

Working group on forest health and vitality

Terms of Reference

Working group session: Wednesday, June 14 13:30-15:15
Plenary session: Wednesday, June 14 15:30-17:30

Questions to be discussed in the working group

1. Which are the most important variables as regards forest health and vitality? Which of these should be included in FRA 2010? (Which of the above are feasible given current information availability, recent technologies and (limited) resources?)
2. For any new variables to be included in FRA 2010:
 - a. At which level should information be obtained (national/regional/global/other)?
 - b. How should the information be obtained? (country reports, remote sensing, thematic studies, other data providers)
3. Are there any suggestions for changes to the current table? (Please refer to table T8 and the proposals in the background document)
4. How do we define disturbance: natural and human induced (agent, phenomena, impact beyond usual incidence that may impact negative on growth and productivity of a forest area)? How do distinguish between positive and negative effects of disturbances? Do we include the area temporarily/permanent affected?
5. Different methodologies result in different units of measurement of forest fire: number of fires, area affected by fire, forest area affected by fire, forest area damaged by fire. How do we best report on forest fires? (Regional/global remote sensing and/or country reporting?)
6. For FRA 2005, countries were asked to report on the area of forest annually affected, yet many countries monitor the cumulative area affected (particularly for pests and diseases). How do we best deal with this issue? (Area newly affected within a year versus area that is currently affected by disturbances (some of which happened in earlier years))
7. How do we best capture the economic impact of disturbances?
8. How do we best report on defoliation, degradation and fragmentation? (If proposed to be included)
9. Thematic studies: Any specific proposals?
10. Remote sensing: Do any of the proposed variables lend themselves to remote sensing? If so, how should the information be obtained? (sampling? map overlays?)
11. Is there a need to create a small task force to deal with any outstanding issues? If so, what are the main tasks and how should it be composed?
12. Other guidance as appropriate.

Expected output

A written report, containing a summary of discussions and recommendations. The report should be presented by the group at the plenary session.