

**UNECE/FAO Team of Specialists on
Forest Policy in Eastern Europe and Central Asia**

Budapest, Hungary, 4-6 March 2009

**Republic of Serbia
Country Report**

Introduction

Total area of forests in Serbia is 2,252,000 ha, and the percentage of forest cover is 29.1%. According to estimations optimal percentage of forest cover is around 41%. The area of state-owned forests is 1,100,000 ha, and rest is in hand of 500 000 small private owners. Wood volume per ha in state forests is 196 m³ and in private forests 130 m³. Wood volume increment is in average 4 m³/ha.

State enterprises are responsible for forest management with state forests and also for some professional operations in private forests. Average private forest holding is 2.4 ha. Forest management in private forests is not organized. During the past private forests and their owners did not treat on equal way like state companies. Direct and indirect support was delivered just to state sector.

Forest policy priorities

- Increasing area covered by forest in the Republic Serbia;
- Optimal level of decentralisation of forest governance and management;
- Permanent financial mechanisms;
- Support the different forms of forest ownership, and ensure the equal legal protection;
- Development of private forest owner associations in order to build their capacity for sustainable forest management and the application of scientific and professional knowledge;
- Support the establishment and development of small and medium enterprises for forestry operations and other activities in the forest sector.

Legislative reforms

Draft of new Law on Forests is finished. Until jun 2009 it will be delivered to Governmet and Parliament for adopting.

Draft of National Forest Action Program is in preparation and it will be delivered to Government with Draft of new Law on Forests

Institutional restructuring

Still we are without significant institutional restructuring in Serbian forestry sector. Frequent political changes have serious effects on the whole reform process, especially on institutional restructuring.