



Ministerial Conference Oslo 14-16 June 2011

Conference **Proceedings**

FOREST EUROPE

Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe

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Introduction

Through the FOREST EUROPE process (The Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe), European countries have fostered protection and sustainable management of Europe's forests for over twenty years. The continuous cooperation of the 47 signatories, including the Russian Federation and the European Union, has led to achievements such as the guidelines and criteria for sustainable forest management. The collaboration of the ministers responsible for forests in Europe has been of great economic, environmental and social importance on both national and international levels since the very beginning of the FOREST EUROPE process.

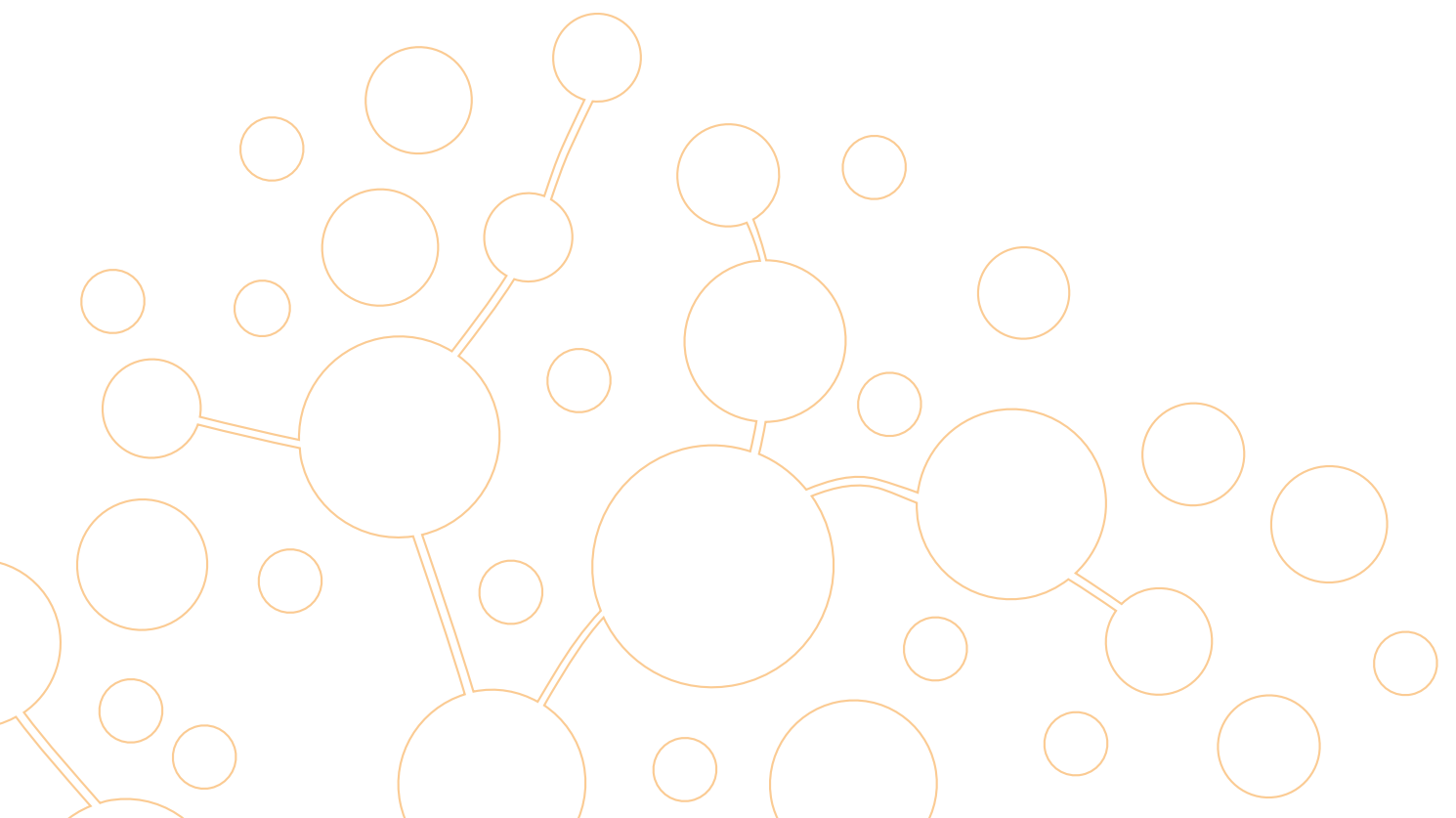
At the FOREST EUROPE Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe held 14-16 June 2011 in Oslo, Norway, the process was taken one vital step further. Ministers and high-level representatives from FOREST EUROPE signatory countries agreed to launch negotiations for a Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe, in addition to making a strong commitment to secure the future health and sustainability of the region's forests.

The Oslo Conference was officially opened by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Haakon of Norway, who emphasised the key roles that forests play for human well-being through their significant social, environmental and economic benefits, as well as their important role in mitigation of climate change. His Royal Highness planted a tree earlier in the morning, in a symbolic gesture as a tribute to forests and the celebration of the International Year of Forests 2011. The Conference was hosted, and co-chaired, by the Norwegian Minister of Agriculture and Food, Mr. Lars Peder Brekk, and organised jointly with the co-chair, the Spanish Minister of Environment and Rural and Marine Affairs, Dr. Rosa Aguilar Rivero.

The Conference started with the thematic Session «Europe's Forests - challenges and opportunities», in which the State of Europe's Forests 2011 Report was presented and launched, followed by a panel debate on European forests in a global perspective. The panel debate was moderated by Ms. Francesc discussion with the panelists. The subsequent Sessions of the Oslo Conference included statements from European signatory countries and the European Union as well as from observatory countries and organisations.

The two decision documents «Oslo Ministerial Decision: European Forests 2020» and «Oslo Ministerial Mandate for Negotiating a Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe» were signed by ministers and Heads of Delegations of the FOREST EUROPE Signatories during a signing ceremony on the final day of the Conference. By signing these documents, the European countries agreed on a common vision, strategic goals, measurable targets and priority actions at national and international level to enhance sustainable forest management and a mission for FOREST EUROPE. By launching negotiations for a Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe, ministers responsible for forests confirmed that sustainable management of Europe's forests require a stable and efficient platform for coherent policy development and implementation.

The final point on the agenda was the change in FOREST EUROPE General Coordinating Committee (GCC) where the Norwegian Minister invited Turkey to take the place of Poland in the GCC and at the same time passed the FOREST EUROPE chairmanship to Spain.



Official **Opening**

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Haakon of Norway

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning - and welcome to Norway!

Through holding the chairmanship of FOREST EUROPE during the last four years Norway has wished to contribute to secure multiple social, economic and environmental benefits from forests to society.

This conference is a result of years' efforts from many of you. I congratulate you with your achievements, Ladies and Gentlemen - and hope you will experience these coming days to be rewarding.

10

Since 2004, I have been working with the United Nations Development Programme to promote the Millenium Development Goals. My main motivation in this engagement is a strong belief that all people should have equal rights to realise their potential as human beings. During these years I have had the chance to visit communities in Botswana, Burundi, Cambodia, Guatemala - and other developing countries around the world. I have met with people in their villages who showed me how they use forests, trees and wood for their everyday existence. I have learned how forests provide food, fuel for cooking and heating, medicine, shelter and clothing. But also how they function as safety nets in crises or emergencies - preventing landslides and limiting droughts. These human encounters and personal stories have helped me to understand key roles that forests play for human well-being. Capacity building, good governance and increased international cooperation are necessary to secure sustainable forest management for human development.

There are telling figures that illustrate the importance of forests: The World Bank indicates that some 1.6 billion of the world's poorest people live in and from forests. About 1.2 billion people rely on agro-forestry farming that helps to sustain agriculture productivity and generate income.

Forests provide significant social, environmental and economic benefits. They are important for biodiversity, water balance, the carbon cycle and as carbon sinks. Forests, sustainably managed, are becoming an important part of the solution for global challenges. Growing forests sequester carbon, wood products store carbon through their life time, and renewable energy is being supplied by wooden biomass.

Only during the last 5 years, about 870 million tonnes of CO₂ have been removed annually from the atmosphere by photosynthesis and tree biomass growth in Europe. This corresponds to about 10 percent of the green-house gas emissions of Europe in 2008.

It is essential to integrate forests as a significant component of future actions and mechanisms for combating climate change and into future strategies towards a low carbon economy.

What will a future sustainable, low carbon economy look like? It will be based on innovations, with new employment opportunities, with a higher share of renewable energy, cleaner products that would not contribute to harming our environment, and lush, healthy trees and forests.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

FOREST EUROPE is an important initiative. It shows an example on how collaborative efforts of many countries have materialised improvement of forests and their sustainable management on the ground, while also contributing to the internationally agreed development goals.

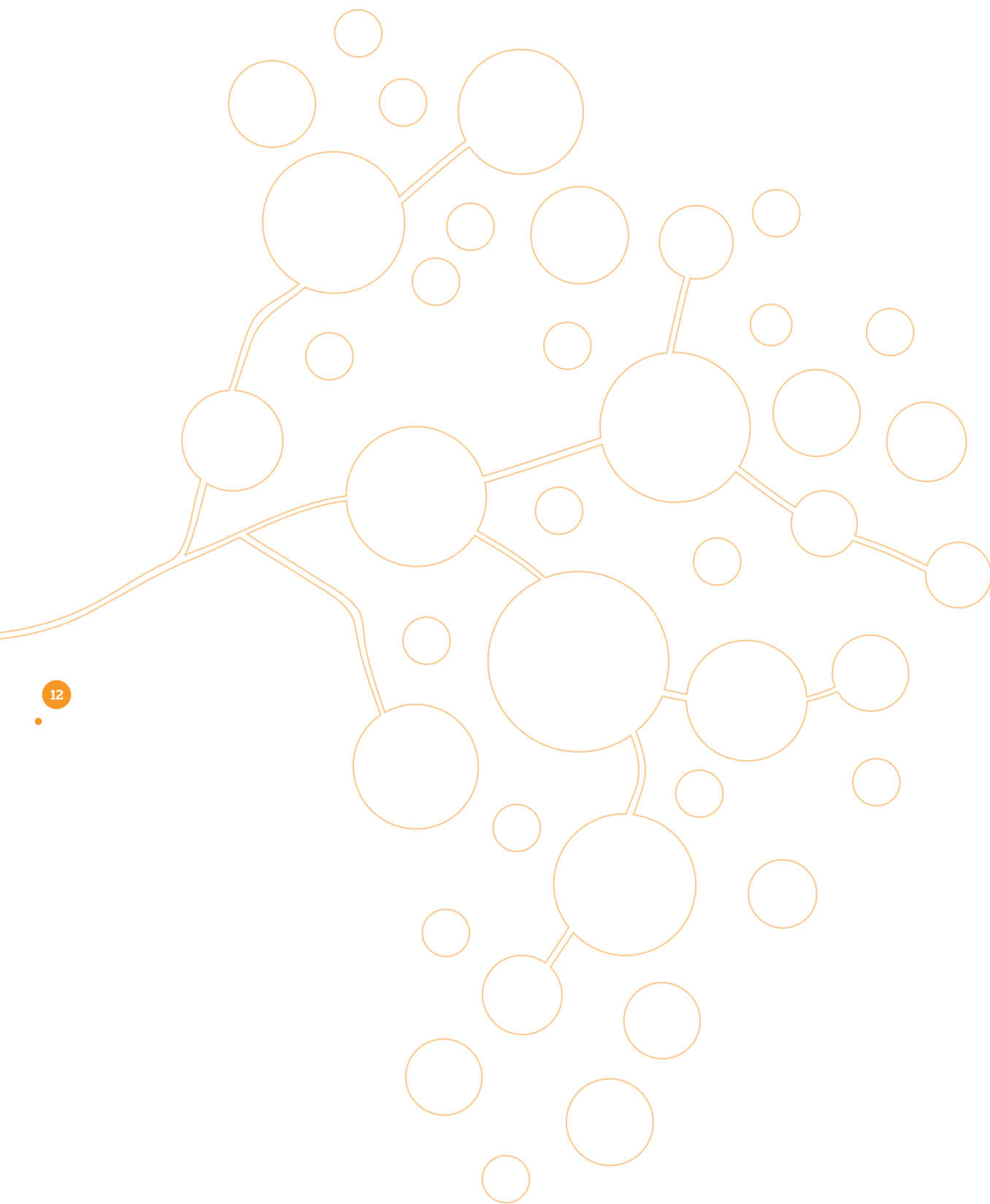
Today, you who are present here today are setting a scene for even better and improved partnership for forests in Europe. This meeting will put European cooperation into a new track and I wish you success in achieving new ambitious goals.

This morning, I planted a tree in the gardens of the Norwegian Forestry Society here in Oslo. This symbolic gesture is my tribute to forests and the celebration of the International Year of Forests 2011.

I'm pleased to declare the FOREST EUROPE Ministerial Conference open.

I wish you fruitful discussions and a rewarding meeting.

Thank you.



Opening **Statements**

Mr. Lars Peder Brekk

Minister

Ministry of Agriculture and Food

NORWAY

Your Royal Highness,

Excellencies,

Distinguished guests,

Dear Colleagues

I would like to begin by thanking His Royal Highness Crown Prince Haakon for opening the FOREST EUROPE Ministerial Conference. We admire the work of the Crown Prince in supporting crucial development challenges of today. It is encouraging and important that His Royal Highness also highlighted the role of forests and sustainable forest management in efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to welcome you all to this FOREST EUROPE Conference. I wish to express my gratitude and honor for your acceptance of our invitation. I am very pleased that so many ministers and high level representatives of the European states, the European Union and observer states are able to be in Oslo today. I would also like to welcome distinguished delegates from international institutions, inter-governmental organisations, non-governmental organisations, scientific community, private sector and others accepting our invitation.

This ministerial conference is hosted jointly by Norway and Spain. I would like to use this opportunity to welcome warmly my fellow co-chair for this event, Madame Rosa Aguilar Rivero, Minister of Environment and Rural and Marine Affairs of Spain.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

You are currently visiting a country with rich forest resources. It has not always been like this. Norwegian forests were degraded and not sustainably managed in the end

of the 19th century. The development of the national forest inventory, the forest laws and institutions in early 20th century laid down fundamentals of national forest governance in Norway. We are benefitting from brave and good decisions in the past. Now we need to prepare for the future. If we want to give next generations the chance to benefit from healthy forests, we need to make new decisions to tackle challenges of today and tomorrow, with combating climate change at the forefront. This should be tasks of all of us, the governments, the private sector, NGOs and civil society.

Since 1990 our joint efforts, in what we now call FOREST EUROPE, has delivered the basis and tools for sustainable forest management. The commitments at the previous five Ministerial Conferences are important achievements in the European cooperation for sustainable forestry. The good participation at this Ministerial Conference is promising for forests, for FOREST EUROPE, and the role of this process in the future.

We have important issues to discuss during these two days. I hope that we together will be able to make decisions that will serve the people and the forests of Europe in the years to come.

Let us take the opportunity to look beyond today. Let us deliberate on how to secure the forests in Europe to the benefit of the society.

I look forward to listening to your views on the challenges and opportunities for sustainable forest management and together with my fellow co-chair I will do my best to facilitate our debate.

New challenges require new means and new tools. Not least, they require cooperation across borders.

Let us make brave decisions!

Welcome.

Mme. Rosa Aguilar Rivero

Minister

Ministry of Environment and Rural and Marine Affairs

SPAIN

President of the Norwegian Parliament, ministers, ladies and gentlemen,

First I would like to express my great satisfaction for participating in the opening of this Conference together with your Royal Highness, the Norwegian minister, my colleague, with whom I will have the honor to co-chair this sixth Conference, and the president of the Norwegian parliament.

This is a conference that unites high representatives of 46 European states and the European Union, together with representatives of other observer states, member of international organisations, associations and social collectives, the scientific community, the private sector, and all of us share a common goal - the preservation of our forests.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In 1990 in Strasbourg, this process was initiated, this platform for cooperation, and today 20 years later we celebrate the 6th ministerial conference here in Oslo. And we can claim that we have taken a great step forward, but we must also make it clear, we must emphasize, that still we have a lot left to do.

We are now going to have a conference with an important and decisive program which includes the opportunities and challenges of the future for the forests in Europe, and their sustainable management. And because of that we have to work and respond to the challenges we have for us to have a «before» and «after» Oslo.

Since 2003 more than 1/4 of the signatory states of FOREST EUROPE have adopted new legislation related to forests, and in practically all of them some kind of regulation has been established. 98% of European forests, which today make up 25% of the world's forested areas, are today subjected to a management system or an equivalent system. So one can say that FOREST EUROPE efforts are ever more important, and there is no doubt that this work is something we cannot do without with a view to the future.

It is essential to strengthen the role played by forest and sustainable forest management in the mitigation of climate change and adaptation to climate change, and also for the preservation of water resources and also biomass as a source of energy and the preservation and improvement of biodiversity.

Let me now express that it is also fundamental that we should not lose sight of the importance of forests from a global point of view in terms of sustainable development, the green generation and the development for those who live in rural areas and for land management and the quality of life for our populations should be fundamental in our global vision and our integral vision of forested areas. This makes it clear that we still have a lot left to do. And we must do this on the basis of the conviction and involvement and shared work and collective work which are essential and fundamental because we have to respond to all of the challenges of the new times from a clear standpoint if we want to have sustainable development, sustainability as a sign of identity.

Dear colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

This is the right moment and the specific and correct moment for Europe to take leadership of a process that will take us with firm steps towards the future, and in a responsible and collective way will take care of the sustainable forest management. We have to provide the best possible foundation to build the future together, and we must continue working with evermore strength to obtain the recognition of forests as a vital resource for biodiversity on a European level, but also on a worldwide level.

We should reach agreements which make it possible to us to continue to make progress, and we should as soon as possible make this binding agreement. I wish that Oslo should be a success and that the work that starts today will bear fruits for this generation and the future generations, and we should hand over a better world to the future generations than the one we found.

Please allow me, dear colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, to end my presentation to talk about Norway, and I would like to say to Norway:

Thank you, you are our host today. We are here in the extraordinary city of Oslo, and we feel that you receive us in a very generous and hospitable way,

Thank you.

Mr. Dag Terje Andersen

President of the Norwegian Parliament

Your Royal Highness, Excellencies and distinguished delegates,

Welcome to Oslo and to Norway.

A good colleague of mine, and our former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Thorvald Stoltenberg, once said - with a smile - that Norway's major contribution to world peace is that there are so few Norwegians. For the same reason, Norway is one of the countries in Europe with the highest share of forest resources per capita.

Forests definitely are of great social, economic and cultural importance to Norwegians - and an important part of our history as well. During the pre-industrial age the forest was our most important natural resource. Forestry was in fact one of the industries contributing to the industrialisation of Norway. As you are well aware of, the utilisation of natural resources in the past put the forests under pressure. By the beginning of the 20th century, the Norwegian forests were only one third of what it is today measured by volume. At that time our forests were unsustainably managed.

Luckily some well-informed persons took action and initiated important work to restore our forest resources.

It is important that we learn from this experience. Forests need continuous management, stewardship and attention. We need forest policies which take into account all the values of forests - the economic, environmental, social and cultural role. We need forest policies which ensure the continuity of this renewable resource. Forest policies must be long-term and forward-looking.

When I was a child during the sixties, 350 persons were occupied in forestry in the native district where I grew up. Today, there are less than 10 persons left. They produce, however, exactly the same amount of timber.

I find this deeply thought-provoking. It clearly illustrates that forestry is one of the industries which during the last decades really has gone through rapid technological developments. It also reminds us that without continuous re-investments in the forestry resources of tomorrow, there will be less to harvest 70 - 80 years ahead.

I would therefore like to stress this: Our generation should not be remembered for exploitation of not renewable resources such as oil and gas, while at the same time being the generation that forgot to re-invest in the renewable resource, forestry.

I know from my own experience as a long time lumber jack what forests mean for development and human well-being. It has been an amazing experience to view the development of sustainable forest management in Norway and elsewhere. It has also been encouraging to follow the development of international and regional cooperation on the development of sustainable forest management.

Based on our experience in Norway and from other regions, I'm deeply convinced that the development of sustainable forest management has to build on core human rights values to succeed. Forest management is about social equity, economic equity and good governance. In other words, you need natural resources in order to make development, but in order to make *successful* development you need human knowledge as well.

The Norwegian playwright, Henrik Ibsen, often wrote of human nature, and in one of his most famous plays the main character declares: Yes, think of it, wish for it or dream about it - but doing it is quite another matter. To put it another way: turning words into actions requires conviction, courage and leadership.

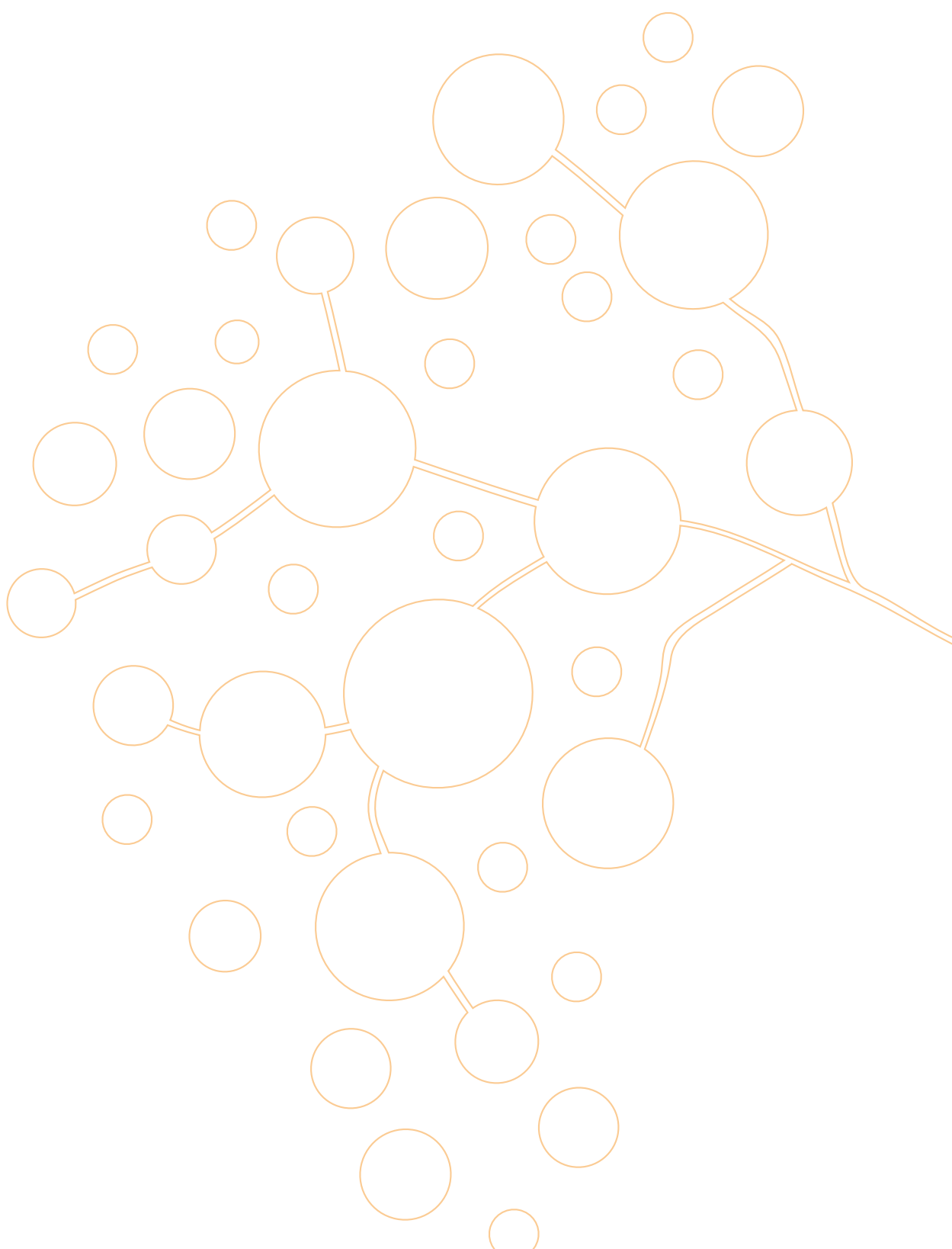
FOREST EUROPE is an excellent example of cooperation and leadership among countries on all elements of sustainable forest management. However, either cooperation or leadership does occur without effort, and I wish to compliment you all for what you have achieved at a European level. Your achievements have served as examples for similar efforts in other regions and contributed to the global cooperation on forest issues. Based on what you have achieved so far, I am convinced that FOREST EUROPE can serve as a basis for even more complex issues in the future.

Forestry in the future must accomplish many tasks. Sustainable forest management can contribute to mitigate climate change. It can also help meeting the growing global demand for renewable energy. And it can secure opportunities for outdoor recreation.

Primarily, however, forestry shall in the future contribute to economic and ecologically sustainable production of forests.

I wish you all the best for the Conference.

Thank you for your attention.



Keynote **Addresses**

Mr. Victor Nikolayevich Maslyakov
Head
Federal Forestry Agency
RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Уважаемые господин Председатель, дамы и господа, коллеги!

Позвольте выразить глубокую благодарность за предоставленную возможность выступить на этом представительном форуме.

Норвегия достойно несла бремя организации работы Общеввропейского процесса по лесам после Варшавской конференции. Об этом говорит и прекрасная организация нашей встречи, и качественная подготовка документов.

Российская Федерация отмечает огромное значение общеввропейского процесса для сохранения лесов Европы. Мы с удовлетворением можем отметить его положительное влияние на переговорный процесс в рамках Форума ООН по лесам.

Приятно отметить, что в устойчивом управлении лесами Европы достигнут существенный прогресс. Это подтверждается данными, опубликованными в докладе «Состояние лесов Европы 2011». Однако успокаиваться рано. В условиях глобального изменения климата, сопровождающегося катастрофическими природными явлениями, и усиления антропогенного воздействия на лесные экосистемы необходимо прилагать всё большие усилия для сохранения лесов на европейском континенте. Важнейшим элементом этого является координация действий под эгидой процесса «Леса Европы».

Природа щедро наделила Россию лесами. Это ее одно из самых значительных богатств. На долю России приходится четверть мировых запасов леса. Доля лесов России на европейском континенте составляет 80%. Это не только легкие России, но Европы и всей планеты. Экономическая, экологическая и социальная роль российских лесов бесценна. И нам не безразлично их состояние, как в настоящем, так и в будущем.

Мы занимаем активную позицию в процессе выработки новых подходов к устойчивому

управлению лесными ресурсами, основываясь на положениях итоговых документов Конференции по устойчивому развитию в Рио-де-Жанейро, Саммита РИО+10 в Йоханнесбурге, решений Форума ООН по лесам, монреальского и общеввропейского процессов.

Россия последовательно участвует в процессе сохранения лесов Европы, который был инициирован на Страсбургской конференции министров лесного хозяйства в 1990 году. Мы одобрили декларации и подписали резолюции конференций в Страсбурге, а также последующих конференций в Хельсинки, Лиссабоне, Вене и Варшаве – и готовы подписать документы конференции в Осло.

Российская Федерация разделяет основные общеввропейские принципы, такие как:

- усиление национальной ответственности за сохранение лесов;
- развитие лесного законодательства и практики правоприменения;
- важность реализации долгосрочной стратегии общеввропейского сотрудничества в таких областях, как:

создание национальных систем управления лесным хозяйством,

привлечение инвестиций в лесной сектор, внедрение ресурсосберегающих технологий, снижение негативных последствий для здоровья лесов от промышленной деятельности, сохранение их биоразнообразия.

Это далеко не полный перечень международных приоритетов, которых Россия придерживается при разработке стратегических документов таких как – Стратегия развития лесного комплекса Российской Федерации до 2020 года и Национальная программа развития лесного хозяйства на 2012–2020 годы.

2011 год провозглашен Генеральной ассамблеей ООН Международным годом лесов. В этой связи под эгидой Правительства Российской Федерации в нашей стране проводится целый ряд мероприятий для широкого освещения в обществе роли и значения лесов для человека, повышения престижности лесных специальностей, развития системы устойчивого управления лесами в нашей стране.

Хотел бы выразить надежду, что Год

лесов не станет декларативным жестом или разовой кампанией, а будет способствовать целенаправленной постоянной работе по решению насущных проблем сохранения лесов.

Одной из наиболее актуальных и насущных задач мирового лесного сообщества должно стать повышение экологической культуры молодого поколения и его персональной ответственности за будущее лесных богатств.

Такой подход послужит надежной гарантией экологической безопасности планеты.

Решению этой задачи может способствовать расширение географии участников традиционного Международного юниорского лесного конкурса, который ежегодно проводится Российской Федерацией.

В лесном секторе нашей страны достаточно проблем, о которых мы не только открыто говорим, но и принимаем меры по их решению.

Речь, прежде всего, идет о большой работе по совершенствованию системы профилактики, обнаружения и тушения лесных пожаров, а также о ликвидации последствий лесных пожаров аномального лета 2010 года.

Российская Федерация готова поделиться своим опытом в данной сфере с международным лесным сообществом.

В целях лесовосстановления по всей стране ведется интенсивная посадка леса. Лесоводам в этом активно помогает население. 14 мая этого года в Российской Федерации прошел первый Национальный день посадки леса. В этой акции приняли участие более 200 тыс. человек. Всего в этот день было посажено около 25 миллионов новых деревьев. Надеюсь, что для миллионов россиян ежегодный день посадки леса станет доброй традицией.

Мы придаем большое значение начатому по инициативе Российской Федерации процессу правоприменения и управления в лесном секторе стран Европы и Северной Азии. Мы тесно сотрудничаем с нашими зарубежными партнерами в области противодействия обороту нелегально заготовленной древесины.

Российская Федерация всегда поддерживала инициативу разработки и принятия документа обязательной юридической силы по лесам,

регулирующего международные лесные отношения (Конвенции по лесам). Считаем, что пора переходить к активным действиям. Предлагаемый для обсуждения и подписания Министерский мандат является важным шагом по подготовке данного глобального документа.

Мы поддерживаем в целом идею разработки документа обязательной юридической силы по лесам Европы. Полагаем целесообразным активное участие международных организаций в этом процессе. Это позволит обеспечить прозрачность переговорного процесса, возможность вовлечения в него стран других континентов, а также учесть пожелания всех заинтересованных сторон. По нашему мнению документ не должен носить ограничений экономического характера, препятствующих устойчивому развитию лесного сектора.

Мы понимаем, что процесс подготовки документа будет сложным и не скорым. Надеемся вместе с Вами прийти к успеху.

От лица Российской Федерации благодарю за приглашение принять участие в деятельности бюро Межправительственного переговорного комитета, призванного разработать целостную структуру юридически обязательного соглашения по лесам Европы. Наша страна примет активное участие в работе Комитета.

Хотел бы выразить убежденность в том, что 6-я встреча Министров лесного хозяйства европейских стран придаст новый импульс международному взаимодействию в интересах решения насущных проблем лесной повестки дня. Накопленный процессом «Леса Европы» опыт позволяет надеяться, что приоритетность лесной проблематики будет сохранена не только на европейском, но общемировом уровне.

Российская Федерация намерена и впредь содействовать консолидации усилий в интересах дальнейшего развития международного механизма по лесам и сохранения лесов Европы.

Всем присутствующим коллегам желаю успешной работы на благо своих стран и Европейских Лесов.

Спасибо за внимание.

English version

Chair,
Ladies and gentlemen,
Dear colleagues,

First of all I would like to deeply thank for the possibility to speak at this very representative forum. We see that Norway has successfully taken upon herself the burden to organise the pan-European forest process after the Warsaw conference. The excellent organisation of this meeting, and quality preparation of the documents, is a good manifestation to that.

The Russian Federation recognizes the enormous importance upon the European process for protection of European forests. We can see its positive impact on the negotiation process within the UNFF. We are happy to see substantial progress in sustainable forest in Europe as shown by the «State of Europe's Forests 2011 Report». But it's too early to lay off our efforts, because of climate change, catastrophic natural phenomena and enhanced anthropogenic impact on forests. All these require further enhanced efforts in the European continent. A major element is to coordinate our efforts under the auspices of FOREST EUROPE.

Russia is rich in forests. It's one of Russia's major riches. One fourth of global forests are situated in Russia. 80% of European forests are in Russia. That is important not only for Russia, but also for Europe. For us to breathe freely. It's important for economy, environment, and for the social development. Today, tomorrow. We are very active in developing new approaches towards sustainable forest management on the basis of the final documents of the Conference on Sustainable Development held in Rio de Janeiro, the Rio +10 summit in Johannesburg, as well as UNFF decisions, the Montreal and European Processes.

Russia has continuously participated in protection of European forests, initiated by the Strasbourg Ministerial Conference in 1990. We adopted declarations and signed resolutions of further conferences in Strasbourg, Helsinki, Lisbon, Vienna and Warsaw - and we are prepared to sign the documents here at the Oslo Ministerial Conference.

Russia shares the major European principles as follows:

- Enhancing national responsibilities for the protection of forests;

- Enhancing legislation and development of further;
- Visionary cooperation strategies in such areas as:
 - Attraction of investments in the forest sector;
 - Implementation of sustainable forest management;
 - Introduction of resource-saving forest use technologies;
 - Mitigating negative impact from industry;
 - Development and protection of biodiversity in forests.

All these elements are included in the national documents adopted in Russia. As the «National Forestry Strategy of the Russian Federation until 2020», and the «National Development Program for Forestry Development for 2012-2020».

This year is declared by the United Nations as the International Year of Forests. Under the auspices of this year Russia has implemented a number of actions on the national scale in the field of forest advocacy, development of forest education and sustainable forest management.

I hope that the International Year of Forests will not remain a declarative gesture or a separate campaign, but that it will contribute to continuous work and efforts focused on solving urgent problems of conservation.

One of the major, most pressing issues should be the development of environmental awareness for the youth and their personal responsibility for the future of forest resources.

This would be a major guarantee for environmental security of the entire planet in the future. Solving this problem may contribute to the geographic expansion of the traditional International Junior Forest Contest, held annually in the Russian Federation.

There are a lot of challenges and problems in the forest sector in our country that we have to address.

First of all, we have to do a lot in the field of prevention and combatting of forest fires, as well as to liquidate the consequences of the forest fires last year, the exceptionally dry year of 2010.

The Russian Federation is prepared to share its experiences with the international forest community. In order to enhance reforestation, a lot of trees are

being planted in Russia. Foresters are assisted by the civil society in this. Actually, 14th of May this year in the Russian Federation was the first national tree planting day, with participation of over 200.000 people. Over 25 million seedlings were planted. We hope that for millions of Russians, this will become a good tradition.

We give a lot of attention to the FLEG process for Europe and northern Asia, initiated by the Russian Federation. We cooperate closely with our international partners in combatting illegal felling and logging, and we have already achieved some success in this field.

The Russian Federation has always supported the initiative to develop and adopt legally binding instrument and documents in the field of international forest relations or in form of forest conventions. It's time for concrete actions, and the ministerial mandate that we are going to sign here would be a major step forward in the development of such a global document.

We support the idea to develop a legally binding document for European forests. We believe that the appropriate international organisations are involved in this process. This will promote transparency of negotiations and take into account the wishes and views of all the stakeholders. This LBA should not be limited to issues of economy.

We understand that the development of such an LBA would be a difficult and time-consuming process, but we hope for a final success.

The Russian Federation is grateful for the invitation to participate in the Bureau of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on LBA in Europe, designed to develop a coherent framework of a legally binding agreement on forests in Europe. The Russian Federation will participate actively in the work by the Bureau. I would like to express my conviction that this 6th Ministerial Conference will give a new impetus to further international cooperation in order to resolve the existing challenges and problems on the forest agenda. The experience accumulated by FOREST EUROPE allows us to hope that the right priorities are given to this work, not only in Europe, but also on the global scale.

The Russian Federation intends to continue to promote consolidation of international efforts to develop international mechanism to protect European

forests. And we wish you all, our colleagues, every success for the benefit of your nations and for the good of European forests,

Thank you.

Mr. Silva Rodriguez

Director-General

*Directorate-General for Agriculture
and Rural Development,*

European Commission

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

On behalf of

Mr. Dacian Ciolos

Commissioner

*Commission for Agriculture
and Rural Development*

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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Messieurs les Ministres, chers Délégués, Mesdames,
Messieurs,

Je remercie infiniment la Norvège pour l'organisation de cette conférence qui intervient à un moment clef pour l'avenir des forêts. Clairement, ces dernières années, le travail de FOREST EUROPE a gagné en visibilité, une visibilité qui s'incarne d'ailleurs dans ce nouveau nom, FOREST EUROPE.

Une véritable dynamique est engagée avec la perspective de l'ouverture de la négociation d'un accord, légalement contraignant, sur la gestion durable des forêts paneuropéennes. Je me félicite que FOREST EUROPE ait entamé cette démarche ambitieuse.

D'ailleurs, je remercie également l'Espagne qui a soutenu la Norvège dans son travail de préparation de cette conférence. Je suis sûr qu'elle va prendre le relais avec autant de détermination et de dynamisme dans cette phase importante.

Pendant longtemps, comme l'agriculture d'ailleurs, les forêts étaient quelque peu sorties de l'agenda international. Elles n'étaient plus à la mode, si je puis dire. Tout au plus, on faisait référence à l'identité, aux traditions et aux valeurs portées par ces espaces. Tout cela n'est pas faux, bien entendu. Mais les forêts, ce n'est pas que du passé, c'est aussi et surtout l'avenir.

La prise de conscience de l'enjeu environnemental, les défis énergétiques et climatiques ont apporté une nouvelle modernité à la forêt et au bois. Nous

redécouvrons chaque jour un peu plus ces écosystèmes qui couvrent presque la moitié du territoire européen. Nous redécouvrons le potentiel qu'ils représentent.

La forêt est revenue à l'agenda international avec un double dimension - environnementale et économique - que ce soit dans les discussions globales sur le climat, sur la désertification ou sur la conservation de la biodiversité. Je me félicite que l'année 2011 ait été promue par les Nations Unies «année mondiale de la forêt».

La forêt est un défi global qui appelle des solutions globales.

Elle représente une ressource économique considérable. Elle recèle un potentiel en pleine mutation, notamment du fait des applications qui se multiplient dans les secteurs industriel ou énergétique. Juste un exemple, celui de la biomasse. D'ici à 2020, la biomasse devrait contribuer à 50% du total des énergies renouvelables et la moitié devrait venir de la biomasse forestière.

Avec plus d'un milliard d'hectares de forêts, le continent européen est une puissance forestière : c'est 25% de la forêt mondiale. Les forêts sont importantes pour l'Union européenne. Et l'Union européenne est importante pour ses forêts. Contrairement à ce qui se passe partout ailleurs dans le monde, la forêt gagne du terrain sur le continent européen depuis plus de 60 ans. Ces 20 dernières années, elle a progressé de 800 000 hectares par an.

La forêt, ce sont des emplois et de la croissance : 2,5 millions de personnes sont employées dans le secteur de la sylviculture.

La forêt, c'est aussi la biodiversité : les habitats forestiers représentent 20% des sites du réseau Natura 2000.

Mais, si je puis dire, l'arbre ne doit pas cacher la forêt. Ce constat très positif ne doit pas cacher les défis qui se profilent pour la forêt à l'échelle mondiale comme au plan européen.

Certes, il y a plus d'arbres, mais d'après ce que j'ai entendu dire, au niveau pan-européen, nous avons des indications laissant entendre qu'un arbre sur cinq est malade. Certes, la plupart des forêts européennes disposent d'un plan de gestion et l'ensemble des Etats européens sont engagés dans un processus de gestion durable des forêts, mais il manque encore parfois de

cohérence et de coordination entre les différentes politiques qui influencent l'avenir des forêts et de la sylviculture. L'environnement, la politique du climat, la politique industrielle et énergétique, celle du marché intérieur ou du développement rural, toutes ont un impact et des attentes fortes à l'égard des forêts et de la sylviculture.

La ressource est peut-être de plus en plus abondante chez nous en Europe du fait de la croissance des forêts. Mais elle est aussi plus fragile et plus que jamais sous pression.

Le changement climatique fait peser la menace de nouvelles maladies. Nous le voyions bien avec le nématode du pin que nous avons tant de mal à éradiquer ou même à contenir, ce qui est, d'après ce que j'ai compris difficile, voire impossible au Portugal ou en Espagne. Les tempêtes ou les sécheresses dites centenaires semblent maintenant revenir tous les dix ans ou quinze ans. Nous avons tous en tête Klaus, Kyrill ou Gudrum. Elles s'accompagnent de dégâts qu'il faut des décennies pour réparer. Et je ne parle pas des incendies.

Tous ces enjeux doivent être mieux pris en compte. D'ailleurs, je tiens à le souligner, dans le cadre de la réforme de la PAC post-2013, les mesures ciblées sur les forêts seront à la fois renforcées, rendues plus simples et plus flexibles.

Nous devons maintenir l'équilibre fragile entre la conservation et l'utilisation des ressources forestières. Cet équilibre doit prendre en compte tant les nouvelles attentes que les nouvelles contraintes qui s'exercent sur cette ressource.

Dans ce contexte, je crois qu'il est plus important que jamais pour l'Europe d'affirmer ses positions et de développer une stratégie globale et commune ambitieuse de gestion durable des forêts.

Ces vingt dernières années, FOREST EUROPE a joué un rôle clef. Nous avons beaucoup progressé sur la voie d'un suivi et d'une vision commune et consolidée de ce qu'est une gestion durable.

Je suis convaincu que nous pouvons aller au-delà.

Nous pouvons encore affiner le modèle européen de gestion des forêts. Cela nous permettra, ensuite, de parler d'une voie forte sur la scène internationale et de promouvoir ce modèle.

Je sais que ce n'est pas toujours facile. D'ailleurs, cela montre bien l'attachement de chacun à ses forêts

qui ne sont pas un bien comme un autre. Nous avons un vrai rapport affectif avec notre patrimoine. Mais j'en suis certain : une coopération accrue permettra d'accroître et d'étendre le potentiel de ce patrimoine.

FOREST EUROPE entre dans une nouvelle phase cruciale, avec l'ouverture des négociations d'un accord légalement contraignant. La Commission européenne est consciente du travail nécessaire pour parvenir à un instrument fort et efficace. Mais nous sommes aussi convaincus que ce travail de consolidation sera l'aboutissement des efforts réalisés ces dernières années par FOREST EUROPE et qu'il va permettre de renforcer la coopération au sein de ce forum.

Pour conclure, je veux souligner une nouvelle fois le travail considérable réalisé ces dernières années par FOREST EUROPE. FOREST EUROPE a permis de développer une véritable vision de la forêt européenne.

La Norvège a accompli un travail colossal et je suis sûr que l'Espagne va prendre le relai avec succès et détermination, d'autant plus dans la perspective des prochaines négociations.

Nous devons travailler ensemble pour relever le défi du changement climatique, le défi du bois-énergie, le défi de la biodiversité, le défi de l'économie verte. Nous devons mettre en commun nos savoirs et notre énergie pour cultiver la diversité de notre patrimoine et l'inscrire dans le temps long de la durabilité.

Merci pour votre attention.

English version

Ministers, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am deeply grateful to Norway for the organization of this conference, which takes place at a crucial time for the future of forests. Clearly, over the last few years, the work of FOREST EUROPE has gained in visibility, and this is indeed embodied in its new name, FOREST EUROPE.

A true dynamic is in progress with the prospect of opening up negotiations for a legally binding agreement on the sustainable management of pan European forests. I am pleased that FOREST EUROPE has started this ambitious approach.

Moreover, I also thank Spain, which has supported Norway in its preparatory work for this conference. I am sure that Spain will take over the baton with just as much determination and dynamism in this important phase.

For a long time, indeed, in much the same way as with agriculture, forests had been somewhat marginalized on the international agenda. They were no longer in fashion, if I can put it that way. At most, one referred to the identity, traditions and values associated with these spaces. All that is quite true, of course. But forests do not just belong to the past, they are also and above all part of the future.

The raising of awareness about environmental issues, as well as energy and climate challenges, has brought a new modernity to forests and wood. Every day, we rediscover a little more of these ecosystems that cover almost half of the European Union territory. We are rediscovering the potential they represent.

The forest came back onto the international agenda with a double dimension - environmental and economic - whether concerning overall discussions on the climate, desertification or the conservation of biodiversity. I am pleased that the year 2011 was declared by the United Nations as «International Year of Forests».

The forest is a global challenge which calls for global solutions.

It represents a considerable economic resource. It has a potential that is undergoing far-reaching change, in particular because of the multiplication of applications in the industrial or energy sectors. Just one example is biomass. From now to 2020, the biomass should contribute 50% of the total renewable energy resources, and half of this should come from forest biomass.

With more than one billion hectares of forest, the European continent is a major forestry power: it accounts for 25% of the world's forest. Forests are important for the European Union. And the European Union is important for its forests. Contrary to what is happening elsewhere in the world, the forest has been gaining ground in Europe for more than 60 years. Over the last 20 years, its area has increased by 800,000 hectares per annum.

The forest represents jobs and growth: 2.5 million people are employed in the forest and forestry sectors.

The forest is also biodiversity: forest habitats account for 20% of the sites of the Natura 2000 site network.

But, if I can put it this way, the trees should not hide the forest. This very positive remark should not mask the challenges that are outlined for the forest, both on a worldwide and a European scale. Admittedly, trees are more numerous, but according to what I have heard, we have indications at the Pan-European level making it clear that one tree in five is diseased. While the majority of European forests have a management plan and all the European countries are engaged in a process of sustainable forest management, there is still sometimes a lack of coherence and coordination between the various policies affecting the future of forests and forestry. The environment, the climate policy, the industrial and energy policy, as well as policies concerning the internal market or rural development, all have an impact and lead to strong expectations regarding forests and forestry.

The resource is perhaps increasingly abundant in Europe because of the growth of forests. But it is also more fragile and more than ever under pressure.

Climate change adds weight to the threat of new diseases. This was clearly seen with the pinewood nematode, which has proved so hard to eradicate or even contain, and, according to what I understood, difficult and even impossible in Portugal or in Spain. The storms or droughts said to be centenary now seem to return every ten or fifteen years. We all have Klaus, Kyrill or Gudrum in mind. These storms were accompanied by damage that will take decades to repair. And I do not speak about forest fires.

All these issues must be better taken into account. Moreover, I should stress that, within the framework of the reform of the CAP after 2013, measures targeted on forests will be at the same time strengthened, made simpler and more flexible.

We must maintain a fragile balance between conservation and the use of forestry resources. This balance must take into account new expectations just as much as the new constraints that are exerted on this resource.

In this context, I believe that it is more important than ever for Europe to affirm its positions and develop an ambitious overall and common strategy for the sustainable management of forests.

For the last twenty years, FOREST EUROPE has

played a key role. We have made great progress towards monitoring and a common and consolidated vision of sustainable management.

I am convinced that we can go still further.

We can further refine the European model of forest management. Then, we will be able to speak with a strong voice on the international scene and promote this model.

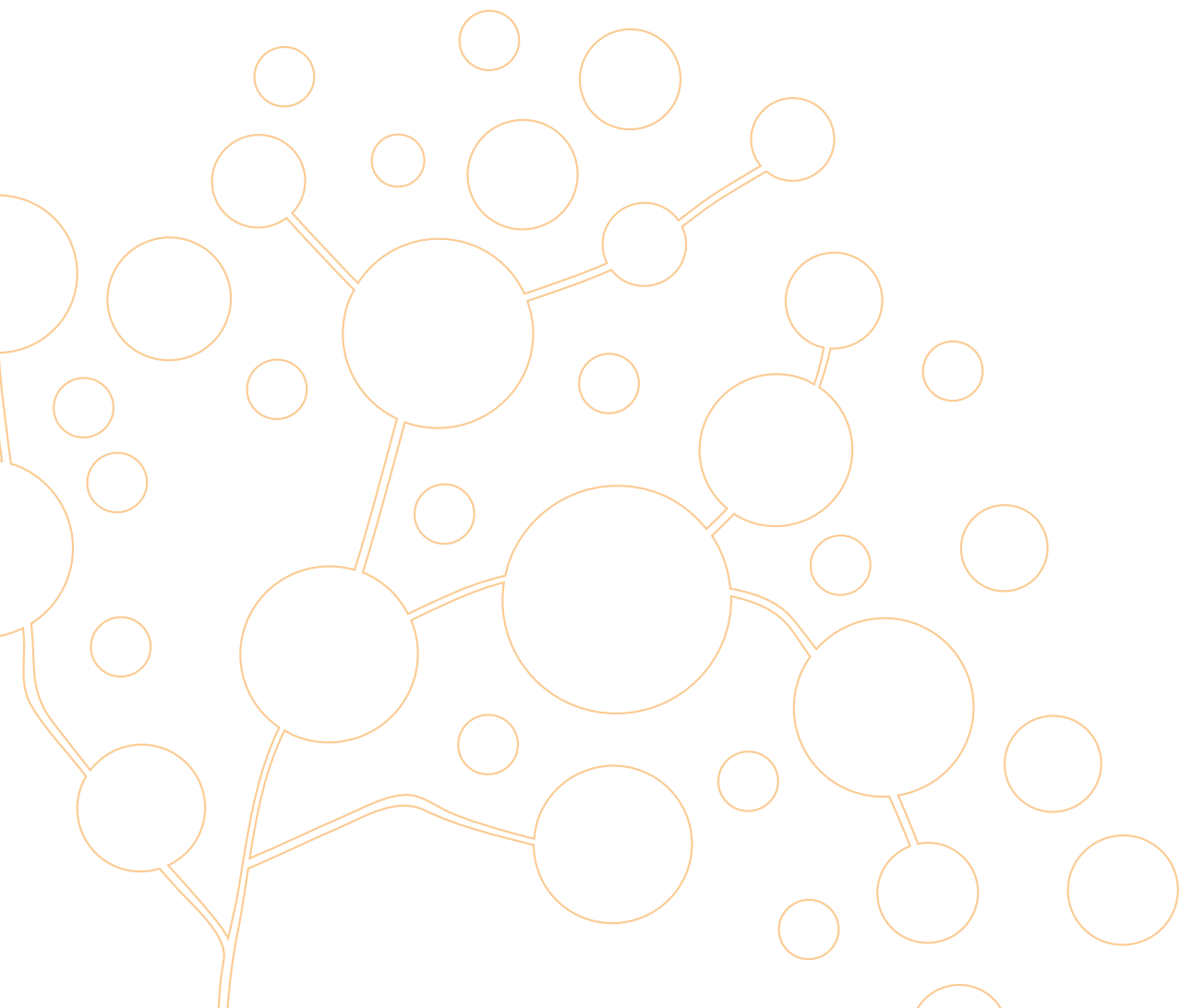
I know that it is not always easy. Moreover, this clearly shows the attachment of everyone to their forests, which are not merely an asset like any another. We have a true emotional relationship with our heritage. But I am certain: increased cooperation will make it possible to increase and extend the potential of this heritage.

FOREST EUROPE is entering a crucial new phase, with the opening of negotiations for a legally binding agreement. The European Commission is aware of the work that is necessary to arrive at a strong and effective instrument. But we are also convinced that this work of consolidation will be the result of the efforts carried out in recent years by FOREST EUROPE, and that it will make it possible to strengthen the cooperation within this forum.

To conclude, I want to underline once again the considerable work undertaken over the last few years by FOREST EUROPE. FOREST EUROPE has made it possible to develop a true vision of the European forest. Norway has accomplished a colossal task, and I am all the more sure that Spain will take over the baton with success and determination in view of the forthcoming negotiations.

We must work together to take up the challenges of climate change, wood energy, biodiversity and the green economy. We must share our knowledge and our energy to cultivate the diversity of our heritage and place it within the framework of long-term sustainability.

Thank you for your attention.



Thematic Session:
***Europe's Forests –
Challenges and
Opportunities***

State of Europe's Forests 2011 Report

Launch of the Report

Mr. Kit Prins, on behalf of the authors of the State of Europe's Forests 2011 report, expressed gratitude for the opportunity to present the main results of the new report to the distinguished audience of people responsible for forest policy. The State of Europe's Forests 2011 is the third report structured around the pan-European criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management to be presented to FOREST EUROPE ministerial conferences.

The report provides a comprehensive, fact-based picture of status and trends in the period 1990-2010, and, for the first time, analyses policy challenges facing the European forest sector. It is jointly prepared by FOREST EUROPE, UNECE and FAO, with major contributions from organisations, countries and hundreds of national correspondents, experts and authors from all over Europe.

The State of Europe's Forests 2011 shows that Europe has one billion hectares of forests, 25% of the world total. The majority of European forests (80%) are located in the Russian Federation. 83% of the forests are available for wood supply. Europe is the most forest-rich region in the world, with forests covering 45% of the land area. Contrary to what most Europeans believe, Europe's forests are expanding. Over the last 20 years, the forest area has expanded by 17 million hectares. There are about 30 million private forest holdings. Many factors, including ownership, vary greatly between countries.

European forests remove 870 million tons of CO₂ from the atmosphere every year, equivalent to about 10% of greenhouse gas emissions by European countries. The area of protected forests is expanding and forest management practices increasingly promote conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. Most forests have a management plan, and the forest sector currently accounts for about 1% of GDP and 4 million jobs. In almost all countries, the net annual increment is higher than annual felling. In Europe as a whole, about 40% of the increment is felled, and the total growing stock of forests has increased by nearly 9 billion cubic metres from 1990 to 2010.

The State of Europe's Forests 2011 also provides information on policies and legal and institutional

frameworks across Europe. Policy objectives and instruments have been adapted in more than half the countries since the last ministerial conference, and are increasingly influenced by international processes and by developments in other sectors, in particular energy, climate change and biodiversity policy.

Challenges remain in improving consistency between policy areas.

An experimental method to assess the sustainability of forest management in Europe was developed for the 2011 report. The results are broadly satisfactory, for most country groups and criteria, but the report also identified threats. Mr Prins encouraged further improvements in the method to develop more authoritative answers to the key question of sustainability.

Threats to forests include nitrogen deposition over critical limits in many areas putting forest soils at risk over quite large areas; significant damage caused by insects, diseases and forest fires (and the risk of increasing severity of damage, because of a changing climate); and increasing fragmentation of forest landscapes, potentially negative for biodiversity. In very few countries the forest area is falling due to external pressures, or because fellings are higher than increment. Employment in the forest sector is decreasing, and accidents and injuries continue to be a challenge. In a few countries, the net revenue of forest enterprises is negative, raising concern for economic sustainability. Information problems persist, especially in South-West and South-East Europe: without proper data on status and trends for important forest features, it is not possible to say whether forest management is sustainable.

Based on data supplied by countries for the 2011 report, complex policy challenges were identified particularly within four tropical areas: Forests and climate change; wood for energy; conservation of forest biodiversity; and the role of forests in a green economy.

Related to climate change the challenge for the forest sector is to balance measures to sequester and store carbon with measures to substitute non-renewable products and fuels, while adapting forests to the changing climate. Furthermore, forests and forest management must be properly integrated in the evolving international climate regime.

Wood is the largest renewable energy source

in Europe and expected to play a major role in meeting future policy targets. Intensification of forest management and other measures to mobilise wood will require attention to trade-offs, for example with biodiversity and other wood using industries.

Progress in conservation of forest biodiversity is identified. Questions arising are if the current situation is satisfactory and what consequences changes in forest management in response to climate change mitigation, including providing wood energy, might have on forest biodiversity.

The 2011 report shows that the European forest sector in many respects already has many of the characteristics of a green economy: it is low carbon, resource efficient and, at least partly, socially inclusive. The sector thus has the potential to be a role model to other sectors in the move to a greener economy. Waste and pollution could be further reduced in the sector, sustainable consumption patterns further developed, and new systems of payment for forest ecosystem services explored.

Mr. Prins closed by expressing hope on behalf of all those who worked to create the State of Europe's Forests 2011 that the report will be used to formulate improved policies.

Panel Debate – European Forests in a Global Perspective

Co-chair Brekk introduced the panel moderator, Ms. Frances Seymour, Director General of the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR). Ms. Seymour introduced the panel debate highlighting the importance of decisions taken in Europe for forests and people in other parts of the world, including through trade and norms of what constitutes good governance. She explained the organisation of the panel debate, starting with statements on behalf of six major groups and reflections by the three panelists. She highlighted time constraints in allowing for a real debate, including concerns and questions by all conference participants.

Major group¹ «Environmental Non-Governmental Organisations»: Mr. Rasmus Hansson, CEO, WWF-Norway, in the statement on behalf of WWF, welcomed that FOREST EUROPE has developed a vision, goals and targets for forests recognising the multi-functionality of forests. WWF also welcomed the efforts in developing a legally binding agreement, but as for goals and targets, raised concern about the level of ambitions and specificity of the commitments. WWF urged ministers to take tomorrow's challenges into account, and called for balancing the possible intensification of forest management to meet demands for energy and climate change mitigation with biodiversity conservation and protection of forests. WWF further urged ministers to consider European forests in a global perspective, and to play a constructive role in global challenges.

Major group «Forest Industry»: Mr. Filip De Jaeger, Secretary General, European Confederation of Woodworking Industries (CEI-Bois), welcomed the attention to the many important roles of forests at European and global levels. Renewable products were highlighted, for economic viability in rural areas and as a key to achieving green economy. He called for balancing demands on forests, as well as first using wood raw material for lasting products and later for energy, and stated support to a legally binding agreement on forests in Europe given it will provide a basis for and contribute to the future competitiveness of the forest-based industries.

Major group «Forest Owners»: Mr. Christer

Segersteen, President, Confederation of European Forest Owners (CEPF), highlighted the European process as a frontrunner in forest policy development and regretted that the achievements so far have not been recognised. He stressed the need for a stronger voice and better tools to convince society and policy makers of forests as part of the solution to many emerging challenges. He supported the vision and 2020 targets for forests and a legally binding agreement as the best way to strengthen political commitment and further development of sustainable forest management. Highlighting the forest owners' commitment to do their part, he called upon governments to develop a holistic legal framework for forests and to seek coherence between sectoral policies and processes relevant to forests and forestry.

Major group «Scientific Community»: Mr. Risto Päivinen, Director, European Forest Institute (EFI), stated the scientific community's commitment to continue contributing to the FOREST EUROPE work. In the cross-sectoral and complex context of European forest policy, the scientific community emphasised joint actions on a foresight-focused working group, and research, capacity building, networking and experience sharing with a special focus on countries with economies in transition. He confirmed willingness to contribute to the improvements in assessing progress in sustainable forest management and achievements of the 2020 targets, and to support negotiations of a legally binding agreement on forests with science-based knowledge and expertise.

Major group «Social Non-Governmental Organisations»: Mr. Håkan Nystrand, President, Union of European Foresters (UEF), recognised the significant contributions forests can make in tackling societal challenges. Noting the increasing forest area in Europe, he highlighted their huge potential to sustain and enhance vital values. He highlighted the importance of civil society and economic actors in promoting sustainable forest management, and the continued support of the social organisations to the FOREST EUROPE process. In future work, including for promoting the role of forests in green economy and improved communication about benefits of forests, as well as in the negotiations of a legally binding agreement, he called for full involvement of stakeholders.

¹ Statements by the major groups, and the organisations involved, are presented just after this summary.

Major group «Youths»: Ms. Juliette Mouche, Head of the IFSA commission for FOREST EUROPE, International Forestry Students' Association (IFSA), promised continued support to FOREST EUROPE and sustainable forest management. She highlighted the importance of forests and the need to ensure their health and vitality. She supported the legally binding agreement on forests as an important measure for this, and stated hope that such an agreement will lead to concrete actions to forest biodiversity and other functions of forests. She called for modernisation of forest education systems and more active participation of younger generations in activities to raise awareness in society about multiple goods and services from forests and the need to preserve them.

Moderator Seymour thanked the representatives of major groups for their statements, and invited the panelists to present their first reflections, including on the topics raised by the major groups.

Mr. Eduardo Rojas-Briales, Assistant Director-General for forestry, FAO, highlighted forests as an extraordinary valuable asset with high inter-generational and interspatial linkages that cannot be left to markets or national regulations alone. He pointed to historical developments in forest management and continued European leadership in sustainable use of the renewable resource, and the need to share this experience with other regions and sectors. Furthermore, he pointed to new opportunities in addressing scattered and fragmented approaches with a legally binding agreement in Europe which may also support global developments. He highlighted the role of forests in providing energy and raw material, in combating climate change, as well as in a greener economy, and the need to balance different functions and services of forests in the search for win-win solutions that allow the full mobilisation of the forests' potential. He stressed the role of semi-natural forests to meet increasing demands on forest goods and services, and the European experience in mobilising this potential.

Mr. Pedro J. Ochoa, Senior Technical Adviser, European Investment Bank, explained that the bank during the last two years has supported forestry and forest industry projects with in total 2.4 billion EUR. He stated that the bank welcomes the development of a legally binding framework, and the positive efforts in

the sector for ensuring responsible forest activities. He highlighted experiencing the changes in forest partners becoming major energy producers, and the important role of this in climate change mitigation and adaptation. Although sharing the concern of the industry about the competition for biomass for energy and other products, he declared belief in a balanced approach, in that intensification of forest management can produce both bioenergy and maintain raw material supply for the industry. In the situation with increasing importance of energy production, he highlighted challenges to the sector in terms of common sustainability criteria for forest biomass.

Mr. Tim Rollinson, Director General, UK Forestry Commission, reflected on the success story of reforestation in Europe. He emphasised that forests are very important to societies, providing highly valued goods and services, while acknowledging that we are today only beginning to understand how important forests and their ecosystem services are. The lack of proper valuation easily results in overuse of resources, and UK in a recent national ecosystem assessment found that the benefits from the natural world are critically important to human well-being and economic prosperity, but consistently undervalued in economic analysis. He stressed the need for finding resilient ways to manage and balance production and other ecosystem services, and argued for using the European experience on reforestation to find solutions on current challenges in other parts of the world.

Acknowledging that actions and decisions today are important for the future – for forests as well as for human well-being – he stressed the need to understand how different factors relate to each other, to support wise choices and best possible decisions for the way forward.

Moderator Seymour invited comments and questions from the audience. Highlighting that the session was styled as a debate, she encouraged comments on aspects that conference participants disagree with.

Mr. Philippe Blerot, General Inspector in the Nature and Forest Department, Belgium, stated that the production and use of biomass for energy purposes give less added value than other forest products, and recommended to use the forest resources first in more valuable products that can substitute plastic or steel,

and second for energy. Furthermore, he highlighted problems of carbon/nitrogen ratios in agriculture and argued for using forests to offset lack of organic material from intensive agricultural production.

Ms. Sirkka-Liisa Antilla, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry of Finland thanked the excellent panellists for addressing challenges and opportunities of European forests and forest sector. She highlighted the unique opportunities provided to the forest sector through the emerging green economy, and recommended actions to ensure that the forest sector will be the forerunner in green economy. She stressed green economy as a holistic approach, and its contributions to well-being of all citizens and for livelihood, in particular in rural areas. She called for inter-sectoral approaches and involvement of the private sector and financing institutions in a bio-based green economy.

Mr. Niels Elers Koch, President of the International Union of Forest Research Organization, IUFRO stressed the need for a new model of forest governance. He welcomed the FOREST EUROPE commitments to share experience across countries and sectors on the role of forests in tackling global challenges. He stated that IUFRO supports efforts in response to the new global situation and contributes through providing concrete scientific knowledge on improving institutional aspects, problem focus and policy learning. He informed about an IUFRO initiative, a task force on forest governance, and a IUFRO fact sheet on new concepts for more effective forest governance.

Mr. Eskil Erlandsson, Minister of Rural Affairs of Sweden, stressed the role of active policies, forest owners and an innovative forest industry in explaining the current situation and trends in Europe's forests. He explained that the current Swedish forest policy put environmental and economic on equal footing, and put great trust in those owning and using the forests with freedom with responsibility as an important condition. He highlighted his vision for contributing to new green jobs in Swedish forestry. He informed that the government sees great potential in forests, already contributing more than 30 billion EUR in export value, also for their importance in recreation and for providing ecosystem services. He stated his readiness to cooperate through FOREST EUROPE also in the future.

Ms. Jan McAlpine, Director of United Nations

Forum on Forests, in response to the call for highlighting elements of disagreement stated her agreement to all elements touched upon, but highlighted social aspects of forests as an area deserving more emphasis. In the International Year of Forests, she called for greater attention to and more energy in explaining to our citizens about the concrete values of forests, in climate change mitigation and biodiversity conservation, and also the need to explaining why forests are important, and that all functions environmental, economic and social need to be maintained.

Mr. Abdelamin Lhafi, High Commissaire for Water, Forests and Desertification Control, Morocco, highlighted the need for sustainable development - and the importance of integrating forestry in rural development. He asked if aggregate indicators, based on the sectorised indicators, have been developed to assess the contributions to sustainable development, in order to monitor what has been achieved.

Mr. Janusz Zaleski, Undersecretary of State, Ministry of the Environment of Poland, stressing his responsibility also for nature conservation, raised the issue of intensive use of wood for energy in Europe, and the possible negative effects on forests, as well as people, outside of Europe. He emphasised the trade-off between more use of wood and biodiversity targets, and pointed to the potential role of trees outside of forests, both in Europe and globally.

Mt Thorsten Arndt, Head of Communications, Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC), highlighted the need for greater emphasis on social aspects of forests and sustainable forest management. He argued that more work is needed on stakeholder initiatives, as well as in procurement policies and legal requirements, and other government initiatives, to better balance the demand side on forest with how to manage forests.

Ms. Lorenza Colletti, Senior forestry officer, Italian State Forest Service, highlighted differences between quantity and quality in forest resources and in local forest management. She stressed the importance of demonstrating and communicating our improvements to other sectors.

Turning back to the panelists, Moderator Seymour posted two questions. In response to the many references made to the need for balancing

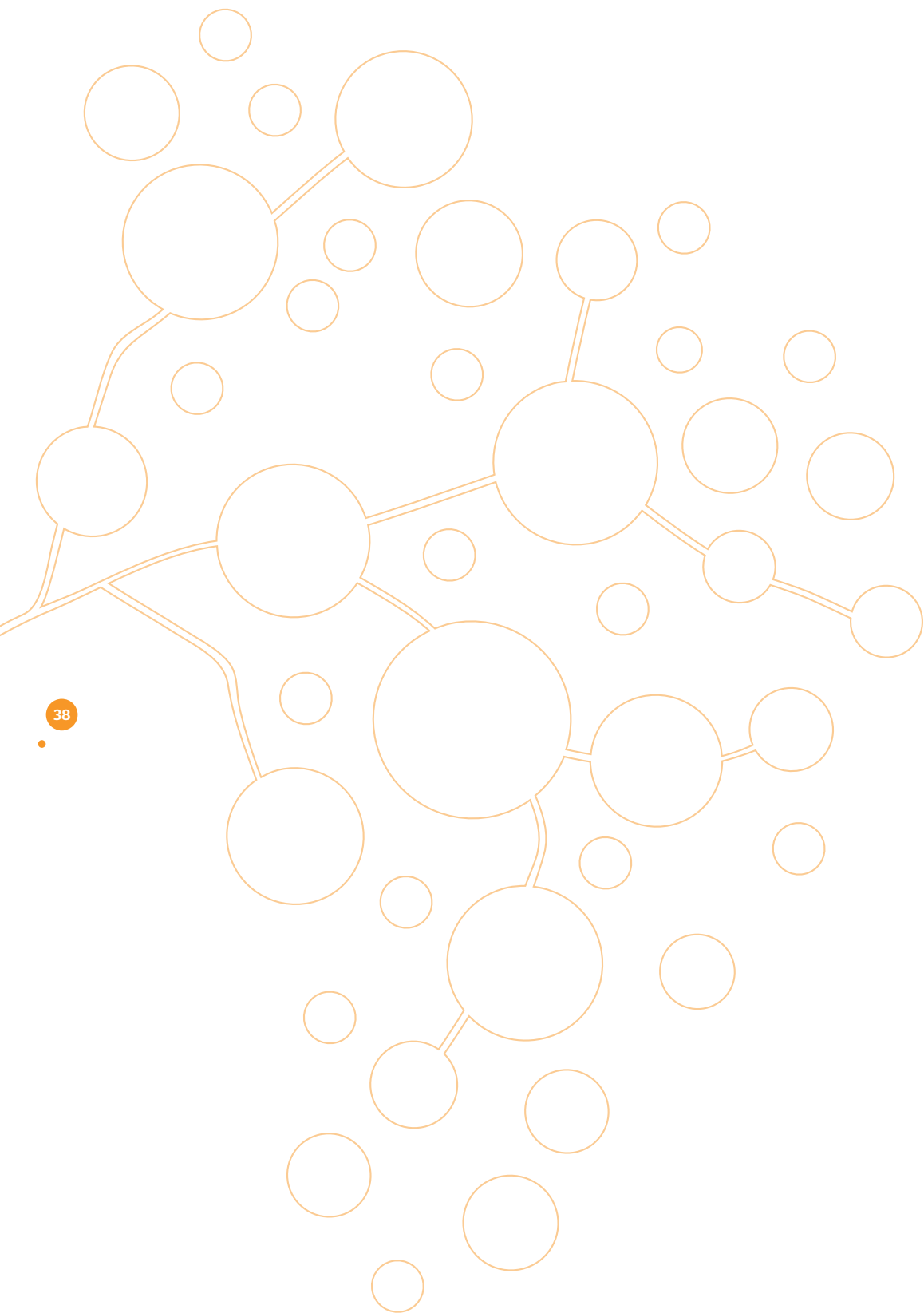
environmental, economic and social dimensions, and the inevitable trade-offs, she challenged the panelists to come up with one area where a more specific and concrete target is needed. In addition, she asked panelists to reflect on the forest sector's challenges in communication with broader society, on why the sector is at best misunderstood, and if lack of proper recognition results from the wrong message or messengers, and how communication can be improved.

Concerning specification of target, Mr. Ochoa highlighted the role of forests in climate change mitigation and adaptation, and for providing renewable energy, argued for more specific and ambitious sustainability criteria to ensure that European wood imports for energy does not harm forests in other parts of the world. Mr. Rojas-Briales emphasised new technologies and management systems in response to resolve new challenges. In order to meet demands for energy, he called for new focus and increased investments and research on the low value products and the possible win-win situation in simultaneously reducing fire risks. Mr. Rollinson argued for specifying goal rather than target, and called for the forest sector to show leadership in green economy. He argued that full integration of forests and the forest sector in the green economy would help the forest sector demonstrate its important role in climate change mitigation and adaptation, and that it could at the same time contribute to reaching out to society.

Concerning improving communication, Mr. Ochoa highlighted better information to citizens on the environmental importance of forests, for leisure etc., the need for the legally binding agreement to enforce sustainable and renewable production, and that new and innovative financial instruments have been successful for example in the US. Mr. Rojas-Briales highlighted the challenges for the few and scattered forest community to reach out, and admitting the forest activities cannot be hidden, argued for more proactive communication with society on why and how forestry is conducted. He argued that in response to the image of logging as bad, while agriculture is seen as good, more knowledge is needed in society on the natural forest processes, including that logging is not deforestation. Mr. Rollinson challenged the forest community to go out and talk to others about

what we do and how we do it, in a language that is understandable to others.

Moderator Seymour thanked the major groups, panelist and active participants for their contributions in the panel debate. She encouraged the ministers and all conference participants to maintain a global perspective and to get out and talk to others.



Statements
of **Major Groups**

Major Group

«Environmental Non-Governmental Organisations»

WWF (World Wildlife Fund)

Mr. Rasmus Hansson

Chief Executive Officer

WWF Norway

1. Vision, Goals and Targets of FOREST EUROPE

- WWF welcomes the fact that FOREST EUROPE has developed a vision as well as targets and goals, which recognizes the multi-functionality of European Forests
- WWF also welcomes the view that the challenges forests are facing cannot be addressed by the forest sector alone
- WWF is concerned however, that the process is focusing on strengthening sustainable forest but that it remains entirely unclear, how relationships and synergies with other sectors will be strengthened.
- More time and thinking needs to be invested by FOREST EUROPE into this direction.

2. Legally binding agreement (LBA)

- Even though WWF acknowledges the efforts to strengthen the sustainable management and the conservation of forests in Europe through a legally binding agreement in Europe, we do not see the added value of such an instrument today.
- How will FOREST EUROPE ensure that a legally binding agreement will not lead to an agreement on the «lowest common denominator» concerning sustainable forest management? How can it be achieved that all different kinds of threats on Europe's forests will be sufficiently addressed?
- A legally binding agreement should set a framework which equally takes into account all different aspects of forest management: economic, environmental and social functions and puts a special focus on those aspects that are not related to economic value such as ecosystem services and biodiversity conservation.
- The Ministerial Declaration remains very vague on measures concerning the monitoring and assessment of commitments made. Already the implementation of earlier commitments under the MCPFE did not succeed and partly lacked

participative involvement of stakeholders.

- WWF urges FOREST EUROPE to analyse why previous decisions have not been implemented properly and to identify policy measures which can address these shortcomings. The process on a legally binding agreement seems to rush into a solution phase without properly having addressed the problem at this stage.
- WWF, at this point is concerned that the legally binding agreement in its current form will not be the most efficient way to achieve the swift transformation in forest management required to meet the global threats to our forests as we consider too many issues being unclear.

3. Current demand on forest resources

- The European region and the world are faced by a rapid and growing demand for forest resources, partially driven by bioenergy. This will lead to higher pressure on forest biodiversity and ecosystem services.
- We are already witnessing worrying trends towards intensification of forest management. The text of the ministerial declaration explicitly mentions under Goal IV the «potential of European Forests to mitigate climate change through (...) substitution of non-renewable materials and energy sources.»
- WWF would like to see concrete reassurances that this is not contradictory to goal V of the Oslo Ministerial decisions, which advocates for the halt of loss of forest biodiversity.
- WWF strongly recommends that FOREST EUROPE identifies how relationships and synergies with other sectors can be strengthened so that increasing pressures on our forest ecosystems can be properly addressed.
- WWF urges FOREST EUROPE to address the limits of sustainable wood production to satisfy the growing demand for forest resources, partially driven by forest energy.

4. Lack of demonstrating global responsibility

- The Cancun agreement under the UNFCCC (December 2010) encourages all Parties «to find effective ways to reduce the human pressure on forests that results in greenhouse gas

emissions, including actions to address drivers of deforestation».

- WWF observes that FOREST EUROPE is not properly analysing the European role in contributing to efforts to reverse the trend of forest loss and forest degradation globally which are undertaken by many international processes such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
- In the Oslo declaration the commitment *«to work towards a global environmental challenges and the achievements to stop forest loss globally»* is reiterated
- WWF therefore urges to send a strong signal to ensure that international drivers of deforestation are properly addressed. WWF asks to initiate that the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTA) to UNFCCC starts a process to analyse international drivers and the role of developed countries and approaches in addressing those.
- WWF further stresses the need for stronger European collaboration/support for addressing global forest issues through financing, capacity building and technical support, i.e. REDD+, where the coordination of donors on REDD+ activities at country level needs to be improved.
- WWF urges Forest Ministers to demonstrate their support in tackling global forest challenges.

Major Group «Forest Industry»

CEI - Bois (*European Confederation of Woodworking Industries*)

CEPI (*Confederation of European Paper Industries*)

ENFE (*Network of Forest Entrepreneurs*)

Mr. Filip de Jaeger
Secretary General
CEI - Bois

The European forest-based industries and their service providers for forest operations welcome the attention given to the important role of forests at European and global level, among others through the FOREST EUROPE (formerly MCPFE) process.

Forests are vital for us. Our entire existence and competitiveness is dependent upon a continuous supply of sustainable raw material- wood. This raw material permits the production of a wide range of renewable wood and wood-based products for a variety of applications, next to supplying renewable energy and biorefinery solutions. Experience, in particular in Europe, has shown that the existence of a thriving forest-based industry has had a most positive effect on the development of the forests as such, and of the livelihood and economic viability of rural areas.

Based on this naturally renewable raw material, the forest-based industries see themselves as key to achieving a truly green economy and as a major provider of green jobs already today in the whole supply chain. Their products do not only store carbon for a prolonged period of time; they also allow, in many cases, to substitute energy and carbon intensive materials providing additional opportunities in mitigating the effects of climate change. Work is ongoing to reduce the energy consumption of the few energy intensive processes in the sector at present and, in this context, the sector is strongly supporting the European goals for a low carbon economy by 2050.

Care should be taken, however, to maintain a balanced approach to the increasing demands from both industry and the energy sector towards forests. It should be possible to ensure that the valuable raw material wood represents is used in an optimum way both from an economic and ecological point of view.

This would imply that suitable sortments are first used for the production of sustainable and renewable products, providing a real added value to the entire sector and thereby serving climate goals, and not immediately for the production of renewable energy. An energetic valorisation can anyway still take place at the end of the life-cycle. Putting efforts on improved silvicultural measures and use of the growth potential in Europe are important means to achieve a balanced supply for both industrial use and energy production. It should be pointed out that the forest-based industries are one of the main producers and users of renewable energy.

The forest based industries are pleased to note that, in the documents prepared for consideration by the ministers at this conference, reference is made to the role of forests in:

Providing renewable raw material;

- Fostering a green economy, e.g. through increased provision of wood;
- Generating and maintaining jobs and income in the whole forest based value chains, not at least in small enterprises in rural areas;
- Responding to the growing need for timber as a renewable material;
- And to the importance of carbon storage in forest products and the substitution of non-renewable materials and energy sources.

We regret, however, that these important aspects do not seem to have been included fully in the proposed mandate for negotiating a legally binding agreement on forests in Europe and would request that they are duly taken into consideration too.

The forest based industries remain supportive, in principle, to the conclusion of such legally binding agreement provided it will provide a basis for and contribute to the future competitiveness of the forest-based industries.

Major Group

«Forest Owners»

CEPF (Confederation of European Forest Owners)

COPA-COCEGA (European farmers and European agri-cooperatives)

ELO (European Landowners' Organization)

FECOF (European Federation of Municipal Forest Owners)

EUSTAFOR (European State Forest Association)

USSE (Union of Foresters of Southern Europe)

Mr. Christer Segersteen

President

CEPF

Forest owners are strongly in favour of a legally binding forest agreement

Distinguished Madam Chair, Ministers, Excellencies,
Dear colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen

I have the honour and pleasure of taking the floor here today on behalf of the major group representing public, private and community forest owners, families, producers and landowners - all those who are involved in the practical side of what forests provide for society.

This conference is the culmination of years of work and cooperation between those who share the same values and dedication to sustainable management of forests in Europe. And we, the European forest owners, are amongst these. We are very pleased to see that the FOREST EUROPE process has once again been at the forefront in ensuring that the open dialogue on sustainable forest management continues to move forward; we are grateful to be an integral part of this process. We also look forward to continuing our role in managing forest resources in the future.

The FOREST EUROPE process has, for more than 20 years, been instrumental in fine-tuning the best ways of balancing the ecological, economic and social benefits provided by forests. Thanks to this, a number of practices and guidelines on sustainable

forest management are in use today, carried out by the national forest services, forest communities and the private sector alike. The accomplishments achieved by all these are considerable, as we have learnt from the report on the State of Europe's forests. However neither the explicit achievements reflected by the positive state of Europe's forests, nor the concept of sustainable forest management as such, have been recognised in the political sphere or by society at large. And this, I believe, is why we are here today; we need to ensure coherent, stable and effective policy development in order to maintain the vitality and multi-functionality of forests, as well as to address emerging challenges.

And today's challenges are more complex *than ever*. Climate change and globalisation exert pressure on natural resources around the world. Both issues encompass a variety of ecological, social, economic, as well as political, aspects in relation to forests. We need a stronger voice and better tools to convince society and policy makers that forests are a part of the solution to these issues.

Thus, we welcome the ongoing and persistent work that FOREST EUROPE has been doing on a legally-binding agreement. It seems to be the best way to strengthen political commitment, implementation, as well as further development of sustainable forest management.

Our experience and daily practices in forestry have taught us to look ahead and consider the needs for the future. Naturally, this aligns the forest owners with the proposed vision and goals for European Forests in 2020, when vital, productive and multifunctional forests contribute effectively to sustainable development.

Forest growth is based on a long time scale. Thus looking towards the European 2020 targets, we strongly believe that our contribution to the accomplishment of these already began many years ago. All the issues listed in the Oslo Ministerial Decision are relevant to our practices. Innovation, improved education and information sharing, prevention of natural disasters as well as the valuation of ecosystem services, to name just a few, are of special interest to the forest owners. We look forward to continuing work on these and will support the efforts of FOREST EUROPE to consolidate current and future developments.

As already mentioned, the European forest owners

are committed to continuing the implementation of sustainable forest management at the practical level. Therefore, we call upon national governments, the European Commission and all other actors behind this process to step forward and to ensure the development of an holistic, legally-binding agreement for forests at the pan-European level.

We all know how difficult it is to ensure coherence between various sectorial policies and processes relevant to forests and forestry today. An instrument providing a legal framework for better coordination and cooperation both within and outside of the forest sector is what is lacking. At the same time, we believe that taking this crucial step now ensures the continuation of the multiple use of forests, achieving a balance between all three aspects of sustainability. This is necessary in order to reach common acceptance and recognition of this viable concept, both among citizens and decision-makers. It is important to enhance the role of forests as a renewable natural resource, a provider of various ecosystem services as well as the prerequisites for human well-being, such as employment and livelihoods.

Underlining the need for further elaboration on this, we want to stress that such a process should be led with respect to the competence of the signatory states as well as the ownership rights. As we, the forest owners, are the major actors in putting policies into practice, we also call upon to ensure credible and powerful representation of all forest owner groups in the negotiations. It is essential that we have an opportunity to influence and contribute to the development of such an agreement.

To recap, the European forest owners not only fully support the ongoing initiative towards a legally-binding agreement but also wish to see that FOREST EUROPE remains the leading pan-European forest policy process. We believe that the whole of the forest sector would benefit from upgrading the achievements of FOREST EUROPE to a legally binding instrument. Taking the step forward to political recognition and further, the integration of sustainability principles into other policies, is in fact the bridge that needs to be built.

European forest owners are ready to assume their responsibility in strengthening these joint commitments. We need to provide solutions to satisfy the increasing demands for wood as well as for bio-

energy production. Fortunately the long history of sustainable forest management forms a solid basis in addressing climate change and the protection of biodiversity. It also offers a response to the current needs for transition to a green economy. We hope that the outcome of this conference will provide the chance of finding solutions for the present environmental and economic challenges, even more effectively.

The year 2011 is special for forestry as we are celebrating the International Year of Forests. We sincerely hope that it will become special also due to the historic decision on the launch of negotiations leading to a legally-binding agreement on forests in Europe. We forest owners are proud to be a part of this founding moment. We look towards this with hope, but also in readiness to carry out its implementation on a day to day basis.

I thank you for your attention.

Major Group

«Scientific Community»

Bioversity International

EFI (European Forest Institute)

IIASA (International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis)

IUFRO (International Union of Forest Research Organizations)

Mr. Risto Päivinen

Director

EFI

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates and Colleagues,

Four years ago at the Warsaw Summit, the Scientific Community stressed the need for further strengthening of the science-policy interaction as part of the FOREST EUROPE process. Today, here in Oslo, we are pleased to report that our cooperation with FOREST EUROPE since Warsaw has produced visible outcomes in that respect. Furthermore, the pan-European work of the Scientific Community, consisting of Bioversity International, the European Forest Institute (EFI), the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) and the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO) has also benefitted countries' efforts to implement sustainable forest management.

Let me highlight the key commitments included in the Oslo Ministerial Decisions regarding the role of research and science-based knowledge.

Firstly, the European Forests 2020 document recognizes «the value of adequate and accessible forest information, such as forest inventories, monitoring and reporting on implementation of sustainable forest management as well as science-based knowledge, for decision making at all levels». Secondly, in support of the shared vision and goals for forests, a clear European target is specified for improving forest knowledge «through research, education, innovation, information sharing and communication.» This target is highly relevant for all issues identified by the Oslo Ministerial Decisions.

For the purpose of fulfilling its mission, FOREST EUROPE has committed to undertake four tasks, including one «to promote education, research and

use of scientific knowledge and facilitate sharing experiences across countries, sectors and stakeholders on all aspects of sustainable forest management and other forest related issues.» I wish to assure on behalf of the Scientific Community that we are fully committed to contribute to this important task of FOREST EUROPE. We also share the view: «develop and update policies and tools for sustainable forest management, including by facilitating open and flexible policy dialogue, active participation by relevant stakeholders and cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination with other actors.»

The key instrument for implementing the FOREST EUROPE decisions and commitments, especially the European 2020 Targets, at the pan-European level is the Work Programme of the process. Similarly to the previous Work Programme, the Scientific Community remains committed to contribute to the development and implementation of the new one in cooperation and partnership with other key actors. In particular, we can provide valuable inputs to further development of sustainable forest management to address forest-related issues such as biodiversity, climate change, water, bioenergy, governance, improvement of forest reporting and monitoring systems as well as development of a common approach to valuation of forest ecosystem services.

In this context, it is important to acknowledge that many of the most serious forest challenges are highly cross-sectoral and require significant engagement with energy, trade, climate change, agriculture and other sectors and interests. In this complex context of European forest policy, FOREST EUROPE can play a key role in promoting policy learning and institutional intersection by sharing a «learning platform» involving multiple stakeholders, informed by the best available information about policy options.

Towards this end the development of the Work Programme provides a good opportunity for the Scientific Community to initiate joint actions which could include the following:

Establishing a foresight-focused working group with an aim to synthesize the existing research-based knowledge and to identify policy-relevant information needs in collaboration with key actors and sectors;

Capacity building through networking, partnership, education and research with a special

emphasis on signatory countries with economies in transition;

Improving monitoring and information systems, as well as criteria and indicators (C&I), for assessing the progress in implementing sustainable forest management and achieving the FOREST EUROPE 2020 targets;

Embracing complexity in international forest governance and practicing sustainable forest management to meet various societal demands is a global challenge. Here, in pan-European region, the Scientific Community is already providing networking opportunities and sharing research results and other information to create future capacity to implement sustainable forest management. However, further work in this regard is still needed to ensure equal opportunities and capacity in all parts of Europe.

The definition of sustainable forest management (SFM) and the development and adoption of the pan-European criteria and indicators for SFM are some of the most important results of the FOREST EUROPE process. Accurate and harmonized forest information is crucial for assessing progress towards SFM at pan-European and national levels. However, new innovative thinking and approaches are needed to better understand and assess the complexity of SFM. For example, we are facing a challenge in linking quantitative indicators with qualitative ones and this could be solved by developing governance indicators. The existing C&I also need revision to remain useful. Therefore, the Scientific Community strongly supports the Oslo decision that the new Work Programme of FOREST EUROPE should include actions to further improve the forest monitoring and reporting tools.

This Ministerial Summit is expected to make a decision on initiating a negotiation process for a legally binding agreement on forests in Europe. The Scientific Community is keen to support the negotiating process by providing the latest science-based knowledge and expertise, as requested by the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee and the Bureau.

Major Group

«Social Non-Governmental Organisations»

BWI (Building and Wood Workers' International)

CIC (International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation)

FSC (Forest Stewardship Council)

PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification)

UEF (Union of European Foresters)

Mr. Håkan Nystrand

President

UEF

European Forests in a Global Context

1. The challenge of safeguarding the environmental, social and economic benefits that the world's forests provide is critical for human life on Earth.
2. We recognize the significant contributions that forests can make in tackling societal challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, poverty, combating biodiversity loss, improving the livelihoods of forest dependent people, rural communities, and indigenous people.
3. Poverty reduction and the provision of economic and social benefits are an indispensable requirement for sustainable forest management. The linkage between deforestation and social benefits is strong, compelling, and in need of specific attention.
4. We note that the forest area in Europe is increasing. This represents a huge potential to sustain and enhance the vital values derived from forests for people, their livelihood, our environment and future generations.
5. Achieving sustainable forest management is a major challenge in many parts of the world. Stakeholders globally need to collaborate to halt deforestation and forest degradation.
6. Globally, regionally, nationally and locally we support further steps that protect and promote forest dependent populations, local communities, smallholder forest owners, forest experts and workers, family foresters, youth and children, and indigenous peoples all of whom are entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with the forests on which they depend.

FOREST EUROPE Process

7. Expanding sustainable forest management requires cooperative and transparent processes among all stakeholders and governments. Therefore, it is essential for FOREST EUROPE to secure the participation of stakeholders through empowerment in open, transparent and accessible processes.
8. We would like to draw attention to the continued support of the Social Organizations to the FOREST EUROPE process.
9. It is important to note that civil society organizations and economic actors are essential in promoting sustainable forest management and the use of timber and non-wood forest products from such forests as renewable and climate-smart materials.
10. This includes the promotion of robust, credible and transparent forest certification systems as effective, voluntary tools providing assurances for sustainable forest management.

The Role of Forests in a Green Economy

11. Forests must be seen in the context of complex societal challenges such as climate change, population growth and increasing resource shortages caused by unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, especially those that are high carbon emitting. Recognizing the unique attributes of products and services from sustainably managed forests both in terms of carbon sequestration and other ecosystem services is therefore critical. Such recognition requires, among others, improved communication about benefits of forests in a green economy through a comprehensive, European-wide, inclusive communication strategy that enjoys the commitment and support of all stakeholders.
12. Stakeholders must recognize and use all tools available to support forests to adapt and thrive with these challenges including adaptive silviculture practices, promotion of recycled and forest-based products and services for their

unique sustainability attributes. This includes procurement policies, which, in determining the best available materials within the context of a green economy, should apply environmental and social life cycle analysis.

13. Many of the services provided by forests are currently not properly assessed and accounted for, such as the sustainable management of its ecosystems, including wildlife. A green economy must account for such non-financial services, in example by integrating a «Payment for Ecosystem Services» (PES) approach.
14. The potential of forests to contribute to the green economy should be increasingly realized. This would include the provision of decent green jobs, where forest workers are able to benefit from improvements in dangerous and hazardous conditions through increased skills training and career development and thus provide a well-trained and well-rewarded workforce with the skills necessary to adapt to a just transition to the green economy.

and economic aspects as elements of good forest management, and provide for increased wealth retention in rural communities through partnerships with smallholders and community-owned forests. It must also contribute to the development of labour, enterprises and social values and prepare for means and instruments for a beneficial balance of economic and environmental values, in addition to maximizing formal employment opportunities.

Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe

15. The Ministerial Conference will be deciding about a mandate for negotiating a legally binding agreement on forests in Europe.
16. The majority of organizations represented in the Social Organizations Major Group cluster welcome such a mandate. Negotiations on a legally binding agreement on forests in Europe have to take many aspects into consideration. They should lay the foundations for effective means that will enhance the role of forests in mitigating climate change, conserving biodiversity, fostering a low carbon economy, providing green jobs and addressing ways and means of tackling the issue of illegal logging. We call for full involvement of stakeholders in all stages of the negotiations.
17. A legally binding agreement must bring a clear added value to the work for the best of the forests, society and green economy. It must promote the efficient use of forest resources, while maintaining and enhancing the forest ecosystem and biodiversity as well as the social

Major Group «Youth»

IFSA (*International Forestry Students' Association*)

Ms. Juliette Mouche

Head

IFSA commission for FOREST EUROPE

International Forestry Students' Association as a representative of forestry students in Europe and around the globe would like to express its support to FOREST EUROPE in their work towards a sustainable management of our continent's forests and encourage the continuation of the process to enhance the cooperation on forest policies in Europe as this issue is now becoming more and more crucial.

Forests are important on different levels of our life and they satisfy different human needs. On account of this, it is important to keep them healthy and vital so they will be able to continue to provide us with different services on national and global level. We think that Legally Binding Agreement is a good measure to achieve this. We also encourage and deeply hope that signing the Legally Binding Agreement will lead to concrete and prompt actions in protection of forest biodiversity and other functions of forests.

From our point of view, one part of successfully achieving the targets set forth by FOREST EUROPE should be to modernize present forestry education system. Such a thing could be done through common fora for example, and also by fostering more active participation of younger generations in education process and in different projects to raise awareness in society about multiple goods and services of forests and the need to preserve them. As the first generation who has had to deal since its birth with global warming, today's youth needs to be kept aware of all the policy making processes regarding environment so it will be as efficient as possible when it will become the decision-making generation.

As a result, we would like to continue to be involved in this process.

On our side, we will continue to strengthen our dialogue between students and decision-making bodies working towards common goals and we will continue to proceed with students participation in different forest policy processes like UNFF, UNFCCC,

UNCBD to show the importance of forest policy making.

In this end, we would like to thank FOREST EUROPE for allowing us to be an observer of this important process, so we can share the knowledge received and our reflection with other students in order to broaden their knowledge about the importance of policy making in forestry.



Statements of
Signatory Countries
*and **European Union***

ALBANIA

Mr. Fatmir Mediu

Minister

Ministry of Environment,

Forestry and Water Administration

Honourable Chair, H. R.H. Crown Prince Haakon of Norway,

Excellencies, Minister Lars Peder Brekk & Madam Minister Rosa Aguilar Rivero,

Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure and honour to speak on behalf of the Albanian Government and congratulate you on this important Ministerial Conference.

I would like to start off by commending the work done within FOREST EUROPE process, and for the shared experience, particularly helpful for my country and the Balkans, as a region. It helps us move ahead with the right policies and coordinated efforts, so as to best accomplish our goals. Thus, thank you Minister Brekk and Madam Minister Rivero for your commitment and organisation of this excellent conference, where we are called to discuss on the future development of European Forests.

Albania has fully supported the Ministerial Conferences, sharing the same vision for forest development, forest protection and sustainable management. I would like to thank the Experts for their work on the documents for the conference. We fully support the two documents and reconfirm the vision of the Oslo Ministerial Decision: of European Forests 2020.

Albania is blessed with an impressive landscape and biodiversity. We are currently adopting a new forestry reform, focusing on:

- sustainable forest management,
- multi-functional management, by harmonizing ecological, economical and social aspects; and
- enhancing of goods and services for local communities.

The National Environmental Strategy, as an integral part of the National Strategy for the Development and Integration, is the basic document that stipulates state

policy on environmental protection.

Its implementation is bringing progress in:

- legislation approximation and enforcement in compliance with EU;
- institutional strengthening and capacity building;
- sectorial integration and public participation;
- sustainable use of natural resources;
- promotion of renewable energy resources and carbon sequestration for climate change mitigation.

With forests, as one of our main natural resources, our objective is to improve forestry service, a better management of forest fires, or other natural hazards, as well as prevention of illegal logging.

Forests in Albania play a crucial role on development of rural areas. They present about 60% of the country's area. No other sector has such a fundamental impact on Albania's rural population. Thus, a new reform is underway. The goal: «Forest for people, livelihood and poverty eradication» - Aiming at profound transformation, by connecting people with the forest; making them live together in harmony, making our people the real owners of the forests, while teaching them to preserve it as National Treasury. The reform focuses on decentralisation and administration. More than 50% of forest and pasture are transferred from state to local government, while assisting local authorities with extension services.

For years, forestry has undergone several others projects financed by WB, SIDA, and other donors, aiming at better forest management, administration and enhancement of capacities of Albanian authorities to fulfil their duties. The Program for Development of the Regions, and National Resources Development project has involved around 240 communes. The main outputs of this work have been:

- Substantial increase of reforested area. About 1000 ha, are reforested yearly.
- Better land protection, through combating land degradation and desertification.
- Implementation of the forestry reform and establishment of Forest extension services, etc.

This has reasonably led to a substantial increase of forest incomes, both at local and national level.

Also, on climate change mitigation, there is a

project on carbon sequestration and conservation of biodiversity, through sustainable forest management and participatory methods, involving all stakeholders.

The agreement with Bio-Carbon Fund in the framework of NRDP, financed by WB, is a very important mechanism and a good experience to implement new financial schemes for environmental services.

Again, let me reaffirm our strong commitment to sustainable forest management and recognition of the significant contribution it can make to green economy, to sustainable development and poverty eradication. In this spirit, we welcome the Oslo Ministerial Mandate for Negotiating a Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe.

Albania recognizes the importance of regional and sub-regional forest dialogues. In this context, Albania will continue to be fully engaged in establishing a common partnership with other countries and international organizations, in the spirit of FOREST EUROPE initiatives.

Thank you!

Mr. Nikolaus Berlakovich

Federal Minister

*Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry,
Environment and Water Management*

Madam Chair, Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This gathering of Ministers and high representatives is more than a conference on forests only, for two main reasons:

Firstly, the FOREST EUROPE Ministerial process has always looked far beyond simple technical aspects of forest management to the broader scope of the political relevance of forests for the environment, the economy and the society as a whole. With this view a concept for sustainable management has been established in this region, which is a landmark in sustainable development, and deserves better recognition and strengthened implementation.

Secondly, since its start in 1990 this forest process has always been a significant component of European integration. The Ministerial Conferences of Strasbourg, Helsinki, Lisbon, Vienna and Warsaw are milestones of a policy process, which serves as outstanding example for intergovernmental co-operation with broad and strong stakeholder participation.

The world has changed significantly over the course of this process. New countries have emerged, joined the international community and signed up to the commitments taken. The EU has enlarged remarkably in size and changed its modalities. And, we face challenges with a new scale of dimension, such as climate change and the urgent need for a transition to green economy.

We, the representatives of governments are expected to find adequate responses to these challenges and it is clear that forests play a crucial role.

The «State of Europe's Forest 2011» report shows that in Europe both forest area and the volume of growing timber are still increasing. This is good news, as we are challenged to best utilise our forest's potential for sequestering and storing carbon and for

responding to the increasing demand for renewable energy and commodities.

However, it is important to not limit the role of forests to carbon stocks alone. I have been advocating consistently in the on-going climate negotiations that forests are to be addressed by a much wider approach that fully respects their multifunctionality and includes aspects of biodiversity and sustainable production as well. We also need adequate strategies to adapt forests to climate change by increasing their resilience and preventing damages caused by storms, fires, pests and disease.

In a most tragic manner the Fukushima incident has demonstrated the urgent need for a transition to green economy. Austria does not support nuclear energy, we do not regard nuclear energy as sustainable and we do not see it as part of a solution for climate change.

Austria's priorities in the energy policy are renewable energies and energy efficiency. In the context of the EU's climate and energy package Austria has committed to ambitious targets regarding renewable energy sources. A core element of this strategy is to further increase the share of sustainably produced biomass. All surveys show that there is an enormous biomass potential out in our forests, which can and must be used in full harmony with environmental and nature conservation requirements.

We also have an increasing demand for ecosystem services, such as biodiversity conservation, recreation opportunities, regulation of freshwater, protection of soil, preventing erosion and avalanches, and forest benefits for human health.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Altogether, forests provide a multitude of opportunities to be grasped for the benefit of both the economy and the environment. However, we need effective mechanisms to balance conflicts of interests that arise from the various demands directed towards our forests.

The Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe has a good track record of addressing those challenges. The concept of Sustainable Forest Management we share in this region gives us a profound basis to build upon.

The present situation calls for new robust political

solutions and a strengthened framework on forests in the pan-European region. I am convinced that the two Oslo decisions will take the forest agenda in Europe a significant step forward.

I am in particular glad that we are now in the position to decide upon opening negotiations for a legal agreement on forests in Europe. You may recall that Austria launched this initiative at the last Ministerial Conference in Warsaw.

A dynamic region like Europe needs reliable basic parameters for both, the environment and the economy. I firmly believe that a clear and effective legal framework for sustainable forest management in the European region will strengthen the forest sector and is best to secure the full range of forest benefits in the long term.

Let us therefore take all efforts to develop and finalise this agreement as quick as possible. We have an advanced point of departure thanks to the substantive technical groundwork done on this issue in the run-up to the Oslo Ministerial Conference. Let me thank all, who have contributed to this work. But of course there is still a long, steep way ahead of us. Let us enter it without hesitation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In concluding I would like to offer you «A Piece of Forest», which comes in form of a chocolate bar. This is one of our contributions to the International Year of Forests. It contains non-wood forest products, such as cranberries, walnuts and chestnuts, and for each bar sold in the shops a certain percentage of the revenue goes to a fund supporting a forest project in Laos. I hope you will enjoy it.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Mikhail M. Amelyanovich
Minister
Ministry of Forestry

Уважаемый Господин Председатель,

Ваши Превосходительства, дамы и господа!

От имени Правительства Республики Беларусь я хотел бы выразить благодарность организаторам конференции «Леса Европы» за приглашение принять участие в этом исключительно важном форуме. Прекрасная организация конференции служит подтверждением большого внимания, уделяемого в Норвегии лесам и лесному хозяйству. Здесь плодотворно сочетаются глубокие традиции и инновации.

Современную мировую лесную политику невозможно представить без Министерской конференции по защите лесов Европы. На наших глазах этот процесс становится классическим образцом многолетнего конструктивного сотрудничества, основанного на идее устойчивого развития. Форум в Осло призван раскрыть его новые горизонты и возможности в интересах содействия сохранению лесов и их устойчивому использованию, достижению иных глобальных целей в области развития, сформулированных в Декларации тысячелетия.

Беларусь, как участник Общеευропейского лесного процесса, последовательно реализует принципы устойчивого управления лесами посредством национальных лесных программ. Государственная программа развития лесного хозяйства на 2011–2015 годы построена на основе баланса экономических, экологических и социальных интересов, учитывает задачи сохранения ресурсного потенциала, биологического и ландшафтного разнообразия лесов, адаптации их к изменению климата.

Благодаря поддержке государства в лесном фонде Беларуси за последние 20 лет произошли существенные позитивные количественные и качественные изменения. Площадь покрытых лесом земель превысила 8 млн.га, а объем древесины в насаждениях – 1,5 млрд.куб.м. Более половины

лесов отнесено к специальным категориям для защиты флоры, фауны, почв и вод. Значительные территории (около 550 тыс.га) в поймах рек и на болотных массивах покрыты кустарниковой растительностью, не входящей в лесной фонд. Лесные и древесно-кустарниковые сообщества вносят определяющий вклад в депонирование углерода, снижение парникового эффекта.

Большое внимание уделяется поддержанию водорегулирующей функции лесов. С этой целью учреждено 9 Рамсарских территорий. При содействии UNDP и GEF успешно реализован международный проект «Ренатурализация и устойчивое управление торфяными болотами для предотвращения деградации земель, изменений климата и обеспечения сохранения глобально значимого биологического разнообразия». В лесном фонде на площади более 28 тыс.га проведено повторное заболачивание деградированных торфяников. Это позволило сократить выбросы парниковых газов, восстановить и вовлечь в хозяйственное использование природные экосистемы, снизить риск возникновения пожаров. Работа в этом направлении продолжается.

Широкое развитие получили правовые, социально-экономические и культурные аспекты устойчивого лесопользования, новые технологии воспроизводства лесов, защиты их от вредителей и болезней, лесинвентаризации, лесного мониторинга. Создана современная инфраструктура для производства различных видов древесного топлива, а также для ведения охотничьего туризма и рекреационной деятельности.

Налажено эффективное противодействие незаконным рубкам и иным нарушениям лесного законодательства. Беларусь участвует в программе ENPI FLEG, направленной на создание более совершенных механизмов управления в лесном секторе, противодействие нелегальным рубкам леса и незаконной торговле древесиной.

Посредством лесной сертификации осуществляется независимый контроль за соблюдением национальных и международных стандартов устойчивого лесопользования и лесопользования. Национальная система лесной сертификации признана Советом PEFC соответствующей его требованиям.

Свидетельством большого внимания, уделяемого в нашей стране вопросам сохранения и приумножения лесных богатств, является тот факт, что Министерство лесного хозяйства функционирует на протяжении 45 лет. В отрасли много трудовых династий.

Европейские леса связаны географически, генетически и подвержены воздействию сходных природных и антропогенных факторов. В Беларуси под влиянием изменения климата, последствий широкомасштабной осушительной мелиорации и радиоактивного загрязнения территории наблюдается определенная динамика биоты лесов. Отмечается сокращение ареалов аборигенных холодостойких, умеренно теплолюбивых видов растений и распространение сухолюбивых видов. Постепенно расширяется проникновение в лесные сообщества синантропных видов. Прослеживаются тенденции расширения видового состава и вредоносности насекомых-вредителей и болезней леса, снижения интенсивности продукционных процессов в нарушенных лесных экосистемах. Возрастают объемы древесины, поврежденной ветровалами и буреломами (в 2010 г. – более 2,4 млн.куб.м). Серьезной угрозой являются экстремальные погодные явления и природные пожары. Новые вызовы лесам обуславливают необходимость углубления диалога европейских государств.

Разделяя видение миссии «Лесов Европы», как важного процесса, направленного на обеспечение улучшения качества жизни и благополучия человека, формирование здоровой окружающей среды и устойчивого экономического развития, мы поддерживаем его цели и задачи и готовы к сотрудничеству по всем аспектам.

Весьма актуальной и перспективной представляется консолидация международных усилий в области лесных исследований, образования, инноваций, «зеленой» экономики, обмена информацией и взаимодействия в сфере лесозащиты, борьбы с лесными пожарами и незаконными рубками.

Разработка юридически обязательного соглашения по лесам в Европе должна послужить правовой основой и эффективным инструментом для формирования и реализации согласованной

лесной политики, будет способствовать реальному достижению целей и задач в отношении европейских лесов.

В заключение хотел бы выразить уверенность в том, что решения, принятые в Осло, послужат укреплению международного сотрудничества в осуществлении общепризнанных глобальных целей в отношении лесов, придадут ему новый импульс и качество.

Выражаю искреннюю благодарность хозяевам форума за гостеприимство и желаю всем его участникам благополучия и процветания.

Благодарю за внимание!

English version

Mr. Chairman,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Belarus I would like to express gratitude to the organizers of the Conference «FOREST EUROPE» for the kind invitation to take part in this forum of prime importance. Perfect organization of the conference manifests that considerable attention, which is paid to the forests and forestry in Norway. Forest management in the country is known for its beneficial synergy of long-time traditions and innovations.

Ministerial Conference on Forest Protection in Europe became an indispensable part of the current global forest policy. Before our eyes the process becomes a classical example of long-term constructive collaboration, based on the idea of sustainable development. Oslo Meeting will certainly demonstrate its new horizons and potential in the interests of facilitating forest conservation and sustainable management, achievement of global objectives of development, formulated in the Millennium declaration.

Belarus as a participant of the Pan-European Forest Process, consistently implements the principles of sustainable forest management through national forest programmes. The State program of forestry development in 2011-2015 is drawn up on the basis of balanced economic, environmental and social

interests, with due consideration to the objectives of conservation of resource potential, biological and landscape diversity of forests, their adaptation to climatic changes.

Thanks to the state support there have been tremendous positive qualitative and quantitative changes in the condition of forests in Belarus for the last 20 years. The area of forest-covered lands exceeded 8 million ha, the total volume of growing stock - 1.5 billion m³. More than half of forests are rated as special categories of forests, critical for flora, fauna, soil and water protection. Considerable areas (ca. 550 thousand ha) in the flood-plains and bogs are covered with shrubbery, not included in the forest funds. Forest and shrubbery communities play key role in carbon sequestration and mitigating greenhouse effect.

Much attention is paid to maintaining of water regulating functioning of forests. With this purpose there were created 9 Ramsar wetlands. With support of UNDP and GEF there was successfully implemented an international project «Restoration and sustainable management of peat bogs for prevention of land degradation, climatic changes and facilitating conservation of globally significant biological diversity». More than 28 thousands of hectares of degraded peat bogs were turned into wetlands anew. That enabled to reduce emission of greenhouse gases, to rehabilitate and to involve natural ecosystems in economic utilization, to lower the risk of fires. The work in this direction is being continued.

Social, socio-economic and cultural aspects of sustainable management, innovative reforestation technologies, protection of forests from pests and diseases, forest taxation and monitoring are the issues, which have got wide development. Up-to-date infrastructure for production of various types of fuel wood, as well as for hunting tourism and recreation has been created.

Effective counteraction to illegal felling and other violations of legislation in forest sector has been introduced. Belarus actively participates in the ENPI FLEG Program, aimed at improving forest law enforcement and governance in forest sector, eradication of illegal felling and timber trade.

Through forest certification independent control of the observance of national and international standards of sustainable forest management and

utilization is exerted. The national system of forest certification is recognized as complying with PEFC norms.

The fact of fruitful functioning of the Ministry of Forestry of Belarus for a long period of 45 years is another evidence of the great attention, paid to the issues of conservation and growth of natural treasury of forest resources. Lots of professional dynasties are engaged in the forest sector.

European forests are geographically and genetically united and are influenced by similar natural and anthropogenic factors. In Belarus resulting from climatic changes, consequences of large-scale reclamation and radioactive contamination certain dynamics of forest biota is traced. The reduction of areals of indigenous cold-resistant and temperate thermophilous species and expansion of xerophilous species is being registered. Penetration of synanthropic species in forest communities is gradually increasing. The tendencies of enlargement of species composition and injuriousness of insect pests and diseases, decrease of intensity of productional processes in disturbed ecosystems are observed. The volume of windfall grows (in 2010 - more than 2,4 million m³). Serious threat comes from extreme weather conditions and forest fires. New challenges make it necessary to intensify the dialogue of European states.

Sharing the concept of «FOREST EUROPE» as a significant process, aimed at improvement of quality of life and human well-being, formation of healthy environment and sustainable economic development, we support the goals of this process and are open for collaboration in every aspect.

Consolidation of international efforts in the sphere of forest researches, education, innovations, «green» economy, information exchange and cooperation in forest protection, fire control and illegal felling seem urgent and prospective tasks.

Elaboration of legally binding agreement on forests in Europe should serve as legal basis and efficient instrument for creating and implementation of coordinated forest policy, that will enable actual achievement of goals, set before European forests.

In conclusion I would like to express assurance in the importance of decisions, adopted in Oslo, for strengthening of international cooperation on the way to reaching generally acknowledged global objectives

in respect of the forests, giving this cooperation new impetus and quality.

Let me also express sincere gratitude to the hosts of the Forum for the hospitality and wish them and all participants' well-being and prosperity.

Thank you for your attention.

Mr. Philippe Blerot
*General Inspector
Nature and Forest Department,
Public Utility of Wallonia*

Excellences, Mesdames et Messieurs, Madame la Présidente,

C'est un honneur d'être ici à Oslo pour signer les deux Décisions parmi lesquelles figure le Mandat Ministériel pour les Négociations d'un Accord Juridiquement Contraignant sur les forêts en Europe. Ces décisions ont en effet pour objectif de renforcer la mise en œuvre de la gestion durable des forêts afin d'assurer de façon équilibrée les fonctions économique, environnementale, culturelle et sociale de la forêt dans la région Pan-Européenne.

Cette Conférence Ministérielle nous offre une opportunité unique de mettre en évidence le rôle clé que jouent les forêts dans nos vies et celles des générations futures, puisque 2011 a été déclarée *Année Internationale des Forêts*.

Les forêts et la gestion forestière durable sont cruciales pour garantir la multifonctionnalité aujourd'hui et à l'avenir et à tous les niveaux. Elles contribuent de manière significative au développement durable et à l'éradication de la pauvreté et nous devons donc profiter de cette occasion pour sensibilisation à ces questions.

En Région flamande, les défis actuels peuvent être résumés par les mots-clé de quantité et qualité. Dans cette région fortement urbanisée, la première priorité réside dans la protection et la conservation de la zone forestière. Des efforts sont en cours pour réaliser des projets de boisement dans un contexte d'amélioration des réseaux naturels et forestiers dans le paysage. Sur la question de la qualité, le gouvernement Flamand a développé un programme incitatif destiné à encourager la mise en œuvre des critères de gestion durable au niveau opérationnel du terrain. Ce programme prévoit de stimuler des groupements forestiers qui facilitent le rôle multifonctionnel des forêts dans des zones hautement fragmentées, en encourageant les propriétaires et gestionnaires à coopérer afin d'améliorer la gestion durable de leurs forêts. Un processus de consultation intensive a été mis en œuvre afin de

définir un statut de conservation favorable pour les habitats repris dans la Directive européenne et d'ainsi contribuer à la réalisation du réseau *Natura 2000* en Flandre.

Depuis la Conférence de Varsovie, la Wallonie qui comprend 80% de la forêt belge, a adopté un nouveau code forestier en 2008 intégrant en son article premier les critères et indicateurs de développement durable tels qu'adoptés lors de la Conférence Ministérielle de Lisbonne en 1998. Toutes les mesures prévues par le code forestier constituent une déclinaison de ces principes afin de garantir le développement durable des forêts wallonnes. A titre d'exemple, ce code prévoit une forme de rétribution pour les services rendus par la forêt via une exonération des droits de succession sur la valeur des bois sur pied pour les propriétaires privés.

Cette exonération est étendue à la valeur du fonds et à la taxe foncière en *Natura 2000*. La gestion des forêts publiques y compris les forêts communales, est quant à elle à charge des autorités wallonnes.

Nous avons une riche tradition dans la gestion durable des forêts sur notre continent. Mais de nouveaux défis se profilent à l'horizon et nous devons renforcer encore notre attention et nos actions. Afin d'assurer une croissance économique durable, nous avons besoin d'une économie notamment centrée sur la gestion durable du capital naturel et sur l'utilisation efficace des ressources telles que la terre, l'eau et les forêts. Comme l'illustrent les études sur l'économie des écosystèmes et de la biodiversité (*The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity*) et le rapport sur l'économie verte du Programme des Nations-Unies pour l'Environnement, la biodiversité et les services rendus par les écosystèmes ont une valeur considérable qui doit être reconnue par notre société.

Comme mentionné dans la Décision Ministérielle «Forêts Européennes 2020», il y a un lien inextricable entre les forêts, la biodiversité et le changement climatique. Les engagements pris en matière forestière lors de la 10^{ème} Conférence des parties de la Convention sur la Diversité Biologique à Nagoya, y compris le nouveau Plan Stratégique de la CBD, sont bienvenus et doivent être soutenus. Nous devons nous assurer que le processus *FOREST EUROPE* contribue de façon significative à ces engagements mondiaux.

À cet égard, il est nécessaire de renforcer la coopé-

ration et l'action internationales en tirant parti des synergies avec d'autres conventions, accords ou processus touchant aux forêts telles que les Conventions de Rio. Les trois conventions montrent l'importance des forêts dans la réalisation de leur succès respectif. Dans ce domaine également, la collaboration au sein de la région Pan-européenne devrait constituer un exemple y compris pour d'autres régions dans le monde.

À cet égard la Belgique se réjouit de signer les deux décisions ministérielles qui accordent aux forêts et à la gestion forestière durable l'attention qu'elles nécessitent et méritent. La Belgique abordera les futures négociations avec un esprit ouvert et de manière constructive afin de convenir d'un accord juridiquement contraignant susceptible de fournir une réelle valeur ajoutée.

English version

Dear Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen, Madame Chair,

First of all, I would like to thank the Kingdom of Norway for its welcome and the excellence of its organisation.

It is an honour to be here, signing the Oslo Decisions, including the *Ministerial Mandate for Negotiating a Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe*. These decisions focus on strengthening the implementation of sustainable forest management with the view to achieving a balanced reflection of all economic, environmental, cultural and social forest functions in the Pan-European region.

This Ministerial Conference provides us with a unique opportunity to highlight the key role of forests in our lives and for future generations, as 2011 was declared the *International Year of Forests*.

Sustainable Forest Management is crucial in order to guarantee the multifunctional roles that forests play, now and in the future, at all levels. They contribute significantly to sustainable development and poverty eradication. We therefore should take full advantage of this opportunity to raise awareness.

In the Flemish region actual challenges can best be summarized under the headings of quantity and quality. In a highly urbanized area, the first priority

lies in protecting and conserving the forest area. Efforts are underway to realize afforestation projects in the context of enhancing the nature and forest networks in the landscape. On the issue of quality, the Flemish government has developed an incentive programme to stimulate the implementation of the criteria for sustainable forest management on the operational field level. This includes the stimulation of forest grouping which facilitate the multifunctional role of forests in highly fragmented areas, stimulating forest owners and managers to cooperate in order to enhance the sustainable management of their forests. An intensive consultation process has been set up in order to define the favorable conservation status for the habitats under the Habitat Directive, in order to contribute to the realization of the Natura2000 network in Flanders.

Since Warsaw Conference, Wallonia, with 80% of the Belgian forest, has adopted in 2008 a new Forest Law including in its first article the criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management as adopted by the Lisbon Ministerial Conference in 1998. Every actions planned by this Forest Code are a translation of these principles to ensure sustainable development of forests in Wallonia. For example, this Code provides for private landowners a form of compensation for forest services, via an exemption of inheritance taxes on the value of timber. This exemption is extended to the value of the fund and to property tax in Natura 2000. The cost of public forest management, including communal forests, is fully supported by the Walloon authorities.

We have a rich tradition in managing the forests in our continent sustainably. But new challenges are ahead, and we need to further strengthen our attention and actions. To ensure sustainable economic growth, we need an economy that puts in particular the sustainable management of natural capital and the efficient use of resources, such as land, water and forests at the center. As the TEEB studies («The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity») and the UNEP «Green Economy Report» illustrate, biodiversity and ecosystem services have a huge economic value that needs to be recognised by our society.

As included in the Ministerial Decision: European Forests 2020, there is an inextricable link between forests, biodiversity and climate change. The commit-

ments made at the 10th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Nagoya in relation to forests, including in the new CBD Strategic Plan, can only be welcomed and supported. We must ensure that the FOREST EUROPE process contributes significantly to these global commitments.

In this respect there is a need to strengthen international cooperation and action by taking advantage of synergies with other forest-related conventions, agreements and processes such as the Rio Conventions. All three Conventions show the significance of forests in the achievement of their success. Also in this field, the collaboration within the pan-European region should set an example, including for other regions in the world.

In that regard Belgium is looking forward to signing both Ministerial Decisions, attributing to forests and Sustainable Forest Management the attention they need and deserves. Belgium will approach the forthcoming negotiation process with an open mind and in a constructive way with the aim of agreeing to an LBA that should provide a clear added value.

Mr. Georgi Kostov

Deputy Minister

Ministry of Agriculture and Foods

The forests in Bulgaria are considered by the society as part of the national wealth and identity. Their economic, social and ecological functions are of significant importance for sustainable development of the society and improvement of livelihood, mainly in the poorly developed rural and mountaneous regions. The National strategy for the development of forest sector lays down the following vision: «Bulgarian forest is national asset. The resources of the forest ecosystems should preserve and enrich their ecological, social and economic functions to improve the quality of peoples' life. The forests are professionally managed on the basis of scientific achievements, stable forest sector, wide public support, as well as mutual observance and integration of the interests of all stakeholders.»

The forests in Bulgaria occupy 37% of the country's territory. Their area, towards 31.12.2010, is 4 138 147 ha, of them 76,4% - state forests, 10,9% - private forests, 12,2% - municipal forests and 0,56% - forests of religious and other organizations. The total timber volume amounts up to 642 mill m³, the average volume per ha is 172 m³, the average increment - 14,4 m³. The annual average harvesting from Bulgarian forests is about 7 mill m³ growing stock, i.e. just a little less than 50% of the total annual increment.

At the beginning of April 2011 entirely new Forest Act was adopted and came into force in Bulgaria, regulating the public relations concerning protection, management and utilization of the forest territories and aiming to guarantee the sustainable and multi-functional management of the forest ecosystems. The main goals of the Law are to preserve and increase the area of the forests; to maintain and improve their status; to guarantee and maintain the ecosystem, social and economic functions of the forest territories; to guarantee and increase the production of timber and non-timber products by close-to-nature management of the forests; to establish a balance between the interests of the society and the forest owners; to support the forest owners; to implement the international and European commitments for conservation of the forest habitats.

Regarding the insurance of more strict control on the correct and appropriate management of forests, the new Forest Act separates management and control functions in the forest sector. Forest management will be performed by 6 State Forest Enterprises and their territorial units, while the control functions will be entitled to the Executive Forest Agency and 16 Regional Forest Directorates. For the first time the State is ready to finance the control on forest territories from the state budget, while the State Forest Enterprises will function as self-supported by their own economic activities and will operate observing the measures and activities foreseen in the forest management plans. The forest sector works in a constant contact with the different stakeholders, the local population inclusive, who will have more influence on the preparation and implementation of the regional plans for development of the forest territories. Additionally, the new Forest Act regulates the access to forest territories, which is new policy for this part of Europe.

Forests, biodiversity and climate changes:

Bulgaria is one of the European countries with relatively well preserved and maintained forest ecosystems. This is proved by the fact that, in the frames of EU, our country characterizes with the largest share of forest territory - totally 34%, included in NATURA 2000 network. In accordance with the commitments of the country under the EU Directives for protection of wild birds and natural wildlife habitats 49,4 % of the total forest area is covered by Directive 92/43/EC and 29,4% - by Directive 2009/147/EC. Two reserves - the Biosphere reserve «Kamchia» and the maintained reserve «Baltata», are of European and worldwide importance as they conserve the most representative riparian forest ecosystems in the eastern part of the Balkan Peninsula. This is unique ecosystem containing about 40 tree species, 260 wild bird species, 25 fish species and 26 small mammal species. In the frames of Directive 92/43/EC 31 forest habitats are identified in Bulgaria and recently, under Operative Programme «Environment» and with the financial support of ERDF, mapping and determination of their condition is performed. The long-term conservation of the biodiversity and forest resources is one of the main components of the sustainable forest management, especially in conditions of

climate change. The maintenance of biological and genetic diversity of the forests ecosystems ensures their vitality, productivity and helps their successful adaptability to the changing environment. The efforts to mitigate climate changes and help the adaptation of forests towards them require more comprehensive scientific knowledge on the reasons, process and consequences from the environmental changes. This can be achieved more effectively by establishment of research network for monitoring, exchange of data, methodology and information at European and international level.

What we do in Bulgaria, in the frames of the forest sector, with regard to climate change and what are the hot spots, related to forests? This is a relevant question as the Bulgarian forests provide about 85% of the water flow in the country or about 3.6 billion m³ drinking water resources. They play significant role in decreasing of green-house emissions in the atmosphere by absorbing and ceasing CO₂ in biomass. That is why the afforestation, sustainable forest management and adaptation of forests to climate changes are priority tasks in the forest policy. These problems are laid down at strategic, governmental and operative levels.

At strategic level the problem «climate changes - forests» is laid down in the National strategy for sustainable development of the forest sector 2006–2015. Bulgarian government has clear and concrete vision regarding forests and climate change establishing as Goal 30 of the Governmental programme: «Improvement of the protection and support for adaptation of the Bulgarian forests to climate changes».

At operative level measures and actions are foreseen in the Annual Programme of the Executive Forest Agency. At the beginning of 2011 the Agency and team of scientists elaborate «Programme of measures for adaptation of forests to climate changes in Bulgaria and mitigation of the negative effect of climate change on them». Besides, one of the main goals in the new Forest Act is to guarantee and maintain the ecosystem, social and economic functions of forests, to maintain the biological and landscape diversity and to improve the status of forest ecosystems.

The significance of Bulgarian forests goes beyond the national level as they are part of the Southeast

European region. The territory of the country is strongly dependent on the general changes in ecological and economical aspect. Bulgaria actively participates in a number of European programmes and projects related to adaptation of forests to climate change and mitigation of its negative effects. Some of them are Futureforest (INTERREG IVC Operative Programme), ECOSHOES (Cost action), MOTIVE (FP 7 programme), «Climate change and their influence on water resources» and «Practical use of Monitoring for natural disaster management» under Southeast Europe Transnational Programme; European Forest Fire Monitoring using Information Systems (EFFMIS) under INTERREG C IV Transnational Programme. Bulgaria also actively participates in different forums and initiatives of the European Forest Institute as Silva Mediteranea, as well as in the exchange of experience at European and international level on the management of coppice forests as part of the possible adaptive strategies in Southern Europe.

Ecosystem services, green economy and renewable biomass energy

The establishment of a balance among the economic, social and ecosystem functions of the forests requires consistent policy and strategy at national and EU level, as well as improving the communication with all stakeholders and insurance of wide public support. Bulgarian state creates a number of measures for stimulating the ecological balance - green jobs, green procurements, green incentives and green taxes, but their introduction and implementation is forthcoming. However, the green investments give a possibility for development, in near future, of strong economy, relative energy independence, effective utilization of the natural resources, development of up-to-date tourist services, high quality of life. This requires horizontal integration of the measures under the different legal acts concerning harmonized development of the green technologies.

For the first time the new Forest Act lays down articles concerning the assessment of ecosystem services from forests, but the work on elaboration of methodology for their evaluation is still ongoing. Evaluation of all public benefits provided by forest ecosystems - prevention and protection against soil erosion, providing of enough in quantity and

good in quality drinking water, improvement of the microclimate, insurance of possibility for recreation and tourism is foreseen. The accumulation of financial means from payments for ecosystem services would allow more effective solution of the problems related to preventive and adaptation measures concerning climate change and other negative environmental effects.

The economic crisis in Bulgaria in the last decades affected most strongly the mountain and fore-mountain rural regions, where the unemployment rate reached up to 60–65%. These are the regions in Bulgaria where greater part of the population traditionally works in the forest sector or depends on the harvesting and trade with different forest products. This situation imposed the reconsidering of the possibilities for development of ecological manufacturing, more effective utilization of the natural resources and establishment of new working places.

The main component in the green economy is the production of energy from biomass, concerning forest sector - production of energy from wooden biomass. The production of energy from wood biomass is related with low green-house gas emissions, which contributes to mitigation of climate changes. Stimulation of biomass usage as renewable energy source will also have positive ecological, social and economical effect and will help the implementation of the country's commitment, in accordance with the requirements of EU, to increase the share of energy produced by renewable sources. In Bulgaria the firewood is the main part of the harvested timber - varying from 45 up to 60%, and its average annual amount is up to 3.1 mill m³. In the last 10 years the usage of firewood in Bulgaria has increased about three times, which is due to its low price in comparison with the constantly increasing prices of fuels, natural gas and coals and of the energy produced by them. There is long-term national programme for stimulating the utilization of biomass for the period 2008-2020 and the recently adopted in Bulgaria Forest Act and the new Law for energy from renewable sources gives certain incentives for production of energy from biomass. The introduction of mechanisms, incentives and preferences in these Acts will definitely attract the investors. This, on the other hand, will guarantee the sustainable development and improvement of the

forests and will insure working places for the people in rural regions.

Prevention of illegal logging and forest fires

Illegal logging reflects a complex of social and demographic problems in some regions of the country. The new Forest Act pays special attention to the wide public awareness in discussion and adoption of the National Forest Strategy, Regional plans for development of the forest territories and forest management plans and programmes. The increased public control on forest management will serve as preventive measure to reduce strongly eventual attempts for illegal logging and placement of illegal timber and other forest products to the market. An Action Plan for coordinated actions with other state institutions at performing the control checks is elaborated. It involves the Prosecution Service, Customs, Ministry of Environment and Waters, Interior Affairs, etc.

Another preventive measure in the last years is the active process of certification of the State Forest Enterprises. Till now totally 206 409 ha of forests are certified and another 750 320 ha are in process receiving certificates.

Forest fires are still serious problem for Bulgaria. In 2010 totally 222 forest fires were recorded on an area of 6526 ha, of them 3242 ha or about 50% state forests. More than 75 % of the fires started outside forest territories and were transferred to neighboring forest stands.

Dear ladies and gentlemen,
Dear colleagues,

The forest sector and the forest based industries should preserve their economic competitiveness as they affect socially and demographically the weakest developed regions in Bulgaria and also in Europe. That is why we consider that the elaboration of a framework agreement for the forest sector at European level is a step in the right direction referring to mitigation of climate change, protection of forests, control and prevention of illegal logging and placement of wood and other forest products on the market. The decisions in this direction should take into account not only the political considerations but also the

recommendations of the scientists, who alarm about the very short time we have to take effective measures and prevent the environmental changes. Common vision, forest strategy, policy and legally binding documents, as well as appropriate mechanisms for their application, implementation and monitoring are necessary. The sustainable management of the natural resources, as are the forests, is performed at national level and is responsibility of the states but their effective protection requires close cooperation and coordination at international level. In this respect European Union should initiate concrete measures and binding instruments for introduction of better practices in sustainable forest management at European and global scale. Let's not forget that forest is renewable but exhaustible resource and a unique product of Nature of which we all depend.

We thank the experts who prepare the documents for Conference and express our full support to the Decision: European Forests 2020 and for negotiating a Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe. The decisions of this Conference are a step to better future for our children and for the next generations.

Mr. Herman Sušnik
State Secretary
Ministry of Regional Development,
Forestry and Water Management

Mr. Chairman/Madame Chair,

I thank you for giving me the opportunity to take the floor.

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great honour and pleasure to greet this high Assembly, and particularly our hosts, at the conclusion of another multi-annual stage of challenging and demanding work on current pan-European forestry issues.

By changing its name to FOREST EUROPE, the ministerial process for the protection of European forests has announced, even on a symbolic level, the turning point in its successful twenty-years of operation. Through its work and achievements, it has identified and addressed the principal forestry issues and tasks, in order for the European forests to maintain the high level of services they provide. I am delighted that this important conference on the future of pan-European forests is being held during the International Year of Forests 2011, the proclamation of which was initiated by the Republic of Croatia.

The adaptation of forests to climate change, their role in mitigating the consequences of climate change, the production of forest biomass as a renewable energy source, the preservation and supply of fresh water, as well as many other problems in direct interaction with the forests, all seek the unconditional application of sustainable forest management principles. This management principle will continue to be the sole effective tool and guarantee for forest preservation in changeable environmental conditions. In order to achieve that, it is necessary for all the stakeholders to join their efforts and reach a synergy of performance, primarily by adjusting national policies and implementing coordinated activities towards the selfsame goal.

Today, more than ever, the adaptation of forests to

climate change is one of the fundamental forestry missions relevant not only for the preservation of forests but for the preservation of humankind itself. Numerous expert debates and documents have been adopted at the highest levels, recognizing and advocating the need for urgent actions to be taken towards forest adaptation to and mitigation of climate changes. FOREST EUROPE has been prompt in recognizing the importance of this problem, and it has directed its actions towards finding mechanisms for a concrete solution. In my opinion, the documents we have in front of us have potential and are an important step towards finding the necessary and legally binding mechanism for the solve of this and many others current problems regarding forests.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In view of the growing and insatiable need for new resources, the estimated world population growth of nearly 80 mil. people per year, the increasing food and water requirements, the need arise for the creation of such «green» forms of economy which will improve human well-being and increase social equity while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities. The solution can be found in «greening» the existent economies with the aim of satisfying the above-stated needs and at the same time low level of carbon production, a high resource efficiency and a full inclusion of the social component. I am therefore happy to have recognised these very elements in the texts we have in front of us, and which represent the development guidelines of the pan-Euro region for a substantial number of years. For that very reason I believe us to be on the right path which could, with certain adjustments, be applicable on the global scale in the spirit of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

However, we must not disregard the fact that a wide range of factors influences preservation and endangers biodiversity. Being dedicated to the preservation of the rich forest biodiversity of the Republic of Croatia, we are able to testify by example that a high biodiversity level in a relatively small area is a true reflection of sustainable forest management. Furthermore, we can say that sustainable forest management is the very guarantee for the preservation, renewal and enrichment of biodiversity. Therefore, what is

imposed as an imperative is the further development and implementation of consolidated standards and systems for the preservation of biodiversity as a *«conditio sine qua non»*.

In regard to resources, we cannot fail to mention the topic of renewable energy sources and, among them, forest biomass. It is the field which poses additional, demanding tasks and challenges to foresters in order to meet the fundamental conditions: a consistent sustainable forest management coexistent with an increased supply of wood as a fuel source. The interaction of forestry and other economy sectors, especially rural development, can open up numerous and important opportunities for stable development and the creation of a new added value for all involved in such cooperation.

I believe the Oslo Ministerial Mandate for Negotiating a Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe is a document that offers a quality basis for drafting an LBA which will bind all the signatories to permanently sustainable forest management, as a precondition of their survival and the continued provision of their multifunctional services in the pan-European region. This document opens a new era in our joint consideration and evaluation of the present and future roles of forests in the region. From the positive experiences acquired in the last twenty years of the ministerial process, we build the foundations for the implementation of sustainable forest management on a global scale, and we contribute to the realisation of the vision of preserved and productive forests for future generations.

The global challenges and dangers that threaten forests, as well as the immeasurable contribution of the forests to the existential needs of mankind, commit us to a consolidated, comprehensive and efficient engagement to find quality solutions.

In that view, I regard this positive and encouraging initiative filled with optimism, especially since the proposals intimate a high degree of dedication, readiness and determination to firmly apply the mechanism agreed upon in practice.

I therefore urge all of us to support this process and extend it our full support as it journeys towards becoming a legally binding agreement on forests in Europe.

Thank you Mr Chairman/Madame Chair.

Mr. Charalambos Alexandrou
Chief Conservator of Forests

On behalf of

Mr. Sofoclis Aletraris
Minister
Ministry of Agriculture, Natural
Resources and Environment

Mr. Chairman,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honor and a pleasure for me to address this Conference on behalf of the Minister of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment, of the Republic of Cyprus.

First, I would like to congratulate Norway and Spain for the excellent job they have done in preparing this conference.

Since its foundation, MCPFE Process has played a crucial and a vital role in the promotion of sustainable management of forests in Europe, and beyond. For the first time in history, sustainable forest management was defined clearly and precisely. Major concerns about forest management have been thoroughly addressed and valuable tools have been developed. Nineteen Resolutions and five Ministerial Declarations comprise a huge, solid and substantial background for the policy framework for forests and forest sector in Europe.

However, in our view and as it was clearly identified and stated in the MCPFE Review, there was a weakness, mainly the non-mandatory nature as regards the implementation of these commitments. Definitely, there is also a necessity to adequately respond to major challenges such as the climate change and its influence on forest resources, the conservation of biodiversity, soil and water, the sustainable development of a green economy, the sustainable provision of renewable products and other social demands for services.

That is why Cyprus shares the view that a legally binding agreement on forests in Europe, along with the re-invigoration of the Process itself, will strengthen the policy framework, it will prevent further fragmentation of forest policy and it will increase the visibility of the forest sector. As regards the Decision «European Forests 2020» the adoption for the first time of measurable goals and targets will strengthen and reinforce the FOREST EUROPE process and it will make it possible to realize the vision and mission.

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In this direction, Cyprus has supported, right from the beginning, the development of a Legally Binding Agreement on forests in Europe and the strengthening of FOREST EUROPE Process and is ready to sign both documents with the Ministerial Decisions of Oslo Conference.

We do believe that the development of a comprehensive, functional and promising Agreement in Europe will be for the benefit of our forests, our society, our environment and our common future. In addition, it will provide a clear and real example of regional cooperation, willingness and determination to strengthen policy framework for sustainable forest management, which could guide the international dialogue on a global arrangement on forests.

Thank you for your attention.

CZECH REPUBLIC

Mr. Jiří Novák

Deputy Minister

Ministry of Agriculture

Mr. Chairman, Ministers, Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, let me warmly thank the government of Norway for hosting the ministerial conference and the Liaison Unit for its smooth organization and for excellent work in preparing the conference documents that will be signed by ministers today. We highly appreciate the State of Europe's forests 2011 report jointly prepared by FOREST EUROPE, UNECE and FAO, as we put a great emphasis on availability of the reliable and highly comparable data which enable to effectively steer forest policy at the national level. The report is an excellent source of information that helps us in identifying strengths and weaknesses of our forest policy as well as opportunities and threats that our forests are facing. It also helps us to identify best practices in various areas of interest, such as marketing of non-wood forest goods and services and many others. I would like to stress that we are prepared to collaborate on further work aiming at the improvements of reporting with a view to its harmonization and optimization.

Mr. Chairman, in the history of the FOREST EUROPE process, this ministerial conference is, for several reasons, exceptional. After twenty years of concerted effort to develop and implement the concept of sustainable forest management, expressed namely by developing its pan-European definition and by adopting numerous resolutions covering all its aspects, it is time to reflect upon the past and to think how to reinforce the implementation of our political commitments. The Czech Republic welcomes and fully supports opening negotiations of a legally binding agreement on forests in Europe and is ready to actively participate in the International Negotiation Committee, which is to be established by the Ministerial Mandate. Mr. Chairman, let me briefly touch upon some of the main conference issues. We really welcome that conference documents stress the importance of economic functions of forests and their potential in fostering a green economy. We are of opinion that

all political decisions related to forests and forestry should be assessed for their social impacts, especially on the employment.

We see the highest priority in continuously adapting our forests to climate change and in increasing their ecological stability in order to ensure their various functions to the maximum extent possible in altered conditions. I would like to stress that only healthy and stable forests can fulfil their role in climate change mitigation. Unfortunately, current policies and commitments at the global, European and subsequently national level tend to prefer mitigation measures and are too focused on increasing carbon stocks in forests. Commitments agreed at all levels should respect that the adaptation of forests to climate change means an active management that may lead to a temporary decrease of carbon stocks in forest stands and soils. Concerning mitigation measures themselves, it is absolutely necessary to find the right balance between carbon sequestration in forest stands and soils, carbon storage in forest products and substitution of non-renewable materials and energy sources.

The use of forest biomass for energy production deserves special attention. The demand for forest biomass will certainly grow in the near future. It is necessary to ensure its sustainable production with no negative impacts on forest ecosystems, for example on forest soils or biological diversity. At the same time, it is important to make efforts not to give the production of energy from wood an advantage over other ways of use of wood with a higher added value, which also generate higher employment. We should also strive to avoid market distortion especially by different levels of support in different countries.

Thank you for your attention!

Ms. Gertrud Knudsen

Head

Nature Planning and Biodiversity

Mr. Chairman, your excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

Allow me first of all on behalf of the Danish government to express my sincere thanks to the governments of Norway and Spain for their invitation, and to you of course mr. chairman, for the generous hospitality you show by hosting this conference. I also like to thank the Liason Unit for an excellent preparation and organisation.

It is an honour and a great pleasure to have the opportunity to address you today at this ministerial FOREST EUROPE conference. It could not be held at a better location than this, the beautiful city of Oslo. Nor could the timing be better - year 2011, the UN declared International Year of Forests.

Perhaps never before in modern history has forests been more in focus of political debates at almost every thinkable level. This is due to the fact that forests serve a multiple range of services that are all highly appreciated by our societies: Renewable materials and energy, biodiversity, climate change mitigation, cultural values, recreation, hunting, water protection...

The FOREST EUROPE process has come a long way and been tremendously successful since the first ministerial conference in Strasbourg in 1990. The task for us today, however is not to dwell on successes of the past, but to look into the future and to the challenges that lie ahead. The two decisions we have before us is a nice extension of the previous work in FOREST EUROPE.

The first decision establishes a clear vision for FOREST EUROPE and outlines a series of goals and targets. The second decision provides for the opening of negotiations on a legally binding agreement on forests and marks a new and promising era in the pan-European forest cooperation.

Together, they provide Europe with a strong foundation to meet tomorrow's challenges individually and collectively and to ensure that our forests also in the future can deliver a wide range of services to the benefit of society, where protection and sustainable use goes hand in hand.

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to announce that Denmark can join and will sign both of these decisions.

One of the major challenges is how we at the same time can meet the expected surge in demand for wood for renewable energy while also meeting other goals, for example for biodiversity.

In this regard, I am pleased that our decision on targets clearly states that the response to political objectives on the use of renewable materials and energy in Europe shall be increased supply of wood and other materials from *sustainably* managed forests.

We are all aware that this is a demanding task that not only sustains the production base but also takes into account all the other aspects of sustainable forestry. The forest sector must take on responsibility to make this happen. And not only that - it must also be ready to demonstrate and verify the legal and sustainable origin of its products. If the forest sector fails to deliver convincing evidence of this, timber may risk facing a bad standing amongst concerned consumers. We should not allow such an entry point for criticism to emerge.

I am therefore also happy that we at this conference will agree to maintain action against illegal logging and related trade as a top priority in Europe. It is also encouraging that our agreed outline for the future joint work programme include actions to improve monitoring and harmonised reporting with a view to improve verification of legality and sustainability.

Denmark has been a pioneer country in the development of public procurement policy and guidelines for legal and sustainable timber. We have worked in close co-operation with stakeholders and taken the lead in exchanging experience and lessons learnt, thereby contributing directly and substantially to previous commitments in this process. We are happy to continue our efforts to this end and work jointly with all of you to promote sustainable timber as a renewable and environmentally friendly raw material.

Another major challenge is how to achieve sufficient payment for the ecosystem services the forest sector provides.

To that end we have some positive experiences in Denmark, where we have managed to attract substantive co-financing for our afforestation activities

from sectors outside the forest. We have, for example, engaged in cooperation with the water sector.

We have through integrated planning identified sensitive water resources close to larger cities. Afforestation on those sites provides protection of the ground water - and also excellent recreational opportunities. A framework contract with a major Copenhagen water supply company has ensured a substantial and long term co-financing of these afforestation activities.

Recently, the Nature agency has made an additional agreement with a Danish tele company that has wished to invest in green activities, partly compensating for the company's CO₂-outlets. This is a purely voluntary contribution, which is linked to the company's activities.

Mr. Chairman, the decisions of this conference come at a time when we already have a high political focus on forests in Denmark. This is due to the work in a forest policy committee, established by the Environment minister last year. The Liason Unit kindly offered to participate in one of the Committees first meetings, thereby updating the members with valuable information on the important work in the FOREST EUROPE process. The committee is expected to report on its work and make recommendations for a future Danish forest policy within the next few weeks.

The Danish Government looks forward to receiving these recommendations, and in light of these contribute to a targeted and constructive implementation of the important and historic decisions we are about to take at this conference.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Keit Pentus

Minister

Ministry of the Environment

Ministers, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a great pleasure to participate in the Oslo FOREST EUROPE Conference. FOREST EUROPE has come to the significant milestone – we have two equally important decisions in front of us. We acknowledge the concept of sustainable forest management and have implemented it for decades. Now, we are ready for a common vision, goals, targets and actions.

Estonia has just concluded the formulation of National Forest Programme. This February the Estonian Parliament approved the Estonian Forest Programme until 2020, including the objectives, targets and actions for ten years. The Programme is contributing to sustainable development and laying bases for greener economy. Ladies and Gentlemen, we are happy to see that viability and productivity as well as diverse and efficient use of forests are a common vision all over Europe. We, in Estonia, are of the opinion that sustainable forest management shall safeguard reasonable land-use and favourable state of forests. However, forestry is not only about trees and wood. It is more and more about people. Active participation creates personal connections with nature and forests. Awareness and encouraging attitude of the society as well as favourable legal framework will promote sustainable forest management, especially in private forests. Private forestry is seen as a key to increase the use of wood as a renewable resource to be used by forest industry and energy sector up to the amount of annual increment. In order to secure the continuous provision of goods, the productivity of forests should be maintained by increasing silvicultural activities.

For hundreds of years Estonia has been dependant on forests. We know that forests are more than fibre, energy, labour and income. Besides being habitat for people, plants and animals, ecosystem services the forests provide are gaining increasing importance. The new programme also contains the need to study further the functions of forest ecosystem and establish financial incentives for marketing ecosystem services. In order to protect genetic resources at least 10% of

forest area will be under strict protection to maintain a good status of endangered species and populations inherent to Estonia.

Our generation has inherited excellent forests for hiking, picking berries, hunting and getting valuable timber. And we also have to secure the multiple uses of forests for generations to come. Continuous management and multiple uses of forest maintain the quality, connection and continuity between forests and human generations.

Like the objective of our Development Programme and European Forests 2020, namely to ensure the viability and productivity as well as multiple use of forests, we believe the implementation of balanced and holistic concept of sustainable forest management will continue to be a tool to address the present and future challenges for forests. For that reason we highly welcome the two important decisions for forestry to be taken today.

Thank you for your attention.

EUROPEAN UNION

Ms. Hilikka Summa

Head of Unit

Directorate General Agriculture and Rural Development, European Commission

On behalf of

Mr. Dacian Ciolos

Commissioner

Commission for Agriculture and Rural Development

Ministers, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to address you at this Sixth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe, taking place in the beautiful city of Oslo. In the series of forest conferences over the past 20 years, this one is exceptional and important in many ways.

Let me first express my congratulations to Norway and Spain for the excellent job they have done in preparing this Ministerial Conference.

Over the past 20 years the European countries and the European Union have co-operated successfully in this regional process, and developed a coherent policy framework for sustainable forest management for the pan-European region. The results of this work are an important reference for the development of forest-related policies for all 46 signatory countries as well as for the European Commission, which has contributed to this process since its beginning.

This Sixth Ministerial Conference is an important milestone as it takes a step towards changing the traditional work modalities of the FOREST EUROPE Process. The two Ministerial Decisions that are on the table today are both exceptional.

The Decision on European Forests 2020 changes the traditional format of the ministerial commitments, suggesting a new vision, goals and targets for the coming decade. An even bigger step will be taken by the Oslo Ministerial Mandate for negotiating a Legally Binding Agreement, which will trigger a negotiating process towards a new instrument for pan-European forest policy. These two decisions will significantly

influence the familiar work modalities of FOREST EUROPE in the years to come.

With great satisfaction I can inform you that the European Union and its Member states have unanimously decided to support both decisions.

In signing the Oslo Ministerial mandate for the Legally Binding Agreement we commit to contribute constructively to the negotiation process. Our aim is to achieve a framework agreement, which will add value to the current voluntary FOREST EUROPE process as well as to the existing international forest-related processes, while avoiding any unnecessary duplication with these processes. We are committed to the values expressed by the existing FOREST EUROPE commitments, and to the objective of enhancing sustainability, multifunctionality and economic viability of forests and forest management across Europe. We believe the LBA should and will have the potential to further enhance international forest dialogue.

In the decision «European Forests 2020» we will for the first time in the FOREST EUROPE process adopt measurable goals and targets for European forests. We will also commit to developing a work programme of joint actions, which will help reaching the targets and fulfilling the new vision and mission.

The European Union appreciates the fact that the traditional voluntary co-operation under FOREST EUROPE will be continued and reinforced by these common targets. We are committed to contribute to this work and find it important that the informal and voluntary FOREST EUROPE work continues alongside the formal negotiation process, in order not to lose sight of the substance of forests while working on the details of the negotiation text.

Mr Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Over the four years since the Warsaw conference the «MCPFE» – as we used to call this process – has already undergone some important changes. The change of its name from the cumbersome «Ministerial Conference for the Protection of Forests in Europe», or from the «MCPFE», which only a small circle of participants recognised, is one of them.

This «re-branding» of the process has been an important step towards more effective communication with policy sectors outside forestry and with the public. During this International Year on Forests

one cannot over-emphasise the importance of communicating about the role and potential of forests and forestry in tackling the global challenges we are facing. Within the European Commission we have sought to contribute to effective communication by preparing a communication strategy on forests.

For the EU FOREST EUROPE has been and continues to be an important reference for forest related policy discussions. We have made concrete use of the results of FOREST EUROPE's work, which are referred to in the Union's Forestry Strategy as well as in our legislation on rural development. The resolutions and declarations of FOREST EUROPE will continue to be a reference in the Commission's work on a review of the EU Forestry Strategy, which we are starting together with the Member States and stakeholders.

Since the time of the adoption of the first Forestry Strategy in 1998 the challenges facing European forests and policy objectives have evolved. The EU has put in place a new approach to build lasting prosperity for tomorrow - the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. Progress towards a low carbon economy is an important part of this strategy, providing both a challenge and an opportunity for the forest sector to contribute with its renewable, recyclable and climate friendly resources. A renewed EU Forestry Strategy will be put in place to reflect today's challenges and policy objectives.

Mr Chairman, ladies and gentlemen,

To conclude, I want to express my strong belief that this Sixth Ministerial Conference is an important step forward in the forest policy dialogue in Europe. The European Commission looks forward to continuing co-operation with FOREST EUROPE partners on the future work programme as well as to contributing, alongside the Union's Member States, to a successful conclusion of the negotiations on the Legally Binding Agreement. This is a demanding work programme, which we believe can be completed in the spirit of constructive co-operation which has always characterised the FOREST EUROPE process.

Finally, I would like to thank Norway for the excellent work they have done in operating the Liaison unit following the previous conference, and to wish all the best to Spain which will in due course after this conference take over this important task.

Thank you for your attention.

Ms. Sirkka-Liisa Anttila

Minister

Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

Madam Chair, Distinguished Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure and honour to be here today with you all, distinguished representatives from Europe and all over the world. The chain of Ministerial Conferences has made significant contributions to sustainable forest management in Europe, with positive reflections all over the world.

Today many people in the world are watching us to see how we will proceed. We Finns are proud to be part of the key team with our French colleagues, who launched the process in 1990.

Legally binding agreement on forests in Europe - LBA

Finland fully supports the launch of negotiations on a legally binding agreement on forests in Europe. It is extremely important that we - the signatories of the decisions of the Conferences - take this important initiative forward, as well as actively and positively contribute to the process. The outcome of the negotiations will be assessed in 2013, and then we must build on that outcome.

Finland is committed to work so that the agreement will bring true added value. For us this could be realised, for example, through enhancing the green economy. It is most important to continue developing the pan-European integration and multilateral forestry cooperation.

FOREST EUROPE Process

We are also strongly behind our FOREST EUROPE Process. We find it very important that the original voluntary track of Ministerial Conferences keeps going strong as well. The decisions made at the previous five Conferences and the decisions to be signed here tomorrow must be put to practice.

The decisions made at the Conferences have had positive impacts on our national forest policy. We have introduced elements of the Conference decisions into our national legislation, developed and updated criteria and indicators for sustainable

forest management, and evaluated our National Forest Programme against the outlines set in this process. The criteria and indicators have reflections in forest certification. Practically all Finnish forests have already been certified.

Green economy

As I earlier today said green economy has got lots of potential for our well-being also in the future.

National Forest Programme (NFP)

In Finland, we have just recently revised our National Forest Programme 2015 to better meet the changing economic and societal environment. The mission of the programme is to generate increased welfare through diverse and sustainable forest management. The key principles include the development of existing and new forest-based products and services and the entire value chain, the integration of different uses of forests, and the preservation of the environmental benefits of forests.

Our National Forest Programme provides us a sound framework to develop forest resources and forestry in balanced way. Our world is changing more and more rapidly. The Programme also gives us a practical tool to efficiently tackle the multifaceted demands and interests of the society and to strengthen forest governance by incorporating all relevant stakeholders, including small-scale forest owners, into decision-making.

METSO Programme

In Finland our Forest Biodiversity Programme for Southern Finland so called METSO Programme was first piloted for a period of five years, and the Programme which is now being implemented builds on the results.

The Programme has brought completely new ways of thinking to protection: the actions are voluntary, the programme covers both conservation areas and commercially managed forest, and it is interlinked with research and information components. We are highly satisfied with the results. Especially the biodiversity work carried out in commercially managed forests alongside with the utilisation of wood has brought good new results.

LBA and future of FOREST EUROPE Process

In our Oslo Ministerial Mandate we have the outline for the legally binding agreement. All of the 11 possible topics, points from a to k, are relevant and important to Finland. However, we are going to prioritize some of them. Our main focus will be on ensuring sustainable forests management, contributing to green economy, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and halting the loss of forest biodiversity. The well-being of Finnish citizens rests strongly on the use of our forests, and we shall keep on working along this line.

It is important to monitor and report on forests. We are very pleased on the report of State of Europe's Forests 2011. Here, I would like to take the opportunity to highlight the work we have done in Finland. We have just finalised the evaluation of our forests and their management practices in a report «State of Finland's Forests 2011» based on the pan-European criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management.

Wide participation of stakeholders and institutions, cross-sectoral cooperation and access to research results have been among the key elements in our success in carrying out this work. We strongly emphasise the need to continue the process as a collaborative effort.

We also need to address jointly the new challenges which have arisen when preparing for the seventh Conference in Madrid.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As a conclusion, I want to express my strong belief that this Conference in Oslo is a major step forward in the forest dialogue in Europe and in the whole world.

I wish to extend my sincere thanks to our Norwegian hosts, the secretariat and all of you for preparing and organising this Conference. We will give our support to Spain in the demanding tasks in the future, and we will certainly give our contribution to the negotiations on the European forest agreement.

Once again, it is a pleasure to be here with you all today.

Thank You for your attention.

Mr. Hervé Gaymard

President

l'Office National des Forêts

Monsieur le Président,

Mesdames et Messieurs les Ministres,

A mon tour, je souhaiterais affirmer combien la France se réjouit de participer aux travaux de cette sixième conférence ministérielle, ici à Oslo. Je dois malheureusement vous présenter les excuses de Bruno Le Maire, notre ministre de l'agriculture, qui est retenu à Paris par la préparation du G20 agricole.

Vous savez qu'avec la Finlande, la France a été à l'initiative du processus MCPFE en 1989 et que la première conférence ministérielle a eu lieu en 1990 à Strasbourg. Le contexte politique et économique était différent. Le contexte forestier aussi. Le processus a été rebaptisé FOREST EUROPE et nous sommes réunis ici pour un nouveau départ, nous nous en réjouissons.

Monsieur le Président,

Notre conférence doit adopter deux documents, que nous signerons demain.

La décision ministérielle d'Oslo relative aux forêts d'Europe en 2020, tout d'abord.

L'état des forêts européennes 2011 nous a été présenté ce matin. C'est un document remarquable, très complet, à la fois technique et politique, puisqu'il décrit, pour la première fois, les politiques, les institutions et les instruments forestiers en Europe. La situation des forêts européennes est satisfaisante et elles produisent les biens et les services que la société en attend.

Nous allons très prochainement publier en France, pour la quatrième fois depuis 1995, les indicateurs de gestion durable des forêts françaises, selon la même présentation que ceux des forêts européennes.

Sur la base de cet état actuel, le projet de décision définit une vision, des buts et des objectifs pour les forêts d'Europe en 2020. La France y adhère et s'en félicite.

Nous allons également décider, je cite : « d'élaborer un programme de travail de FOREST EUROPE qui donnera la priorité aux actions européennes conjointes

conduites en coopération avec des partenaires et d'autres organisations, telles que l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture, la Commission économique pour l'Europe des Nations Unies et l'Institut européen de la forêt ».

Pour la France, cette coopération entre les organismes forestiers paneuropéens est très importante. Nous y tenons beaucoup. Il est très important de rechercher les synergies, et d'éviter la concurrence stérile. C'est possible et nous y sommes arrivés pour le secrétariat du Comité intergouvernemental de négociation de l'accord juridiquement contraignant. La répartition des tâches entre l'unité de liaison, la Commission économique pour l'Europe des Nations Unies, l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture, le Programme des Nations unies pour l'environnement et l'Institut européen de la forêt est excellente. C'est de bon augure pour l'avenir.

Le deuxième document que nous devons adopter demain est en effet *le mandat ministériel d'Oslo en vue de la négociation d'un accord juridiquement contraignant sur les forêts d'Europe*,

En Europe, nous avons aujourd'hui des conventions sur l'eau, sur la conservation de la vie sauvage et du milieu naturel, sur la pollution atmosphérique transfrontière à longue distance, sur l'accès à l'information, la participation du public au processus décisionnel et l'accès à la justice en matière d'environnement, et bien d'autres encore. Nous aurons bientôt, je l'espère, une convention sur les forêts d'Europe.

Une plus grande visibilité, une plus grande importance, sera ainsi donnée aux forêts. Aux forêts en tant que telles, de manière complète avec toutes leurs fonctions, et non plus seulement par le prisme de la biodiversité, du climat ou de l'énergie par exemple. Ce sera une réelle avancée.

Monsieur le Président, Mesdames et Messieurs les Ministres,

Je souhaite en conclusion réaffirmer combien la France, souhaite le développement d'une politique forestière ambitieuse, au niveau paneuropéen (46 pays), comme au niveau de l'UE (27 pays). Nous faisons un lien fort entre cet accord juridiquement contraignant en Europe, les suites du livre vert concernant la protection des forêts et l'information sur les forêts dans l'UE,

et la révision de la stratégie pour les forêts de l'UE. Et enfin, je voudrais remercier la Norvège et l'unité de liaison d'Oslo pour leur travail quotidien depuis quatre ans et souhaiter bonne chance à l'Espagne qui a accepté de prendre le relais.

Je vous remercie de votre attention.

English version

Chairman,

Ministers,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would now like to stress how much France is looking forward to taking part in the work of this Sixth Ministerial Conference here in Oslo. I must unfortunately apologize to you on behalf of Bruno Le Maire who has had to remain in Paris to prepare the G20 Meeting of Agriculture Ministers.

You know that France initiated the MCPFE Process with Finland in 1989 and that the First Ministerial Conference took place in Strasbourg in 1990, in a different political and economic context. The context of forests was different too. The Process was renamed FOREST EUROPE and we are pleased to gather here to take a new start.

Chairman,

Our Conference is to adopt two documents, which we will sign tomorrow.

The first is *the Oslo Ministerial Decision: European Forests 2020*.

The State of Europe's Forests 2011 report was presented to us this morning. It is a remarkable, very comprehensive technical and policy document as it describes, for the first time, forest policy, institutions and instruments in Europe. The situation of European forests is satisfactory and they produce the goods and services expected of them by society.

For the fourth time since 1995, we shall publish very shortly in France the indicators for the sustainable management of French forests, to be presented in the same way as European forest indicators.

Based on this current state of forests, the draft Decision defines a vision and goals and objectives for European forests in 2020. France adheres to and welcomes the Decision.

We are also going to decide, I quote, «to develop a FOREST EUROPE work programme with prioritised joint European actions to be carried out in cooperation with partners and other organisations, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and the European Forest Institute.»

In France's view, such cooperation between pan-European forest bodies is very important and we value it highly. It is very important to seek synergies and avoid fruitless competition. It is possible to do this and we succeeded in the case of the Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on preparing a legally binding agreement. The distribution of assignments between the Liaison Unit, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Environment Programme and the European Forest Institute is excellent and this augurs well for the future.

The second document we are to adopt tomorrow is the *Oslo Ministerial Mandate for Negotiating a Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe*.

In Europe, there are today conventions on water, conservation of wildlife and natural environments, long-distance transfrontier atmospheric pollution, access to information, participation by the public in the decision-making process, access to environmental justice and many other issues. We will soon have, I hope, a European Forest Convention.

Greater visibility and greater importance will thus be given to forests. To forests as such, in a comprehensive way that includes all their functions and no longer views them merely through the prism of biodiversity, climate or energy, for example. This will be a big breakthrough.

Chairman,

Ministers,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to conclude by emphasizing once again how much France is calling for the development

of an ambitious forest policy at pan-European level (46 countries) and EU level (27 countries). We think that there is a strong link between the legally binding agreement in Europe, follow-up to the Green Paper on Forest Protection and Information in the EU, and the Review of the EU Forest Strategy.

And lastly, I would like to thank Norway and the Liaison Unit Oslo for the work they have done on a daily basis for the past four years, and wish good luck to Spain, which has agreed to take over from them.

Thank you for your attention.

Ms. Mariam Valishvili
First Deputy Minister
Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources

Excellencies,

Honorable Chair,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure and honor for me to be here at the FOREST EUROPE Ministerial Conference with you all, distinguished representatives from Europe and all over the world.

On behalf of the Georgian Government I would like to thank Norway for the invitation to this ministerial conference. As a host nation you have done an excellent work since the last conference held in Warsaw in 2007. We appreciate the work that has been done by our distinguished Norwegian hosts and Spain for the remarkable organization of the conference and Oslo Liaison Unit and all of you for the progress made towards building the framework for strengthening cooperation between the states of European continent in the field of forestry.

A key item of the conference is the celebration of a strengthened policy framework for sustainable forest management throughout Europe. In this context we support the idea to begin, based on commitments of previous Ministerial Conferences, a new process of preparation of a legally binding instrument on sustainable forest management in Europe. Moreover, we support adoption of a vision, goals and targets for forests in Europe as part of the future FOREST EUROPE strategy. We are prepared to implement them in our national strategies, programmes and initiatives.

We believe that these high-level policy decisions will enhance the role of forests in mitigating climate change, conserving biodiversity, fostering a low carbon economy, providing green jobs and addressing ways and means of tackling the issue of illegal logging.

We all agree that challenges faced by the sector which combines environmental, economic and social aspects are manifold, globally, regionally and

locally. Protection of forests is necessary, since they are vulnerable to the increasing damage brought by mankind - be it carbon emissions or accelerated urbanization. Protection of forests is necessary, since they have much to contribute to the same mankind in terms of protection of the environment around us and production of valuable goods. It can contribute much to low-carbon economy and produce green jobs.

Forests, covering more than a third of Georgia's land area, constitute a highly valuable natural resource playing an essential role in life and economic development of the country. Georgia enjoys important position among the world's 34 hot spots (including the Caucasus) recognized for rich biodiversity. A natural forest with its biological integrity, productivity and structure greatly surpasses the ecosystems of artificially created forests. 90-95% of Caucasian and in particular Georgian forests is of natural origin. Forests have soil protection and water retention functions and help preserve the power producing capacity of rivers, improve weather conditions and create conducive settings for the development of tourism.

Political and economic crisis in the 1990s as well as complex process of transition to a market driven economy and the growth of the demand for timber in the world market has severely affected the country's forest resources. Unsustainable logging and over grazing have resulted in a significant degradation of forest stock. Unless prevented, these processes may bring irrevocable economic and ecological damage.

Forests in Georgia are most heavily damaged due to over cutting, forest fires, tree diseases etc. The degradation of qualitative consistence and productivity of the forest lead to the reduction and sometimes even loss in the functionality of forests. As a result, avalanches and landslides are happening quite often in the mountainous regions. Virgin forests occupy about 500-600 thousand ha. They are mainly located on steep slopes of Great and Minor Caucasus where the access is restricted. The loss of diversity and changes in species composition in forests is mainly a result of anthropogenic influence.

Despite the mentioned difficulties, sustainable management of Georgia's forests will ensure the development of agriculture, recreational and tourism industries which is an important prerequisite to overcoming the economic crisis. To this end, we

understand that it is essential to undertake a fundamental reform of the forest sector, which, in return, should be grounded on a national forest policy and strategy. Unfortunately due to the tragic situation of Georgia's currently occupied regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, we are limited to control the extensive forest areas in order to ensure implementation of the principles of sustainable forest management on those territories.

Today forestry in Georgia faces great challenges: how to advance forest management practice in order to improve condition of forests devastated during the periods of political instability in the past so that protection, environmental, social and economic functions of forests are balanced and sustainability ensured. Georgia started elaboration of National Forest Programme and improvement of institutional and legal frameworks for the sustainable management of our forests. At the same time, we continue to build capacity of our forestry institutions in order to implement modern forest management practice. Georgia greatly appreciates the assistance we are already receiving from many European countries to achieve best practices in forest sector development and we look forward to more substantial intergovernmental cooperation in terms of stronger networking of forestry experts.

Georgia is a small country with around 35% forest cover which is above the European average and has a significant potential in production of wood and other wood products. On the other hand, it has a great heritage in terms of biodiversity and can play a considerable role in terms of protection of ecosystems and eco-heritage both locally and globally. Georgia creates favorable environment for investment in the sector with its many resources still untapped. On the other hand, almost 20% of forests are protected, being given the status of national parks and protected areas. Still more have special status because of their protective functions and ecological significance.

This balanced policy, a kind of «golden medium» between protection and production is weaved in the overall economic policy of the country which implies e.g. in the energy policy increased ratio of renewable hydro-energy resources of the country to remove the pressure on the forests and harm done to the climate from the use of fossil fuels. Despite the

strong commitment by my government as everywhere, Georgian forests are facing global challenges from hazards due to climate change, fires, etc.

Already more than 90 percent of the electricity production in Georgia comes from renewable sources and in fact, we are exporting renewable energy to our neighbors. We have established an investment friendly and enabling environment for external and internal initiatives in forest management to encourage sustainable management of Georgian forests and are improving our regulations to make them less bureaucratic and more transparent. This can be complemented by large-scale initiatives to grow our forests and advance carbon reduction activities, both of which will need the support of the international community. These programs could allow natural forests to constitute as much as 10 percent of Georgia's territory, offering significant economic and environment benefits. With this, along with other green initiatives, Georgia could become a kind of testing model of low carbon economies, the appeal Georgian president made recently at UNFCCC at Cancun.

Here we are to contribute to the global struggle to solve climate change challenges, safeguard biodiversity and foster a green, low carbon economy. We can set and strive to achieve targets for 2020 and move one step further towards strengthening framework for sustainable forest management throughout Europe. It is up to us to decide how effective and lasting solutions we find.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Protection of forests is a unified responsibility and requires a response from a united humankind.

We must act with resolve and determination, setting aside our short-term interests, actual rivalries or tensions, and taking concrete actions for our long-term good, for the good of the generations to come.

Thank you.

Mr. Peter Bleser

*Parliamentary State Secretary
Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and
Consumer Protection,*

Summary

The conference marks a strengthening of pan-European cooperation for sustainable and multi-functional forest management.

There is great potential in European forests for a Green Economy, i.e. producing raw materials sustainably while at the same time protecting nature, the environment and people's livelihoods.

In a society geared towards sustainability, the use of renewable resources plays a key role – this of course includes in particular forests and the sustainable management of forests. The report on the state of the forests in Europe shows that Europe is in good shape in this context: The report shows that the trends are positive rather than being marked by the destruction and deterioration of forests.

One of the biggest challenges is the conflict between the growing need for wood on the one hand and the demand to extend the non-use of forests i.e. to expand the amount of set-aside forest land on the other.

Sustainably produced wood is an important, indispensable raw material and renewable energy source. Current studies forecast supply shortages in 2030 of 150 to 420 mio cubic meters in the EU alone.

The only answer to this conflict of interest is an integrative, sustainable system of forest management, combining the use and protection of forested land in many different ways.

Germany thus welcomes the fact that Oslo gives the signal for negotiations to commence on a legally binding forestry instrument. The decisions of the 6th Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe strengthen the general conditions for modern forest management throughout Europe.

GREECE

Mr. Foivos Angeletos

Charge d'Affaires

Embassy of Greece in Norway

Excellencies,

Distinguished colleagues and delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Under the current socio-economic circumstances established both at national and international level, green economy can play a vital role for sustainable country development, which can be achieved by means of green economy and particularly by adjusting forest management to climate change, which nowadays affects our lives to a great extent.

Our priority is the protection of our forests by threats (mainly forests fires), the maintenance of biodiversity (a new law has been enacted in 2011), and the sustainable management and development of our forests.

Our country that has legislated and applied sustainable forest development since 1937, is participating in all international Fora promoting protection and sustainable management of the forests of our planet, such as the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (FOREST EUROPE), and all initiatives and European Commission regulations on this topic.

We welcome the effort of those participating to this process, and particularly the Liaison Unit, and we pledge to sign the Ministerial Decision.

Mr. Endre Kardeván
Secretary of State
Ministry of Rural Development

Your Excellencies, Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Hungary has been a supporter and participant of the FOREST EUROPE initiative since the Strasbourg conference. In the past twenty years or so, this process has been promoting the issue of European forests and providing platforms for the discussion of technical and policy matters, and the nineteen decisions adopted so far by the ministerial conferences have become the guidelines for forest management in Europe and in Hungary.

The last conference in Warsaw raised not only the success stories of the process but also the issue of how to continue. Although the adopted decisions fully cover the topic of sustainable forest management, it has also become clear that a dynamic co-operation cannot be limited only to the discussion of newly emerging technical issues in the field of forest management. We need to move forward, so thanks to a thorough technical preparation, we now have two draft decisions on the table.

The European Forests 2020 reinforces the process, including its specific mission, goals, targets and short- and medium-term visions until 2020. FOREST EUROPE will continue to act as a major platform for European forest management.

The other decision will give empowerment to launch the negotiations of a legally binding agreement on forests in Europe and will, at the same time, delineate a framework for such negotiations.

By launching the negotiations we will reinforce our co-operation, show a regional example to the countries of other continents and send a clear and authentic message to the United Nations Forum on Forests when dealing with the issue of a legally binding instrument on forestry

At this point allow me, please to add some thoughts to the highlights of this conference.

Following the social and economic changes of 1989 in Hungary, the practice of forest management was restructured with a view to the requirements of EU

membership and, as a result, the forest legislation was also reviewed. Hungary's new Act on Forests passed in 2009 continues to maintain an overall forestry planning regime, increases the possibilities for social consultation in the planning phase and maintains the official control of plan implementation, but it also transfers various powers to qualified forestry professionals working as entrepreneurs in the private sector.

The new Act on Forests pays special attention to preventing illegal logging and introduces a DOC system to keep track of timber of legal origin. In order to ensure harmony with EU legislation, the practical implementation of this system will be in line with the regulation of the European Council laying down the obligations of operators who place timber and timber products on the market.

The new Act on Forests and the related implementation decrees reinforce the expansion of nature-friendly forest management and the protection of biodiversity. The new Act on Forests gives special respect to the introduction of forestry methods ensuring continuous coverage in state-owned forests that account for some 60% of Hungary's total forest area. Constant efforts are made to increase the rate of natural renewals and indigenous associate tree species.

It is our task to preserve the biodiversity of forests and we, forest managers, are best positioned to perform this task most efficiently in view of all the forest functions. Hopefully, this attitude will be properly reflected in the biodiversity sections of the legally binding agreement.

The issue of climate change is important for our sector, given that Hungary is one of those European countries that are highly exposed to climate change. The climatic endowments and, in particular, the often critically low water levels may question the survival of closed forests in the plain zones of Hungary. As to hilly areas, the rate of vegetation zone shifting may endanger our indigenous forest associations. Therefore we must give special emphasis in the new convention to improve the adaptation of forests and to mitigate the impacts of climate change. However, we must not forget about the carbon storage and sequestration potential of forests.

Hopefully, the next round of climate change

negotiations in South Africa will bring agreement on a more definite recognition of the carbon capture potential of forests and timber.

It would be important to recognise the role of forests in carbon emissions trading and to use the trade revenues, among others, for financing forest management and timber products. Accordingly, Hungary's new Act on Forests stipulates that the revenues generated from forest carbon storage and sequestration must be used for the development of forest management.

Finally, I would like to confirm that Hungary welcomes and accepts the two decisions of this conference.

Thank you for your attention.

Ms. Svandís Svavarsdóttir
Minister
Ministry for the Environment

Norwegian hosts

Co-chairs

Ministers, other heads of delegations,

Ladies and gentlemen

Firstly, let me thank the Government of Norway for inviting us and hosting this important conference. It is a pleasure being here in Oslo on this occasion and have the opportunity address this conference - a conference that is a milestone in the Pan-European Forest Ministerial level process to advance protection and sustainable use of forests in Europe - The FOREST EUROPE process

It makes the topics of this conference even more relevant that it coincides with the International Year of Forests declared by the United Nations.

We come to the Oslo conference to discuss policies and legal frameworks regarding common visions for the governance of one of Europe's most important living natural resources - the vast and diverse forest estate that encompasses around 40% of our continent and delivers multiple ecosystem services we all depend on.

The Oslo Ministerial Decision; European Forests 2020 - is therefore an important declaration by the European countries to guide their national policies and commitments to advance the protection and use of their forests.

It is further a major step for the signatory countries to decide here in Oslo upon entering negotiations towards a legally binding agreement on European forests.

It is a fact that forests are national assets and their governance is bound to national policies and legislations. It is therefore the responsibility of a sovereign state to appropriately conserve and secure sustainable governance of its forest resources.

However, and very importantly, do forests ecosystems also have common resource properties

that impact across and beyond national boundaries. Let me just mention few important issues you all know - such as climate, water and soil protection and biodiversity that are all forest related issues of common concern that need our joint and collective responsibility.

A joint action towards protection and sustainable use, beyond the capacity of the nation state, is therefore needed to secure the delivery of such forest ecosystem services for the common good.

The FOREST EUROPE Ministerial process can hopefully serve as a key instrument to bring together states and their interests in negotiating common and comprehensive frameworks that can get the legitimacy to advance our common forest related issues.

Therefore, Iceland, appreciates that this meeting will initiate and formally start negotiations towards a legally binding agreements on forests in Europe, that will be considered for signature in the year 2013. There is a need for such an agreement and it will be a major achievement if European countries commit themselves here in Oslo to jointly work towards such an agreement that aims to secure the provision of the vital ecosystem services forests provide.

Madame Co-chair,

Iceland is currently among the least forested countries in Europe. Our history tells a story of environmental degradation, where the forest and woodland cover is recorded to have decreased by about 95% since our land was settled 11 hundred years ago. Fortunately, there has been a great national commitment during the last decades to revert this vicious cycle by progressively working on different land reclamation measures, resulting in significant increase of the forest and woodland cover.

However, more needs to be done. It is a major priority to protect, reclaim and expand the native woodlands of Iceland. Further there is now a proven potential to grow productive forests for the provision of renewable wood products in many sites; forests are important for recreation and public health and have further an important role in mitigating climate change to meet our climatic commitments.

I see the FOREST EUROPE process and the relevant decisions important to guide our national work. I would like to highlight the objectives of the European

Forests 2020 declaration such as contribution of forests to a green economy, climate change mitigation, biodiversity conservation, to combat desertification and provision of renewable products.

Madame Co-chair,

Iceland fully supports the work of FOREST EUROPE. Our joint endeavour beyond the Oslo conference will hopefully raise awareness and strengthen *management*, conservation and development of all types of forests in Europe for the benefit of current and future generations.

Thank you

Mr. Shane Mcentee
Minister of State
Ministry for Forestry

Co-Chairmen, Ministers, Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

First of all, I would like to give my sincere thanks to the Governments of Norway and Spain, for preparing and hosting this Sixth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe.

I am most grateful for the opportunity to address you here today, in the beautiful city of Oslo and, on behalf of Ireland to offer our support for, both the Oslo Ministerial Decision, European Forests 2020 and the Ministerial Mandate to open negotiations on a Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in the pan European region.

Over the last five years or so, the concept of a «green economy» has shifted, dramatically, as the world has realised, that sustainable economic growth, job creation and the eradication of poverty, can all be achieved without environmental damage, ecological scarcity or social disparity. Today, many countries across the globe are well advanced in the transition towards greener and smarter economies. Since taking office in early March, job creation and economic growth have been, and will continue to be, our Government's chief priorities. I am convinced, that transition to a green and smart economy is the quickest and most direct route to achieving those goals.

Forestry and forest-based industries already provide millions of jobs throughout the pan European region and, in turn, those jobs deliver a substantial contribution to prosperity, particularly in rural areas. However, the benefits of forests cannot and should not be measured, only, in economic terms. The contribution of forests to our quality of life, to achieving our environmental objectives and international environmental commitments, particularly with regard to preserving biodiversity, mitigating climate change and conserving precious water resources, cannot be overstated.

If we are to continue to reap these immense benefits and to release the enormous potential benefits that a healthy and vibrant forest sector can

bring to our society, our forests must be managed in a sustainable way. In that context, the voluntary FOREST EUROPE process has served us extremely well and the guidelines and criteria, developed over the years, by FOREST EUROPE, have had a significant influence on the formulation and implementation of forest policies at national level, and have introduced and helped nurture the principles of sustainable forest management right across the region.

So...what of the future? Sustainable forest management can be further improved and more widely applied if this conference fully embraces the ambitious vision set out in the Ministerial Decision, European Forests 2020. That vision, where all our forests contribute effectively to sustainable development, where they support a green economy and address the many environmental challenges that beset this region, can, and will become reality. I believe that the goals and targets set out in the Ministerial decision are appropriate and the correct stepping stones to bring us to the realisation of that vision.

Great credit is due to the skill and resolve of the Norwegian and Spanish Co-chairs whose spectacular efforts have allowed us today, to consider how sustainable forest management might be further enhanced through the establishment of an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee, with a mandate to develop a legally binding agreement on forests in Europe.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish the liaison unit, the secretariat, the negotiation bureau and of course, the members of the international negotiating committee, calm waters and a steady wind for the epic voyage that lies before them. It is most appropriate that, in this, the International year of the Forest, your voyage commences from the magnificent port of Oslo which, down through the ages has witnessed the launch of so many epic journeys. But, experienced seafarers will tell you, that it is not the going out of port, but the coming in, that determines the success of a voyage, so, as you depart with our very best wishes, I'm sure I speak for us all when I say that we eagerly look forward to your return and to seeing the fruits of your deliberations, when the negotiations conclude in two year's time.

Go raibh míle maith agaibh
Slán go fóill, agus beannacht Dé oraibh go léir.

Mr. Giovanni Umberto De Vito

Diplomatic advisor to the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies

Mr. Chairperson, Ministers and Delegates,

I would like to express my satisfaction on this event representing a traditional and innovative landmark in the history of forest management in Europe. Traditional because the process has a long history behind itself, innovative because something new and potentially far-reaching is under consideration: a pan-European forest Convention.

Over more than twenty years the *FOREST EUROPE* process has proved to be a useful and leading mechanism to deal with European forest challenges, first of all the need to jointly protect and use the forest resources enshrined into the well known concept of «sustainable forest management». It is clear how the process has continuously stimulated forestry policies and forestry activities carried out at the European and the national level, also proving to the rest of the world the European will to manage its forests at its best. Forests are a key element in rural Europe.

Continuous progress towards the sustainable forest management has been achieved thanks to the efforts of the *Liaison Unit Oslo* and the information provided by the national correspondents. This contribution has been recognized in the report on the «State of Europe's forests 2011». Together with agriculture, forests have been representing for centuries the main resource for rural and mountain areas development in Europe and Italy. Nowadays national authorities and the wider public attach greater attention to environmental protection and forest externalities. National and international policies now take into account forest functions going beyond the production objectives, involving new issues and challenges such as climate change mitigation, biodiversity conservation, energy production, water cycle management, soil erosion and desertification fighting, natural risks prevention and forest historical-cultural landscape management.

As you probably know, the Italian territory is covered by woods for about one third, that is to say a bit less than ten and a half million hectares of woodland (as defined by FAO) that have a great value

from any possible point of view.

In Italy there is a strong tradition in forest protection to preserve the ecosystem for the future generations. The State Forest Service (CFS), a national police corps specialized in the defense of rural and forest resources and in the protection of the environment, landscape and ecosystem, is part of this tradition.

The most important forest law was enacted in 1923 and is still in force. The 1923 Act - recognizing the rule of forests in the protection of soil - introduced the «hydrogeological bound» so imposing many limits in the land uses.

Many things have changed in Italy over the last decades. Forestry policies and the forestry management have gradually been shifted to the local Administrations, while the function of controlling the implementation of the laws and European rules is committed to the national level, and, specifically in this sector to the State Forest Service.

However, the spirit of the 1923 Act is still present together with the strong bounds for the Italian forests. It is very important to keep the bounds in order to protect the ecosystems. At the same time, it is important to have a more flexible approach in order to allow a good management of woods and their resources.

Briefly, we have to balance two different and sometime conflicting objectives: soil and landscape protection on one side; production of wood and other valuable services to the benefit of rural peoples on the other side. Faced with an on-going economic crisis and due to globalization pressure, it is, indeed, difficult to achieve the appropriate combination between protection and production.

In this regard we are ready to consider a Legally Binding Agreement on forests. On one hand, such a new convention could add value for a sustainable and effective European forest management; while on the other, it might introduce external and excessive limitations in forest activities. Finding the appropriate balance between these two different aspects will be the real challenge of the negotiations.

During this process, we see a specific role for the European Union as well. The EU could assist in forest knowledge, for instance, by supporting and co-financing common, comparable and long

term collection of information from national forest inventories and forest monitoring as partly already done in the past. Real action on forests is an urgent need for joint and reliable sources of knowledge.

The further development of the *FOREST EUROPE* process and, in particular, the European forest Convention will require careful attention in the coming years. I would eventually like to show my appreciation for the start of such activities in 2011 - International Year of Forest - expressing the hope that a «growing life» for European forests may represent a «growing life» for European peoples, thanks to the contribution of forests to the Green Economy.

Italy is therefore pleased to join the consensus on the two final documents of this Conference.

Mr. Jānis Dūklavs
Minister
Ministry of Agriculture

Madame Chair, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is an honor and pleasure for me to address FOREST EUROPE Ministerial Conference on behalf of Latvia's Government.

Countries of Europe are responsible for the stewardship of approximately one quarter of the world's forests. This challenge should be met in a manner that ensures sustainable forest management including economical contribution to society's development, social functions and conservation and appropriate enhancement of forest biodiversity.

Significant progress has been made in the years since the First Ministerial Conference in Strasbourg, when Europe made the first step toward common understanding of the role forests and forest sector can play in a rapidly changing environment.

Five targeted steps toward Oslo have augmented increasing common understanding of the forests' unique potential in supporting sustainable national and regional development and green economy.

The forest sector ranks high in Latvia's economy. We have to recognize today that successful use of national forest resources from sustainably managed forests during the past two years succored to soften the impact of global economic crisis providing substantial part of countries export value.

The progress was achieved by involving forest stakeholders - forest based industry and private forest owners, as well as civil society, non-governmental organizations and in many cases learning by doing.

Today in Oslo our attention is concentrated on two decisions.

Sustainable forest management has been the central issue in FOREST EUROPE process and even now sustainable forest management in its wider understanding helps to keep all forest related issues united as reflected in the decision European Forests 2020.

Defined and agreed goals and targets to be achieved by 2020, will ensure the contribution of

European forests to the green economy, including through increased provision of wood, other forest products and ecosystem services from sustainable sources and optimize socio-economic and cultural benefits, especially for livelihoods, rural development and employment from European forests.

As regards Legally Binding Agreement (LBA), Latvia perceives LBA as an important instrument in future, including its role in reaching goals and targets for European Forests. Therefore mandate for negotiating a Legally Binding Agreement on forests in Europe can be important milestone in further FOREST EUROPE process and it could add value in international level in the future.

We would like to emphasize that the full potential of added value of LBA, may be not adequately evaluated today. But if we look to the future? Our aim is to achieve balanced and stable continuity of all economic, environmental, cultural and social functions of forest and to contribute to the internationally agreed goals and objectives on sustainable development. In this context it can serve also as a good consolidation instrument for other policy initiatives.

Madame Chair, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

We have a great pleasure to be there and participate at FOREST EUROPE Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe and be ready on behalf of Latvia's Government adopt a vision, goals and targets for forests in Europe as part of the future FOREST EUROPE strategy and decide to enter into negotiations on a legally binding agreement on forests in the pan-European region.

I would like to extend my acknowledgements to the Liaison Unit of FOREST EUROPE. They did an excellent job in the preparatory process and organizing this Conference.

Mr. Chairman, Excellence's, Ladies and Gentlemen and dear colleagues, Latvia would like to thank the Government of Norway for excellent contribution to the Pan-European Process and our support to Spain, all GCC (General Co-ordinating Committee) members and Negotiating Committee in our further work.

Thank you for attention!

Mr. Gediminas Kazlauskas
Minister
Ministry of Environment

Mr. Chairman, Ministers, Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Lithuanian Government, I would like to thank Norway for the invitation to the sixth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests, for the hospitality during our stay and for the excellent preparatory work supported by partners, which allows us to have fruitful discussions during these days.

It is a great pleasure and honour for me to be here in Oslo and together with colleagues from all over Europe to set a significant milestone of the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (FOREST EUROPE) process, which started 21 years ago.

In the light of the International Year of Forests, we have an opportunity to once again evaluate our achievements, to reinforce our commitments, made during the Strasbourg, Helsinki, Lisbon, Vienna and Warsaw Conferences, and to undertake the new ones towards the implementation of sustainable forest management.

Since the first ministerial conference in Strasbourg we have been able to see a significant progress in the field of sustainable forest management. The decisions of the five previous conferences are operational and we can observe their direct influence on European forests. The Lithuanian Forest Policy is also based on the Pan-European principles of sustainable forest management. Due to the implementation of sustainable forest management over the last twenty years, forest coverage in Lithuania has increased by 3,3 percent and reached 33,2 percent while at the same time growing stock volume has risen significantly.

However, today the forestry sector is facing new challenges. Forest ecosystem services are becoming increasingly important as well as the role of forest in the energy sector and climate change mitigation. The recent trends of the development of the forestry sector might cause difficulties in maintaining long-term economic viability. In my opinion, only coordinated efforts at global, regional and national levels could help to tackle these problems.

In this respect, the Oslo Ministerial Conference has a high political importance. The decision to start negotiations on Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe is challenging, but I think that a legal framework could be an effective policy option for addressing the challenges and bringing opportunities for forests and the forestry sector in Europe, as well as it could serve as a good example of cooperation in the forestry sector.

I would like to note that by signing the prepared documents we are very timely focusing on the forest-related issues, which have been of high relevance during recent years and in which numerous initiatives at regional and national level have been taken so far.

Dear ladies and gentlemen, I am confident that our cooperation at Pan-European level will have a significant contribution to the achievement of goals to preserve European forests which are set in the first Oslo Ministerial Decision

Thank you for your attention!

Mr. Marco Schank

Minister

*Ministry for Sustainable Development
and Infrastructure*

Messieurs les Co-présidents, Messieurs les Ministres,

Chers Collègues, Mesdames, Messieurs,

Au nom du Gouvernement luxembourgeois, je voudrais d'abord remercier sincèrement le Gouvernement norvégien qui, de concert avec le Gouvernement espagnol, a consacré tant d'efforts à l'organisation de cette sixième Conférence ministérielle pour la Protection des Forêts en Europe, ici à Oslo.

Tous les 4 ans, nous évaluons nos progrès et il est encourageant de voir que le bilan est globalement positif en Europe. Ce n'est malheureusement pas le cas dans d'autres régions du globe. En effet, je considère que la situation des forêts au niveau mondial reste préoccupante, surtout en raison de la dégradation des forêts et de la déforestation massive dans les pays tropicaux.

Or cette année, nous célébrons l'Année Internationale des Forêts et j'insiste sur le pluriel de forêts. Avec cette dénomination, nous avons voulu souligner la responsabilité commune de l'humanité, donc aussi la notre, envers ces écosystèmes uniques que sont les forêts dans le monde entier.

Dans cette optique, je me réjouis des nouveaux engagements que nous allons signer aujourd'hui à Oslo et plus particulièrement la formulation d'une vision commune pour les forêts en Europe, ainsi que les buts et les objectifs que nous nous sommes fixés. Je me pose cependant la question si nous avons suffisamment englobé dans notre vision cette responsabilité commune au niveau mondial. Les actions prévues dans nos objectifs en faveur de la bonne gouvernance et la lutte contre le bois illégal vont certes dans ce sens, mais seront-elles suffisantes pour stopper la dégradation et la perte de forêts au niveau mondial ? Je suis d'avis que nos efforts futurs doivent encore d'avantage englober ces préoccupations.

Je me réjouis aussi de l'initiative en vue de l'ouverture de négociations devant aboutir à un instrument juridiquement contraignant sur la protection des

forêts en Europe. Je suis d'avis que ce futur accord est une chance unique pour doter nos forêts d'un cadre juridique qui permettra leur protection efficace face aux nombreux défis qui nous préoccupent, notamment celui du changement climatique, de la raréfaction des ressources naturelles, de la dégradation des sols et de la perte de biodiversité. Ce futur accord va aussi nous permettre de mieux défendre les forêts contre les décisions adverses prises dans d'autres secteurs d'activité et qui ont un impact parfois indirectement négatif sur les forêts. Seul un accord de ce type permettra de prendre des engagements à long terme pour la protection de cet écosystème naturel unique que sont les forêts et qui fonctionne selon des processus d'évolution basés sur le long terme.

En relation avec les problématiques du changement climatique et du recul de la biodiversité en Europe, je tiens à saluer les objectifs et les buts que nous nous sommes fixés. Le Luxembourg a récemment adopté un plan d'action pour le climat qui englobe une stratégie et des mesures concrètes d'adaptation des forêts au changement climatique. De plus, nos efforts pour atténuer les effets du changement climatique grâce au secteur forestier se poursuivent par des actions de promotion de l'utilisation du matériau bois et la mobilisation accrue du bois en forêt, notamment dans le cadre d'un projet transnational au niveau de la Grande Région avec nos collègues allemands, belges et français.

En ce qui concerne la biodiversité, nous sommes actuellement dans une phase d'évaluation d'un paquet de mesures, le Plan National de Protection de la Nature, qui sont mises en œuvre depuis 2007. Dans ce cadre, nous avons mis en place des réserves forestières intégrales, représentatives de tous les types de forêts du pays, sur plus de 1% de la superficie forestière totale, dans le but de créer des réservoirs de biodiversité pour les générations futures. Aussi, nous exécutons un programme ambitieux de réhabilitation de forêts riveraines particulièrement riche en biodiversité.

Enfin, c'est avec un intérêt particulier que je note la mission de sensibiliser d'avantage le public et de mettre en œuvre une stratégie de communication. La sensibilisation du public pour la nature et les forêts est une mission qui me tient particulièrement à cœur. Cet aspect a été substantiellement renforcé au Luxembourg en inscrivant cette mission dans la

loi organique de l'institution étatique responsable des forêts, en renforçant le partenariat avec les autres acteurs du secteur et en dotant les différentes régions du pays de centres d'accueil pour le grand public.

Au nom du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg, je tiens à exprimer toutes mes félicitations aux Gouvernements norvégien et espagnol d'avoir organisé de manière aussi remarquable cette sixième Conférence ici à Oslo. Mes compliments également à tous ceux qui ont contribué à la réussite de cette conférence.

MONTENEGRO

Mr. Tarzan Milosevic

Minister

Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development

Dear Minister Brekk, my dear colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to be able to greet you all on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of Montenegro and in my own name, and express satisfaction for attending one of the most significant events for European Forestry - The Sixth Ministerial Conference on Protection of Forests in Europe (FOREST EUROPE), which is held in one of the most beautiful European cities - Oslo.

Within the agriculture sector, forests in Montenegro are the most important resource of rural areas in terms of their environmental, economic and social value. The objectives of rural development are thus integrated in forest and forest land management. Through their numerous functions, forests make living in these areas possible, providing substantial economic safety to rural households, fuelwood and construction material needs, wood and non-wood products, and possibilities for recreation and tourism thus creating the basis for development of entrepreneurship and new job positions.

Globalization, fast economic growth, urbanization and climate change change the role of forests and requirements of local and international public for their services. Forests are increasingly seen as a complex ecosystem making a significant contribution to conservation of the planet and quality of life.

I am convinced the results of this Conference will have an impact on raising awareness of the importance of forests and forestry in the entire world and will present a turning point for more efficient implementation of the commitments we have jointly defined at previous Conferences. When speaking about that, I especially think about the sensitive moment the entire society has currently found itself in: the negative impact of climate change, efforts to protect biodiversity, water supply problems and the need for ensuring renewable sources of energy. The role that forests have in mitigating these phenomena is

enormous and unique and it is therefore necessary we all get involved in a more specific manner and include forests and forestry into the relevant political agendas in Europe and worldwide.

Since 1990, FOREST EUROPE - the Ministerial Conference on Protection of Forests in Europe - as a regional political process, has been putting efforts in protecting forests by promoting sustainable forest management. Montenegro, as an active participant of the last two Conferences, has drafted its reform processes within the forestry sector based on the principles laid down in the Declarations and Resolutions from Vienna 2003 and Warsaw 2007 at the 4th and 5th Ministerial Conference on Protection of Forests in Europe. In relation to this, the adoption of the process of National Forest Programme in Montenegro, as the key instrument in accomplishing sustainable forest management, as well as working on its results have guided and will guide the work of the state institutions in forestry sector.

This is what we have managed to do since the last Ministerial Conference on Protection of Forests in Europe:

We have adopted the National Forest Policy in 2008 laying down the objectives of Montenegro regarding forestry sector development, clearly indicating the activities that are going to be implemented to reach those objectives;

The Government has adopted the National Action Plan for Combatting Illegal Activities in Forestry in 2009. This document presents the response of the competent state institutions, civil society and other stakeholders to undertake a wide range of activities and through participation of the society as a whole to stop or minimize negative phenomena in forestry. Satisfactory improvement has been reached, especially when speaking about cross border cooperation and cooperation between the institutions. This has resulted in reduction of illegal harvesting;

We have passed a new Forest Law at the end of last year, which, together with previously adopted Law on Reproductive Material of Forest Trees and the Law on Hunting and Game encompasses the legislative framework in this area;

Adoption of all of the above-mentioned documents was preceded by wide public consultation with numerous stakeholders.

We are currently at the final phase of implementation of the National Forest Inventory, which is for the first time being carried out in Montenegro. Work started two years ago when we defined the Methodology; field training of forestry experts was carried out and the field work was completed in 2010. We are currently working on data analysis and the final results will be available next year. Preliminary results indicate that there will be an increase in the area of forest and forest land, currently around 54%, making Montenegro one of the most forested countries in Europe;

We are working hard to improve the methodology for forest management planning, which will create the necessary prerequisites for managing this sensitive resource according to the most advanced standards;

As a response to numerous challenges, we are in the process of defining a new, more efficient institutional framework which will harmonize the functions and responsibilities of Governmental institutions in the forestry sector, in order to ensure adequate enforcement of policy within the sector. After respecting the recommendations provided by a Functional Analysis of forestry sector institutions, we are carrying out a Business Processes Review;

We are constantly working on building human resources in forestry, with the assistance of international Projects and institutions (FODEMO project funded by the Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, EU Delegation in Montenegro, SNV, Norwegian Forestry Group).

All of the above mentioned, together with work on setting up a Forest Information System that will improve planning and monitoring at national and local level and the support we are providing to establish a sustainable private forestry sector, will contribute to reaching the vision of forestry in Montenegro, which reads: Improve the existing condition of all the forests so that the protection, environmental, social and economic forest functions are balanced, and sustainability ensured.

The documents Montenegro will sign at this Conference fully comply with our commitments to give forests and forestry the place they deserve in the future development of the Ecological State of Montenegro, where 60% of the population is related to villages and areas abundant in forests.

Finally, I would especially like to thank to the host of the Conference, my colleague from Norway, Minister Brekk and to all the others who have contributed to the excellent organization of this event and to wish successful organization of the next Conference to Spain.

Thank you for your attention and congratulations to all for 2011 - International Year of Forests.

NETHERLANDS

Mr. Henk Soorsma

*Member of the Management Team
Department of Nature, Landscape and
Rural Affairs
Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture
and Innovation*

On behalf of

Mr. Henk Bleker

*Minister
Ministry for Agriculture and Foreign
Trade*

Mister Chairman, Excellencies, Distinguished
Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of Mr. Henk Bleker, Minister for Agriculture and Foreign Trade we like to express our gratitude to the Governments of Spain and Norway for preparing and hosting this Sixth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe at this beautiful venue.

The moment for this Sixth Ministerial Conference is very well chosen: about a half year after the conference on climate change in Cancún and the session of the United Nations Forum on Forest with its high level segment and one year before the Rio+20 Summit. And last but not least it takes place during the International Year of Forests.

We can practice what we agreed on and prepare for Rio+20. Forests are now prominent on the international political agenda.

The current developments underscore the importance of forests: forests emerged as a significant component of three environmental conventions and therefore as part of the solution of many global issues as climate change, biodiversity, food security, and energy supply.

It is estimated by 2050 the world population will have reached 9 billion people, putting a tremendous pressure on the natural resources of our world, resulting in increased consumption and higher demand for bio fuels. These developments are likely to expand the proportion of land devoted to agriculture at

the expense of our world's forests. Forestry, agriculture, and land use change account for 30% of greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore we cannot succeed in addressing these global challenges, including climate change, without including these elements.

Without any doubt sustainable forest management in a global context plays a key role in dealing with these challenges, as the importance of the multiple economic, environmental and social benefits provided by forests multi-functionality, is generally being recognised.

In our view the FOREST EUROPE process, in close collaboration with other existing regional processes, is very important and instrumental to translate global commitments and actions to the national level and, vice versa, inform the international policy arena about specific regional experiences and lessons learned.

Therefore I can let you know that The Netherlands supports the opening of negotiations for a legally binding agreement. The aim of The Netherlands is that this agreement will add significant value to the current voluntary FOREST EUROPE process as well as to the existing international forest-related processes, while avoiding any unnecessary duplication with these processes and can be implemented by signatory states and forest managers and owners in a cost efficient way.

The Netherlands also supports the Decision on Europe 2020. It reflects in many ways the main policy of our commitment in achieving sustainable forest management at the global and European level. An integrated approach with equivalent attention to ecological, economic and social aspects is starting point for us in realizing sustainable forest management. We will commit to the European 2020 targets but in the framework of our main policy we will especially focus on two issues:

- making the timber trade chain more sustainable by promoting legal and sustainable timber production and
- an adequate and sustainably financing of forest management, especially by mobilising additional financial resources from the private sector so the economic value of forests will stimulate its conservation.

The latter means that a move has to be made, namely the recognition of the significance and value of

ecosystem services of forests and a lack of adequate financing mechanisms for them.

As already addressed in the Decision, the challenges faced by forests, at the global and European, level cannot be addressed through forest policy measures alone. Therefore we have to look beyond the forest. So in our policy we will also focus on greening the trade chains of those products that currently contribute to deforestation like palm oil and soy, and we will focus on a more productive and efficient agriculture to reduce the pressure on existing forest areas.

Ladies and Gentlemen to conclude:

The Netherlands is convinced that when our efforts at the Pan-European level across all sectors can be streamlined and geared towards the achievement of the global objectives on forests, future generations are in a position to sustainable use and conserve our precious forests to the benefits of all.

Thank you for your attention.

NORWAY

Mr. Lars Peder Brekk
Minister
Ministry of Agriculture and Food

Excellencies

Ladies and Gentlemen

Dear Colleagues,

Sustainable forest management is an evolving concept. We need continuously to adapt to new challenges with the aim to secure forest resources and simultaneously ensure forest services for society. For these reasons we should continue developing tools and means to manage our forests in a holistic manner and for making timely decisions.

Forest policy is a national responsibility and forests are national sovereignty, but FOREST EUROPE creates unique opportunities for European cooperation. This cooperation has also initiated work that has contributed to development and implementation of national policies and tools for sustainable forest management in a cost-effective manner.

I appreciate the fact that we in the Oslo Ministerial Decision «European Forests 2020» have suggested to improve the tools for sustainable forest management, as an action for follow up of this conference.

Forests cannot be managed with a tunnel vision. Sustainable forest management is a holistic strategy that has proved to work and that has restored the forest in Europe after unsustainable practices in the past. Today the multiple benefits from forests are under threat and the role of sustainable forest management in securing forest benefits is not well understood by many. From some sectors and interest groups, forests are viewed with particular interests - and often within limited scope.

FOREST EUROPE can help us in the effort to find solutions to increasing pressures on forest resources. A legally binding agreement can help us in this effort. A legally binding agreement within the framework of FOREST EUROPE can support our work towards a future, where forests contribute effectively to sustainable development and green economy.

In my opinion we have an opportunity now to

lay the basis for a future oriented cooperation and for a legal framework, which can effectively secure delivering forests goods and services. We should not miss this opportunity. We will not get many new chances to correct inaction.

Norway has domestic experience in the field of forest and natural resources management that is guiding our policies for the future. Through the last hundred years, both the standing stock and the annual growth of forests in Norway have more than doubled, although removals have been relatively stable. Due to this long term effort, the forest in Norway is currently sequestering a volume of CO₂ similar to half of the country's domestic greenhouse gas emissions.

The current status of our forest provides opportunities for increased use of biomass for energy, to substitute more energy demanding construction material by wood, create employment opportunities - and to enhance the environmental values of our forests.

We are well aware of the benefit that systematic work of restoring the Norwegian forests has had on the economic development, environmental values and the society of our country. We would like to contribute to similar processes in other parts of the world. Norway is involved in developing cooperation projects for this purpose. We will also underline the importance of global and regional forest processes and partnerships in this regard.

Through the work of FOREST EUROPE we have developed strategies for sustainable forest management and tools available for the European region. FOREST EUROPE is an open, participatory and transparent process. Sustainable forest management is about partnership as much as about planting trees, conserving or managing forest resources. We have a lot to share with other regions.

We are experiencing challenging times. The economic crisis, increasing global temperatures due to climate change need to be met. Norway, like other states, is seeking for all possibilities to mitigate climate change effects.

It is crucial to find new and more efficient ways of utilising energy from renewable sources, wood, wind or solar power. Gradually we must change the way we develop and use technologies to make the transition to a low carbon economy. Role of sustainably managed

forests cannot be misjudged in this respect. As modern technologies evolve, one material remains as desirable now as it was in the very past: wood. Forests can become part of a solution.

We need to meet new challenges. We need more international cooperation in the future - not less. We need stronger commitments and an effective framework. FOREST EUROPE is more relevant than ever.

Thank you.

Mr. Janusz Zaleski

*Under-Secretary of State and Chief
Nature Conservator
Ministry of Environment*

Chairman,

Distinguished Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me take this opportunity, Mr. Minister Lars Peder Brekk, to congratulate you and the Secretariat for the excellent preparation of this Conference.

The Sixth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe takes place after the 2007 Conference hosted by Poland. I am convinced that just like all previous Conferences this one, held in Oslo in 2011, has already become an important moment for agreements regarding forests and forestry in Europe.

By creating an LBA we must ensure that it includes specific decisions in order to effectively protect forests in Europe.

We should not follow the example of other international negotiation processes, which for several years cannot reach the final agreement.

The negotiations on the UNFCCC are just an example.

Therefore, it is important to assess the changes and the progress of improving the state of condition of European forests.

We welcome the first attempt for assessing the Sustainability of Forest management in Europe, which has been done by authors of State of Europe's Forest 2011.

It's a good way and we should continue it, saving in the LBA text required monitoring of European forest condition.

LBA proceedings commencement is also an important example of strengthening the role and significance of forestry in enhancing life quality of societies and environmental protection provides effective instruments for its execution.

Multifunctional forestry paradigm contains various notions describing a way to sustainable development that are related to initiating a global

green economy. The execution of green economy assumptions concentrates on issues regarding climate change, energy obtained from wood, wood sector infrastructure development, and recognizing growing wood resources as biodiversity deposits.

It is also made up of factors counteracting hazards posed by climate change, food and energetic safety, and restricting deforestation processes. That is why creating the concept of Green Economy and its potential along with a simultaneous effort to develop adaptive solutions, especially in forestry, is a key to stop environmental degradation and mitigate negative climate change.

Restricting negative climate changes should be undertaken by appropriate land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF), as well as by appropriate adaptive strategies including regional development strategies, which is much more challenging. Land use comprises three fundamental strategies: avoiding deforestation, afforestation, reforestation and replacing of fossil fuels with energy obtained from incineration or plant biomass decomposition. Is growing tilled and forested areas to obtain biomass an optimal solution?

Assuming wood as a renewable resource is unusual in comparison to other energy sources it should be widely propagated in sustainable industrial development and find wide-ranging application - scenarios of forest resources mobilization should also include further wood division optimization among prospective consumers.

Special attention should be paid to a growing interest in Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES). Various means of land uses may generate multiple environmental services. It mainly refers to forest ecosystems which e.g. may have a regulative function in water management, which reduces the risk of flooding or land sliding, whereas the forest owner or manager does not receive benefits for such environmental services. As a consequence we face a situation of ignoring those services, which may lead to socially harmful land-uses.

The Sixth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe devoted to forest preservation in Europe contributes to the history of European forestry achievements that are tough, beset with difficulties and conflicts, demanding strong efforts, good will and understanding during long international consultations

and determination in their execution.

I am deeply convinced that approving a document commencing proceedings aimed at devising legal instruments applied in European forestry management has been our common great success and today we are opening a new chapter in the European history of the forests and forestry.

Thank you for your attention!

Mr. Christian Apostol
Secretary of State for Forests
Ministry of Environment and Forests

Mr./Mrs. Chairperson,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to express my appreciation and thanks to all who contributed to the preparation of the Conference documents, with important topics for challenges ahead.

In terms of modern sustainable economic development, forestry approach at the European level can be done, in order to increase its contribution to the improvement of the standard living quality and based on sustainable forest management, only in the socio-economic context, with joint efforts, based on a clear vision and goals. In this respect, *the Ministerial Decision: European Forests 2020* to be adopted in Oslo is an important step forward and common endeavour to ensure our healthy environment and economic development in Europe for the next decades.

The European 2020 targets and the actions to be taken at European and national level are well identified in the Decision and reflect the challenges that we should face to maintain sustainable managed forests and balance their economic and environmental functions to the benefit of society.

The listed goals for European forests are very important all together and each one in part, with adapted relevance to various conditions of our continent.

Romania gives a great importance to sustainable forest management ensuring the integrity of forest land and even expanding forest area, which is an already constant target of forest policy. Providing functional stability and higher efficiency of forest ecosystems in order to ensure biosphere stability, are basic principles of forest management in our country.

Among the current priorities of forestry in Romania, the most important are:

- Ensuring the sustainable management of forests based on unitary regulation in the forestry field, without different approach for public and private property, forest owners ensuring technical forest

management of each property through forest districts;

- Increasing the area of forest vegetation by afforestation of degraded lands and plantation of forest belts, especially in areas prone to drought and desertification, contributing to carbon sequestration and improving environmental conditions;
- Maintaining and developing the multiple role of forests, including in environmental protection;
- Biodiversity conservation of forest ecosystems;
- Update the forest resource assessment by the development of the new national forest inventory;
- Improvement of the forest accessibility - rehabilitation of forest roads and construction of new ones;
- Deforestation and illegal logging prevention and control through institutional and legal framework strengthening.

In order to preserve the forest resource, the Forest Code provides strict conditions for land use change. Forest use change is generally forbidden; when is allowed, it is only for certain objectives, with land compensation with the value five times bigger and area three times larger and with payment of certain fees. If the forest cover percentage of the county is lower than 16 %, land compensation should be done only in the same county.

Modern and environmentally friendly forestry cannot be carried out without appropriate financial support. The Forest Code stipulates subsidies for:

- forest administration for private forest owners - individuals and legal persons, if the forest area ≤ 30 ha;
- income compensation for loss due to restrictions required by protection functions of forests, according to forest management plan;
- pest control works for private forest owners - individuals and legal persons, if the forest area ≤ 30 ha;
- restoration of forests and forest transportation ways affected by natural hazards or forest fires with unknown author, if the conservation and regeneration fund set up at the forest district level cannot cover the expenditures;

- supporting forest owners associations.

The policy concerning production and use of wood is to integrate forest exploitation and wood processing in the concept of sustainable management of the natural capital in order to superiorly turn to good account the wood resources.

Basic objectives are to increase the efficiency of logging, wood transportation and processing, to promote ecologically sound logging technologies, to improve the access to forest land, in relation with the modern methods and technologies of wood harvesting, observing the environmental protection requirements. In this respect Best Practice Guidelines for Forest Roads have been developed in a widely open manner, with participatory approach and solutions agreed by involved stakeholders.

Forest sector and Wood have been considered in the Biomass Master Plan for Romania. The wood biomass has been also considered in the National Action Plan on Energy from Renewable Sources, implementing the Directive 2009/28/EC. Due attention has been also given in the National Program for Rural Development.

The restitution of forest land to former owners raises also significant challenges to the legal, regulatory and institutional framework, particularly in tackling problems such as illegal logging. In order to prevent and combat illegal logging, the Forest Authority acts for stopping illegal activities in the forestry field in close cooperation with other State Authorities. Appropriate legislation has been developed in this respect, the main and latest outcome being the Romanian System for Timber Flow Control and for Tracking the Wood Source (SUMAL) in place since 2008. The implementation is based on a complex system of measures resulting in an integrated information system involving forest managers, economic operators and forest authorities. In this respect, wood tracking would be carried out from harvesting and transportation to end users through special regime documents in a unique numbering system, allowing precise identification of wood sourcing. Appropriate supporting software is used by all wood holders in order to ensure analytical management of wood by assortments and recording of wood inputs and outputs. Technical support is provided by the territorial forest authority.

I'm sure this Conference, attended by so many countries, organizations and institutions, showing their interest and willingness to make real progress on this important concern of today - forest conservation, will be a milestone for future developments.

Thank you for your attention.

Mr. Alexander Panfilov

*State Secretary and Deputy Head
The Federal Forestry Agency*

Уважаемые дамы, господа! Коллеги!

Пользуясь предоставленной возможностью, хотел бы от имени российских лесоводов передать вам следующее.

Последние годы, в том числе и уже этот 2011-й год, стали изобиловать учащающимися экстремальными природными явлениями, как в глобальном, так и в европейском масштабах: засухи, наводнения и прочее. Страдали и продолжают страдать люди и природа. Леса – легкие планеты и, практически, единственный естественный фактор смягчения негативных последствий изменения климата.

Россия, располагающая основной массой европейских запасов лесных ресурсов, чьи леса расположены в нескольких климатических зонах от северной (бореальной) до субтропической, с пониманием относится к возникающим проблемам. Мы намерены решительно вести лесную политику, которая обеспечила бы устойчивое, экономически эффективное, экологически безопасное, социально ответственное лесопользование и неистощительное лесопользование.

Международное сотрудничество в рамках процесса «Леса Европы» в настоящее время в значительной степени определяет лесную политику на континенте, способствует сохранению и устойчивому управлению лесами на благо нынешнего и будущего поколений.

Развивая такое сотрудничество, наиболее приоритетными с точки зрения Российской Федерации считали бы направления, связанные с внедрением инновационных технологий и методов управления в лесном хозяйстве и лесопромышленном комплексе, в частности: создание систем предупреждения, обнаружения и тушения лесных пожаров; лесовосстановление; совершенствование механизмов лесопользования; подготовку квалифицированных кадров и другие.

Для России процесс, целью которого является защита и сохранение лесов Европы, представляет

практический интерес. Вместе с тем представляется, что для эффективного решения имеющихся и новых проблем в лесах и лесном секторе Европы требуются политические решения и эффективные экономические механизмы. Одним из таких средств является возможное юридически обязывающее соглашение, переговоры по которому откроют новую дорогу к практическому решению задач, определенных целями процесса. Как уже говорилось, Россия готова принять участие в переговорах по такому соглашению.

Хотелось бы также отметить, что Россия не просто поддержала инициативу Генеральной Ассамблеи ООН о проведении в 2011 году Международного года лесов, но и последовательно на самом высоком уровне включилась в ее реализацию. В одобренном Правительством Российской Федерации Плане проведения в России Международного года лесов содержатся мероприятия различного характера от конкурсов и публичных мероприятий местного характера до мероприятий национального и международного уровней: съездов лесоводов, научных конференций, лесных форумов и прочее. Цель у всех мероприятий этого плана одна – обеспечить консолидацию всех ветвей власти, бизнеса и гражданского общества во имя устойчивого развития, неистощительного пользования лесными ресурсами, воспитания молодого поколения и всего населения страны в духе бережного отношения к природе.

Мы не сомневаемся, что многие страны имеют не менее здравый подход, и призываем всех, кто заинтересован, реализовывать намеченные международные мероприятия совместно.

Уверен, что принятые этим форумом резолюции внесут неоценимый вклад в развитие европейского и мирового лесного дела.

Желаю всем успешной работы на форуме!

Благодарю за внимание.

English version

Ladies and gentlemen,
Dear colleagues

Taking this opportunity, I would like on behalf of Russian foresters to thank you for organising this 6th ministerial conference.

During the last years we have seen quite a lot of extreme natural catastrophes, both globally and in Europe; droughts, floods and so on. The forest is the only basic natural factor to mitigate the negative impacts of the current climate change.

Russia has the most of European forest resources, in different climatic zones, from the boreal forests in the north to the subtropical areas further south, and as such we understand the problems encountered, and we are committed to efficient, environmentally friendly, sustainable forest policies and forest management.

International cooperation within FOREST EUROPE is the major factor to define the forest policy on the continent, for the benefit of the present and future generations. Building on this cooperation, the Russian Federation considers the following major priorities:

- To implement innovative technologies and forest management;
- Innovations in energy, including systems to prevent and combat forest fires;
- To further develop forest education;
- To move towards a green economy through its different elements.

After two decades of «romantic approaches», so to say, now we are ready to undertake practical steps in the fields of European forestry and European economy. For Russia it is also about the protection and conservation European forests and Russian forests. To be able to efficiently address current and emerging issues in the forests and the forest sector in Europe, we require responsible political decisions and efficient economic mechanisms. One means to do this is a legally binding agreement, by which negotiations will open a new path to meet the current challenges. As mentioned in the keynote statement by Mr. Maslyakov earlier this morning, Russia is committed and ready to take part in negotiations on that agreement.

I would also like to note that Russia has not just supported the initiative of the UN General Assembly to hold the 2011 International Year of Forests, but consistently at the highest level was involved in its implementation. The Russian National Plan, referring to the International Year of Forest, contains a lot of local, regional and national activities to promote sustainable forest management. The purpose of all activities of the plan act to ensure the consolidation of all branches of government, business and civil society for sustainable development, sustainable management of forest resources, educate the young generation and the total population in a spirit of respect for nature.

We understand that we all share this reasonable approach and are committed to cooperate and work together. I am sure that the decisions put forward by this conference will be a major step towards a better future for European forests.

Thank you.

Mr. Sasa Orlovic

Director of Forests

*Ministry of Agriculture, Trade, Forestry
and Water Management*

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to be able to attend the Conference, which already has a history of over 20 years of struggle for the realisation of the concept of sustainable forest management in Europe.

During the period of defining the common policy in the Pan-European region, 19 Resolutions have been adopted covering almost all fields of forests and forestry in Europe.

In this sense, at the beginning of the 21st century, Serbia started a series of initiatives and projects in the field of forests and forestry, supported by and in cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (UN FAO) and the Governments of Norway, Finland and Austria. Consistent with the recommendations and commitments arising from the process of the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE), Serbia adopted the Forest Development Strategy in 2006, and the new Forest Law in 2010, which reaffirms the concept of sustainable forest management. Also, the Serbian Parliament will, in following days, adopt the Forest Development Program of Serbia till 2020 (as the equivalent to the National Forest Programme). The new legislative and programmatic and planning documents have resulted in a significantly different treatment of forests and forestry in Serbia. Above all, this implies the support to the enhancement of forest condition which is characterised, in addition to an insufficient percent forest cover, also by an unfavourable structure in relation to many parameters.

The new planning, organisational-institutional, and in particular the financial framework points to a greater state support to forests and forestry in future, which is particularly manifested through the introduction of payment for ecosystem services by all legal persons functioning on the territory of Serbia, establishment of the Forest Fund which finances all the activities foreseen by the action plan of the Programme, as well

as a greater respect and support to private forests.

From the above, it can be estimated that Serbia is following and trying to implement the greatest part of the commitments resulting from the most important policy process of FOREST EUROPE, of which we are participants and signatories.

Serbia will continue its efforts to implement all the issues agreed at the Pan-European level. In this context, Serbia shall be a signatory to the proposed Conference documents and do its best to realise the shared vision for forests in Europe within the anticipated period, because the proposed vision, goals and the activities for their accomplishment represent an extraordinary sublimation of all the previous efforts within this process in the past 20 years.

Ladies and Gentlemen, esteemed colleagues, perhaps it was too optimistic to expect that within the previous four-year period we could achieve the common legally binding agreement on forests in Europe, taking into account the length of the Ministerial process and the significance of forests in the Pan-European region. As we emphasised at the previous Conference in Warsaw in 2007, the legally binding agreement on forests in Europe is a logical and the only possible step as a real support to forest enhancement at the regional level. Unfortunately, it was not accomplished within this cycle, but we do believe that by the predicted term, with the clearly defined rules of the procedure, and guided by our esteemed colleague Jan Heino, we shall have the document which will reflect our targets.

We do believe sincerely that our endeavours, as well as all the effects on the raising of forest significance and improvement of its multiple functions indispensable for the survival of the humanity, will be adequately evaluated by the society, by current, and especially by future generations to which we would like to ensure a more healthy and happy future.

In the end, Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to wish you a prosperous International Year of Forests!

Mr. Gabriel Csicsai
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural
Development

Mrs/Mr Minister, distinguished delegates,

At first, on behalf of the Slovak Republic, I would like to thank the host country, the Kingdom of Norway, for organizing the sixth ministerial conference as well as for giving me the opportunity to present within this ministerial roundtable positions and views of the Slovak Republic related to current challenges of European and international forestry policy.

Let me express briefly our views regarding the actual policy issue of the role of European forests in a process of economic transformation of the society to a green economy. Firstly, I would like to highlight the importance of growing general acceptance and understanding by policy makers of the forests and forest sector's potentials in a green economy, which happens also in the Slovak Republic. The contributions provided by the holistic concept of sustainable forest management through its three main pillars (environmental, economic, social) are particularly important when discussing link between forests and the green economy agenda.

We are of the opinion that it will be crucial to focus specifically on communicating and explaining how full integration of forests into the green economy agenda can create preconditions to economic growth and sustainable job creation. In doing so, we think that our main arguments should be based on those forest functions whose provision contributes significantly and specifically to climate change mitigation, production of renewable material and energy, as well as production of a variety of environmental services.

There are many values and benefits from forests, beyond timber and non-wood forest products, which are still and often inadequately acknowledged by society and accounted for economically. There is a strong potential for recognizing the ecosystem values of forests more appropriately through their economic valuation. The ecosystem services provided by sustainably managed forests are essential to meet societal needs and for supporting a sustainable and

low carbon economy. Therefore, we believe that internalizing these positive externalities from forests into prices will help us to reflect properly true economic costs of sustainable forest management and, consequently, to raise awareness on multiple values of forests and integrate the total economic value of forests into policy making process.

Public procurement policies for wood and wood products, which are under development and implementation in Europe, are also one of the components of the policy framework which can foster transition of societies to a greener economy.

Forests and forest sector have a strong potential to contribute to a greener economy and a more sustainable society. However, the extent of real contributions will depend, among others, on recognition of forests role by politicians and adequate policies, as well as on the forest sector's ability to improve efficiency of its production and to continue in developing innovative and better marketed products.

From these reasons, we appreciate that the Oslo ministerial decision «European Forests 2020» reflects through vision for forests in Europe, goals for European forests and European 2020 targets in an appropriate way a crucial role that forests play in economic transformation to a green economy.

Dear colleagues,

At present, a forest sector faces challenges that highlight its importance and bring it into the forefront of current developments in policy and economic arena at all levels. A main attention is given, in particular, to the contribution that forests and forestry can provide in addressing such policy issues as combating climate change, production of energy from renewable sources, conserving biodiversity, avoiding deforestation and forest degradation and preventing desertification.

In recent years, we can see enormous and intensive developments within these policy areas. As a result, various commitments, which directly or indirectly influence forest management in Europe, have been adopted. The fact that some of these commitments have legally-binding status is particularly relevant in our discussions. As a consequence, these sectoral policies outside the forestry sector, in many cases, determine rate, nature and intensity of use of forest resources. In doing so,

these policy sectors assess relevancy and importance of forest functions only through their respective scope and primary interest (e. g. through carbon sequestration, biodiversity conservation targets). At the same time, they do not take into consideration holistic nature of the concept of sustainable forest management. We can assume that this trend will continue, if nothing changes.

Based on these arguments, we are of the opinion that in changed and continuously changing political, socio-economic and natural environment, it will be crucial to ensure coherence between forest-related policies through adequate inter-sectoral policy cooperation and coordination and, at the same time, to strengthen existing policy framework for forest management in Europe. This means to strengthen the European forestry policy as such. In light of this, the present situation calls for a new robust political solution.

The ministerial conference gives us a unique opportunity for sending a clear signal from the entire European forest sector that we, as a region, are ready to work towards higher qualitative level on sustainable forest management. The ministerial conference gives us a unique opportunity to adopt a decision which can become a significant milestone in European as well as international forest policy. We believe that opening negotiations on a legally binding agreement on forests in Europe represents such a decision.

Thank you for your attention.

Ms. Tanja Strniša
State Secretary
Ministry of Agriculture,
Forestry and Food

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me, on behalf of the Government of Slovenia, to express our deep gratitude to Norway for the organisation of this Ministerial Conference and the hard work that has been invested in its preparation. We believe that it represents not only a continuity of the very successful Pan-European process in support of sustainable forest management, but also an opportunity to add to the process a perspective towards a legally binding agreement on sustainable management of forests in Europe, which would make it even more important.

During past decades, forests in Europe have been improving in terms of their capacity to perform all their functions. We believe that FOREST EUROPE process has contributed significantly to this positive development, documented in reports on the State of Europe's Forests. General and operational level guidelines, criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management as well as findings of the workshops organised within the process, have had a great impact on national forest policies. In Slovenia for example, we have found out that implementation of the national forest programme has proven to be much more successful after implementing the participatory approach and other principles during its adoption, as promoted by the Vienna Resolution 1.

We are convinced that the vision and goals of the European Forests which we are going to share by signing the Oslo Ministerial Decision: European Forests 2020, will assist us in focusing our national forest policies on most relevant challenges related to forests that our societies are facing today, and will strengthen our resolve to achieve them also through co-operation among ourselves. Maintaining vital forests and achieving that their multiple functions are mutually balanced seems to be the central challenge in future. We will have to face changing climate conditions and gradual reorientation of energy policies, where forests and wood with its potential to substitute non-renewable material and energy sources should have a major role. With this comes an opportunity for sustainable forest management as an active approach for addressing

environmental and socioeconomic challenges in a balanced manner while considerably contributing to green economy, which will have to become one of the central components of sustainable development.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Slovenia has a long tradition and extensive experience in sustainable forest management. It was therefore natural that we already at the previous conference in Warsaw supported the idea to begin, building on commitments of all Ministerial Conferences, a new process of preparation of a legally binding instrument on sustainable forest management in Europe. We are therefore pleased to have the opportunity to sign the document based on conviction that «a legally binding agreement on forests in Europe is necessary to reinforce and strengthen implementation of sustainable forest management with the view to achieving balanced and stable continuity of all economic, environmental, cultural and social forest functions in Europe, and will contribute to achieving the vision, goals and targets for forests in Europe».

We are further convinced that holistic and active approaches, such as sustainable forest management, are the most efficient means to address complex challenges Europe and the world are facing today. We believe that after twenty years of continuous work within the FOREST EUROPE process we have elaborated all elements of the approach, which means it is now ripe enough to enshrine it in a legally binding form. Here, Europe has a special responsibility for its promotion and establishment since it has been conceived on our continent a couple of centuries ago. We also want to underline that a mandate for negotiating a legally binding agreement on forests we are signing at this conference will represent an important contribution of Europe to raising awareness of sustainable forest management, which is one of the key objectives of the International Year of Forests 2011.

Mr. Chairman,

In the end, I would like to express our firm commitment to the vision, goals and targets for European forests as well as to active participation in negotiations within the context of the EU and its Member States.

Thank you.

Mr. José Jimenez

*Director General
Ministry of Environment,
Rural Affairs and Fisheries*

On behalf of

Ms. Rosa Aguilar Rivero

*Minister
Ministry of Environment and Rural
and Marine Affairs*

Thank you very much, Mr. Co-chairman and Authorities.

I want, firstly, thank all State of Europe's Forests 2011 experts the job done. It is out of any doubt, an excellent reference of the current state of our forests and flags its future sustainable management in Europe challenges and opportunities.

Some of the data that appear in the report give us elements for an optimist vision:

The sustained growth of 800.000 hectares per year for last 20 years, is pointing us that we are in the good path for forest area recovering.

Also forest area included in protected natural areas has grown (In Spain, 86% of land protected area is forest area)

Contribution of forests to climate change mitigation is extraordinary important.

This enlargement of forest area has meant a significant impulse for the economy attached to the sector.

Forests and sustainable forest management contribute to mitigation and adaptation to climate change, provide us renewable raw materials, supply energy, protect water and soil and other environmental services, preserving also our society from natural disasters.

Nevertheless, according to the report, in some aspects there are some circumstances that ask us to put or efforts and perseverance in order to improve the situation.

These challenges have to be always present in our forest management policy and, in this sense, it

is essential that our work is directed to ensure that forests maintain its ecological functionality and continue providing us their environmental services.

In every case we shall take the opportunity and mobilise the potential of forests as actives of a green economy, serving as an example of sustainable production and consumption patterns and constitute employment sources.

Concerning this process and this Conference, Spain is very satisfied that we have reached this point with the duty done. We have got the objectives that we marked in Warsaw Conference.

From then we have made a large effort. Thanks to signatories and observers co-operation, we will have a document that will have a great transcendence on our forests at continental scale currently, and at global scale in a not very late future.

We have been able to work jointly in a common vision on forests, that include values as multifunctionality, its incidence on life quality - and not only on rural communities, but also the urban ones - or climate change mitigation and biodiversity conservation.

We have been able also to fix a set of ambitious objectives for year 2020. These objectives cover aspects as different as land planning, forest products mobilisation, environmental services, synergies with other environmental agreements, or fight against illegal logging.

From now on we should put our efforts in getting these goals, simultaneously needed and ambitious, so that European forests contribute to a true sustainable development.

This way, in addition, FOREST EUROPE will be configured as an international co-operation instrument in the forest sector, field in which the European Union has a long way already made.

Our decision to start negotiations of a legally binding agreement on forests in Europe endorse the idea that it is possible and convenient a new agreement, with integration will and with new perspectives, with a holistic approach and anchored in social participation and equity principles.

Spain considers that the aim is not any agreement: it is fundamental that the future legally binding agreement on forests in Europe have a clear added value and that is understood in line with prescriptions

and works in due course within environmental multilateral agreements, including Climate Change Framework Convention, Biodiversity Convention and Desertification Convention.

I cannot leave this opportunity without mentioning that, following the tradition of FOREST EUROPE process, Spain will soon take over the task of hosting the Liaison Unit. We will put on it all our effort and work, from the responsibility and commitment.

Finally, I want to thank and congratulate our hosts for the splendid organisation of this Conference that will be a reference for Spain.

Thank you very much, Mr Co-chairman,
and thank you all.

Mr. Eskil Erlandsson
Minister
Ministry for Rural Affairs

First of all I want to congratulate my Nordic neighbour and friend Lars Peder Brekk on this great event. I believe that this Ministerial Conference will be of great importance for the development of Sustainable Forest Management in the Pan-European region, and beyond.

I am a very strong supporter of the concept of Sustainable Forest Management (SFM). It is my conviction that it can be reinforced through a voluntary approach. That is why Sweden fully endorses the vision, goals and targets for European Forests 2020. We are committed to the work ahead and in particular I wish to highlight the need to push forward on cross-sectoral discussions on how forests and forestry can help solve emerging challenges. One way to strengthen the implementation of SFM is to cooperate more on monitoring and reporting, so that we can track and evaluate progress.

I guess everybody in this room knows that Sweden has been reluctant to start negotiations on a LBA.

In the depth of my heart I do not believe in a common legislation for European forests across the Pan-European region. One size simply does not fit all. We need to recognise the different geo-climatic and socioeconomic conditions for forests and forestry in our respective countries. Also, there is room for improvements in the current method of cooperation. My conclusion is therefore that the voluntary track is the best way of supporting the development and implementation of SFM. The Swedish Parliament also strongly shares my view on this.

Nevertheless, I have understood that many other countries want to start negotiations on a LBA. I have after deliberations back home come to the conclusion to accept starting the negotiations. Due to varying conditions on national level, I'm convinced that a *framework agreement* would be the most suitable model. Such an approach leaves flexibility in national and regional implementation and ensures a responsive forest policy framework. Moreover, we should ensure that the negotiations will cost-effectively add value to our process. An LBA should:

- enforce SFM,
- promote a level playing field,
- advance policy coherence,
- and as such make a contribution to our global forest policy dialogue.

The negotiations on the LBA will take some time. A LBA will not be in place for some years. I want to conclude by underlining the importance of continuing to work along the *two parallel tracks*, the voluntary track and the LBA, with the *overarching aim to strengthen SFM* in our region.

Thank you very much!

Mr. Andreas Götz

Vice-Director

Federal Office for the Environment

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, dear Friends of the Forests,

Switzerland would like to commend the great joint efforts that resulted in the clarification of the mandate for the negotiations for a convention on Forests in Europe and in the Vision European Forests 2020. This gives all of our countries an excellent basis for our future work together.

I would like to praise the openness and support of the GCC and my warmest thanks go to Norway and Spain, for keeping us focused all through these years towards this Ministerial Conference.

Forest area and quality are increasing in Europe. This is a success story, even if this regeneration process took over 100 years in Switzerland. But this is far from meaning pressures on forests are over or even decreasing.

Sustainable Forest Management can be recognized as the successful concept that brought forests back in Europe. It will also help to safeguard in the best comprehensive manner all goods and services from forests in the future.

Furthering the implementation of SFM to maintain these forests and their services even through turmoil, can only be achieved if SFM is an evolving concept. We need to adapt and be flexible towards the changing conditions. For example, climate change is upon us. If the forest sector plays an important role in the mitigation, needless to say, that climate change will have an increasing impact on our forests and their functions. Adapting our forests to climate change is a long term and one of the most challenging endeavors. But multiple other demands and challenges, are upon us, such as renewable energy, demand for drinking water, protection from erosion and avalanches, leisure space, etc.

If there was a call from the forest and the foresters up to now, we must admit that the full understanding of forest functions is still eluding the non-forest sectors and interest groups. Forests are being looked at through a one lens binocular, let it be wood or biodiversity or

leisure. But a kaleidoscope vision giving the 360 degree picture on forests is missing.

A call from the forest is outdated. What we need at this instant is to give the forest a voice!

In Oslo during this Ministerial conference, a unique onetime window is open. Today, we have come to Oslo to give the forest a voice through a new basis for future cooperation within the entire European region: that is through our commitment to a convention on forests.

We cannot afford to miss this important step. A call is not a voice. A resolution is not a convention. We have a unique opportunity to ensure that the forest sector sets an equal foot in the arena as the other sectors, to ensure that the services of the forests will be maintained and recognised by all.

A voice must be enacted by actions. Switzerland believes that it is time to start the negotiations of a European convention. There are risks, we are not all sure of what it will contain, but we want to give the forest a voice to be heard by the other sectors so that forests are properly included in other sectors' decisions.

Switzerland, as an upstream forest country with one third of its territory, stands ready. Water from Swiss forests is running to Rotterdam, Arles, to the Adriatic and the Black Seas.

We are ready to give the forest a voice not only in Europe but also to show the world that this region can be innovative and proactive, taking also a global responsibility.

And we do commit to enacting that forest is one of the most important sectors on which much of the Europeans' well-being depends.

Such a decision will also enlighten the International Year on Forests, and hopefully trigger global action!

I hope you already hear the murmur of the forest. If we all join together in negotiating a convention, it is not a murmur that will be heard but at last the voice of the forest.

I thank you for your attention.

TURKEY

Mr. Mustafa Kurtulmuslu

Director General of Forestry

Ministry of Environment and Forestry

On behalf of

Mr. Veysel Eroglu

Minister

Ministry of Environment and Forestry

Mr. Chairman

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me start out with conveying the best wishes of the Turkish Minister of Environment and Forestry, Prof. Dr. Mr. Veysel Eroglu, who regrets not being able to participate in this important event because of the general election in our country.

The most important event of the 2011 International Year of Forests is no doubt the Oslo Ministerial Conference. In this conference, it is a great pleasure and honour to speak behalf of him with you all, distinguished representatives from Europe.

A crucial crossroad

The political commitments on forests such as declarations, resolutions, guidelines and ministerial statements signed in the five previous conferences have provided a coherent policy framework for the protection and sustainable management of forests in Europe. In this conference we believe that a crucial crossroad will be passed through Oslo Ministerial Decisions. During the 2008-2010 periods, the twenty-year of FOREST EUROPE Ministerial Conference process was addressed in detail and assessed through the External Review and the Working Groups outcomes. In conclusion, a new direction for FOREST EUROPE process was determined. The new directions, i.e. Oslo 1 and Oslo 2 are now in front of us. We, as the Turkish part of the process, tried to contribute these works and will try to contribute in future steps too.

We implement the resolutions of the conferences. And now we hope that the process will be gone further.

Because we believe that it is time to carry our efforts one more step up. We can get in a negotiation process of the legally binding agreement in close cooperation and walk toward a European Convention on Forests. Turkey is ready to contribute to all kinds of efforts in forthcoming period.

Turkey's implementations of FE Commitments

We implement the resolutions of the five previous conferences in our countries. You could see that in 2004 Turkey adopted its national forest program and published the sustainable management indicators of its forests, in accordance with the resolutions that we had taken in Vienna in 2003. The preparatory work for revision of the national forest program was started in 2010 and we are planning to conclude the revision work in 2012.

Turkey is a country which can increase forest assets during the last decades. Within the context of the Afforestation and Erosion Control Action Plan, we plan to undertake activities targeted at afforestation, erosion control and improvement of forestlands on a total area of 2 million 300 thousand hectares, and to plant 2.5 billion seedlings. 2 billion USD has been allocated to this end.

We operate all our forests with the principle of sustainable forestry managements covering the Forest Management Plan. Multiple uses of forests and satisfaction of all stakeholders are the other essential principles in our forestry. For that reason we aware of that our forests can provide both public and private goods and services.

Our countries, total area of forest ecosystems within protected areas of various status is approximately 1,5 million hectares, and its rate to the country surface area is 2 %. Also, determined there are 36 types 231 pieces of Forest Gene Pools Protections. «Forest Health and Vitality» in Turkey is being monitored in 800 permanent observation zones in framework of ICP Forest Programme.

60 % of Turkey's forests are under high risk of fire. Nevertheless, we are considered among the most successful countries in firefighting across Europe. Geographical Information System (GIS) based «Fire Management System» has great effect on this success.

We are ready to share our experience of information and technology in this system.

We consider that 2011 International Year of Forests is a great opportunity to underline the social role of this year in reduction of rural poverty. To develop conditions of forest villagers, who are under the gross national income, 500 thousands of forest villagers are employed in various forestry activities every year. Furthermore, forest villagers are supported with various credits and grants. Until today, 1 billion USD has been donated for 360.000 families. In addition, every year, 150.000 people who live in forestlands are employed for activities of the Afforestation Mobilization Action Plan.

We are ready to share our information and experience in the field of forestry. Continuing with the scope of international cooperation activities, more than 20 countries from Central Asia, Balkans, Caucasia, Middle East and Central Africa experts every year receive education on topics of integrated watershed management, sustainably managed forest, seedling and seed production, combating on erosion and desertification. We established «International Training Centre for Fire Fighting» in our south Mediterranean region's city of Antalya. In here we share our experience on forest fires.

We also provide technical support to countries in our region in preparation of ecosystem-based Forest Management Plans. An example of this is under FOA coordination, Turkish experts prepared Syria's ecosystem based first Forest Management Plan.

The footnote of the annex 2 of the Oslo Ministerial Mandate, which will be signed in this Conference, is «Additional successor states of the former Soviet Union not mentioned in the above list should be entitled to join the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee, as the USSR was a signatory of the Strasbourg Resolutions of 1990.» In the framework of Annex 2 footnote, Turkey will be able provide crucial contributions on setting up healthy linkages between the successor states and FOREST EUROPE process.

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentleman

Turkey will sign the documents of the 6th Ministerial Conference.

We assume that we agree on steps for their implementation under the future work program. This

will also contribute the further progress at global level.

We are delighted to be able to announce here that Turkey would like to join the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee. Turkey is thus prepared to be more pro-actively involved in steering the process in the future. Turkey is ready to accept responsibility that can be managed international co operations.

As you know, annual conference of EFI 2012 will be held in Istanbul / Turkey. Additionally, I would like to announce another issue that Turkey hosts the next UN Forum on Forests which will be held in 2013.

As a conclusion, I would like to express my strong belief that this conference in Oslo is a crucial step forward in the forest dialogue in Europe and in the whole word. I would like to thank sincerely our Norwegian hosts, the head and members of the Liaison Unit Oslo and all of you for preparing and organizing the Sixth Ministerial Conference in such an exemplary fashion. And we will be prepared to give our support to Spain in their demanding tasks in the future.

Thank you for your attention.

Mr. Iaroslav Makarchuk

First Deputy Head

State Forest Resources Agency

Уважаемые министры, делегаты, дамы и господа!

Примите поздравления от имени 80-тысячного коллектива лесоводов Украины. Позвольте выразить благодарность правительствам Норвегии и Испании за уровень подготовки и проведения шестой Министерской конференции по защите лесов Европы как центрального Европейского мероприятия в Международный год лесов. Хочу также поблагодарить секретариат Министерских конференций за кропотливую работу в течение последних четырех лет.

Стоит отметить, что внимание к проблемам лесов и лесного хозяйства растет с каждым годом. Ведь невозможно переоценить роль лесов в смягчении последствий изменения климата, их вклад в зеленую экономику, социальную и культурную составляющую лесопользования. Украинские лесоводы делают все от них зависящее для сохранения биоразнообразия Европы, поддержки стабильности биосферы, сохранения и приумножения лесных богатств в интересах нынешнего и будущего поколений.

За последние четыре года, прошедшие с последней Министерской конференции в Варшаве, в лесном хозяйстве Украины произошли позитивные сдвиги в направлении устойчивого развития лесного хозяйства:

- Усовершенствована нормативно-правовая база – внесены изменения в Лесной кодекс, принята Государственная целевая программа «Леса Украины» на 2010–2015, утверждены нормативно-правовые акты, действие которых направлено на совершенствование ведения лесного хозяйства и улучшение финансово-экономического состояния лесохозяйственных предприятий.
- Усилена работа по внедрению методов лесоводства максимально приближенных к природным, использованию экологобезопасных технологий.
- В целях защиты внутреннего рынка

лесопродукции, его открытости и прозрачности по инициативе Государственного агентства лесных ресурсов Украины с 2008 года введен механизм проведения аукционов при реализации необработанной древесины.

- Обеспечивается более широкое привлечение контрактников для выполнения лесохозяйственных операций.
- Государственное агентство лесных ресурсов Украины совершенствует транспортную сеть в лесах. За последние три года только в Украинских Карпатах построено 340 км новых лесных автодорог.
- Увеличено использование древесины как возобновляемого ресурса.
- Активизирована работа с общественностью. В ежегодной акции Государственного агентства лесных ресурсов Украины «Будущее леса в твоих руках» за последние четыре года приняло участие более 1 миллиона человек. Участие в акции вместе с работниками лесного хозяйства принимают школьники, представители властных структур, медиа. Проведение Акции создает мощный информационный повод для усиления природоохранной пропаганды о важности создания и сохранения лесных насаждений, улучшения экологической ситуации в государстве.

Украина полностью поддерживает концепцию, цели и задачи в отношении лесов Европы до 2020 года и считает, что выполнение запланированных мероприятий будет способствовать укреплению позиций устойчивого лесопользования и повышению экологической безопасности Европейского континента.

Сотрудничество между лесниками Европейских стран продолжается уже более 20 лет. Достигнута договоренность по многим важнейшим отраслевым вопросам. Мы поздравляем всех с решением о начале переговорного процесса по разработке юридически обязательного соглашения по лесам Европы, способствующего повышению роли лесного хозяйства в европейском контексте. Мы благодарим за предоставленную украинским специалистам честь

содействовать процессу разработки соглашения и номинацию в Бюро межправительственного комитета по ведению переговоров. Впереди нас ждет кропотливая работа и многочисленные дискуссии с целью поиска конструктивного решения, которое бы учло требования всех сторон переговорного процесса. Надеемся, что этот шаг усилит и укрепит сотрудничество между лесниками наших стран.

Две недели назад Украина подписала Протокол по устойчивому управлению лесами в рамках конвенции по охране и устойчивому развитию Карпат. Он стал для нас первым международным юридически обязательным соглашением. Надеемся не последним. Мы призываем всех продолжить плодотворное сотрудничество между европейскими лесоводами в интересах нашего общего будущего.

Благодарю за внимание!

English version

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen!

First of all I would like to congratulate you on behalf of 80 thousand team of Ukrainian foresters. Let me also express my gratitude to the Governments of Norway and Spain for the high level of preparation and holding of the Sixth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe as the central European activity of the International Year of Forests. I also would like to thank the Liason Unit Oslo for the hard work over the past four years.

It is worth mentioning that attention to problems of forests and forestry is increasing every year. It is impossible to overestimate the role of forests in mitigation climate change, their contribution to the green economy, social and cultural component of forest management. Ukrainian foresters are doing everything in their power for conserving biodiversity in Europe, maintaining stability of the biosphere, protection and enhancement of forest resources for present and future generations.

Since the last Ministerial conference in Warsaw positive steps had been made towards sustainable forest management in Ukrainian forestry. Among other:

- Improved legal and regulatory framework - adopted changes in the Forest Code, adopted State target oriented program «Forests of Ukraine» 2010-2015, approved by laws and normative documents which directed at improving forest management and financial condition of forestry enterprises.
- Strengthened work on introduction of close to nature forestry, using of nature friendly technologies.
- In order to protect domestic market of timber products, its openness and transparency in 2008 a mechanism for conducting auctions of roundwood was established on the initiative of the State Forest Resources Agency of Ukraine.
- Promoted further involvement of contractors for performing forest operations.
- Provided work for improving transport network in forest on the initiative of the State Forest Resources Agency of Ukraine. Over the past three years only in the Ukrainian Carpathians there was built 340 kilometers of new forest roads.
- Increased use of wood as a renewable resource.
- Improved public relations. More than 1 million people took part in State Forest Resources Agency annual campaign «Future forest in your hands» over the past four years. Pupils, students, representatives of state authorities, mass media are taking part in the campaign together with foresters. The campaign is creating a powerful newsmaker for strengthening the environmental advocacy of the importance of creating and maintaining forest stands, improving the ecological situation in the country.

Ukraine fully supports the vision, goals and European 2020 tasks and believes that the implementation of planned activities will promote sustainable forest management and improve the environmental safety of the European continent.

Cooperation between foresters of European countries has more than 20 year's history. Understanding on many important forestry issues was reached. We congratulate all of you with decision aiming starting negotiation process on legally binding agreement on forests in Europe which will encourage the role of forestry in the European context. We would

like to thank you for providing Ukrainian specialists opportunity to facilitate the process of agreement elaborating and nomination Ukraine to the Bureau of Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee. Ahead of us there is a hard work and numerous discussions aiming to find a constructive solution taking into account requirements of all parties to the negotiation process. We hope that this step will strengthen and enhance cooperation between foresters of our countries.

Two weeks ago Ukraine signed the Protocol on Sustainable Forest Management to the Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians. It became our first international legally binding agreement. Hopefully not the last. We encourage all of you to continue the fruitful cooperation between European foresters in interests of our common future.

Thank you for your attention!

Mr. Stephen Lowe

*Head, International Forestry
Department for Environment,
Food and Rural Affairs*

I want to begin by thanking our Norwegian hosts for their work in preparing for, and hosting, this Ministerial Conference. The dedication and commitment of the Norwegian Government towards the promotion of sustainable forest management, and other forest-related activities is well known and greatly appreciated.

The FOREST EUROPE process has made major contributions towards the development of, and support for, sustainable forest management across the region. It provides a forum for dialogue, a means of exchanging information and ideas, and a process for developing guidelines and strategies. It has a valuable role to play and we fully support the ideals which have guided it for the past 20 years.

Sustainably managed forests have a key role to play in meeting the biggest challenges facing us today - in tackling climate change, preserving biodiversity and providing incomes and economic growth, especially for the world's poorest communities. As the Crown Prince said in opening this conference forestry can contribute towards the solutions for global challenges, including meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

Two weeks ago the UK launched a National Ecosystem Assessment report. The report looks at the full value of our natural world by assessing the economic, social and health benefits we derive from nature.

Too often, in the past, we have looked at the costs of protecting nature but not the benefits. We have looked at the market value of products, including timber, but not their full value to our health and well-being. We have seen environmental protection and the management of natural resources as a burden, or at best, a responsibility. We haven't seen them as opportunities, or recognised the full value of clean air, well-maintained wetlands or sustainably managed woodlands and forests.

For example, the report suggests that the health benefits of living with a view of a green space are worth

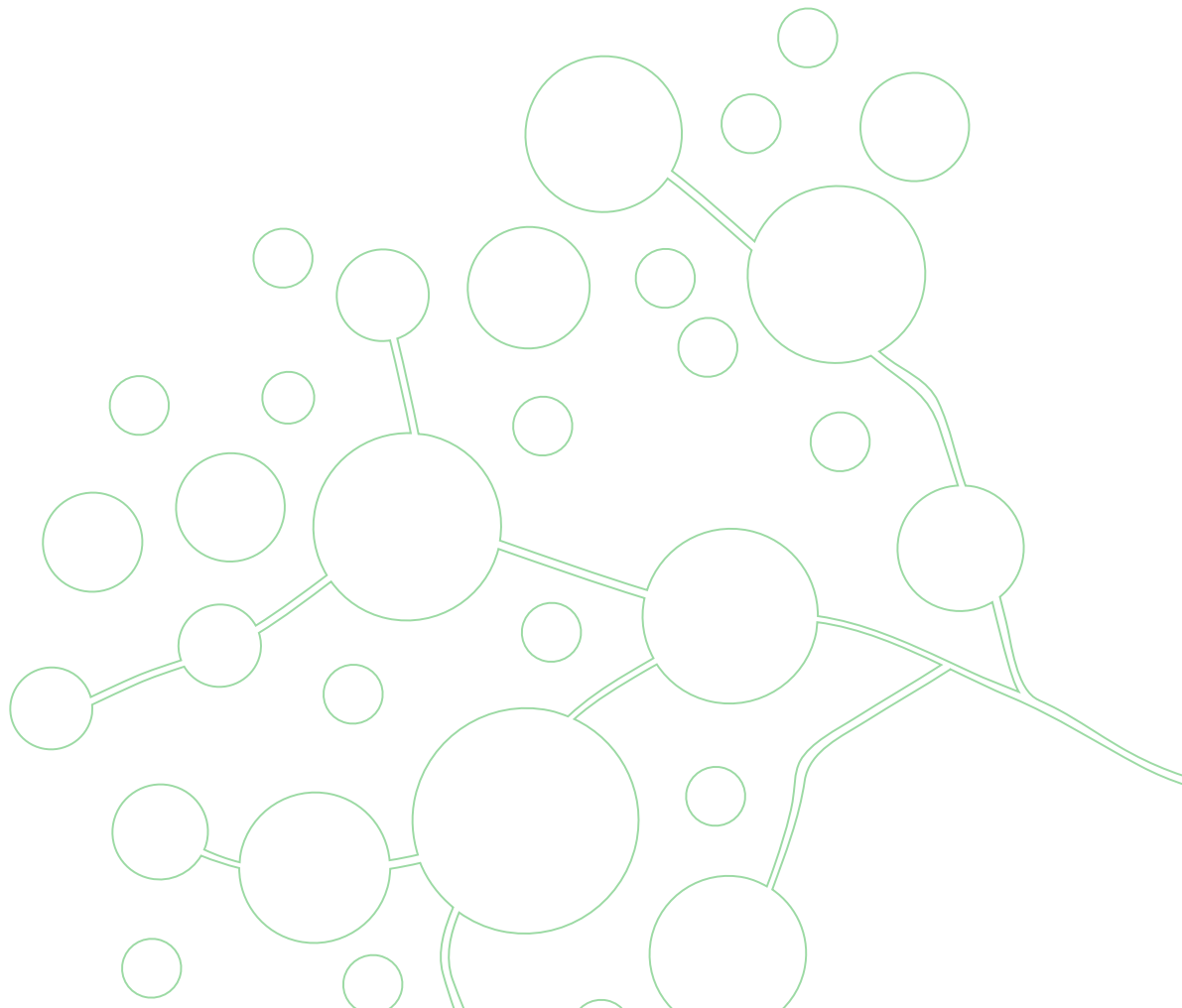
up to £300 (€350) per person each year. Pollinators are worth £440 million (€500m) a year to British Agriculture.

There are two debates within Europe at the moment; one is about how to generate strong economic growth as a response to the financial downturn. The other is about how to improve the quality of life and measure standards of living in ways which are not exclusively market-based. The two seem to be contradictory, but they are not. The forest sector is a good example of how we can meet both of those challenges, and the forest sector is well placed to contribute to both.

This Conference marks an opportunity for the European continent to make strong commitments to protect and manage our forests in a way which will benefit all of us, for generations to come.

We have two Decisions before us here in Oslo; European Forests 2020, to take forward the existing work of FOREST EUROPE and the Oslo Mandate for entering negotiations on a Legally Binding Agreement. The UK is ready to sign both of these decisions and we look forward to taking both of these strands of work forward in the coming months and years. In entering into negotiations on a Legally Binding Agreement it is important that we make sure that any such agreement, resulting from that process, would add real value to the work we are doing and promote policy coherence. Above all it is important that these two work streams go forward in parallel and that we continue the work FOREST EUROPE has made such a contribution to over the past twenty years.

For the reasons I have set out earlier, the value of sustainably managed forests and woodlands should not be underestimated. We will not tackle climate change, protect biodiversity or promote economic growth without managing our forests effectively and sustainably. And we will not reap the social, economic and environmental benefits which, to now, we have undervalued, unless we begin to appreciate the full value of our natural world and act accordingly. There is a positive message we can send from this conference about the role the forest sector can play in securing a strong, sustainable green economy and contributing to the improved quality of life of Europe's citizen



Statements of
Observer Countries

CAMEROON

Mr. Elvis Ngolle Ngolle
Minister
Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife

Honourable Ministers,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It's a real pleasure and an honour for me, to take the floor on the occasion of the Oslo European Ministerial Conference on forest protection in my capacity as the Minister of Forestry and Wildlife of Cameroon.

Since 1992, the sustainable management of forests has become one of the main challenges of national growth and as a result, the improvement of the living conditions of the populations including indigenous peoples. Our government sincerely thanks the government of Norway for the kind invitation and warm welcome at our arrival in the green and beautiful city of Oslo.

I would like to seize this opportunity to give a brief overview of the state of Cameroon forests by presenting the various achievement we have recorded at institutional and policy levels, the major challenges that we face, before giving the perspectives for the Cameroon forest sector.

Cameroon forests cover about 22 million hectares which represent 46% of the national territory and make up the vast and rich forest massif of the Congo Basin that has an estimated surface area of 220 million hectares. This rich flora and fauna has made our country, the second forest massif in Africa after the Democratic Republic of Congo. 19,20 % of the territory of Cameroon is reserved for conservation of biodiversity representing 9 124 666,07 hectares and 13 million hectares are represented for forest production representing 30 % of the total forest cover.

Most of these forests are under strict management plans of which 1million hectares are certified under the FSC Label. It is important to specify that, since 2002, the government of Cameroon has reserved one million hectares of a primary forest in the South East regions of the country in the zone of Ngoyla-Mintom for conservation purposes as gesture in favour of

conservation in return for possible compensation in the form of REDD+, carbon financing or any other form of payment for environmental services. The international community is hereby called upon to take an interest in and support Cameroon in this policy endeavour.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since the Earth Summit of Rio Janeiro in 1992, Cameroon has undertaken a number of actions in line with the aspirations of the international community, all oriented towards the sustainable management of its forests. These include:

- the creation of the Ministry of the Environment and Forestry in 1992,
- the adoption in 1993 of a new forestry policy, codified by Law 94/01 of 20 January to lay down forestry, wildlife and fisheries regulations,
- the adoption of the framework law on the environment in 1996,
- the holding in Yaounde in Cameroon under the stewardship of His Excellency Paul Biya, President of the Republic of Cameroon, on 17 March 1999 of the Central African heads-of-state summit on the sustainable management of forest ecosystems of the Congo Basin, that resulted in the Yaounde Declaration, from which sprouted the Central African Forest Commission (COMIFAC) which is an inter-state mechanism to harmonise forestry policies of our States,
- the implementation of an interstate Convergence Plan at the level of Cameroon, through the Forest Environment Sector Programme (FESP) that started in 2004.
- FESP is a government programme developed with the support of the international community for the implementation of forest policy on sustainable and participatory management of forest resources and wildlife of the country. The programme's overall objectives are conservation, the management and sustainable exploitation of forest and wildlife resources so as to meet local, national, regional and world needs of present and future generations.

At the level of Forest Governance,

The commitment of our country in favour of forest governance was demonstrated recently by the signing on October 6, 2010 with the European Union in Brussels, of the Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPA / FLEGT) which allows for the export and marketing of legal timber to markets in the European Union. The ratification process is underway at the National Assembly at this moment.

Honourable Ministers,

Distinguished Delegates

The implementation of a forestry policy, for nearly two decades has identified a number of major challenges that hinder the achievement of its main objective which is the sustainable management of forests. These constraints are essentially regulatory and economic as well as in terms of governance. They are:

- The revision of the legal framework to suit the current world context which are climate change, REDD, CDM, the problem of endangered species, reforestation, forest taxation, forest control, independent monitoring, forest certification and the Voluntary Partnership Agreements, etc..
- how to take advantage of innovative financing related to REDD, markets and carbon credits;
- Developing a new strategy for the sector in view to comply with major changes taking place
- Improving forest governance;
- The mapping of zoning.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In terms of future perspectives, in order to achieve the objectives it has set for itself to achieve sustainable management of forest resources and wildlife, Cameroon intends to continue its efforts in the following aspects:

- Forest certification,
- Forest inventory;
- Continuing the reforestation activity in ten regions of the country to fight against climate change and desertification,
- The establishment of incentives to enable further processing of forest products,
- Conservation of biodiversity through the creation of new protected areas;

- Continuing the fight against the illegal exploitation of forest resources against poaching;
- Development of alternative activities to divert the people living around forests and protected areas;
- Mobilization of new funding sources;
- Strengthening international cooperation and partnership.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Colleagues,

Cameroon is resolutely committed to carry out new and innovative processes which could make her an emerging country by the year 2035. In this perspective, the strong determination of the Government of Cameroon is to seek the support of her development partners to enable her to meet the challenges which we all face that of the sustainable management of forest ecosystems and economic development. The international community is thus called upon as a matter of imperative to support the government through cooperation for the sake of forest protection and conservation.

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, you may visit our website www.minfof-cm.org for any enquiries and further contacts.

Thank You for your kind attention.

Mr. Mike Hammah

Minister

Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources

Mr. Chairman,

Your Excellencies,

Colleague Ministers,

Distinguished Delegates,

The Press/ Media,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government and people of the Republic of Ghana, I bring you greetings to this Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (FOREST EUROPE). Indeed we are honoured to be given this opportunity to participate in the event and to share with you your rich experiences in forest protection and management.

I appreciate very much the warm reception given to me and my team since we arrived in Norway and I congratulate the Norwegian Ministry of Agriculture and Food for the successful organization of this Ministerial Conference.

Your Excellencies,

This year which is the International Year of Forests (Forests 2011) provides an opportunity for us to effectively position forests and people in the international policy discussions. The year further offers opportunities for us to create linkages to other sectors, particularly if we have to address drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, some of which lie outside the forestry sector.

On May 10, 2011, Ghana had a very successful national launch of the International Year of Forests to raise awareness on sustainable management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests for the benefit of current and future generations.

As part of the activity line -up for the year, Ghana is

planting a target of 10,000 ha of plantations of various tree species across the country, particularly in the transitional Zone in the north to halt the advance of the Sahara Desert in this part of our country.

This activity will also help to create a suitable environment that seeks to improve water quality by protecting the catchment areas of our rivers and provide favorable conditions for agriculture in the area.

The government of Ghana welcomes collaboration with development partners and other organizations in undertaking this activity to celebrate Forests 2011 and beyond.

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

I am happy to inform you that, Ghana is the first country in sub-Sahara Africa to sign the Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA) with the European Union which mandates Ghana to ensure that only legally produced timber is exported to the European market or traded in the domestic market.

The Agreement was duly ratified by Parliament of Ghana and it is currently being implemented. It is expected that by the end of 2011, Ghana will start issuing out FLEGT Licenses on traded wood products to the EU market.

We are looking forward to a good collaboration in the implementation of the Agreement.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished delegates,

As a reflection of Ghana's commitment to the Non-Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forest (NLBI), it has successfully piloted the implementation of the forest instrument over the last two years. We have developed the methodology for its implementation and have proved that the Instrument is a very effective tool that provides a systematic approach for countries to assess their performance with regards to the implementation of their respective forest sector policies and programmes and to enhance coordination.

We have also developed and tested a monitoring and evaluation framework as an over-arching monitoring tool for all policies and programmes in the forest sector and we are ever ready to share our experiences with other countries on the subject. We wish to take the opportunity to extend our sincere gratitude to the Government of Germany and the Food

and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) for their assistance in successfully piloting the implementation of the Instrument.

Distinguish Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen

Ghana is undertaking REDD+ activities (Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) in order to contribute to climate change mitigation actions in the forestry sector in collaboration with other forest-related sectors.

Ghana has made significant progress in this direction and is now at the demonstration or pilot phase of implementing its REDD+ Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP) that will result in the formulation of a National REDD+ Strategy to enable Ghana take advantage of this emerging carbon market and markets for environmental services.

The REDD+ programme is expected to contribute to the Low Carbon Growth Development objective of the country and provide the needed impetus for Ghana's Green Growth Agenda.

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Forest financing remains a key challenge for most governments in developing countries including Ghana. This continues to impact on our ability to achieve sustainable forest management. I wish to take this opportunity to express the gratitude of the Government of Ghana to our partners (the EU, DFID, World Bank, French Development Cooperation, Netherlands Government) who have provided financial and technical support for the implementation of the Natural Resources and Environmental Governance Programme (NREG).

The government of Ghana is fully committed to ensuring that the NREG Programme addresses the major governance challenges in the environment and natural resources sector.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished delegates

I wish to conclude by emphasizing the need for us to keep forests on the global policy discussions beyond the International Year of Forests and FOREST EUROPE with the view to highlighting the issues on forests and people, forests and water quality, forest in a green economy, forests and conflicts and forest financing.

Once again we thank the organizers for the invitation and we look forward to a fruitful future collaboration and cooperation.

Thank you for your attention.

Mr. Takeshi Goto

Counsellor

Forestry Agency

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

Mr. Chairman,

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure and honor to be given this opportunity to deliver a statement, on behalf of the Government of Japan, at this FOREST EUROPE Ministerial Conference Oslo 2011. I wish to express my sincere gratitude for the kind invitation and warm hospitality extended by FOREST EUROPE, the Government of Norway and the Government of Spain.

Mr. Chairman,

Taking this opportunity, I would like to convey the wholehearted appreciation of the people of Japan for the cordial sympathy and generous assistance rendered by the governments and the people of the member countries and observers of FOREST EUROPE on the occasion of the earthquake and tsunami disaster in March. All these supports have brought the people of Japan strength and hope for the recovery from the tragedy and the restoration of towns, infrastructure and environment, including the coastal forests extensively damaged by the tsunami disaster. Thank you very much.

Mr. Chairman,

Forests, in fact, provide us with multiple benefits which secure the livelihood and well-being of the present and future generations. Japan, as one of the most forested countries in the world, has been making best efforts to sustainably manage forests. The current challenge of Japan is to revitalize the management of planted forests, which occupy more than 40% of forested area in Japan and dispersed among a million of smallholders. The improvement and better use of the planted forests through the encouragement of collective management of smallholders' forests,

as well as the development of efficient road system, operational know-how and skilled workforce, will certainly contribute not only to the local economy and environment but also to the global benefits, such as the mitigation of climate change and the advancement of green economy.

Mr. Chairman,

Japan has also contributed to the implementation of sustainable forest management worldwide, including REDD-plus and the conservation of forest biodiversity, through the active participation in various forest-related dialogues and negotiations, as well as the international cooperation and collaboration with countries and international organizations. Japan strongly believes that practical actions should be further taken at the operational level according to the respective regional, national and local circumstances.

In this respect, I wish to draw your attention to the International Seminar held in Tokyo in March this year, which was co-hosted by the Republic of Indonesia and Japan and co-organized by the Montréal Process, International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) and FOREST EUROPE. The International Seminar was specifically focused on the use of policy tools and instruments for sustainable forest management, such as the criteria and indicators (C&I), guidelines and forest certification. It was proposed, among others, that C&I processes and relevant international organizations work together toward the streamlining of reporting and further use of C&I for other forest-related reporting. Japan, together with other members of the Montréal Process, is ready to work with FOREST EUROPE and its member countries to this end for the global benefits.

Mr. Chairman,

It is my honest hope that FOREST EUROPE will open a new era here in Oslo in its pursuit of sustainable forest management in Europe and worldwide. The achievement today will certainly enhance the celebration of the International Year of Forests 2011 and the forest-related dialogues at Rio+20 next year.

Thank you for your attention.

Mr. Abdeladmin Lhafi*High Commissioner**High Commission on Water and Forests
and Combating Desertification*

Monsieur le Président,

Distingués délégués,

Mesdames et Messieurs,

Le Maroc, dispose de ressources forestières importantes, s'étendant sur près de 9 millions d'hectares et recèle une grande diversité biologique, éco-systémique et paysagère, se traduisant par une diversité des habitats naturels avec 40 types de grands écosystèmes naturels, dont 30 forestiers.

Ces ressources, vulnérables du fait des contraintes structurelles résultant des facteurs climatiques, font également face à des exploitations variables dans leur intensité, dues à l'exercice du droit d'usage principalement.

En effet, le territoire national est dans la frange des climats arides et semi arides, dans 90% de son étendue. Les contraintes climatiques s'ajoutent et contribuent à la dégradation du couvert végétal en produisant des phénomènes d'érosion pouvant aller jusqu'à 5000t/km² /an et par voie de conséquence à la perte en terre végétale, en superficie agricole utile et à la diminution des capacités de stockage des barrages par l'envasement et le raccourcissement de leur durée de vie.

La Conservation des forêts et leur gestion patrimoniale et durable constituent dès lors l'axe central de la stratégie nationale de développement et ce, en raison des rôles majeurs socio-économiques mais aussi sur les plans de la protection de la biodiversité et la préservation de l'environnement d'une façon générale.

Aussi le Maroc a-t-il mis en place un ensemble de plans opérationnels, construits autour d'une vision qui ne visent pas seulement la réparation des dégradations, mais aussi et surtout la prise en compte des causes de dégradation et la mise en place des dispositifs à même de provoquer les ruptures souhaitables, pour un développement durable. Ce modèle est soutenu par une approche qui s'appuie fondamentale-

ment sur une méthode de développement participatif, intégrant les usagers et divers opérateurs et acteurs dans toutes les phases de diagnostic, de formulation et de concrétisation des projets, dans des formes de rapports partenariaux contractuels. La démarche vise à l'émergence des tissus coopératifs, associatifs et groupement d'intérêts économiques, pour en faire de véritables moteurs de développement rural, local et régional. La dégradation de la forêt dans nos territoires, faut-il le rappeler, est une question de développement, l'objet étant donc de créer de la valeur ajoutée au profit des populations locales, pour en faire à la fois les bénéficiaires des revenus des forêts et en même temps les conservateurs de l'espace et des écosystèmes dans une forme d'équilibre, qui garantisse la régénération des ressources naturelles. La valeur ajoutée n'étant pas uniquement due à la valeur des produits, mais également à l'instauration des labels de qualité, de traçabilité, de certification des espaces forestiers et le recours au commerce équitable.

Et c'est dans cette vision que s'intègre la planification stratégique de nos plans opérationnels et de nos programmes portant sur :

La gestion des espaces forestiers sur la base de plans d'aménagement concertés, plus de 60 % des forêts (3 millions d'ha) disposent actuellement de plans d'aménagement ;

L'inversion des tendances actuelles de la dégradation du couvert forestier par le reboisement, la régénération et l'amélioration sylvo-pastorale de 50 000 ha/an, avec une requalification de l'espace donnant la priorité aux espèces naturelles et à la protection des forêts contre les incendies et les attaques parasitaires ;

La maîtrise de l'érosion hydrique à travers un aménagement des bassins versants visant le traitement de 1,5 million d'ha à l'horizon 2020 dans le double objectif de conserver les terres et la biodiversité à l'amont, et de réduire l'envasement qui limite la durée de vie des barrages, évalué à près 75 millions de mètres cubes par an.

La conservation et la valorisation de l'importante biodiversité que recèle le pays avec plus de 2,5 millions d'hectares classés comme aires protégées. La conservation, pour être pérenne, doit être adossée à un plan de développement local, notamment écotouristique.

Dans ce cadre, des espaces à grande valeur culturelle et naturelle ont été reconnus par l'UNESCO en tant que patrimoine mondial, à savoir les 3 réserves de

Biosphères : la Réserve de Biosphère de l'Arganeraie, sur une superficie de 2,5 millions d'ha, (créée en 1998), la Réserve de Biosphère des Oasis du Sud sur 7,2 millions d'ha, (créée en 2000), et la Réserve de Biosphère Intercontinentale de la Méditerranée, créée en 2006, la première du genre au monde, s'étendant sur 1 millions d'ha répartis à parts égales entre l'Andalousie en Espagne et le Nord du Maroc. Une autre réserve de Biosphère concernant la Cédraie est en cours de création.

Par ailleurs, et dans l'objectif de mettre à niveau nos instruments légaux et réglementaires, une loi sur les aires protégées et une loi sur le commerce des espèces de faune et de flore menacées d'extinction (CITES) ont été promulguées.

Face aux changements climatiques et à la complexité des phénomènes qui les régissent, aux incertitudes existantes mais aussi à l'exigence d'anticipation, la stratégie adoptée, incorpore les mécanismes et mesures appropriées d'adaptation pour une gestion durable des ressources naturelles.

Dans ce cadre, et compte tenu de la contribution des forêts au bilan énergétique national atteignant 18%, la stratégie énergétique adoptée par notre pays vise à l'horizon 2020 une réduction significative de l'utilisation du bois et de l'énergie fossile en général. Ainsi, il est prévu de porter la part des énergies renouvelables à 42% de la capacité installée, réparties en tranches égales entre l'énergie hydrique, éolienne et solaire ce qui permettra l'économie de 2,5 millions de tonnes d'équivalent pétrole et réduira ainsi les émissions de CO₂ de 9 millions de tonnes/an.

Par ailleurs, les risques sanitaires et des feux de forêts imposent des systèmes de veille sanitaire et épidémiologique et d'interventions rapides et réactives. A ce titre, les modèles d'évaluation des risques des feux de forêts qui ont été développés permettent un calcul biquotidien du coefficient-risque sur une échelle de l'ordre du km², intégrant l'ensemble des composants déterminant des départs de feux de forêts ; leur mise en application en 2010 a donné des résultats probants puisque la superficie moyenne par incendie est passée de 14 ha à 4 ha à l'échelle nationale et moins d'un ha par incendie dans le Nord du pays, région où le modèle a été testé, en raison de son risque potentiel et de sa sensibilité élevée.

Dans le registre de l'état de veille sanitaire, un

système de surveillance est mis en place pour une réactivité rapide, mais aussi pour prévenir l'éclosion des maladies et asseoir une forme d'épidémiologie prédictive et améliorer l'efficacité des systèmes de protection des forêts.

Monsieur le Président,

Distingués délégués,

Mesdames et Messieurs,

Ce sont là à la fois les modes de gestion, de conservation et de développement forestier, avec le souci permanent d'un développement durable, limitant la dégradation et faisant de l'usager, un responsable de son espace ; une façon de réconcilier le citoyen avec l'environnement où il vit, et c'est à travers cette démarche que la solidarité intergénérationnelle trouve son essence pour préserver l'espace forestier.

Je vous remercie.



Statements of
***Intergovernmental
Organisations***

ALPINE CONVENTION

Mr. Marco Onida *Secretary General*

The Alpine Convention welcomes the decisions which are being taken at this Ministerial Conference

In the Alps, forests cover around 43% of the land surface, playing a crucial role for the preservation of biodiversity, the prevention of natural hazards and contributing to form the typical cultural landscape of the Alps, an essential basis for tourism.

The Alpine Convention has already acquired considerable expertise and knowledge in the field of sustainable forest management, through:

1. A legally binding Protocol on mountain forests, dating from 1996. *Main objective:* to preserve mountain forests as a near-natural habitat and to improve their stability, *Specific provisions:* priority to the protective function of forests, ensuring the effectiveness of forests for water resources, climate balance, air quality and noise protection, ensuring their biological diversity, recreational functions and their role as a source of employment and income for the resident population, calling for compensations for services of mountain forest economy and the promotion of professional training for foresters.
2. The climate action plan adopted by the Xth Alpine Conference contains measures regarding the promotion of the use of wood from mountain forests as a source of renewable energy (mitigation) and measures concerning the development of wood industries and the maintenance of forests with protective functions (adaptation). Furthermore the Contracting parties have agreed to develop guidelines for the follow-up of mountain forest facing climate change.
3. The Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention was observer in forest related projects of European Territorial Cooperation programs such as KnowForAlp, Manfred and Network Mountain Forestry.

4. Important aspects of forest management are currently treated within the activities of the Alpine Convention platforms on water management, wildlife and society, ecological networks, natural hazards and mountain agriculture.

The Alpine Convention was happy to contribute to this process so far, will be pleased to continue contributing and is looking forward to a further fruitful cooperation.

Mr. Eladio Fernández-Galiano
Head Biological Diversity Unit

Excelentísima Sra. Ministra y Señora presidenta,

In the name of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Mr. Thorbjørn Jagland, former PM of Norway, let me join my voice to others that have greeted the Co-chairs of this Conference and in particular Norway for their excellent hosting. Spain will have the hardest task: to take forward this process in a new era that will be marked by the negotiation of a new legally binding instrument, of a European Forest Convention. The start of negotiations is indeed very good news and a brave new step in the good direction. The Council of Europe welcomes this new phase in the development of FOREST EUROPE and invites all its member states to support this process. Our congratulations to the different committees that have prepared the decisions for this ministerial Conference, and to the Liaison Unit that has so well served the process.

Mme. Chair, permit me a personal recollection. I assisted at the first Ministerial Conference (at the time Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe) in 1990. France had chosen to host the First Conference on the premises of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, as our organization was open to all democratic nations and had a record in protection of nature and natural values, an aspect that should never be forgotten in forest management. As a younger civil servant I was impressed by the first meeting and the great expectations that were created. At the time climate change was seen as a very distant worry, winters in Strasbourg were extremely cold, biodiversity was not a major concern of societies and the discussion on forest protection was mainly around wood production, transboundary pollution, protection of water quality, some leisure activities and little more.

Forests are not what they used to be. Our forests are seen now under a different light. We understand they are vital to arrest or minimize climate change, which is undoubtedly the greatest challenge our generation is confronted to. They are seen as a magnificent reservoir of biological diversity, as a fundamental provider of ecological services for human societies, from water, protecting soils to avoiding

erosion, to preventing or reducing risks of catastrophic floods, to providing space for a number of economic activities, including rural tourism and other assets of the green economy. Wood and other marketable forest products are finally only a part of what a forest provides.

For these reasons we, at the Council of Europe believe that the new Convention should be ambitious and reflect the great potential of forests for human societies, take into account the 3 Rio Convention, stressing the need to protect biological diversity, of helping mitigate climate change, fight erosion and desertification, have provisions to better deal with forest fires, consider the heritage and landscape value of forest, integrate them into the wider countryside through ecological networks, insert them into the rural economy etc. All those aspects will make of this new treaty one of the most modern and forward looking of this new century.

Needless to say, the Council of Europe offers the negotiators its expertise in biodiversity conservation and wise use, in preventing forest fires and in other governance issues for which our organization is known so that the treaty is finalized and implemented, for the benefit of forests and of the new generations of Europeans.

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS (FAO)

Mr. Eduardo Rojas-Brijales
*Assistant Director-General
Forestry Department*

Honourable Minister Brekk,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates and Colleagues,

I wish to thank, on behalf of FAO's Director-General, Dr Jacques Diouf, the Government of Norway and FOREST EUROPE for the invitation to participate in this Ministerial Conference. I also wish to express FAO's appreciation to Norway for its continued commitment to the forest issue not only through FOREST EUROPE but also other international forest processes and for championing REDD on a global scale that shows an outstanding, forward thinking institutional and financial commitment.

Let me recognize that FOREST EUROPE has been shaping the forest policy landscape in the region for the last 20 years. The success of the previous conferences has generated high expectations, and this Conference is not falling short in meeting them. As a result of tireless efforts, you have in front of you a set of draft decisions, which is undoubtedly one of the most influential ever.

It is for the first time in history that a holistic vision has been developed for the region's forests and forestry. By adopting this vision and approving the associated goals and time-bound targets and by launching a process towards a new instrument you could shape the future of Europe's forests not only till 2020 but well beyond.

For more than 60 years, FAO and UNECE have contributed jointly to serve forestry in the region. This cooperation has been repeatedly highly appreciated by the European countries. In fact, this is a clear avant la lettre example of «Delivering as One» that the SG Ban-Ki-Moon is driving forward in the UN. We are committed to strengthen cooperation and stand ready to support the process, together with other international partners, towards its new objectives. As member countries agree to develop a legally binding agreement, new opportunities will open to rationalize the existing forest networks in Europe, ensuring high political

commitment, visibility and efficient use of time and resources.

It has a huge symbolic value that such landmark decisions are being taken in 2011, the International Year of Forests. Nothing could fit more to the main aims of the Year: to put forests at the very centre of the public and political attention; increase their visibility as the provider of vital goods and services to society; and improve the understanding that these services should not be taken for granted and need investment, good management, supportive institutional framework, balanced rights and duties. Europe's forests are a complex resource embedded in and affected by challenges and opportunities of modern societies. I have to note with great appreciation that your decisions are setting a proactive agenda for the future and break away from the old reactive approach, inherent to forestry for so long.

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to look into the future for a moment and recognize two opportunities to ensure that forests could continue to enjoy much needed attention. FAO's Committee on Forestry, and more recently the 9th session of the UN Forum on Forests recommended the establishment of an International Day of Forest as a lasting opportunity for recognizing the contribution of forests and sustainable forest management to sustainable development. The outcome of the considerations of the respective parent bodies, the FAO Conference and the Economic and Social Council of the UN, is of paramount importance in this regard.

As the draft ministerial decision suggests the LBA would be ready for signature in 2013. In that year we will celebrate the tricentennial of the definition of sustainability, or in Carlowitz's language, Nachhaltigkeit. This coincidence provides an excellent opportunity to consider a proposal for celebrating the «European Year of Sustainability» in 2013. By promoting such event forestry could demonstrate its important role and achievements in the historic quest for sustainable development.

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

Let me finish by commending the historic step you are pursuing here today, wishing Spain, as the

new host of the Liaison Unit, every success in this endeavour, and noting that in Mr. Jan Heino the most able candidate is recommended to serve the process in a key role. It's my pleasure to express FAO's full support and commitment to your work towards the next conference and beyond.

I thank you for your attention.

INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER ORGANIZATION (ITTO)

Mr. Gerhard Breulmann

*Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
Officer*

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of our Executive Director, Mr. Emmanuel Ze Meka, I would like to express the ITTO's sincere gratitude for the opportunity to participate in this Ministerial Conference.

The International Tropical Timber Organization is an inter-governmental organization promoting the conservation and sustainable management, use and trade of tropical timber resources. Its 60 member countries represent tropical timber producer and consumer countries, including 18 European countries and the European Community. The members represent about 85% of the world's tropical forests and over 90% of the global tropical timber trade. ITTO develops internationally agreed policies to promote sustainable forest management and forest conservation and assists its producer member countries to adapt such policies to local circumstances and to implement them in the field through projects. Our involvement in the promotion of sustainable management of tropical forests worldwide is direct, comprehensive and proactive within the context of our principal mandate of promoting the processing and international trade in tropical timber while securing the sustainable management of the forests as the resources base.

Since its inception in 1986, the cornerstone of ITTO work has been its pioneering mission of assisting efforts to bring tropical forests under sustainable management. ITTO policy and project activities include, among others, training and capacity building activities; improving market access for sustainably produced tropical timber products and transparency of the international timber market; development and enhancement of national forest statistical systems; initiatives on enhancing forest law enforcement and governance and addressing climate change; and the formulation of a series of ITTO guidelines, including for example:

- The ITTO/IUCN guidelines for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in tropical timber production forests (recently updated in 2009)
- The ITTO guidelines for the restoration, management and rehabilitation of degraded and secondary tropical forests (developed in collaboration with CIFOR, FAO, IUCN and WWF)
- The ITTO guidelines on Fire Management in Tropical Forests

and particularly

- The ITTO Criteria and Indicators for the sustainable management of tropical forests

The ITTO Criteria & Indicators (C&I) were the first developed in the early 1990's and revised in 1998 and again in 2004 to take into account lessons learned in using C&I including relevant work of FOREST EUROPE.

Over the years, ITTO has provided more than US\$ 30 million to train governmental and private sector (personnel) in its producer member countries on the use of the C&I for monitoring, assessing and reporting on forest management. In 2010 we also initiated a new global study to better understand the extent to which the use of C&I is contributing to SFM on the ground, including in European forests. To this end, ITTO is circulating a survey to countries worldwide including members of FOREST EUROPE, and we look forward to your responses.

In 2005, ITTO published the first report «Status of Tropical Forest Management» providing a comprehensive analysis of the forest management situation in all 33 of the ITTO's producer member countries and based on the C&I. The second report «Status of Tropical Forest Management 2011» has been launched just one week ago, on 7 June 2011 in Bern, Switzerland. It provides a comprehensive assessment of progress being made towards SFM in each ITTO producer member country and identifies the challenges remaining. A key finding of the report is that, worldwide, the area of tropical forest considered to be under SFM has increased by around 3 million hectares per year in the past five years. While this increasing trend is cause for optimism, the fact remains that less than 10% of the «permanent forest estate» is

being managed sustainably.

The International Year of Forests 2011 also marks the 25th anniversary of ITTO. Since its inception, ITTO has funded more than 1000 projects, pre-projects and activities valued at around US\$ 350 million. All projects are funded by voluntary contributions, mostly from consumer member countries. In recent years ITTO member countries in Europe have increasingly emerged as significant donors, in particular for the ITTO Thematic Programmes, which are enshrined in the ITTA 2006 and are a major feature of that agreement. Current programmes include REDDES addressing deforestation, forest degradation and enhancing environmental services including the mitigation of climate change; TFLET on forest law enforcement, governance and trade; CFME on community forest management and enterprises or TMT on trade and market transparency.

There remain ample scope and opportunities to further strengthen relationships and collaboration with our European partners in areas of mutual interest and concern, and we look forward to fostering concrete collaborations in the years to come.

Congratulations to FOREST EUROPE and thank you very much.

MONTREAL PROCESS

Mr. Takeshi Goto

Counsellor

*Forestry Agency, Ministry of Agriculture,
Forestry and Fisheries, Japan*

On behalf of

The Montréal Process Working Group

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Montréal Process Working Group, I would like to express my sincere appreciation for being invited to the FOREST EUROPE Ministerial Conference Oslo 2011.

The Montréal Process is an international initiative to develop and apply Criteria and Indicators (C&I) for the conservation and sustainable management of temperate and boreal forests and was launched in 1994 as a response to the Rio Forest Principles.

The members include 12 countries: Argentina, Australia, Canada, Chile, China, Mexico, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, the United States of America, Uruguay and Japan, that across the Continents, account for 60 percent of all forests in the world, and 90 percent of the world's temperate and boreal forests. The Process brings together members with highly diverse ecological, economic and social conditions to share experiences related to forest monitoring, assessment and reporting.

Our major activities to date include;

Adoption of the original set of Criteria and Indicators (C&I) in 1995, Publication of the 1st member country's reports using the original set of C&I in 2003, Initiation of the review process of the original set of C&I in 2003 and the completion of revisions of indicators in 2006 (C1-6) and in 2009 (C-7), including the technical notes, and Publication of the 2nd member country's reports using year 2006 revised set of indicators in 2009.

Through these activities, our members have each improved the capacity to assess and report on national forest trends.

Mr. Chairman,

Collaboration and harmonization among the experienced C&I processes have been an important contribution over the past decade. The Montréal Process, FOREST EUROPE, and International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) have worked together to co-sponsor important meetings and workshops that have helped to improve global understanding and streamline reporting. Together, we co-sponsored the International Conference on the Contribution of Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management (CICI) in 2003 in Guatemala City. FOREST EUROPE hosted Inter-Criteria and Indicators (C&I) Process Collaboration Workshop in Bialowieza, Poland in 2006, and co-sponsored a subsequent session in Joensuu, Finland in 2008. Earlier this year, the Governments of Indonesia and Japan hosted the International Seminar on Challenges of Sustainable Forest Management with us in Tokyo.

The Montréal Process Working Group values these working partnerships with FOREST EUROPE and ITTO. Together, we recognized the importance of encouraging the periodic review of the relevance of indicators. This allows us to take into account the reporting needs emerging from issues related to forest governance, forest degradation, climate change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity conservation and combating desertification and land degradation. It also helps improve the consistency in reporting among C&I processes and with other relevant reporting mechanisms, as appropriate, with the aim of reducing countries' reporting burden, contributing to systematic and integrated reporting and facilitating the further implementation and improvement of C&I frameworks.

Mr. Chairman,

The Montréal Process is seeking to build on our past collaboration and create closer partnerships with other C&I processes, including FOREST EUROPE, and related organizations. Looking ahead over the coming year, we would like to invite representatives of FOREST EUROPE, ITTO, FAO, CIFOR, IUFRO and UNFF to meet with the Montréal Process Working Group at our upcoming meeting from October 17th to 21st 2011 in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. We wish to exchange views on the possibility of future activities for collaboration and harmonization. At that

meeting, we would like to review emerging reporting requirements from other organizations, including the RIO+20 process, UNFF, UNEP, UNCBD, and FAO. We would like to explore interest in working together to further streamline international forest reporting requirements, such as through a joint expert meeting planned sometime in January-March 2012.

Finally, I would like to thank you again for the kind hospitality extended to us during this important meeting.

Thank you for your attention and for considering our proposal for further joint activities.

REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER FOR CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE (REC)

Ms. Marta Szigeti Boniferti
Executive Director

Your Excellencies, Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour to take part in the FOREST EUROPE Ministerial Conference on behalf of the Regional Environmental Center.

Forests are our common heritage and have ecological, economic, social, aesthetic and cultural values that are impossible to quantify. What mechanisms and instruments can be employed to safeguard European forests? How can we foster cooperation and work together to ensure that forests are sustainably managed for future generations?

The Regional Environmental Center has learned that cooperation and partnership at regional level can catalyse solutions to common challenges.

With experience in the EU member states, South Eastern Europe and Turkey, and with a network of offices in 17 countries, we are able to strengthen cooperation and dialogue among stakeholders. Our international organisation is neutral, mission driven, transparent and flexible. We are ready to support FOREST EUROPE by providing policy guidance for decision makers, technical backstopping in regional and transboundary cooperation, as well as education, training and the facilitation of public participation.

Focusing on illegal logging, climate change, green economy and renewable energy, our activities can add value in the implementation of the FOREST EUROPE mission and goals.

Illegal logging is a major threat to our forest resources and gives rise to a wide range of devastating problems. Our organisation is currently implementing a project to combat illegal logging in South Eastern Europe and Ukraine and to enhance dialogue and cooperation among the countries. We have recently published a regional report on illegal logging that contains recommendations for key actors to enable them to close the existing gaps in legislation, policy, implementation and enforcement.

The Regional Environmental Center has launched a new regional network, Themis, an informal cooperation platform on the sustainable use of

national resources, illegal logging and environmental crimes in South Eastern Europe. Themis is intended as a strategic tool for awareness raising and as a joint coordination mechanism, with our organisation as its secretariat.

Land use, land-use change and forestry are longstanding areas of focus for our organisation. We are currently supporting decision makers to streamline climate change considerations into their activities, with a focus on the agricultural sector. In addition, we are strongly involved in promoting an EU-wide shift to climate-friendly economies within the INTERREG IVC Regions for Sustainable Change project, led by our organisation. Tools and methodologies to assist regions to integrate climate change issues into regional policy planning documents have been developed. This includes forestry-related planning, in recognition of the vital role of sustainable forestry practices in delivering green growth and creating green jobs.

Building on its experience and expertise, our organisation is keen to assist the FOREST EUROPE process and foster regional cooperation to ensure that European forests are sustainably managed for the sake of future generations.

Thank you for your attention.

UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE (UNECE)

Statements of Intergovernmental Organisations

Mr. Andrey Vasilyev
Deputy Executive Secretary

Mr. Chair,

Your Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is an honour for me to be in Oslo and to speak to the Ministers and representatives of FOREST EUROPE.

First of all, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate once again to Mr. Lars Peder Brekk, Forestry Minister of Norway, not only for organizing this Ministerial Conference but also for hosting the FOREST EUROPE Liaison Unit since 2007.

The Joint UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber team, that the UNECE have the pleasure to manage together with the FAO Department of Forests, has a long history of cooperation with FOREST EUROPE. The best example for this partnership is without any doubt the publication of the State of Europe's Forests report, which is an important cooperation effort and a large scale project. For this Ministerial the third edition was jointly prepared by FOREST EUROPE, UNECE and FAO.

Structured around the pan-European criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management, this report analyses data provided by around 400 national experts on more than 2000 quantitative variables. Drafting involved 14 Coordinating Lead Authors and Lead Authors, supported by over 50 thematic Authors and Reviewers.

It makes me proud to acknowledge that Delegates to FOREST EUROPE and to our bodies, those being the ECE Timber Committee and the FAO European Forestry Commission, entrusted the coordination of this process to the UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber team in Geneva, working with the Liaison Unit Oslo. This has involved processing of data received from national correspondents and other organisations, organising meetings to consult stakeholders and ensuring the quality of the report.

By providing objective and harmonized data, the

State of Europe's Forest report aims to stimulate sound policy decisions on forests and forest-related sectors in Europe. It was presented earlier to you so I will not speak in detail about its contents. Nevertheless, let me tell you how UNECE/FAO interprets the main conclusions of the State of Europe's Forests new edition.

First of all, the report gives us a rather encouraging picture of European Forests in 2011 and of the impact of sustainable forest management.

Forests continue to expand and remove increasing amounts of carbon from the atmosphere. Removals remain below annual volume increment so that the stock of wood in Europe's forests is growing every year. Perhaps a surprising result given that Europe continues to be one of the largest producers of wood in the world, thanks to balanced management plans that promote sustainable use while conserving biodiversity along with the multitude of other benefits that well-managed forests provide.

Another important finding is that while certain atmospheric pollutants are gradually reducing, there is still a tendency for some soils to become more acidic. Roughly one-fifth of all trees and one per cent of Europe's forests show some signs of damage, caused mainly by insects and diseases. We can, nevertheless, take advantage of genetic diversity to help forests adapt to a changing climate while maintaining their role in the protection of water, soil, people and infrastructure.

The authors noted that institutional and legal frameworks continuously adapt to changing needs and priorities, even if further adjustments might be necessary to seize emerging opportunities. At the same time, national forest policies are increasingly influenced by international processes and policies in other sectors such as energy and agriculture, as well as by climate change and biodiversity.

In spite of this positive picture, we are facing four major challenges:

To secure a balance between the competing demands that society places on forests, and to use the capacity of forests to help mitigate climate change while at the same time adapting forests to new climatic conditions.

To increase the harvest of wood from Europe's forests in such a way that we can supply enough

wood to meet the demand for renewable energy and renewable raw material, without reducing the other vital benefits that forests offer society.

To find ways to conserve and restore the biodiversity of our forests that can go hand in hand with the more intensive forest management that may be necessary to meet society's growing demand for wood.

To achieve the potential of the forest sector in the transition towards a green economy in Europe, building on and developing the green features of the sector such as sustainable production and consumption patterns, green building, green jobs, the supply of renewable energy and payments for ecosystem services.

UNECE/FAO will continue to address these challenges through its programme of work. With reference to the last point, let me recall that the next joint meeting, called «Orman 2011» of the Timber Committee and the European Forestry Commission, will be held from 10 to 14 October in Antalya (Turkey) and its theme will be forests in a green economy.

UNECE/FAO is working with numerous stakeholders to develop an action plan for the forest sector in a green economy. This plan aims to stimulate action to improve the contribution of the forest sector in the UNECE region to the emerging green economy. The first version of the action plan was substantially improved during a two-day meeting in Geneva in May 2011. The current version will be presented to the Delegates in Antalya as a lead into the discussions, which will touch upon:

- Sustainable production and consumption of forest products;
- The low-carbon forest sector;
- Decent green jobs;
- Valuation of and payment for forest ecosystem services;
- Monitoring and governance of the forest sector.

The Action Plan addresses the green economy dimensions of the forest sector, and the specific contribution that the forest sector can make to support the development of a broader green economy. The green economy represents an opportunity for the forest sector, especially in our region, and it needs to be seized.

The green economy is becoming more and more a key element in our work (with practical applications such as green building and payments for ecosystem services) and all countries in the ECE region (Europe, Russian Federation and USA and Canada) are actively involved.

I wish to reaffirm that UNECE/FAO will continue to support and collaborate with the FOREST EUROPE process, in accordance with the decisions the Ministers take here in Oslo. I have no doubt that cooperation with the new Liaison Unit to be formed in Spain will be fruitful, as will be our work with all the relevant partner organisations that deal with forestry in Europe such as FAO in Rome, UNEP and the European Forest Institute.

The work that lies ahead is simply too important to allow us the luxury of working in our own backyard. Several decades ago, FAO and UNECE decided to join their forces, delivering as one for Forestry and Timber.

Building on our past efforts, we must now all work together to ensure that we «deliver as one», across sectors and across institutions. In this way we make a real difference by helping countries to meet their national development needs and priorities for forests, including their commitments under FOREST EUROPE.

When we deliver as one, we deliver for all.

Thank you.

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP)

Statements of Intergovernmental Organisations

Mr. Christophe Bouvier

Director and Regional Representative

On behalf of

Mr. Achim Steiner

Executive Director

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, may I convey our gratitude to the Government of Norway for the excellent organization of this Conference and the opportunity for UNEP to address this distinguished audience. I wish also to congratulate Min. Rosa Aguilar - the president of UNEP's Governing Council for her nomination as co-chair of the Conference.

It is indeed a great honour for me to represent the United Nations Environment Programme at this Conference. UNEP has been working closely with you for many years and we are pleased to see the successes that have been achieved so far thanks to your valuable efforts.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

As the Crown Prince of Norway and many other speakers have stressed before me, forests are the source of much needed environmental services, terrestrial biodiversity, a wide variety of genetic resources, stabilize land, global climate and regulate water cycles. Economic valuation studies of ecosystems, conducted in different countries, have demonstrated the important benefits from forests. While their value is hard to measure, all estimates show large orders of magnitude. For example, reducing deforestation by half every year until the end of the century would bring as much as \$ 5.3 trillion in climate regulation benefits alone.

Forests are not only the basis for the livelihoods of over 1 billion of the poorest people, those living on USD2 a day or less; they also contribute in a critical way to the traditional way of life of 60 million indigenous people and local communities. Forests play a major role in the economies of many countries: wood based industries contribute more than USD450 billion to world's markets.

To UNEP, the importance of investing in forests is manifested through their multiple roles and as a contributor to sustainable development. For example, according to UNEP's report on green economy and forests, unveiled on the occasion of World Environment Day a week ago, investing an additional US\$40 billion a year in the forestry sector could halve deforestation rates by 2030, and catalyze the creation of millions of new jobs. Backed by the right kinds of enabling policies, such an investment - about two-thirds more than what is spent on the sector today - could also sequester or remove an extra 28 per cent of carbon from the atmosphere, in addition to contributing to decent green jobs and sustainable economic development.

Indeed UNEP's Green Economy initiative has identified forestry as one of the ten central sectors capable of propelling a transition to a low carbon, resource efficient, more equitable, decent employment-generating future. There is also an increasing engagement from the private sector in nature-based assets. The World Business Council for Sustainable Development, for example, has recently issued guidelines on valuation of ecosystems, not only as part of social responsibility but based on sound long term business planning; this was based on the analysis of real life best practices, including from the pulp and paper industry. Forest management indeed is one of the sectors where long-term vision of sustainability is necessary. Here in Scandinavia, innovation is leading to new solutions in engineering and infrastructure, with additional environmental benefits.

At the global level, UNEP promotes the sustainable management of forests through various programmes; one of them is the United Nations Collaborative Initiative on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) in developing countries. The Programme was launched in 2008 to assist developing countries prepare and implement national REDD+ strategies, it could not have been launched without the foresight and generosity of our host today, the government of Norway. It builds on the combined convening power and expertise of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) which provides its coordination.

The Programme currently has 29 partner countries spanning Africa, Asia-Pacific and Latin America. We are also active in our role as advocates for the forests, and this year's World Environment Day last week promoted the slogan *Forests: Nature at your Service* to honour the International Year on Forests and raise awareness of the general public worldwide on the multi-functionality of forests. World famous fashion designer Ms. Vivienne Westwood is designing five «tree shirts» for our IYF campaign. The sales of these «tree shirts» will support reforestation efforts, and equally important, help raise public awareness in Europe. Forestry related events will continue throughout the year.

While European forests are expanding, UNEP is concerned, as you are, about forest fragmentation throughout Europe, eutrophication, diseases, illegal logging and forest fires, especially in the Mediterranean basin and in the Russian Federation. The environmental, social and economic stakes are too great, not just for Europe, but for the world, to remain complacent.

At the pan European level, UNEP as a member of the FOREST EUROPE partnership, and supporting countries' efforts to meet the biodiversity targets agreed last year in Japan at the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity - which UNEP also administers. UNEP and UNECE/FAO are also jointly developing policy scenarios for the European Forest Sector Outlook. For the upcoming Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference, to be held in Astana in September, UNEP, in collaboration with UNECE and others, a document containing some countries' best practices in forestry that contribute to a transition to a green economy. We are also working with scientists at the European Commission's Joint Research Centre in Ispra to draw up maps pinpointing where increased efforts are needed to restore Europe's green corridors and reconnect fragmented forests.

On 27 May High Level Representatives of the seven Carpathian countries signed the Protocol on Sustainable Forest Management to the Carpathian Convention which UNEP serves as its interim secretariat. We are pursuing a process of consultation on the Caucasus mountain range with similar goals.

Many before me have rightly stressed the importance for Europe of Russian forests. But Russia

hosts over 20 percent of world *forests*, which are key to the global ecological balance. We are encouraged by the Russian Federation's Government and Chamber of Commerce's intention, embedded in a new partnership with UNEP, to shift towards a greener, more diversified economy. We intend to propose the forest industry, including timber, pulp and paper, as a potential driver in this transition to a sustainable economy.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,
You will be taking key decisions at this Conference regarding the negotiations of a legally binding instrument on forests for the pan European region and establishing targets to achieve your vision for the future. As a partner in FOREST EUROPE, UNEP stands ready to support your decisions, and will continue to share its experience, for example in supporting the negotiation and administration of a very significant number of multilateral environmental agreements.

The FOREST EUROPE process needs to be scaled up and enforced to safeguard the forests of the pan European region. Your renewed efforts in creating the enabling conditions in the forest sector will support a transition to a green economy within and outside of Europe. For all its shortcomings and the challenges ahead, the progress achieved through this European forest process is remarkable; the world in many respects will be looking at you, as an inspiration on how the sound management and conservation of natural capital, first and foremost our forests, builds the basis for sustainable social and economic development rather than considered a tradeoff for well-being and equity within our societies. This assembly, for one, is poised to bring some of the concrete answers that the world will be seeking in this regard at the Rio +20 Conference on sustainable development - almost exactly one year from now.

Thank you and all the best wishes for a very successful Conference.

UNITED NATIONS FORUM ON FORESTS (UNFF)

Ms. Jan L. McAlpine
Director

Excellencies, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

I am very pleased to take part in this Ministerial Roundtable and would like to take this opportunity to thank the Government of Norway for hosting this meeting, the Secretariat of FOREST EUROPE Oslo liaison unit for their hard work and all European partners for their commitment in promoting sustainable forest management in Europe.

I would like to share with you recent updates related to the United Nations Forum on Forests and regional cooperation, and activities being organized to celebrate the International Year of Forests, 2011

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Most of us know the multiple functions of forests. We are well aware of the economic value of forests, especially through timber production, and of the positive effects that forests can have in mitigating climate change, notably through carbon sequestration. Forest degradation and deforestation contribute around 17% of global greenhouse gas emissions, affect local climate, soil fertility, water, rainfall patterns, soil erosion, and livelihoods

As you know the United Nations Forum on Forests was established in 2000 to promote the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests in a holistic manner - using a 360 degree perspective. Forests are more than economic values and carbon - they provide a healthy environment for people, secured livelihoods, shelter and sustenance.

Forests play a fundamental role in creating livelihoods for 1.6 billion people around the world - almost a quarter of the world's population. These are people who are most marginalized by the world economy. Forests act as a safety net for the rural poor and thus play a key role in reducing poverty. Ultimately, forests support all 7 billion people who depend on forests.

«Forests for People» is the theme of the International Year of Forests 2011 which celebrates the central role of people in the sustainable management, conservation and sustainable development of our

world's forests. As you know, the UN General Assembly requested the UNFF Secretariat to serve as the focal point for the implementation of Forests 2011, in collaboration with Governments, CPF members, and other organizations and processes as well as relevant major groups.

Distinguished delegates,

The multi-year programme of work of the United Nations Forum on Forests places particular importance on the role of regional collaboration for sustainable forest management. At every UNFF session the Secretariat is mandated to present a report by the Secretary-General which summarizes regional and subregional inputs received from partners, based on a questionnaire sent by our Secretariat with issues relevant to each session. We also organize a traditionally very well attended discussion at UNFF sessions to discuss regional and subregional realities.

To help foster regional communication during the intersessional periods between UNFF sessions, we recently decided to issue a new virtual regional newsletter in English, French and Spanish called «Regional Voices.» The publication will highlight best practices, challenges and opportunities in implementing sustainable forest management at the regional and subregional level. We are currently preparing the first edition which is expected to be published in July 2011.

We continue to work to ensure that our regional/subregional partners are an integral part of our ad hoc work, especially through the participation in expert groups, as well as in identifying and engaging entities which deal with forests in regions and subregions throughout the world. We also intend to focus further on our relationship with regional/subregional financial institutions, fundamental for the success of our work on forest financing. We need to further engage regional development banks, for instance, and we count on Member States support to do that.

Excellencies,

At the recent United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) meeting in February, ministers and high officials agreed on a Ministerial Declaration which stresses that forests are crucial for sustainable development and the achievement of the

internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. Ministers also recognized the need to solve the issue of forest financing and encouraged the promotion of synergies between climate change and sustainable forest management activities while noting that sustainable forest management encompasses a comprehensive approach to achieving the best out of forest functions. Finally, ministers considered Forests 2011 as a great opportunity to raise awareness and strengthen political commitment and action worldwide.

Most of you are probably familiar with the iconic Forests 2011 logo. The logo was developed by the UNFF Secretariat to communicate the critical message of the multiple values of forests and the need for a 360-degree perspective. The iconographic elements in the design depict that forests provide shelter to people and habitat for biodiversity; are a source of food, medicine and clean water and play a vital role in maintaining a stable global climate and healthy environment.

All of the elements in the official logo of the Year reinforce the message that forests are vital to the survival and well-being of people everywhere. Requests for the iconographic logo designed by the UN Graphics Design Unit have been pouring in; to date over 800 organisations are using the logo in their media and publications. The logo is also being made available in local languages, in addition to the 6 UN official languages. To date the logo has been translated into over 40 local languages including Armenian, Bulgarian, Catalan, Croatian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, Estonian, Finnish, German, Greek, Icelandic, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Kyrgyz, Latvian, Polish, Portuguese, Slovakian, Slovenian, Swedish, Swahili, and Turkish.

During the launch of the International Year at UN Headquarters in February this year, the Forests 2011 logo was projected 9 stories high onto the UN Secretariat building. The launch ceremony was held in the United Nations General Assembly Hall on 2 February, part of UNFF9 high level ministerial segment. The event was presided over by H.E. Mr Joseph Deiss, President of the 65th session of the United Nations General Assembly and included high level speakers: UN Secretary General (video message), Ministers, Nobel laureate: Wangari Maathai, and senior government and UN officials and children's ambassador.

In his message to the launch event United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said, «By declaring 2011 as the International Year of Forests, the United Nations General Assembly has created an important platform to educate the global community about the great value of forests - and the extreme social, economic and environmental costs of losing them.»

Speaking as an official emissary of President Paul Kagame, H.E. Mr. Stanislas Kamanzi, Minister of Environment and Lands, Rwanda, announced his country's border-to-border landscape restoration initiative (a long term target by 2035, landscape restoration initiative that will incorporate wetlands, small agriculture holdings, trees outside forests, forests, biodiversity protection and livelihoods for the 10,000 million people living on 26,000 square kilometres of land).

Ladies and Gentlemen,

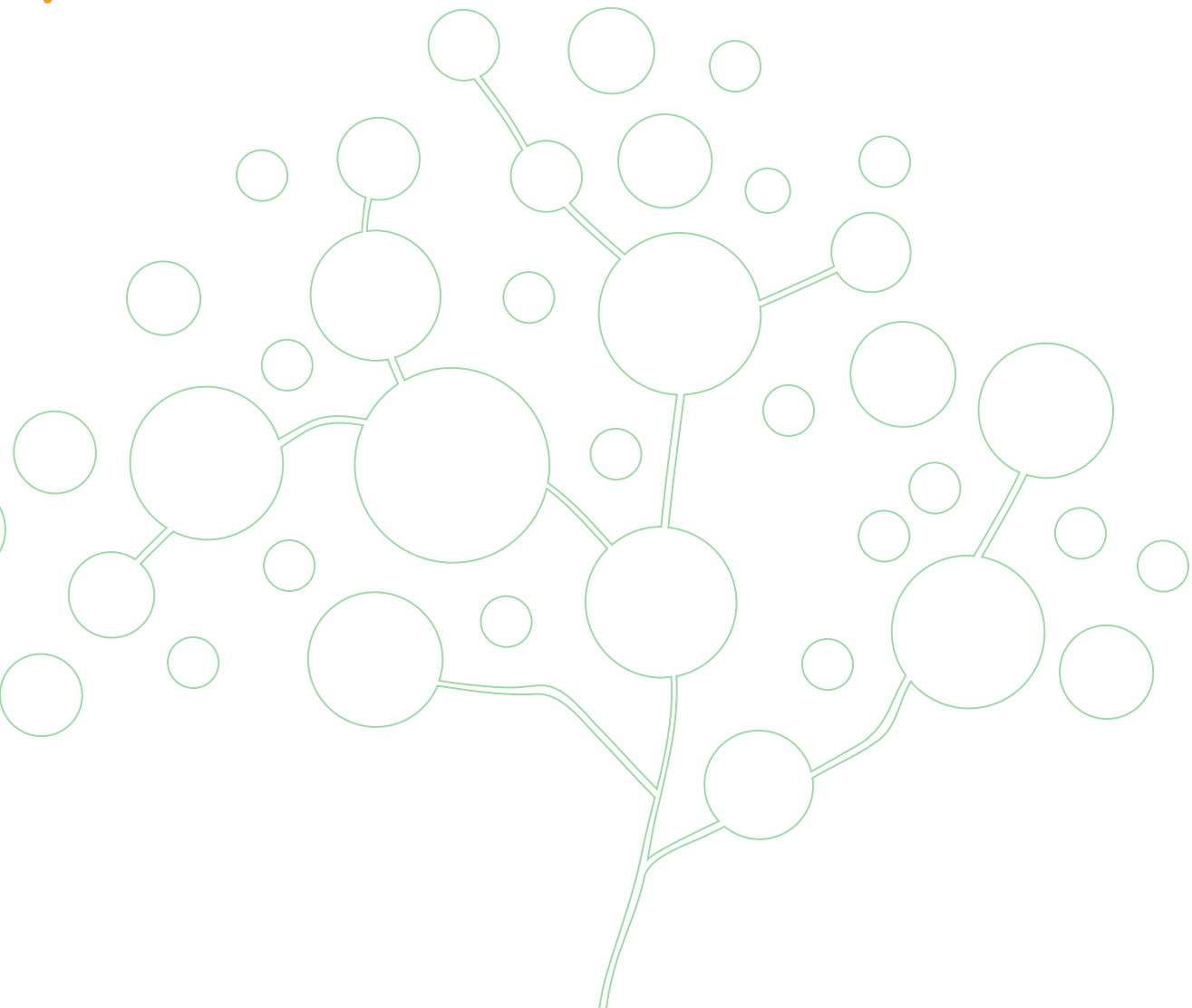
Film is a powerful medium to inspire a sense of personal responsibility and stewardship - the International Forest Film Festival is a key component of outreach efforts that seek to inform and inspire. The festival was recently awarded the grand prize by CinemAmbiente, the leading environmental film festival in Europe on June 5, 2011. Clips of the winning films are available online, and screenings can be requested for any of the 165 films of the film festival. To date over 100 screening requests have already been received, and hundreds more are expected as the Year progresses. In addition there will be a Forest Film festival event as part of Jackson Hole film festival slated for October 3rd - 7th, 2011. At the end of my presentation I will share a short clip from the film that won Best of Festival - «The Queen of Trees» - an amazing film about an African tree that provides sustenance to a staggering number of creatures.

The UNFF Secretariat has produced a variety of outreach and promotional items for the Year which include a video Public Service Announcement and logo animation created by Adolescent.TV and featuring a contemporary take on how everything, from the tea we drink to the furniture we use in our daily lives, has a forest within it. Award-winning filmmaker and UNEP Goodwill Ambassador Yann Arthus-Bertrand created a 7 minute short film «FOREST», which was narrated by UN Goodwill Ambassador for Biodiversity Edward

Norton. The film is copy-right free, and was premiered at the Forests 2011 launch ceremony. It was originally produced in French and English, and has now been translated into Spanish and Portuguese. The video clips are currently hosted on the UN Multimedia site and are viewable from the Forests 2011 website www.un.org/forests

We believe that the tremendous goodwill and attention focussed on forests throughout the International Year will help to ensure that the legacy of the Year will build into a continuing process of advocacy - to put the spotlight on forest issues at the upcoming Rio+20 conference and beyond.

Thank you very much for your part in this celebration!



Outcomes of the
FOREST EUROPE
*Ministerial Conference
on the Protection
of Forests in Europe*
Oslo 14-16 June 2011



Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe
Oslo 14-16 June 2011

Oslo Ministerial Decision: European Forests 2020

1. RECALLING the Declarations of the Ministerial Conferences in Strasbourg 1990, Helsinki 1993, Lisbon 1998, including the vision for the European forest sector, Vienna 2003 and Warsaw 2007, which identified issues of transboundary nature and common concern with regard to forests and recognised the need for strengthening cooperation between the states of the entire European continent in the field of sustainable management of their forests;
2. REITERATING commitments to work towards addressing global environmental challenges and contributing to the achievement of the Non-Legally Binding Instrument on all Types of Forests, with its Four Global Objectives on Forests, as well as other global objectives such as: the Millennium Development Goals, the Aichi Biodiversity Targets of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the climate change commitments;
3. REITERATING former FOREST EUROPE commitments, and TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the work undertaken by other international forums on forest-related policies, including the Rio Conventions and the United Nations Forum on Forests as well as regional organisations and initiatives;
4. TAKING NOTE of the recent findings of the *State of Europe's Forests 2011* report, stating significant progress made in most indicators for sustainable forest management as well as future challenges and opportunities for forests and their sustainable management in Europe, while acknowledging the improvements achieved in data collection as well as the need for further improvement in forest information;
5. REAFFIRMING that sustainable forest management means the stewardship and use of forests and forest lands in a way, and at a rate, that maintains their biodiversity, productivity, regeneration capacity, vitality and their potential to fulfil, now and in the future, relevant ecological, economic and social functions, at local, national, and global levels, and that does not cause damage to other ecosystems;
6. RECOGNISING that climate change is one of the gravest threats faced by society and AWARE that urgent action is required to minimise risks of damage from events such as storms, floods, fire, drought, pests and diseases in order to protect European forests and their functions;
7. RECOGNISING that forests and sustainable forest management contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, provide renewable raw material, energy supply, water and soil protection and other ecosystem services as well as protect society and societal infrastructures against natural hazards;
8. RECOGNISING the importance of economic functions of forests and their potential in fostering a green economy and for generating and maintaining jobs and income, contributing to rural development and enabling the long term economic viability and competitiveness of forestry and forest-based industries;

9. BEING CONCERNED about the negative impacts of illegal logging and related trade on society, the environment and markets, and CONVINCED about the need to further strengthen efforts to improve forest law enforcement and governance;
10. RECOGNISING the value of adequate and accessible forest information, such as forest inventories, monitoring, assessing and reporting on implementation of sustainable forest management as well as science-based knowledge, for decision making at all levels;
11. SEEKING the best way to enhance the role of European forests in contributing to solving the national and global challenges posed by climate change, desertification, loss of biodiversity and other environmental challenges while responding to the growing need for timber as a renewable material, and maintaining the ability of Europe's forests to contribute to the quality of life and the well-being of people;
12. STRESSING the importance of national circumstances, national sovereignty over natural resources and national responsibilities in implementing sustainable forest management bearing in mind the forest ownership structure in Europe and UNDERLINING the added value of European cooperation and joint actions for enhancing progress in sustainable management of forest and of sharing forest-related information;
13. TAKING NOTE of the External Review of the FOREST EUROPE process carried out in 2008/2009 and WELCOMING the outcomes of the work and reflections done afterwards;
14. AWARE that the challenges faced by forests in a rapidly changing environment cannot be addressed through forest policy measures alone and SEEKING to strengthen relationships and synergies in the work of the forest sector with other sectors and institutions for greater coherence in forest-related policy-making;
15. UNDERLINING the will to ensure that all forests in Europe are sustainably managed, and to promote and raise awareness in society about their multiple goods and services;
16. CONVINCED about the need to take effective measures to improve coherence in forest policy development and implementation with appropriate participation of stakeholders;

As representatives of the Signatories of FOREST EUROPE, we

VISION FOR FORESTS IN EUROPE

17. SHARE the following vision:

To shape a future where all European forests are vital, productive and multifunctional. Where forests contribute effectively to sustainable development, through ensuring human well-being, a healthy environment and economic development in Europe and across the globe. Where the forests' unique potential to support a green economy, livelihoods, climate change mitigation, biodiversity conservation, enhancing water quality and combating desertification is realised to the benefit of society;

GOALS FOR EUROPEAN FORESTS

18. DECIDE on the following goals for European forests in support of the shared vision:
 - I. Sustainable management of all European forests ensures multiple forest functions and enhances lasting provision of goods and services
 - II. European forests contribute to a green economy, including through increased provision of wood, other forest products and ecosystem services from sustainable sources
 - III. Forest management in Europe is being adapted to changes in climate, forests are healthy and resilient to natural hazards and protected against human-induced threats such as forest fires, and the productive and protective functions of forests are maintained

- IV. The potential of European forests to mitigate climate change, through carbon sequestration in trees and soils, carbon storage in forest products and substitution of non-renewable materials and energy sources, is utilised to minimise Europe's ecological footprint without harming the global carbon balance
- V. The loss of forest biodiversity in Europe is halted and degraded forests are restored or rehabilitated
- VI. The role of forests in combating the progress of desertification is strengthened
- VII. Socioeconomic and cultural benefits, especially for livelihoods, rural development and employment from European forests are optimised
- VIII. Illegal logging and associated trade in wood and other forest products are eliminated in Europe;

EUROPEAN 2020 TARGETS

19. DECIDE on the following European targets to be achieved by 2020 in support of the shared vision and the goals for forests:
 - I. All European countries have developed and are implementing national forest programmes, or its equivalent, in line with the shared vision and goals and the pan-European approach to national forest programmes
 - II. In addressing emerging issues forest knowledge is improved through research, education, innovation, information sharing and communication
 - III. In response to political objectives on the use of renewable raw material and energy in Europe, the supply of wood and other forest products from sustainably managed forests has increased substantially
 - IV. The full value of forest ecosystem services across Europe is being estimated with a view to using common valuation approaches, and that values are increasingly reflected in relevant national policies and market-based instruments such as payments for ecosystem services
 - V. All European countries include strategies for forests and climate change adaptation and mitigation in national forest programmes or equivalents and all other relevant national strategies
 - VI. The rate of loss of forest biodiversity at habitat level is at least halved and where feasible brought close to zero, and measures are taken to significantly reduce forest fragmentation and degradation and to restore degraded forests
 - VII. The role of forests in combating desertification is fully recognised and forests are also managed to that end
 - VIII. All European countries have policies and measures which ensure a significant increase in socio-economic and cultural benefits, especially for human health, livelihoods, rural development and employment from forests
 - IX. Effective measures are taken at regional, sub-regional and national levels to eliminate illegal logging and associated trade;

MISSION OF FOREST EUROPE

20. DECIDE on the following mission for FOREST EUROPE to advance realisation of the shared vision, the goals and the 2020 targets for forests:

FOREST EUROPE enhances the cooperation on forest policies in Europe under the leadership of ministers, and secures and promotes sustainable forest management with the aim of maintaining the multiple functions of forests crucial to society;

21. DECIDE that to fulfil the mission, FOREST EUROPE will undertake the following tasks:
 - a. Develop and update policies and tools for sustainable forest management, including by facilitating open and flexible policy dialogue, active participation by relevant stakeholders and cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination with other actors;
 - b. Monitor, assess and facilitate implementation of commitments on forests and sustainable forest management in all European countries and in the region as a whole;
 - c. Promote education, research and the use of scientific knowledge and facilitate sharing of experiences across countries, sectors and stakeholders on all aspects of sustainable forest management and other forest related issues;
 - d. Raise awareness and understanding of contributions by FOREST EUROPE to sustainable forest management in relevant fora including at international level and among the public, including through implementation of the communications strategy;

EUROPEAN AND NATIONAL ACTIONS

22. ENDORSE the Pan-European Guidelines for Afforestation and Reforestation with a special focus on the provisions of the UNFCCC, developed in collaboration with Environment for Europe/Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy;
23. NOTE the progress made on European Forest Types and encourage continued refinement of forest classification integrated with work on further reporting and development of sustainable forest management and its tools;
24. DECIDE to develop a FOREST EUROPE work programme with prioritised joint European actions to be carried out in cooperation with partners and other organisations, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and the European Forest Institute. The work programme should, in parallel to the work of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on preparing a legally binding agreement, address the following actions:

a. Further development of sustainable forest management and its tools

Responding to increasing attention and new scientific knowledge on the multiple roles that forests and sustainable forest management play in tackling global challenges, FOREST EUROPE will step up efforts and further consolidate the pan-European policies and tools for sustainable forest management, taking into account biodiversity and climate change commitments, emerging threats to and pressure on forest resources as well as the role of forest owners;

b. Further improvements in forest monitoring and reporting

Stressing the importance of adequate, accessible and evidence-based forest information at all levels of policy making, and for informing the broader public, FOREST EUROPE will further improve the basis for forest monitoring and harmonised reporting systems to serve emerging needs, including for verification of legality and sustainability;

c. Strengthened efforts against illegal logging and related trade

Responding to the severe consequences of illegal logging and related trade and to the challenges posed by global deforestation, and in order to complement and underpin efforts by the European Union and the ENA/FLEG process against illegal logging and related trade, FOREST EUROPE will further strengthen efforts for good governance and forest law enforcement, inter alia by cooperating to ensure that timber traded within or into FOREST EUROPE signatories' derives from legally harvested forests, and by facilitating the exchange of lessons learned;

d. Valuation of forest ecosystem services

Stressing the importance of the full range of forest goods and services, FOREST EUROPE will develop a common approach to valuation of forest ecosystem services and promote its use, with the aim of raising awareness of the contributions to societies of multiple forest functions, to serve informed decision making and to assess achievements against the 2020 targets;

25. COMMIT to further develop and implement national policies for sustainable forest management in accordance with national and local conditions and priorities, and to monitor and report on the progress towards sustainable forest management, and in line with this jointly explore measures to improve monitoring of the achievements of the European 2020 targets;
26. COMMIT to identify and implement national actions to fulfil the shared vision and the related goals and 2020 targets for forests in Europe;
27. ENCOURAGE potential donors, on request, to support the development and implementation of national forest programmes or forest sector plans and strategies in countries undertaking forest sector reform, particularly countries with economies in transition.



Oslo Ministerial Mandate for Negotiating a Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe

1. RECALLING the Declarations of the Ministerial Conferences in Strasbourg 1990, Helsinki 1993, Lisbon 1998, including the vision for the European forest sector, Vienna 2003 and Warsaw 2007, which identified issues of transboundary nature and common concern with regard to forests and recognised the need for strengthening cooperation between the states of the entire European continent in the field of sustainable management of their forests;
2. REITERATING commitments to work towards addressing global environmental challenges and contributing to the achievement of the Non-Legally Binding Instrument on all Types of Forests, with its Four Global Objectives on Forests, as well as other global objectives such as: the Millennium Development Goals, the Aichi Biodiversity Targets of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the climate change commitments;
3. REITERATING former FOREST EUROPE commitments, and TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the work undertaken by other international forums on forest-related policies, including the Rio Conventions and the United Nations Forum on Forests as well as regional organisations and initiatives;
4. TAKING NOTE of the recent findings of the *State of Europe's Forests 2011* report, stating significant progress made in most indicators for sustainable forest management as well as future challenges and opportunities for forests and their sustainable management in Europe, while acknowledging the improvements achieved in data collection as well as the need for further improvement in forest information;
5. REAFFIRMING that sustainable forest management means the stewardship and use of forests and forest lands in a way, and at a rate, that maintains their biodiversity, productivity, regeneration capacity, vitality and their potential to fulfil, now and in the future, relevant ecological, economic and social functions, at local, national, and global levels, and that does not cause damage to other ecosystems;
6. RECOGNISING that climate change is one of the gravest threats faced by society and AWARE that urgent action is required to minimise risks of damage from events such as storms, floods, fire, drought, pests and diseases in order to protect European forests and their functions;
7. RECOGNISING that forests and sustainable forest management contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, provide renewable raw material, energy supply, water and soil protection and other ecosystem services as well as protect society and societal infrastructures against natural hazards;
8. RECOGNISING the importance of economic functions of forests and their potential in fostering a green economy and for generating and maintaining jobs and income, contributing to rural development and enabling the long term economic viability and competitiveness of forestry and forest-based industries;

9. BEING CONCERNED about the negative impacts of illegal logging and related trade on society, the environment and markets, and CONVINCED about the need to further strengthen efforts to improve forest law enforcement and governance;
10. RECOGNISING the value of adequate and accessible forest information, such as forest inventories, monitoring, assessing and reporting on implementation of sustainable forest management as well as science-based knowledge, for decision making at all levels;
11. SEEKING the best way to enhance the role of European forests in contributing to solving the national and global challenges posed by climate change, desertification, loss of biodiversity and other environmental challenges while responding to the growing need for timber as a renewable material, and maintaining the ability of Europe's forests to contribute to the quality of life and the well-being of people;
12. STRESSING the importance of national circumstances, national sovereignty over natural resources and national responsibilities in implementing sustainable forest management bearing in mind the forest ownership structure in Europe and UNDERLINING the added value of European cooperation and joint actions for enhancing progress in sustainable management of forest and of sharing forest-related information;
13. TAKING NOTE of the External Review of the FOREST EUROPE process carried out in 2008/2009 and WELCOMING the outcomes of the work and reflections done afterwards;
14. AWARE that the challenges faced by forests in a rapidly changing environment cannot be addressed through forest policy measures alone and SEEKING to strengthen relationships and synergies in the work of the forest sector with other sectors and institutions for greater coherence in forest-related policy-making;
15. UNDERLINING the will to ensure that all forests in Europe are sustainably managed, and to promote and raise awareness in society about their multiple goods and services;
16. CONVINCED about the need to take effective measures to improve coherence in forest policy development and implementation with appropriate participation of stakeholders;
17. CONVINCED that a legally binding agreement on forests in Europe is necessary to reinforce and strengthen implementation of sustainable forest management with the view to achieving balanced and stable continuity of all economic, environmental, cultural and social forest functions in Europe, and will contribute to achieving the vision, goals and targets for forests in Europe (Oslo Ministerial Decision: European Forests 2020);

As representatives of the Signatories of FOREST EUROPE, we

18. DECIDE to take further international action consisting of the elaboration of a legally binding agreement on forests in Europe and DECIDE to establish an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee with the mandate to develop a legally binding agreement on forests in Europe;
19. DECIDE to adopt the Rules of Procedure which will apply to the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee and which are annexed to this Mandate (Annex 1);
20. DECIDE to establish a Bureau for the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee, which shall consist of the Chair of the Committee and representatives of the following countries: Austria, Czech Republic, France, Norway, Poland, Russian Federation, Turkey and Ukraine, and Spain as permanent observer;
21. NOMINATE Mr. Jan Heino (Finland) for the Chairmanship of the Committee;
22. REQUEST the Chair and the Bureau of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to facilitate the work of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee in fulfilling its mandate and to guide the secretariat in providing necessary service to the negotiations;

23. DECIDE that the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee, basing its work on existing FOREST EUROPE Resolutions and Declarations and relevant international commitments relating to forests, and taking into account the Non-paper on a possible legally binding agreement on forests in Europe, is to develop a holistic legally binding framework agreement for forests, to address, inter alia, the following possible subjects:
 - a. To ensure sustainable forest management in Europe and the long-term provision of a broad range of goods and forest ecosystem services;
 - b. To maintain and enhance forest resources in Europe, their health, vitality and resilience, and their adaptation to climate change;
 - c. To increase the resilience of forests to natural hazards and to protect forest against human-induced threats;
 - d. To enhance the contributions of forests to the mitigation of climate change;
 - e. To maintain and enhance the protective and productive potential of European forests;
 - f. To halt the loss of forest biodiversity in Europe and combat desertification;
 - g. To create and maintain enabling conditions for European forests to contribute to a green economy, employment and the development of rural and urban areas;
 - h. To maintain and enhance the cultural and social functions of forests in Europe;
 - i. To reduce, with the aim of eliminating, illegal logging and associated trade in timber and timber products;
 - j. To improve the forest knowledge base through research, education, information sharing and communication;
 - k. To enhance participation and cooperation on forests at local, national, regional and global levels;
24. REQUEST that the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee, in developing a legally binding framework agreement for forests, considers the following:
 - a. The importance of flexibility, so that Parties can take decisions adjusted to their specific forest conditions and to provide for addressing changing and emerging needs in the future;
 - b. Global discussions on possible improvement of international arrangements on forests, including those related to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20 Conference), with the view to seeking for synergies;
 - c. The need to achieve cooperation and coordination and to avoid unnecessary duplication of proposed actions with relevant provisions contained in other international agreements;
 - d. The importance of securing the effective participation of stakeholders;
 - e. Agreement on common terms and definitions, based on the broader involvement of FAO and other organisations with the necessary expertise;
 - f. Efficient organisation and streamlined secretariat arrangements;
 - g. The possibility of the agreement being brought under the United Nations umbrella;

25. DECIDE that participation in the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee will be open to FOREST EUROPE Signatories (Annex 2) and INVITE them to actively contribute to the success of the negotiating process;
26. INVITE FOREST EUROPE observer States, agencies and organisations, including non-governmental organisations, to participate in the work of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure;
27. REQUEST the Liaison Unit and INVITE the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Environment Programme and the European Forest Institute to service jointly the negotiating process in accordance with the Annex to the Rules of Procedure and based upon the respective expertise of each organisation and the resources that they can contribute within their mandates;
28. INVITE also other interested governments and organisations to contribute by supporting the negotiation process;
29. DECIDE that the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee will commence its work not later than 31 December 2011 with the goal to completing its work not later than 30 June 2013 and will present its results to an extraordinary FOREST EUROPE ministerial conference to be organised within six months after the conclusion of the negotiations, for its consideration and possible adoption and opening for signature.

Annex 1:

Rules of Procedure for the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to prepare a legally binding agreement on forests in Europe

I. PURPOSE

Rule 1 – Purpose and application

These Rules of Procedure shall govern the negotiations on a legally binding agreement on forests in Europe, conducted by the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee established by the Oslo Ministerial Mandate for Negotiating a Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe.

II. DEFINITIONS

Rule 2 – Definitions

1. "Party" means a UN member state or a regional economic integration organisation, which is a Signatory to FOREST EUROPE and which is participating in the work of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a legally binding agreement on forests in Europe.
2. "Regional economic integration organisation" means an organisation constituted by sovereign States of a given region to which its member States have transferred competence in respect of matters covered by the Committee's work.
3. "Committee" means the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC), for the purpose of negotiating a legally binding agreement on forests in Europe.
4. "Chair" means the Chair nominated by paragraph 21 of the Oslo Ministerial Mandate for Negotiating a Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe.
5. "Bureau" means the Bureau established by paragraph 20 of the Oslo Ministerial Mandate for Negotiating a Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe.
6. "Secretariat" means the secretariat established by paragraph 27 of the Oslo Ministerial Mandate for Negotiating a Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe.
7. "Representatives present and voting" means representatives of Parties present and casting an affirmative or negative vote. Representatives who abstain from voting are considered as not voting.
8. "Official documents" means documents directly related to agenda items and which form the basis of discussions foreseen on the agenda.
9. "Signatory to FOREST EUROPE" means the countries listed in Annex 2 to the Oslo Ministerial Mandate for Negotiating a Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe.

III. PLACE AND DATES OF SESSIONS

Rule 3 – Place and dates of sessions

1. The Committee shall hold up to four sessions.
2. The date and place of the first session shall be decided by the Bureau.
3. The places and dates of the subsequent sessions shall be decided by the Committee in consultation with the Bureau and the Secretariat.

4. The Secretariat shall notify all Parties of the date and place of a session at least six weeks before the session is to take place.

IV. AGENDA

Rule 4.1 - Provisional agenda for sessions

1. The Secretariat shall, after approval by the Bureau, submit to the Committee at each session the provisional agenda for the following session. The provisional agenda shall include all items proposed by the Committee.
2. The Secretariat shall circulate the provisional agenda for the first session at least six weeks before the session takes place.
3. The Secretariat shall, at the request of a Party or the Bureau and with the agreement of the Chair, include in an addendum to the provisional agenda any issue suitable for the agenda that may arise between the dispatch of the provisional agenda and the opening of the session.

Rule 4.2 - Adoption and revision of the agenda

At the beginning of each session, the Committee shall adopt its agenda for the session based on the provisional agenda, and has the option to add, delete, defer or amend items.

V. REPRESENTATION

Rule 5.1 - Composition of delegations

The delegation of each Party participating in any session shall consist of a head of delegation and such alternate representatives and advisers as may be required. No credentials are required for the sessions of the Committee.

Rule 5.2 - Alternates and advisers

The head of delegation may designate an alternate representative or an adviser to act as a representative.

VI. BUREAU

Rule 6.1 - Number of officers and the Chair

The Bureau is established by paragraph 20 of the Oslo Ministerial Mandate for Negotiating a Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe and is comprised of one Chair and eight other members who will act as Vice-Chairs, and one permanent observer.

Rule 6.2 - Substitution of a Chair

If the Chair is absent from a session or any part thereof, a Vice-Chair shall act as Chair.

Rule 6.3 - Replacement of the Chair

If the Chair is unable to continue to perform his or her functions, the Committee shall elect by consensus decision the Chair for the unexpired term. If no consensus can be reached, the decision shall be taken by a three-quarters majority of the representatives present and voting.

Rule 6.4 - Substitution and replacement of other members of the Bureau

Without prejudice to Rule, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3

1. If a member of the Bureau is temporarily unable to fulfill his or her function, a representative of the same

Party shall be named by the Party concerned to replace the said member. Such substitution shall not exceed the period of one session;

2. If a member of the Bureau resigns or is otherwise unable to complete or perform his or her function, a representative of the same Party shall be named by the Party concerned to replace the said member. If the Party does not provide the replacement, election of a new Bureau member shall take place according to Rule 6.5 at the next session.

Rule 6.5 - Election of officers

Without prejudice to Rule 6.3 for any replacement the Committee shall choose, by consensus decision a Party who shall nominate its representative to the Bureau. If no consensus can be reached, the decision shall be taken by a three-quarters majority of the representatives present and voting.

Rule 6.6 - Permanent Observer to the Bureau

Permanent observer to the Bureau as nominated by paragraph 20 of the Oslo Ministerial Mandate for Negotiating a Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe contributes to the work of the Bureau, but cannot act as Chair and cannot vote.

VII. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SECRETARIAT

Rule 7.1 - The Secretariat

The Secretariat, established by paragraph 27 of the Oslo Ministerial Mandate for Negotiating a Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe is tasked to service the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee under the guidance of the Bureau and perform all work that the Committee may require, as per the Annex to these Rules of Procedure.

Rule 7.2 - Session management

The Secretariat shall be responsible for convening sessions in accordance with rules 3 and 4 and for making all the necessary arrangements for sessions, including ensuring interpretation into the official languages during sessions, the preparation and distribution of all documentation for the session by e-mail and on the website at least six weeks before the opening of a session.

Rule 7.3 - Document management

1. For all sessions of the Committee, the Secretariat shall in accordance with these Rules:
 - a. receive, translate into official languages and distribute the official documents;
 - b. circulate the documents of the sessions;
 - c. publish and circulate relevant documentation to the Parties;
 - d. have the custody of the documents in the Committee's archives.
2. The Secretariat shall distribute the draft negotiating text of each session of the Committee in official languages to the Parties and observers no later than six weeks after the closure of the session to which the negotiating text relates.

Rule 7.4 - Report of the sessions

The Chair shall prepare the reports by the end of the sessions and shall distribute the final reports in the official languages to the FOREST EUROPE Signatories and observers.

VIII. LANGUAGES AND RECORDS OF THE SESSION

Rule 8.1 - Languages of the sessions

English, French and Russian shall be the official languages of the sessions.

Rule 8.2 - Interpretation

Interventions made in a language of the sessions shall be interpreted into the other official languages.

Rule 8.3

A representative may speak in a language other than an official language of the sessions. In this case he or she shall himself or herself provide interpretation into one of the languages of the session, and interpretation into the other languages may be based on the interpretation given in the first language.

IX. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Rule 9.1 - Quorum

1. The Chair may declare a session open and permit the debate to proceed when at least one third of the Parties participating in the session are present. The presence of a majority of Parties so participating shall be required for any decision to be taken.
2. For the purpose of determining a quorum for a decision to be taken on a matter within the competence of a regional economic integration organisation, that organisation shall be counted to the extent of the number of votes it is entitled to cast according to the Rule 10.3.2.

Rule 9.2 - Powers of the Chair

1. The Chair is to facilitate the Committee in achieving its objectives with the support of the Bureau.
2. In addition to exercising the powers conferred upon him or her elsewhere by the present Rules, the Chair shall:
 - a. declare the opening and closing of each session;
 - b. direct the discussion;
 - c. ensure observance of the present Rules;
 - d. accord the right to speak;
 - e. put questions to the vote;
 - f. announce decisions.
3. The Chair shall rule on points of order and, subject to the present Rules, have control over the proceedings of the sessions and over the maintenance of order at sessions.
4. The Chair may propose to the session the limitation of the time to be allowed to speakers, the limitation of the number of times each Party may speak on any subject, the closure of the list of speakers or the closure of the debate. The Chair may also propose the suspension or the adjournment of the session or of the debate on the question under discussion.
5. The Chair, in the exercise of his or her functions, remains under the Committee's authority.

Rule 9.3 - Vice Chair acting as Chair

A Vice-Chair acting as Chair shall have the same powers and duties as the Chair.

Rule 9.4 - Voting of the Chair

The Chair or a vice-Chair acting as a Chair shall not vote.

Rule 9.5 - Rules for Debate

No one may address a session without having previously obtained the Chair's permission. Subject to these rules, the Chair shall call upon speakers in the order in which they signify their desire to speak. However, a Party will be given precedence over Observers. The Chair shall call a speaker to order if his or her remarks are irrelevant to the subject under discussion.

Rule 9.6 - Points of order

1. During the discussion of any matter, a representative of a Party may at any time raise a point of order and the point of order shall be immediately decided upon by the Chair in accordance with these Rules. A representative of a Party may appeal against the Chair's ruling. The appeal shall be put to the vote immediately and the Chair's ruling shall stand unless overruled by a majority vote of the representatives present and voting.
2. A representative of a Party raising a point of order may not speak on the substance of the matter under discussion.

Rule 9.7 - Time limit, closing list of speakers and adjournment of debate

1. The Chair may limit the time allowed to each speaker and the number of times that each speaker may speak on any question. When debate is limited and a speaker has spoken for his or her allotted time, the Chair shall call him or her to order without delay.
2. During the course of a debate, the Chair may announce the list of speakers and, with the Committee's consent, declare the list closed. The Chair may, however, accord the right of reply to any Party if, in his or her opinion, a speech delivered after he or she has declared the list closed renders this justified. When the debate on an item is concluded because there are no other speakers, the Chair, with the Committee's consent, shall declare the debate closed.
3. During the discussion of any matter, a representative of a Party may move the adjournment of the debate on the subject under discussion. In addition to the proposer of the motion, one representative of a Party may speak in favour of and one against the motion, after which the motion shall be immediately put to the vote.

Rule 9.8 - Closure of debate

A representative of a Party may at any time request the closure of the debate on the subject under discussion, whether or not any other representative of a Party has signified his or her wish to speak. Permission to speak on the closure of the debate shall be accorded only to two representatives of Parties opposing the closure, after which the motion shall be immediately put to the vote. If the Committee is in favour of the closure, the Chair shall declare the closure of the debate.

Rule 9.9 - Suspension or adjournment of a session

During the discussion of any matter, a representative of a Party may request the suspension or the adjournment of any session. Such motion shall not be debated but shall immediately be put to the vote.

Rule 9.10 – Order of procedural motions

Regardless of the order in which they are submitted, the following motions shall have precedence, in the following order, over all other proposals or motions before the session:

- a. To suspend the session;
- b. To adjourn the session;
- c. To suspend the debate on the subject under discussion;
- d. To adjourn the debate on the subject under discussion.

Rule 9.11 – Proposals and amendments

1. Proposals and amendments shall normally be introduced in writing and submitted to the Secretariat, which shall circulate copies in official languages to all representatives of Parties 6 weeks before the opening of the session. As a general rule, no proposal shall be discussed or put to the vote at any session of the Committee unless copies of it have been circulated in the official languages of the session to all representatives of Parties not later than the day preceding the session. Subject to the Committee's consent, the Chair may, however, permit the discussion and consideration of proposals or amendments that have not been circulated or have only been circulated the same day, in which case the proposal or amendment has to be read out in a formal session.
2. A motion is considered to be an amendment to a proposal if it adds to, deletes from or revises that proposal. The Committee shall decide on an amendment before it decides on the proposal to which it relates, and if the amendment is adopted, the amended proposal shall then be voted on.

X. DECISIONS

Rule 10.1 – Adoption of decisions

1. The Committee shall make every effort to reach agreement on all matters of substance by consensus. If all efforts to reach consensus have been exhausted and no agreement is reached, the decision shall, as a last resort, be taken by a three-quarters majority of the representatives present and voting.
2. Decisions of the Committee on procedural matters shall be taken by a majority of the representatives present and voting.
3. If a vote is divided equally, the proposal shall be regarded as rejected.
4. Where there is disagreement as to whether a matter to be voted on is a substantive or procedural matter, that issue shall be decided by a three-quarters majority of the representatives present and voting.

Rule 10.2 – Voting on proposals and amendments

1. If two or more proposals relate to the same question, the Committee shall, unless it decides otherwise, decide on the proposals in the order in which they have been submitted. Any proposals or motions requiring that no decision be taken on the substance of such proposals shall, however, be considered as previous questions and shall be put to the vote before them.
2. When an amendment to a proposal is moved, the amendment shall be voted on first. If two or more amendments to a proposal are moved, the Committee shall first decide on the amendment furthest removed in substance from the original proposal, then on the amendment next furthest removed from the original proposal and so on, until all amendments have been decided on. Where, however, the adoption of one amendment necessarily implies the rejection of another amendment, the latter amendment shall

not be put to the vote. If one or more amendments are adopted, the amended proposal shall then be voted upon. If no amendments are adopted, the proposal shall be put to the vote in its original form.

Rule 10.3 - Voting rights

1. Each Party shall have one vote, except as provided for in paragraph 2.
2. A regional economic integration organisation shall, on matters within its competence, exercise its right to vote with a number of votes equal to the number of its member States participating in the Committee. Such an organisation shall not exercise its right to vote if any of its member States exercises its right to vote, and vice versa.

Rule 10.4 - Method of voting

The Committee shall normally vote by show of hands, but any representative of a Party may request a roll-call, which shall then be taken in the English alphabetical order of the names of the Parties, beginning with the Party whose name is drawn by lot by the Chair. If, however, at any time a Party requests a secret ballot, that shall be the method of voting on the issue in question.

Rule 10.5 - Recording of roll-call

The vote of each Party participating in a roll-call shall be recorded in the report of the meeting.

Rule 10.6 - Conduct during voting

After the Chair has announced the beginning of voting, no representative of a Party shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order in connection with the actual conduct of the voting. The Chair may permit representatives of Parties to explain their votes, either before or after the voting - except when the vote is taken by secret ballot - and may limit the time allowed for such explanations.

Rule 10.7 - Division of proposals or amendments

A representative of a Party may request that parts of a proposal or of an amendment shall be voted on separately. If objection is made to the request for division, the motion for division shall be voted upon. Permission to speak on the motion for division shall be given to only two representatives of Parties in favour and two against. If the motion for division is carried, those parts of the proposal or of the amendment that are subsequently approved shall be put to the vote as a whole. If all operative parts of the proposal or of the amendment have been rejected, the proposal or the amendment shall be considered to have been rejected as a whole.

XI. OBSERVERS

Rule 11.1

Any State not a Signatory to FOREST EUROPE may be represented at the Committee as observer.

Rule 11.2

Organisations with a status as observer of FOREST EUROPE can obtain the status of an observer within the Committee in accordance with Rule 11.3.

Rule 11.3

Any body or agency qualified in matters relevant to this agreement which is either:

- a. an international agency or body, either governmental or non-governmental, or a national governmental agency or body; or

- b. a national non-governmental agency or body which has been approved for this purpose by the State in which it is located;

and which has informed the Secretariat of its desire to be represented at the Committee by observers, shall be permitted to be so represented unless one-third of the Representatives present and voting object. Once admitted, the right of observers to be represented may be withdrawn if so agreed by one-third of the Representatives present and voting.

Rule 11.4

The Chair may invite observers to participate in discussions on specific issues, or particular problems. No proposal by an observer shall be discussed unless this proposal is supported by at least one Party.

Rule 11.5

Observer delegations may provide written statements to the Secretariat. The Secretariat shall distribute copies of the written statements in the language in which the statement was made available to them.

XII. SUSPENSION AND AMENDMENT OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE

Rule 12.1

Any Rule of Procedure may be amended or suspended by a decision of the Committee taken by consensus in accordance with the procedure of Rule 911, provided that at least 24 hours' notice of the proposal has been given.

Rule 12.2

In the event of a conflict between any provision of these Rules and the Oslo Ministerial Mandate the latter shall prevail.

Annex to the Rules of Procedure: Distribution of roles among the Liaison Unit, UNECE, FAO, UNEP and EFI

To the extent that the resources and mandate of the Liaison Unit, UNECE, FAO, UNEP and EFI allow, the tasks should be allocated as shown below. If, for any reason, this becomes impossible, adjustments may be made by the Bureau of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee in consultation with all parties.

Liaison Unit

- Facilitating arrangements for servicing the negotiating process
- Supporting other work in the inter-sessional periods as requested by the Bureau or the Committee
- Advising on FOREST EUROPE matters and the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe commitments as well as providing a link to the FOREST EUROPE work programme
- Liaising with countries, other processes, stakeholders and civil society
- Developing and maintaining the website
- Preparing and organising the next Ministerial Conference
- Undertaking communication activities

UNECE, FAO and UNEP

- Servicing meetings of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee and its Bureau including session management, document management and reporting as well as any other relevant tasks as requested by the Bureau or the Committee
- Providing legal advice
- Providing advice on synergies with Multilateral Environmental Agreements and processes
- Liaising with UN organisations
- Providing analysis and information in support of the negotiations

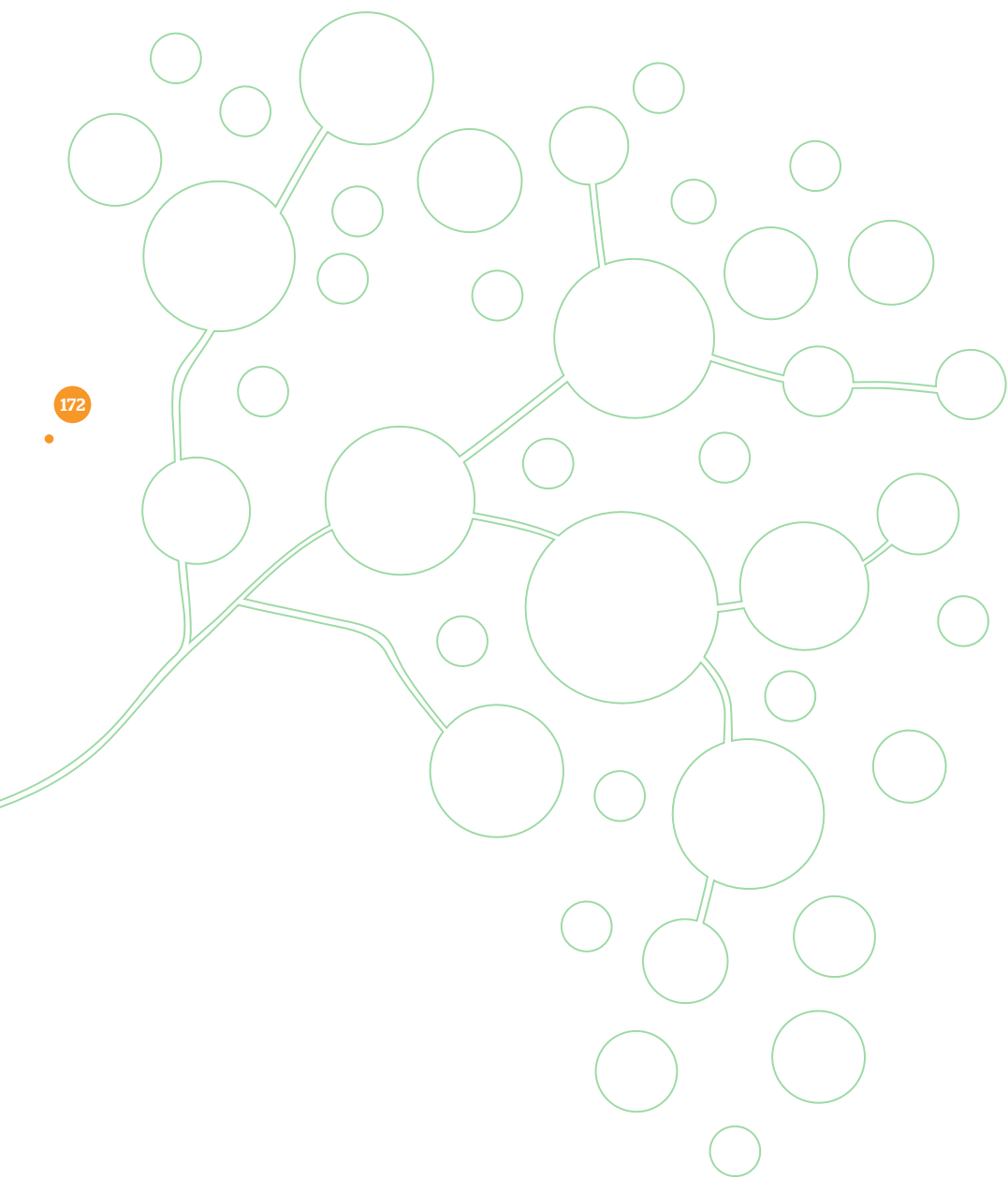
European Forest Institute

- Providing independent scientific and policy advice in support of the negotiations
- Providing inputs to information needs identified by the Committee.

Annex 2: FOREST EUROPE Signatories

Albania
Andorra
Austria
Belarus
Belgium
Bosnia and Herzegovina
Bulgaria
Croatia
Cyprus
Czech Republic
Denmark
Estonia
European Union
Finland
France
Georgia
Germany
Greece
Holy See
Hungary
Iceland
Ireland
Italy
Latvia
Liechtenstein
Lithuania
Luxembourg
Malta
Monaco
Montenegro
Netherlands
Norway
Poland
Portugal
Republic of Moldova
Romania
Russian Federation
Serbia
Slovak Republic
Slovenia
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland
The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Turkey
Ukraine
United Kingdom

Additional successor states of the former Soviet Union not mentioned in the above list should be entitled to join the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee, as the USSR was a signatory of the Strasbourg Resolutions of 1990.



Change in the
General
Coordinating Committee

NORWAY

Mr. Lars Peder Brekk

Minister

Ministry of Agriculture and Food

Excellences, Distinguished Delegates,

It is an established practice that at the time of a ministerial conference, there will be a change in the composition of the FOREST EUROPE General Coordinating Committee.

Thanks to this scheme, many countries have had a possibility to share the responsibility for the process over time. This arrangement builds ownership and it guarantees that difference in perspectives, conditions and challenges across Europe are well reflected in the priorities and work of FOREST EUROPE.

Poland, which has been a member of the General Coordinating Committee since the first Conference in Strasbourg in 1990, will now leave the Committee.

On behalf of all of us, I would like to thank our Polish colleagues most sincerely for all the work they have done for this process. Poland has played a central role in shaping pan-European policies on sustainable forest management for so many years, and particularly during the Polish chairmanship period, which was coronated by the 5th Ministerial Conference in Warsaw in 2007. Poland has served the process exemplary and will be well remembered for this. I thank you very much and invite you to further cooperation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to inform you that, Turkey has declared their readiness to become a member of the General Coordinating Committee of FOREST EUROPE and expressed their will to undertake related responsibilities. On behalf of all of us, I would like to welcome Turkey as new member of the General Coordinating Committee.

I thank Turkey for agreeing to take Poland's place. I am entirely convinced that this change allows to maintain the necessary dynamics of the process and to meet future challenges effectively.

Thank you.

POLAND

Mr. Janusz Zaleski

Under-Secretary of State and Chief

Nature Conservator

Ministry of Environment

Ladies and gentlemen,

The foresters start the new forest by planting the first tree, and then the further development of this tree is dependent on our efforts of human welfare. Twenty years ago we planted the first tree, and now we are witness, and we are planting the second, LBA, tree. And I do hope that it will be quite a good forest growing from these trees.

These last twenty years had a significant positive impact, not only on the forest management and forestry in Europe, but on the better understanding of forests as an integral part of our lives. Poland; and active member of the MCPFE/FOREST EUROPE since the inception of this political process of the forest, actively participated in the formation of all the initiatives which were reflected in all Ministerial Conferences. In 2007 in Warsaw we hosted the 5th Ministerial Conference, and then transferred the management of the Liaison Unit to Norway.

We are also a member of the GCC since the inception of the ministerial process, and passing soon our participation in this committee to Turkey. Turkey, which is a very big country with forestry which developed very fast in a very rational way, will be a very good member of the GCC and I wish turkey all the best, and I think that GCC will work very successfully.

I would like to thank all the countries and their representatives for very cooperative work, very constructive cooperation, and for really friendly and warm atmosphere during all our activities.

Thank you very much!

Mr. Mustafa Kurtulmuslu
Director General of Forestry
Ministry of Environment and Forestry

Mr. Chairman,

His Excellency,

Distinguished Delegations,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of Turkish delegation, I feel honored to address you on the occasion of Turkey's election to the General Coordinating Committee. We would like to express our gratitude for the confidence which has been shown to our country, for this important task.

Since the start of FOREST EUROPE process in 1990, General Coordinating Committee has played a very important role with regard to sustainable management of forests in Europe and has contributed significantly to this process. Turkey aims to further contribute to enhancement of the successful work achieved by the Committee so far.

Turkey attaches great importance to a future agreement on forests in Europe and to the international cooperation in this field. Forests may be divided with national borders. However, they serve all countries, whole world and humanity, regardless of borders. With this conviction and with the spirit of international solidarity, Turkey has participated actively in FOREST EUROPE process, taken part in various international initiatives along with it and worked hard to be able to implement the decisions coming out of these initiatives in her national forestry.

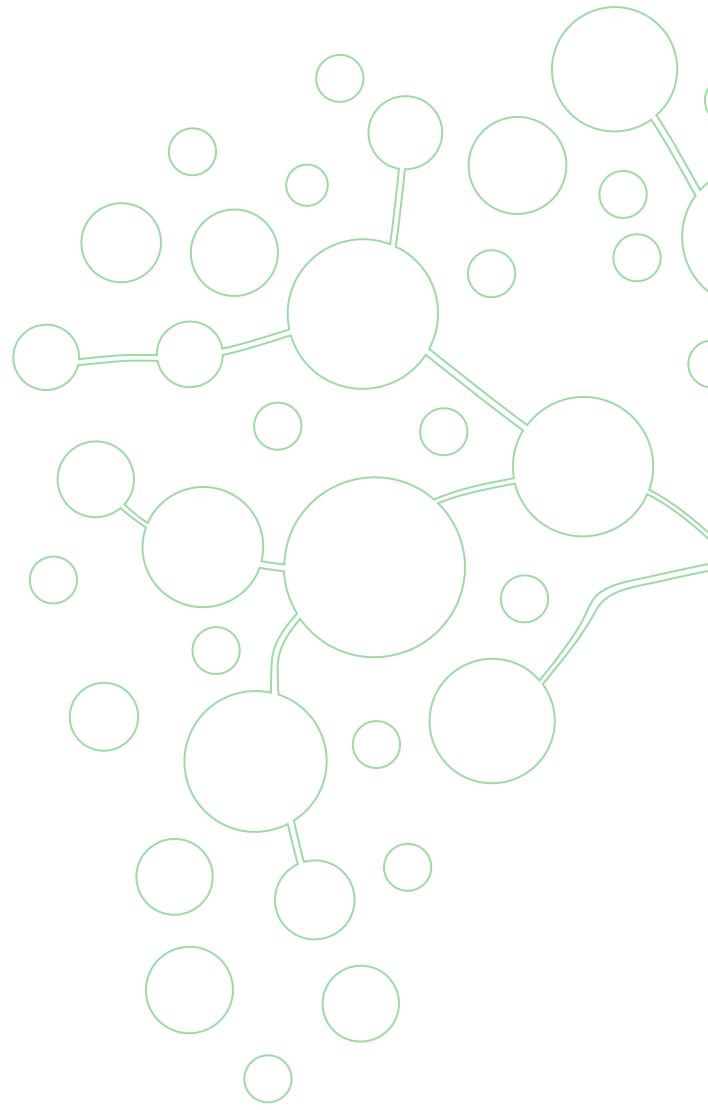
As a member of the General Coordinating Committee, Turkey will be honored to make every contribution for the effective continuation of the works of Ministerial Conferences, and to this end, will make every effort in her capacity.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to express our thanks to all the countries, who contributed to the effective works of the Committee and particularly to Poland. We believe that, Poland who organized the 5th

Ministerial Conference in Warsaw in 2007, deserves our gratitude fully, with her contributions to the works of the Committee.

Wishing to reiterate our gratitude for the favour and consideration shown for Turkey, I take this opportunity to express my heartfelt thanks to Norway as the Chair organizing the Ministerial Conference in Oslo, to His Excellency Mr. Lars Peder Brekk and to the estimable staff of Liaison Unit Oslo.

Thank you.



Closing **Statements**

SPAIN

Mr. José-María Solano Lopez

*Head of Forest Planning and
Management Area
Ministry of Environment and Rural and
Marine Affairs*

On behalf of

Ms. Rosa Aguilar Rivero

*Minister
Ministry of Environment and Rural and
Marine Affairs*

Dear Ministers and esteemed colleagues,

At the moment of closing this sixth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of European Forests, I would like to thank and congratulate my Norwegian colleague and his government for the warm welcome and excellent organization of the Conference, which have made it possible to have an interesting and enriching debate and to obtain significant achievements.

We have taken important and firm steps in the right direction.

In the International Year of Forests we have been able to go in the direction asked of us by our citizens and by our planet. We are in a better situation than before in terms of preserving our forests and promoting their expansion. For these purposes we now have more knowledge and better tools. This situation obliges us to work with persistence, with increased intensity, if possible, to ensure that all our decisions and actions should be compatible with the preservation of forests and the maintenance of their essential ecological processes, their functions, and in particular their biodiversity.

We must perform an exercise in responsibility. We are fully aware of the results that our decisions will bring about, and with this in mind we have adopted such decisions that will ensure the sustainability of our policies and the adjustment of economic growth to social justice and to the preservation of forests and the environment.

If we promote the preservation and the expansion of forests in Europe and the rest of the planet, if we preserve their diversity and secure the survival of their flora and fauna, we will have made a decisive step to win the future. The forest is our best ally. Its services are indispensable. The fertile soil, clean air, water, the living beings - it is our insurance against climate change and other environmental disasters. As a consequence, preserving forests is not an option, but a necessity, and an enormous responsibility towards future generations, towards our children.

The next Conference will be held in Madrid, and we will be very honored to receive you. There we will be able to analyse and demonstrate the progress made, and I would like to ask all of you to work together with a view to this.

Thank you.

Mr. Lars Peder Brekk

Minister

Ministry of Agriculture and Food

Excellences,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This has been a very successful Conference. We are at the crucial point where new and more efficient ways of protecting and utilizing forests need to be set for developing and transition to a low carbon economy. This Conference has made a significant step towards materializing ideas on the role of forests into future actions.

Forests matter. Sustainable forest management matters. They will be more important than ever. Forests are threatened and at the same time they are becoming part of a solution. To keep it all in balance is a very challenging task – and it's our task.

Of course it is impossible to summarise these two days of Conference in a few minutes. In fact the Conference documentation will be provided online. Moreover we will prepare proceedings with the statements and key findings of the Conference in due course.

At his point I would only like to flag three messages I personally wish to bring to your attention:

First, FOREST EUROPE has proven its worth.

Our cooperation is now a maturing and long-standing relationship. Over the last 21 years FOREST EUROPE evolved from an informal, loose arrangement to a well-established platform, with clear vision for forests, mission, defined goals and ambitious 2020 targets.

We are committed to deepening that relationship through opening negotiations for a legally binding agreement.

I'm honored to host this meeting, which decided to adopt «The Oslo Mandate» and to pave the new way to bond all what we have achieved so far in the field of sustainable forest management.

We need to enter negotiations with open minds and with the view to ensure the multiple benefits from forests to society. We need to overcome negative climate change effects on forests in Europe and work actively and collectively towards developing measure

for adapting forests to new conditions.

We need to protect forest land against fire, desertification and other natural hazards. We need to overcome market barriers and make sure that forests are part of innovations, green low carbon economy and that forest products are competitive and don't harm the environment.

This is an ambitious agenda. But the circumstances demand ambition. The negotiations of a legal agreement on forests in Europe will be critical in the years ahead.

Second, I would like to mention an issue I think we need to focus on more in the future:

I have no doubt that forests have their part to play in addressing the current agriculture and food security issue. Rising food demands and current food crisis lead to pressure on land and force expanding agricultural production. At the same time it is one of the most important drivers of deforestation and the source of significant greenhouse gas emissions. The need for strategic approaches to land use in Europe, including agriculture and forestry, is also an issue. Forest and agriculture policies need to be integrated better and the forest role in food security must not be overlooked.

Third, I think we all agree that it is not only about Europe.

Sustainable forest management is about partnership as much as about planting trees, conserving or managing forest resources. We have a lot to share with other regions. It is particularly relevant to talk about Europe's forests role in the world – how we are doing and what more we need to do, against the challenges of climate change and economic crisis that have radically changed the global agenda in the last few years. This underlines – not undermines – the roles of forests. We need more international cooperation in the future – not less.

For me personally, the chairmanship of FOREST EUROPE have been four challenging years where European forest issues were always one of the top priorities of my agenda. Although a lot has been achieved, much work is ahead of us.

I would like to thank the secretariat. We like to call them the Liaison Unit Oslo. I am very grateful and impressed by the work done in this small and very

efficient secretariat all the way from the previous ministerial conference in Warsaw to this one in Oslo. We are talking about 5 persons. I would like to ask Arne Ivar and his team to stand up and I hope that all of you will join me in thanking them for their outstanding work.

I leave this process in good hands of Spain - and all of you Excellencies, dear colleagues and friends. I can only thank you once again for the opportunity to host this Conference in Oslo and I congratulate all involved for making it such a success.

I also want to thank Gyro for excellent practical and logistical arrangements of this conference and impressive artistic programme. Last, but not least, we thank our interpreters for your hard and effective work. We all know we could not have done this without your help.

So, ladies and gentlemen I hope I see you all at the dinner on the Oslo fjord tonight, and for those of you who will participate in the field trip tomorrow, I wish you all an enjoyable time.

This Conference is officially closed,

Thank you very much.



Reports for
the **Ministerial**
Conference

State of Europe's Forests

– Summary for Policy Makers

The *Summary for Policy Makers* presents a compact and comprehensive overview of status and trends, as well as challenges and opportunities for forests, forest policy and forest management in Europe.

The *State of Europe's Forests* 2011 report provides a comprehensive, up-to-date description of the status and trends of forests and forest management in Europe. The report aims to stimulate sound policy decisions on forests and forest-related issues in Europe by providing objective and harmonized data for FOREST EUROPE's Signatories.

The report is structured according to the Pan-European Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management. For the first time, the report also contains an assessment of progress towards sustainable forest management, derived from a new, experimental method. The report further identifies four future challenges and opportunities for forest policy and forest management in Europe.

Forest Resources and their Contribution to Global Carbon Cycles

Forests cover almost half of Europe's land surface and forest area continues to increase

There are 1.02 billion hectares of forest in Europe, which amount to 25 percent of the world total. Over the last 20 years, the forest area has expanded in all European regions and has gained 0.8 million hectares each year. Over the same period, the total growing stock of forests in Europe has increased by 8.6 billion cubic metres, an equivalent to the total combined growing stock of France, Germany and Poland. Growing stock has increased faster than area, which means that average standing volume of wood per hectare in Europe has increased.

European forests sequester increasing amounts of carbon in tree biomass

Between 2005 and 2010, about 870 million tonnes of CO₂ have been removed annually from the atmosphere by photosynthesis and tree biomass growth in European countries. This corresponds to about 10 percent of the green-house gas emissions in 2008 of these countries.

Forest Ecosystem Health and Vitality

Sulphur deposition has decreased over the last decade

Mean annual sulphur inputs decreased by 30 percent between 1998 and 2007, with significant reductions measured on half of the observed plots. For nitrogen compounds there is no clear trend in measured deposition.

In many parts of Europe, there is a tendency to acidification and eutrophication of soils

The development of pH and base saturation of soils did not show a uniform pattern within Europe. However, increased pH and base saturation were found in acid forest soils.

About a fifth of all trees are damaged or dead

Crown defoliation is a key factor which indicates the health condition of a tree. The rate of defoliation of most tree species varied moderately during the last decade, and the level is still alarming. Roughly 20 percent of all trees which were assessed in 2009 showed a mean defoliation of 25 percent or more and were thus classified as damaged or dead.

Eleven million hectares or 1 percent of Europe's forests are affected by forest damage, most frequently caused by insects and diseases

Insects and diseases are the damaging agents which are most frequently observed in European forests – followed by wildlife and grazing. However, the level of damage is often not recorded. One percent of the European forest area is affected by one or more damaging agents (6 percent for Europe without the Russian Federation). Damage due to storms, wind and snow was mainly observed in Central-West, Central-East, North and South-West Europe, while damage due to forest fires has mainly been reported for the Russian Federation, South-West and South-East Europe.

Productive Functions of Forests

Fellings are well below increment

In almost all countries, the net annual increment is higher than the annual fellings. In the European region, approximately 40 percent of the increment is utilized. In the Russian Federation the felling rate has decreased from 41 percent in 1990 and stabilized around 20 percent since 2000. In Europe without the Russian

Federation, the felling rate increased from 58 percent in 1990 to 62 percent in 2010.

Europe remains one of the largest producers of roundwood in the world

In 2010, more than 578 million cubic metres of roundwood were produced. The overall value of marketed roundwood is still increasing and reached EUR 21.1 billion² in 2010. Europe's forests continue to be one of the main roundwood producers in the world. The demand for wood fuel is increasing at a high rate in many European countries.

Non-wood goods can be an important source of local income

The importance of non-wood goods differs between countries, thus a comprehensive view on all types of these goods across Europe is difficult to obtain. However, the reported data clearly shows that non-wood goods can be an important source of local income. The total reported value of marketed non-wood goods amounts to EUR 2.7 billion and has almost tripled since the 2007 assessment – although some of the increase may be due to improved reporting. In 2010, Christmas trees, fruits and berries, and cork were the most important non-wood income sources. The value of marketed non-wood goods represented 15 percent of the value of marketed roundwood in countries that reported both values.

Marketed services are an important source of income for a number of forest owners

Marketed services can be a source of significant income for private and public landowners. Social services, including hunting licences, are one of the most important traditional services. The total value of marketed services, reported by relatively few countries, is almost EUR 818 million and has remained more or less stable since 2007.

Most forests in Europe have a management plan

Management plans and their equivalents are key tools for sustainable forest management. Most of the forest area in Europe is covered by a forest management plan or its equivalent.

Biological Diversity in Forest Ecosystems

The area of protected forests is expanding in Europe

Protected forests are important to maintain and enhance biodiversity, as well as to conserve landscapes and provide recreation opportunities. The area of protected forests in Europe has increased by around half a million hectares annually over the last 10 years due to policies to improve biodiversity. In Europe without the Russian Federation, about 10 percent of forests are protected with the main objective to conserve biodiversity and about 9 percent with the main objective to protect landscape – together, these account for a total area of 39 million hectares. The Russian Federation has 17 million hectares of protected forest. The strictness of and measures for protection vary considerably among countries.

Forest management practices increasingly promote the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity

Forest management practice has changed towards greater integration of biodiversity aspects. For instance, deadwood components and important vulnerable small biotopes are kept in forests managed for wood production. There is an increasing use of natural regeneration and mixed tree species stands. In several countries, long-term monitoring of threatened forest species has indicated that adoption of new forest management measures has reduced the decline of threatened species.

The majority of European forest landscapes have been influenced by humans

About 70 percent of Europe's forests are classified as semi-natural, as a result of many centuries of human influence. Long historical use of wood, high population density, fragmented forest landscapes and forest ownership structure, with many small private forest holdings, have been driving factors. Undisturbed forest amounts to 26 percent and is located primarily in remote and inaccessible areas in eastern and northern Europe, and in the Russian Federation. Plantations cover 4 percent of the forest area and are located mainly in Central-West Europe. The assessment of forest landscape pattern indicates that expanding forest area, by natural succession or restoration, does not necessarily enhance forest connectivity.

² Based on data from 33 countries representing more than 90 percent of the FOREST EUROPE area.

Genetic diversity helps forests adapt to a changing climate

Forest genetic resources are an important component of sustainable forest management. Genetic diversity will help to ensure that forest trees survive, adapt and evolve in the light of changing climate. Almost all European countries have established networks of stands or large forest areas to conserve forest genetic diversity.

Protective Functions in Forest Management

There is growing awareness of the importance of forest management for protection of water, soil and infrastructure

More than 20 percent of Europe's forests are reported to fulfil protective functions for soil, water and other ecosystem services, as well as to protect infrastructure and managed natural resources. The importance of protective forests is clearly recognized, especially in mountainous areas. Management restrictions for protective forests vary among regions depending on local geological and ecosystem conditions.

Socio-Economic Functions and Conditions

Outside the Russian Federation, 50 percent of forests are in private ownership

All forests in the Russian Federation are publicly owned - they represent 80 percent of the forest area in the FOREST EUROPE region. Outside the Russian Federation, ownership is distributed equally between private and public, with considerable variation between countries. The proportion of private forests and numbers of private forest holdings have increased over the last 20 years, mainly because of privatization and restitution processes in a number of countries.

Potential for further mechanization vary substantially between regions

Around 4 million people work in the European forest sector, including wood processing and pulp and paper industries. The general trend is a decrease in occupation, but there are substantial differences between regions, which reflect the mechanization level and the potential for increased productivity. As the forestry workforce is ageing, the recruitment of new workers to the sector is a challenge. Forest work still reports a very high accident rate, and relatively few improvements were identified over the past decade.

While some economic functions are decreasing in importance, other functions are gaining ground

The forest sector, including wood processing and pulp and paper industries, contributes on average 1 percent of GDP (gross domestic product). However, during the last few years, most regions have shown an increase in net value added and net entrepreneurial income of forestry enterprises. The importance and recognition of other forest services, as source of energy, recreation and cultural and spiritual values, are increasing. Rising energy prices and political initiatives to promote the use of wood for energy have increased the value of small timber assortments.

Overall policies, institutions and instruments for sustainable forest management

National forest programmes are increasingly developed and applied

National Forest Programmes are the most widely applied approach by countries to develop sound forest policy frameworks. They are usually based on and elaborated through participatory processes. In many countries, national forest programmes contribute to consistent and broadly supported policies and strategies for putting sustainable forest management into practice. However, particular effort is needed to keep such processes relevant for key stakeholders and flexible, to effectively respond to emerging issues, and keep related costs low. While national forest programme principles are more widely followed than before, there is a need to strengthen substantive participation and the link to overall national development goals and forest-related sectors.

Institutional and legal frameworks adapt to changing societal needs and priorities

Countries in Europe continue to adapt their institutional and legal frameworks to new roles and requirements in the wake of changing societal priorities. Timely and adequate changes are necessary to address current challenges effectively. Moreover, more proactive and strategic decisions and alignments will be necessary in order to seize emerging opportunities and to contribute to fostering a green economy.

Policies, institutions and instruments by policy area

National forest policies are affected by and respond to multiple policy challenges

During the last years, forests and forest management have received increasing political attention. Most European countries are pursuing active and target-oriented policies in a number of forest-related policy areas. Critical issues currently in focus are:

- Forests and climate change, and development of adequate adaptation and mitigation measures;
- Increased use and mobilization of wood resources, particularly with respect to renewable energy targets;
- Improvement of biodiversity, through increased nature conservation and improved integrated forest management;
- Promotion and improved marketing of non-wood goods and forest ecosystem services, such as protective functions, biodiversity and land integrity;
- Economic viability of the forest sector and its contribution to rural development and a green economy.

Most national forest-related policies are increasingly influenced by international processes and other sectoral policies on energy, climate change, agriculture and biodiversity

The need for cross-sectoral approaches and innovation in the forest sector and policy development and implementation is widely acknowledged. This is a response to the growing multiple requirements placed on forests by society and global markets, and is reflected in the concept of sustainable forest management.

In continuing to develop and implement national policies towards sustainable forest management and multiple-use of forests, countries have highlighted the need for improved forest information and monitoring. This applies particularly to policies on forest health and vitality, forest biodiversity and the valuation of non-wood goods and ecosystem services.

Changes in national policy objectives are related mainly to biodiversity, the production and use of wood, carbon balance and land use and forest area

New or amended objectives are often complemented

by specific target-oriented regulations or by amendments to existing regular legal frameworks – like forest laws or the National Forest Programmes. Institutional reforms have mainly affected policy areas like climate change and carbon as well as research, training and education.

Changes in objectives and instruments have occurred in most policy areas in more than half the reporting countries since the FOREST EUROPE Ministerial Conference in 2007

Changes since 2007 reflect the current dynamics and challenges in forest policy development. Most countries have, or are developing, general objectives and adequate policy instruments for the forest sector. However, there is still a need for improved coordination and coherence among multiple policies which affect the forest and wood sector as well as for the formulation of more target-oriented objectives.

Sustainability of forest management in Europe

A new and experimental method to assess progress towards sustainable forest management

In addition to describing the status and trends for the quantitative and qualitative indicators, the State of Europe's Forests 2011 report assesses progress towards sustainable forest management in Europe. For this purpose, a new, experimental method has been used. For each indicator, the official data supplied by countries were assessed on a scale from one (🌲) to five (🌲🌲🌲🌲🌲) trees³, using objective and transparent parameters and thresholds. These results were combined to provide assessments at the level of six country groups, and have been accompanied by detailed comments to put the situation in context. Despite shortcomings, the results appear sufficiently robust to be used for giving a broad picture of developments at the country group level. The data and method are not yet suitable to assess individual countries, or to provide a single overall assessment for sustainability.

The assessment aims to give policy and decision makers as well as the general public a clear overview of complex issues. This should facilitate balanced strategic and operational decision-making, as well as communication and dialogue with the general public and other relevant sectors. It is also hoped that this new approach will encourage further improvements in assessing the sustainability of forest management.

³ When no data are available for an indicator, the assessment is 🌲, as there is no evidence to support any other ranking. Furthermore, it could be said that management decisions based on insufficient information are not really sustainable.

Assessment by country group and criterion, quantitative and qualitative indicators

	Forest resources and global carbon stock	Health and vitality	Productive functions	Biodiversity	Protective functions	Socio-economic functions	Overall policies, institutions and instruments for sustainable forest management	Policies, institutions and instruments by policy area
Russian Federation	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲🌲
North Europe	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲🌲
Central-West Europe	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲🌲
Central-East Europe	🌲🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲
South-West Europe	🌲🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲
South-East Europe	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲	🌲🌲	🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲	🌲🌲🌲

For most country groups and indicators, the assessment shows a balanced and generally satisfactory situation

Almost all the assessments at the level of criteria and country groups are satisfactory, at the levels 🌲🌲🌲 and 🌲🌲🌲🌲. There is no evidence of systematic imbalance at the European level – such as systematically prioritizing production over biodiversity or *vice versa*. However, there are a number of challenges and areas of concern which are indicated by 🌲🌲 at the level of particular indicators and country groups.

Where the assessment is less satisfactory (🌲🌲), the main causes are weak data. For the quantitative indicators, other concerns include decline of forest area (in a very small number of countries); nitrogen depositions exceeding critical limits; soil condition; fragmentation and reduced forest connectivity; low value of marketed wood and non-wood goods and services; low levels of occupational safety and health for the forest workforce, and declining employment in the sector.

Forest sector policies, institutions and instruments in Europe are stable and adapted. The main areas of concern for the qualitative indicators are the economic instruments to support sustainable forest management and whether policies and institutions are sufficiently strategic in their approach and integrated with other sectors.

Russian Federation – the Russian forest has enormous economic and biodiversity significance even at the global scale, but problems of monitoring prevail

The Russian forest resource is the largest in the world, with a much higher share of forest untouched by man than any other European country. Most of the area west of the Urals is managed in a relatively intensive way, but to the east there is a huge expanse of remote forest with difficult and expensive access. The process of transition is on-going, but all forests will remain in public ownership, with arrangements for long-term leases. A new Forest Code was approved in 2006 after intense discussion. There is concern about illegal logging in some parts of the Russian Federation, as well as about vulnerability of the boreal forest ecosystem to climate change (fires and melting of permafrost).

Areas of concern identified by the State of Europe's Forests 2011 report are the decline in area of other wooded land; possible decrease in carbon stock; low value of marketed roundwood compared to volume of resource; low per hectare values for marketed non-wood goods and services; relatively small percentage of protected forest and of area managed for gene conservation; low revenue and government expenditure per hectare; and low share of wood used for energy.

North Europe – the forest sector is mostly privately-owned, well organized, and focused on wood production, with a strong commitment to achieving environmental objectives

In most of North Europe, the boreal forest is at the centre of the landscape. There is an intensive use of the resource and a sophisticated and well-resourced institutional structure. Forest-related questions have a high policy importance in the region.

Areas of concern identified are the large area at risk from eutrophication; the Carbon/Nitrogen ratio in forest soil approaching warning level in two countries; and the low percentage of forest protected for biodiversity in some countries.

Central-West Europe – forest-related issues are not central to these countries' economy or society, although populations have tended to react strongly to threats to their forests

Central-West Europe contains many densely populated and highly prosperous urban countries, although there are significant rural and mountainous areas, which is where most of the forests are. Forest institutions are stable and well-resourced, even if they lack political weight relative to other parts of society, which can mobilize more financial and human resources.

Areas of concern identified are the high percentage of land area at risk of eutrophication from nitrogen deposition; the Carbon/Nitrogen ratio near warning level for soil imbalances in some countries; problems with landscape pattern and fragmentation; negative net entrepreneurial revenues in a few countries; negligible share of wood in total energy supply in a few countries; and the small share of the total workforce engaged in the forest sector.

Central-East Europe – the transition process has been a challenge to forest institutions, but in many countries these institutions have retained their basis

The countries in Central-East Europe were all centrally planned 25 years ago, but many have now been transformed and are increasingly prosperous. Five countries in this group are now members of the European Union. Ecologically the country group is heterogeneous, running from the Alps to the Caucasus and the Volga basin.

Areas of concern identified are the decline in forest cover in one country; the fact that the entire land area

of the region is at risk of eutrophication from nitrogen deposition; the Carbon/Nitrogen ratio near warning level for soil imbalance in one country; high defoliation level in one country; generally low per hectare values for marketed non-wood goods and services; the small share of the total workforce engaged in the forest sector; low levels of wood consumption; and the low reported share of wood in total energy supply.

South-West Europe – some intensive management, but many forests suffer from fire, nitrogen deposition, changes in landscape pattern and rural depopulation

In South-West Europe, most countries have a distinctively Mediterranean forest on much, but not all, of their territory. Despite the threats, some areas are managed intensively, sometimes with introduced species. There are serious information gaps.

Areas of concern identified are the high percentage of land at risk of eutrophication due to nitrogen input; significant fire damage; high fragmentation; and negative trends for forest landscape pattern in some countries.

South-East Europe – diverse forestry situations, many with weak information systems

Most of the countries in South-East Europe have rather large rural populations and low per capita income by European standards. Some have new institutions which emerged after the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia. Fire is an issue throughout the region. In one country, the forest itself is under severe pressure from overgrazing and over-cutting (mostly for fuel) by the rural population. It appears that, in many areas, the forests are not intensively managed and not well protected for biodiversity – but information is very weak, so this cannot be verified. Due to the lack of adequate information provided, and possibly also because the relevant forest-sector information does not exist at the national level, it is not possible to say with any objectivity whether or not forest management is sustainable.

Areas of concern identified are one country with steeply falling forest cover and growing stock; nearly all land area of the region at risk of eutrophication due to nitrogen deposition; significant fire damage; fellings greater than net annual increment in one country; rather low per hectare values for marketed

non-wood goods; several countries with a high share of single species stands; low share of forest protected for conservation of biodiversity in many countries; and low levels of wood consumption.

Future challenges and opportunities for forest policy in Europe

On the basis of the information provided for the State of Europe's Forests 2011, four major challenges and opportunities for forest policy in Europe have been identified.

The forest sector is playing a major role in *climate change* mitigation through carbon sequestration and substitution of non-renewable energy and materials. At the same time it must adapt to a changing climate, which requires significant investment. The challenge is thus to find and deliver the optimum balance among the various forest functions in the context of changing climate and societal needs.

Ambitious targets for renewable energy throughout Europe have resulted in more use of *wood for energy*, and there are clear signals that this trend will continue. The challenge is not only to mobilize more wood to meet the targets but also to reconcile this mobilization with the other dimensions of sustainable forest management.

It appears that there has been strong progress in the *conservation of forest biodiversity*, although there are still significant monitoring and measurement problems. The challenge is to reconcile measures for biodiversity conservation with the more intensive forest management likely to be necessary to meet the expected higher demands for wood, including for renewable energy.

The European forest sector already displays many of the characteristics of a *green economy* and has the potential to play a major, even exemplary, role in the emerging green economy - notably by promoting sustainable production and consumption patterns, green building, green jobs in the sector, and the supply of renewable energy, as well as developing payment for ecosystem services. The challenge is to achieve this potential by strongly developing the «green» features of the forest sector.

Implementation of the FOREST EUROPE Commitments: National and Pan-European Actions 2008–2011

The report *Implementation of FOREST EUROPE Commitments: National and Pan-European Actions 2008–2011* was prepared on the occasion of the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe, Oslo, Norway, 14–16 June 2011.

The report presents national and pan-European implementation of FOREST EUROPE commitments to the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe, Oslo, Norway, 14–16 June 2011, focusing on activities since the Ministerial Conference in Warsaw, Poland, November 2007. The overall objective of reporting on implementation is to evaluate progress made in putting political decisions into action, to facilitate exchange of experience across countries and to serve further policy development. The report serves as a reference document summarising implementation, and complements the report *State of Europe's Forests 2011*.

The report consists of three main parts:

First, reports on national implementation in thirty-two FOREST EUROPE signatories reflects diversity in natural, economic and demographic/socio-cultural situations and priorities across Europe in the follow-up of political commitments agreed at the pan-European level.

Secondly, implementation of joint pan-European actions selected for having added value at the pan-European level are presented under five thematic programme elements: Sustainable Forest Management and Climate Change; Wood Mobilisation and Sound Use of Wood; Multiple Forest Ecosystem Services, including Forests and Water; Regional-Global Co-operation and Partnership; and Cross-Cutting Activities, as well as for the strategic direction of

FOREST EUROPE, including results of an external review of the FOREST EUROPE process and work related to a possible legally binding agreement on forests in Europe.

Thirdly, an update of implementation of former FOREST EUROPE commitments coordinated by European organisations and cooperative partnerships are presented. Updates on the implementation since 2007 are provided for five resolutions: Forestry Cooperation with Countries with Economies in Transition; Strategies for a Process of Long-Term Adaptation of Forests in Europe to Climate Change; Conservation of Forest Genetic Resources; Decentralized European Data Bank on Forest Fires; and Expansion of the EUROSILVA Network of Research on Tree Physiology.



Annex 1 – Conference Agenda

Time	Action	Location
Monday 13 June		
16.00 – 20.00	Registration	Radisson Blu Hotel Registration desk
19.30 – 22.00	Pre-Conference Reception	Radisson Blu Hotel
Tuesday 14 June		
08.00 – 16.00	Registration	Radisson Blu Hotel Registration desk
09.00 – 09.45	Opening of the Ministerial Conference <i>Chair: H. E. Mr. Lars Peder Brekk</i> - Official opening by HRH Crown Prince Haakon of Norway - Words of welcome by H.E. Mr. Lars Peder Brekk, Minister of Agriculture and Food of Norway - Words of welcome by H.E. Mme. Rosa Aguilar Rivero, Minister of Environment and Rural & Marine Affairs of Spain - Opening address by Mr. Dag Terje Andersen, President of the Norwegian Parliament	Radisson Blu Hotel
09.45 – 10.15	Keynote statements - H.E. Mr. Victor Nikolayevich Maslyakov, Head of Federal Forestry Agency, Russian Federation (tbc)	
10.15 – 12.00	Session I Thematic session: Europe's forests - challenges and opportunities <i>Chair: H. E. Mr. Lars Peder Brekk</i>	Radisson Blu Hotel
10.15 – 10.30	State of Europe's Forests 2011 Mr. Christopher Prins, International expert	
10.30 – 12.00	Panel Debate: European forests in a global perspective Moderator: Ms. Frances Seymour, Director General, CIFOR - Interventions by panellists - Interventions by major groups	
12.00 – 12.45	Poster session	Radisson Blu Hotel Foyer
12.15 – 12.45	Press conference of the Ministers of FOREST EUROPE General Coordinating Committee	
13.00 – 15.00	Lunch	
15.00 – 18.00	Session II Ministerial Roundtable <i>Chair: H.E. Mme. Rosa Aguilar Rivero</i>	Radisson Blu Hotel
18.00	Group photo of the Ministers and Heads of Delegations	
19.30	Transfer to Oslo City Hall	
20.00 – 23.00	Conference Dinner	Oslo City Hall
23.00	Transfer to the hotels	

Time	Action	Location
Wednesday 15 June		
08.00 – 16.00	Registration	Radisson Blu Hotel Registration desk
9.00 – 12.00	Session III Ministerial Roundtable <i>Chair: H. E. Mr. Lars Peder Brekk</i>	Radisson Blu Hotel
12.00 – 14.00	Lunch	
14.00 – 15.00	Session IV Statements by the FOREST EUROPE observer countries <i>Chair: H.E. Mme. Rosa Aguilar Rivero</i>	Radisson Blu Hotel
15.00 – 15.30	Presentation and signing of the Conference documents <i>Chair: H. E. Mr. Lars Peder Brekk</i>	
15.30 – 15.45	Other matters	
15.45 – 16.15	Closing statements and closure of the Conference <i>by H. E. Mr. Lars Peder Brekk and H.E. Mme. Rosa Aguilar Rivero</i>	
17.30	Transfer to Oslo Harbour	Boat-trip on the Oslo fjord
18.00 – 22.00	Dinner	
22.00	Transfer to the hotels	
Thursday 16 June		
09.00	Departure from the hotels	
09.15 – 17.30	Oslo Opera House and the forests of Oslo	

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Annex 3

FOREST EUROPE Signatories, Observer Countries and Observer Organisations

Signatory countries and the European Union		
Albania	Germany	Poland
Andorra	Greece	Portugal
Austria	Holy see	Republic of Moldova
Belarus	Hungary	Romania
Belgium	Iceland	Russian Federation
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Ireland	Serbia
Bulgaria	Italy	Slovak Republic
Croatia	Latvia	Slovenia
Cyprus	Liechtenstein	Spain
Czech Republic	Lithuania	Sweden
Denmark	Luxembourg	Switzerland
Estonia	Malta	The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
European Union	Monaco	
Finland	Montenegro	Turkey
France	Netherlands	Ukraine
Georgia	Norway	United Kingdom

Observer countries		
Australia	China	Malaysia
Brazil	Ghana	Morocco
Cameroon	India	New Zealand
Canada	Japan	USA
Chile	Korea (Republic)	

Observer organisations
Alpine Convention
Biodiversity International
BWI (Building and Wood Worker's International)
Carpathian Convention
CEI-bois (European Confederation of Woodworking Industries)
CEPF (Confederation of European Forest Owners)
CEPI (Confederation of European Paper Industries)
CIC (International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation)
COPA-COGECA (Committee of Professional Agricultural Organisations and General Committee for Agricultural Cooperation in the European Union)
Council of Europe
EFI (European Forest Institute)
ELO (European Landowners' Organisation)
ENFE (European Network of Forest Entrepreneurs, Secretariat General)
EOMF (European Observatory of Mountain Forest)
EUSTAFOR (European State Forest Association)
FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nation)
FECOF (Fédération Européenne des Communes Forestières)
FERN
FSC (Forest Stewardship Council)
Greenpeace International
IFSA (International Forestry Students' Association)
IIASA (International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis)
ILO (International Labour Organization)
ITTO (International Tropical Timber Organization)
IUCN (The World Conservation Union)
IUFRO (International Union of Forest Research Organisations)
Montreal Process
PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification)
REC (Regional Environmental Center)
UEF (Union of European Foresters)
UNDF (United Nations Development Programme)
UNECE (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe)
UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme)
UNFF (United Nations Forum on Forests)
UNU (United Nations University)
USSE (Union of Foresters of Southern Europe)
World Bank
WWF International (World Wide Fund for Nature International)

Annex 4

Overview of the Signatories of the Strasbourg, Helsinki, Lisbon, Vienna, Warsaw and Oslo Documents

Country	Strasbourg Resolution S1	Strasbourg Resolution S2	Strasbourg Resolution S3	Strasbourg Resolution S4	Strasbourg Resolution S5	Strasbourg Resolution S6	Helsinki Resolution H1	Helsinki Resolution H2	Helsinki Resolution H3	Helsinki Resolution H4	Lisbon Resolution L1	Lisbon Resolution L2	Vienna Declaration	Vienna Resolution V1	Vienna Resolution V2	Vienna Resolution V3	Vienna Resolution V4	Vienna Resolution V5	Warsaw Declaration	Warsaw Resolution W1	Warsaw Resolution W2	Oslo Ministerial Decision	Oslo Ministerial Mandate
Albania	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Andorra																							
Austria	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Belarus		x			x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Belgium	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Bosnia and Herzegovina																			x	x	x		
Bulgaria	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Croatia	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Cyprus	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Czech Republic	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Denmark	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Estonia	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
European Union	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Finland	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
France	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Georgia													x	x	x	x	x	x				x	x
Germany	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Greece	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Holy See																						x	
Hungary	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Iceland	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Ireland	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Italy	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Latvia	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Country	Strasbourg Resolution S1	Strasbourg Resolution S2	Strasbourg Resolution S3	Strasbourg Resolution S4	Strasbourg Resolution S5	Strasbourg Resolution S6	Helsinki Resolution H1	Helsinki Resolution H2	Helsinki Resolution H3	Helsinki Resolution H4	Lisbon Resolution L1	Lisbon Resolution L2	Vienna Declaration	Vienna Resolution V1	Vienna Resolution V2	Vienna Resolution V3	Vienna Resolution V4	Vienna Resolution V5	Warsaw Declaration	Warsaw Resolution W1	Warsaw Resolution W2	Oslo Ministerial Decision	Oslo Ministerial Mandate
Liechtenstein	x	x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Lithuania	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Luxembourg	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Malta	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x					
Monaco	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x					
Montenegro																			x	x	x	x	x
Netherlands	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Norway	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Poland	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Portugal	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		
Republic of Moldova							x	x	x	x									x	x	x		
Romania	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Russian Federation	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Serbia	x	x	x	x	x	x							x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Slovakia	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Slovenia	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Spain	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Sweden	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Switzerland	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia																			x	x	x		
Turkey	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Ukraine	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
United Kingdom	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Annex 5 – Photographs from the Conference

















