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**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

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**CROSS SECTORAL APPROACH: STRENGTHENING LINKS WITH  
OTHER UNECE SECTORAL COMMITTEES**

Note by the secretariat

This document summarizes the inter-sectoral and cross sectoral activities under the UNECE/FAO integrated programme, for the information of the Committee.

The Committee is invited to provide guidance and suggestions for future work.

## **BACKGROUND**

1. The UNECE at its sixty first session “stressed the importance of intersectoral activities among the Committees so as to promote a more coherent UNECE and requested the Committees to pursue and look to strengthen such activities and approaches”. Likewise the Vienna Ministerial Conference stressed the importance of the cross sectoral approach in its General Declaration and resolutions. Work area 5 of the integrated UNECE/FAO programme of work covers “policy and cross-sectoral issues”. This document briefly presents the inter-sectoral and cross-sectoral<sup>1</sup> activities under the work programme, for the information of the Committee.

2. The Committee is invited to take note of the inter-sectoral and cross-sectoral activities under the UNECE/FAO integrated programme and provide guidance and suggestions for future work.

### Water

3. The UNECE/FAO secretariat participated actively, with the Warsaw Liaison Unit of the MCPFE in the drafting of the Code of Conduct on Payments for Ecosystem Services in Integrated Water Resource Management (which include water related services provided by forests). The draft code (MP.WAT/WG.1/2006/3) was reviewed by the Working Party on Integrated Water Resources Management in June 2006 and will probably be finally approved later in 2006. The issue of forests and water is receiving increasing attention, and may be a major topic at the Warsaw Conference. The cooperative work with the water convention secretariat and other experts ensured that forest aspects were properly taken into account in the Code of Conduct, and brought the water and forest communities closer together leading to a better mutual understanding.

### Energy

4. The interaction between developments in the energy sector (for instance energy prices and policies for renewable energies) and forest sector issues, are monitored by UNECE/FAO, notably in the context of the Forest Products Annual Market Review. A task force has been set up by the Working Party on Forest Economics and Statistics to improve the quality of wood energy statistics, with IEA, and EU as leading partners. A workshop on energy and forest products industry will be held in Rome in October 2006, under the joint auspices of FAO, IEA, UNECE and ICFPA. A joint MCPFE/UNECE/FAO/CEPI workshop on mobilization of the wood resource for raw material and energy will be held in Geneva in January 2007. Taken together, these activities will improve the understanding of the main issues and help Governments and international organisations to develop policies which are firmly based on fact and take into account the characteristics of all sectors concerned.

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<sup>1</sup> “Inter-sectoral” means where two, possibly more “sectors” interact with each other. “Cross sectoral” means where major complex issues cut across many “sectors”. Given the general complexity of the issues, and the difficulty of defining clearly the boundaries of any one “sector”, this distinction is hard to apply in practice.

### Trade

5. Trade in forest products is regularly monitored and recorded, notably in the *Forest Products Annual Market Review*, which is steadily strengthening its coverage of trade policy issues. The Policy Forums at the Committee's sessions in 2005 and 2006 have addressed trade policy related issues (governments' role in certification and public procurement policies, respectively), and have benefited from input from the expertise available in the Trade and Timber Division.

### Environment

6. In one sense, everything related to sustainable forest management (i.e. the whole programme) takes the environmental dimension into account. Certainly most of the activities of the sub-programme have an environmental dimension. It is however worth making a special mention of the efforts being made to collect information on environmental indicators under work area 2. This work is carried out with partners from the environment field, such as the European Environment Agency, and is steadily improving data quality, as well as providing forest sector input to environmental monitoring projects.

### Workshop on Forests – Common Benefits, Shared Responsibilities, Multiple Policies, Riga, Latvia, October 2005

7. The workshop, held under the joint auspices of the UNECE, FAO, MCPFE and the Governments of Latvia and Switzerland, gathered experts from the forest sector and other fields to exchange experiences on cross-sectoral aspects (the report of the workshop is available on the UNECE/FAO Timber Section website). They made specific recommendations for linkages with energy, agriculture nature conservation, water and trade. Among other things, they recommended that:

- (a) UNECE, FAO and MCPFE strengthen cross-sectoral dimensions in all aspects of their programmes
- (b) national forest sector institutions
  - (i) develop a clear vision of other sectors as a precondition for forest sector policies
  - (ii) emphasize communication with other sectors
  - (iii) strengthen the capacity of forest sector institutions to address cross-sectoral issues, for instance by employing specialists from other sectors

8. Delegates are invited to review and comment on the results of the workshop, in particular to indicate to what extent their national institutions are increasing their capacity to analyse and influence multi-sector policy issues.