

FP(12)825:1

Brussels, 31 January 2012
Original: English

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COPA-COGECA WORKING PARTY ON
FORESTRY ON 4 OCTOBER 2011**

Present: VALERO, SIIVONEN, MATOUSEK, SPICKOVA, HOBARTH, CALADO, SOVERAL, LANTIAINEN, OHELA, CHALULMEAUX, ANGENIOL, PRADEAU, BAJEN, CALAIM, FERNANDEZ, POLLASTRI, HENNESSY, KUND, TALUCCI, PAOLUCCI, BERTRAND, ANDERSON, DUCRAY, MARTIN, ACKZELL, MONTAIGU, CROCHET, MARTIN, BOSTROM, MUIZNIEKS, REQUARDT, NARAKKA, GAIZUTIS and ORZECZOWSKI

Secretariat: MIKKOLA, RUNGE

SUMMARY AND conclusions:

The Working Party (WP) met under the Chairmanship of Mr. Valero and adopted the agenda [FP(11)6934:2] and the minutes [FP(11)6513] of the previous meeting.

Item 1: Information points

The Chairman informed the members of the outcomes of the forestry exhibition on 6-9 September 2011 at the European Parliament and of the workshop on “Forest Sector contribution to bio-based economy” on 8 September 2011 initiated by Copa-Cogeca and organised jointly with other forest sector organisations. Event raised large interest amongst the MEPs, the Commission and entire forestry sector being a huge success. The members congratulated the Secretariat for the work and highlighted the importance of such events on awareness raising on the multiple functions of forests and the positive contribution to society. The Secretariat informed the members of the development of the AG work methods and the possible creation of working groups under AG.

Item 2: Preparation of the AG Forestry and Cork meeting

The WP approved the minutes of the previous AG meeting. Mr Hakkarainen presented the changes made into its Strategic Agenda based on the discussion in the previous meeting. Topics such as the revision of EU forest strategy, discussion on biomass strategy, mobilization of biomass and bio-based economy were integrated into the document. The WP approved the document.

Update on SFC Working Groups and revision of the EU Forest Strategy

Mr Hakkarainen gave an update on the work done in the SFC. The SFC has discussed forest measures in the new Rural Development Policy, LULUCF, NREAPs and the biomass sustainability report. The Secretariat gave an update on the work done in the new SFC’s working group on information systems (I) and the outcomes of the Commission’s workshop on the revision of EU forest strategy on 15 April 2011. Mr Näräkkä (MTK) presented the work done in the new WG on Revision of Forest Strategy (FS). He also presented the producers key points to be presented in the AG meeting on the new EU FS. The WP was informed of the upcoming revision of the EU’s Forest Strategy, its timetable and view of the WG members. The WG discussed on the objectives, goals and structure for the future and were invited to send their contributions to the Secretariat. The WP stated that strategy should

promote the use of wood, coordinate policies related to forests in EU, have relevant funding, highlight positive role of forests in climate change and bio-economy and avoid contra dictionary targets. FAP should be integrated into the future Strategy.

State of play on the possible legally binding agreement on forests in Europe (LBA)

The Secretariat informed the members of the outcome of MCPFE ministerial meeting in June in Oslo where the ministers decided to engage into the discussion on LBA. Ms Mikkola participated in the event and presented the “Copa-Cogeca position on a possible legally binding agreement on forests in Europe” [FP(10)5752:2]. Mr Näräkkä gave an update on the discussions regarding the LBA which was followed by exchange of views on possible joint position paper within the forest sector on the matter presented by Mr Höbarth (LKÖ). The WP stressed the need for good coordination between LBA and EU Forest Strategy as well as importance of having observer status in the intergovernmental LBA negotiation committee.

→ The WP agreed to investigate the possibility to develop a joint position paper on LBA with the forest sector (Copa-Cogeca, CEPF, USSE, ELO, CEPI, EUSTAFOR and Cei-Bois). Additionally WP agreed on the importance to apply for observer status in the LBA negotiation committee.

Update on implementation of the Timber regulation

Ms Lantinen gave an update on the implementation of the timber regulation. At this stage the Commission is working on rules for laying down the regulation, recognition of monitoring organisations. Member States will also have to take decision on several matters. The Commission has consulted the stakeholders by organising two meetings on 21 March and 28 April 2011. The Commission has also consulted Member States expert group which is expected to read and comment the final text after which the European Parliament and Council have their say on the draft. The Flegt committee assists the Commission in adopting the implementation acts. Consultation process is still ongoing. Detailed rules are developed for due diligence systems and for monitoring organisations. These should be adopted by 3 June 2012 still using the old Comitology procedure. The first draft has been discussed in September 2011 and the next meeting is expected in December 2011. At this stage the Commission is waiting for MS written comments.

Information on the NREAPs

Ms Langué from the Commission presented the National Renewable Energy Action Plans and the Commission assessment of the NREAPs submitted by the MS in 2010 as well as progress update on the Commission biomass sustainability report 2011. The WG discussed the matter and highlighted their concerns on possible market distortions related to subsidizing renewable energy production, criticism on the need for sustainability criteria for biomass, the role of wood certification and additional costs.

Item 3: Exchange of views on a possible joint position on forest health

The Chairman explained the background and mainlines of the draft joint position on forest health. Mr Soveral (CAP) presented the situation in Portugal and the WP had an exchange of views on the draft. The Chairman invited members to send their concrete proposal to the Secretariat to develop the paper to apply on all pests targeted on forests. Further on this paper could then be developed into a common position with other forest producer organisations.

Item 4: Exchange of views on the forest measures under the Rural Development Policy post 2013

The Chairman presented the main lines of the rural development regulation and the WP discussed the measures targeting forests. The WP highlighted the need for forest related measures to address climate change, employment, maintenance of biodiversity, water resources, agro-forestry, co-

operatives, prevention of forest fires, threshold levels, adequate budget and possibility of using funds from regional policy.

Item 5: Recommendations for Inclusion of Harvested Wood Products within UNFCCC

Mr Ohela informed the WP of the recommendations prepared by sustainable forest products industry (SFPI) WG for government negotiators to effectively include harvested wood products (HWP) within the UN framework convention on climate change (UNFCCC). Carbon benefits of HWP are not fully recognized during the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol. Current contradiction between the physical reality and the accounting rules of the Kyoto Protocol create a significant risk of unintended outcomes. The recommendations showcased evidence of HWP carbon benefits and proposed objectives for COP 17.

Item 6: State of play on forestry in EU biodiversity strategy

Ms Runge informed the WP of the state of play with the EU biodiversity strategy. The strategy was adopted on 4 May 2011. The target to halt biodiversity loss 2010 was not reached. Mandate at global and EU level for restoring ecosystems when possible was a step up with EU commitments in March 2010. By 2020 forest management plans or equivalent (in line with Sustainable Forest Management) are expected to be in place for all forests that are publicly owned and for forest holdings above a certain size. This is to encourage forest holders to protect and enhance forest biodiversity and integrate biodiversity measures into the Forest Management plans. Next steps are “Green infrastructure strategy”, aligning this with invasive species strategy, Natura 2000 as well as common implementation framework. WP members were asked to send their comments to the Secretariat.

Any other business

Ms Runge presented the mainlines of the “Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe” to the WP where the positive role forests can play is not highlighted. 2013 communication on buildings is expected and work begins 2012. WP raised its concern on the lack of visibility to forests in the roadmap and highlighted the need to encourage innovation in use of wood based products.