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Brussels, 24th January 2013
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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COPA-COGECA WORKING PARTY ON FORESTRY ON 4 DECEMBER 2012

Present: VALERO, BASTO, BÖRGER, DE BARROS E VASCONCELLOS, HAKKARAINEN, HÖBART, KARYOS, KOPRIVNIKAR, SZEP, VALENTINI, ROCHA, CALADO, PIRIBAUER, PIETOLA

Secretariat: MIKKOLA, RUNGE, ANDUGAR

SUMMARY AND conclusions:

The Working Party (WP) met under the Chairmanship of Mr Valero and adopted the agenda [FP\(12\)8525 \(rev.3\)](#) and the minutes [FP\(12\)7469 \(rev.1\)](#) of the previous meeting.

Item 1: Information on the upcoming elections

Ms Mikkola informed the members of the upcoming elections in the Advisory Group on 5 December 2012. Copa-Cogeca had nominated Mr Juha Hakkarainen for the Chairmanship of the AG for his second term. Ms Mikkola informed the WP of the upcoming elections of the Chairman and the Vice-Chairmen in the WP spring 2013. More information will be sent in coming months.

Item 2: Exchange of views on the forest measures under the Rural Development Policy post 2013

Ms Mikkola gave an update to the WP on the MFF discussions and Copa-Cogeca reactions to it. The Chairman encouraged members to be active contacting national representative to defend strong CAP and RDP budget.

Item 3: Information points

Ms Runge presented the situation with implementation of EU biodiversity strategy and forest measures in it. Discussion was held and the WP raised their concern on restricting management practices in protected areas, different guidance documents to agriculture and forestry on N2000 areas, concept of wilderness areas, conflict of interests between targets in EU policies, forest fires. They highlighted the need for National Action Plans and analysis of consequences of protection activities to forest industry and jobs in rural areas.

Ms Andugar gave an update on the process at the EP on LULUCF as well as on wood ashes within the European Waste Catalogue. The WP discussed the matters and expressed concerns on the latter matter of wood ash being considered as dangerous waste.

Mr Smith from DG AGRI gave a presentation on the progress done on the Natura2000 forest guidance document as well as with revision of EU forest strategy.

Item 4: Update on SFC Working Group on revision of the EU Forest Strategy

The Chairman gave an update on the revision of EU forest strategy process and presented the opinion of the SFC WG. The WP discussed the matter. The WG questioned if strategy is too late as many policies are already in place affecting forests and questioned how to make sure strategy would guide the policy making at EU level on forest related matters.

Item 5: State of play on the possible legally binding agreement on forests in Europe (LBA) and MCPFE activities

Mr Höbarth informed the members of the outcome of second INC meeting 3-9 September in Bonn. SFM as guideline and principle was seen positive as well as recognition of the wide holistic usefulness of forestry for the society. There was clear recognition of land tenure and ownership rights as well as forest owners to be especially mentioned in the document. The WP discussed the matter and were of view that “close to nature forest” was difficult definition to be used due to lack of clear definition. The WP supported the name “Framework Convention of Forests” for the process and saw it important to be present in the meetings.

Item 6: Exchange of views on the opportunities of the bio-economy and Public Private Partnership bio-based industry initiative

Mr Valero presented the outcomes of Copa-Cogeca workshop on “Improving the competitiveness of the biobased industry value chains” on 1 October 2012 in Budapest. The workshop was seen as success and good beginning of opening the dialogue between the actors in the value chain.

Ms Mikkola presented the bioeconomy strategy of EU to the WP, gave an update on the PPP on biobased industries and presented the Copa-Cogeca response to the public consultation on the PPP on bio-based industries. PPP on biobased industries is currently finalizing its research agenda that should sent to the Commission by end of the year. The public consultation on the PPP runs until 14 December 2012. The WP members were encouraged to respond to the public consultation.

Item 7: Information on the biomass sustainability criteria

Mr Volpi (DG TREN) was not able to participate to the meeting, nevertheless the WP had a brief debate about the topic. The WP agreed that we should maintain our position in transmitting to EU COM new sustainability criteria on biomass that we consider to be absolutely unnecessary. The WP has perfectly valid ones within the Sustainable Forest Management process.

Item 8: Discussion on the functioning of the Advisory Group

Mr Hakkarainen presented their views on how to develop the functioning and efficiency of the AG work and the possibility to create WGs under the AG. The WG discussed the matter and concluded that ad hoc working groups can bring added value however it is important to have objectives, timetable and right experts in the group discussing relevant topics in timely manner to contribute to the policy making in order for the groups to bring added value.

Any other business

Ms Mikkola informed the WP members that this is her last WP meeting. The Chairman thanked Ms Mikkola for her good work done over the past years and wished her good luck and success in her future challenges in life. Ms Mikkola reminded the members that the coordination meeting between CEPF, ELO, Copa-Cogeca and USSE takes place at Rue du Luxembourg 66 between 16-17.30h. All members are welcome to join.