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In reference to your request on submission of inputs related to the ECOSOC Resolution 2015/33, we would like to express support for this important initiative and thank you for the opportunity given to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) to contribute to this process.

We understand that the goals of the UNFF Strategic Plan and the quadrennial programmes of work that are designed to operationalise it will be aligned with the objectives of the International Arrangement on Forests (art.1 of the International Arrangement on Forests beyond 2015). We also understand that the latest forest-related policy developments (art. 39 of the Arrangement) will be taken into account in the Strategic Plan.

The UNECE and FAO through the joint Forestry and Timber Section have already been contributing to the achievement of the relevant objectives of the International Arrangement on Forests (IAF), through the Integrated Programme of Work (IPoW). Should member States decide to do so, particular IPoW provisions could be included/referred to in the UNFF Strategic Plan and the quadrennial programmes of work, in particular as it pertains to the expected components of the Plan listed in the art 39:

- Roles of actors;
- Framework for reviewing implementation; and
- Communication on the work of the IAF.

The UNECE and FAO governing bodies, the Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry (COFFI) and the European Forestry Commission (EFC), during their joint session Silva2015[1] recognised the importance of the regional contribution by COFFI and EFC, including through the joint section, to the ongoing UNFF work as well as to the development of the UNFF Strategic Plan and its next programme of work. The recent example of this contribution is the regional study on trends and challenges in achieving the Global Objectives on Forests prepared for the 11th session of the Forum[2]. In line with this statement, we would like to hereby provide information about the Integrated Programme of Work.

The Integrated Programme of Work for the Committee on Forests and Forest Industry and the European Forestry Commission) provides the substantial framework for UNECE activities related to sustainable forest management and forest sector. The current programme covers the period

[1] http://www.unece.org/forests/silva2015-engelberg.html
[2] http://www.unece.org/forests/forests-in-the-ece-region-2015.html

2014-2017. The overall goal of the Integrated Programme of Work 2014-17[3], is to "Support member countries and relevant stakeholders in their efforts to sustainably manage and use ECE-region forests so that they provide products and ecosystem services to benefit society". The Integrated Programme of Work aims to assist member countries to achieve this overall goal by: providing the best available information; facilitating policy dialogues and communication; and building capacity.

The current UNECE/FAO IPoW 2014-2017 and its activities are structured around four work areas (WA):

WA1: Data, monitoring and assessment;
WA2: Policy dialogue and advice;
WA3: Communication and outreach;
WA4: Capacity-building.

The implementation of IPoW is done through specific activities that are planned and carried out on yearly basis. More information about structure and governance of IPoW are available at: www.unece.org/forests/about-us/governance.

It is planned that the next IPoW will be prepared for the period 2018-2021. We believe that this will facilitate efforts of the member States in planning their future work related to IAF, UNECE and FAO in a coordinated manner.

For more information please contact Chief of the UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section, Mr. Roman Michalak roman.michalak@unece.org or Deputy Chief, Mr Ekrem Yazici ekrem.yazici@fao.org.

I look forward to our further cooperation on this important matter.

Best regards,

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[3] http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/timber/Content/website/Integrated_PoW_2014-2017_En.pdf