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**FAO European Forestry Commission matters: Presentation of
forestry activities of the FAO Regional Office for Europe and
Central Asia**

Food and Agriculture Organization**European Forestry Commission****Fortieth session**

Geneva, 4-7 November 2019

**Forestry Activities of the FAO Regional Office for Europe
and Central Asia****Note by the Secretariat***Summary*

At the Seventy-fifth session of the Commission, which took place from 9-13 October 2017 in Warsaw, Poland, the Commission recommended FAO to prepare a background document for regional activities for the next session of the Commission.

The purpose of this paper is to summarise the on-going and future forestry activities of the FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia, together with regional work planning and priorities. Members may wish to review ongoing and planned work and provide guidance.



I. Introduction

1. The European and Central Asian countries represent very diverse characteristics in terms of climatic, social and economic conditions. These have an important impact on forest lands. In Eastern and Southeast Europe, rural areas are quite densely populated, agriculturally important and under human influence for millennia. Fuelwood harvesting and logging at unsustainable levels, grazing, fires, mining and urban development have, in certain degrees, impacted forest ecosystems' integrity. Moreover, impacts of climate change, such as increased frequency of droughts and sinking of groundwater levels predicted to further accelerate, and changes in species and their composition, may further threaten the stability of forest ecosystems in the region. Central Asia and Caucasus have low forest cover and low forest growth. Fuelwood gathering and grazing lead to ongoing deforestation and forest degradation in Central Asia. Land degradation and desertification, exacerbated by climate change are serious issues, mainly because of inappropriate agricultural practices.

2. The FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia (REU) and the Sub-regional Office for Central Asia (SEC) have been supporting countries in their efforts to manage forest resources sustainably in the region through its relevant forestry programs and operational work under the FAO Strategic Objectives, which ultimately contribute to the implementation of the REU Regional Initiatives and the relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). In addition to the thematic works, they require policy integration and a cross-sectoral approach involving all relevant sectors to create the necessary enabling environment.

II. Regional work program development in FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia

3. FAO has reviewed its Strategic Framework and prepared its Medium-Term Plan 2018-2021 to ensure that its work is harmonized with the 2030 Agenda. FAO's five Strategic Programmes contribute to 40 SDG targets measured by 52 SDG indicators, with a focus on SDG 2 ("zero hunger") as well as SDGs 1 ("no poverty"), 8 ("decent work and economic growth"), 13 ("climate action"), 14 ("life below water") and 15 ("life on land").

4. At the regional level, the Regional Conference for Europe (ERC) formulates regional positions on global policy and regulatory issues, advises on and identifies specific problems of the European and Central Asia region as well as agrees on priorities of FAO's work in agriculture, fisheries and forestry in the Europe and Central Asia region. These agreed regional priorities should be considered in the preparation of planning, programme and budget documents of the organization. The ERC at its 31st Session in 2018 acknowledged the importance of the proposed priorities for the Region:

- (a) Formulating effective policies for sustainable and inclusive growth for farmers and the rural population;
- (b) Enhancing the reach towards new markets through alignment of trade, food safety and sanitary and phytosanitary policies;
- (c) Promoting sustainable natural resource management, combating land degradation and desertification; and
- (d) Addressing food insecurity and reduction of all forms of malnutrition.

5. To implement these priorities, the Region has developed three regional initiatives focusing on small holders and family farm development; on agri-food trade and market integration; as well as on sustainable natural resource management in a changing climate. The latter responds to the urgent need to cope with the challenges of climate change as part of the Paris Agreement and emphasizes the cross-cutting nature of climate change. These regional priorities and initiatives are reflected in the FAO Programme of Work and Budget for the Region and ensure a programmatic approach addressing regional priorities and supporting the implementation of country programmes by mobilizing the organization's technical work across the strategic objectives and the cross-cutting themes (statistics, gender, nutrition, governance and climate change).

6. In addition, the Regional Initiatives allow to better respond to country demand and to develop the Country Programming Framework (CPF) in an integrated manner, as well as increase the impact of interventions and their contribution to achieving the SDGs. FAO's work in the country is determined by the CPF which defines the agreed thematic areas and activities for cooperation between FAO and the respective Government; as well as the Country Work Plans (CWP) which operationalize in the medium term the agreed outcomes as stated in the CPF and UNDAF.

7. FAO's biennial multi-disciplinary Programme of Work is formulated in line with the programme countries' support requirements outlined in the respective Country Programming Framework (CPF) and in light of the regional priorities. Following internal iterative work planning process engaging Country Offices, Regional Office, Strategic Programme Management Teams, Technical Divisions, FAO's respective Regional Commissions (specifically on forestry, the European Forestry Commission) and Global Statutory Bodies (specifically on forestry, the Committee on Forestry) in coordination with the Office of Strategy, Planning and Resource Management, the Organization formulates its country and regional workplans. Following corporate review, the approved workplans inform endorsement of the biennial Programme of Work and Budget by FAO Council's session held in December preceding the first year of the new biennium.

8. REU forestry work through Budapest office includes the following priorities:

(a) Ensure sustainable wood mobilization and use of non-wood forest resources, with a view of the increased demand for bioenergy, through providing support to member countries in assessing and monitoring forest/tree and wildlife resources.

(b) Strengthen country capacity to deal with increasing threats posed by pest movement through expanded international trade coupled with local climatic change, and to implement the Guide to implementation of phytosanitary standards in forestry and other associated forest health guides.

(c) Strengthen country capacity to assess and monitor climate change impacts on forests and land resources, and support countries to adapt to climate change and mitigate its impact.

9. In line with the priorities REU has been organising:

(a) A capacity development workshop on "Development of forests and genetic resources of local ecotypes of forest trees as a means of adaptation to climate change" in Ulaanbaatar and Domogt Sharyn Gol, Mongolia, 9-15 September 2018

(b) 2nd annual meeting of the Forest Invasive Species Network for Europe and Central Asia (REUFIS), back-to-back with a technical training on "Invasive pathogens in the REUFIS region & the role of nurseries", both in Ždanovičy, Belarus, 16-18 October 2018

(c) 3rd annual meeting of REUFIS, back-to-back with a technical training on "sustainable management of invasive species of Chest nut trees and invasive woody plants" which is tentatively planned for late autumn 2019.

(d) A Letter of Agreement on "Improved management of small-scale coppice/degraded forests in private ownership" with the branch office in Macedonia of Connecting Natural Values & People Foundation (CNVP) to promote sustainable wood mobilization in view of the high share of degraded forests and high demand for bioenergy in the Western Balkans.

10. The vast majority of FAO technical assistance has been provided through FAO implemented projects, either provided through FAO Regular Programme funds under FAO's Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) or through Extra- budgetary programme funds, mainly the Government Cooperative Programme (GCP) funds or a Unilateral Trust Fund (UTF).

A. Countries and Territories that requested technical assistance through project support from FAO to tackle country-specific challenges

1. Armenia

11. The WB ranked Armenia among the top 4 Climate Change vulnerable countries in the EECA region with rural population heavily dependent on fuelwood for energy. The FAO provided technical assistance to the Republic of Armenia for developing a Green Climate Fund (GCF) project “Forest resilience of Armenia, enhancing adaptation and rural green growth via mitigation (GCP/ARM/008/GCF)” through two TCPf projects (TCP/ARM/3602, TCP/ARM/3703). The GCF project proposal has three components, namely on forest restoration investments, on fuelwood consumption as main driver of forest degradation, and on rural communities’ involvement in forest governance and management. The total investment has a volume of USD 19,168,240 with GCF grant of USD 10,000,000. The project proposal has been submitted to the GCF secretariat in spring 2019 for technical review and eventual approval for funding by the GCF board.

2. Belarus

12. The Government of the Republic of Belarus adopted the National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Forestry (2015-2030), and the State Program “Belarusian Forest” (2016-2020). However, adequate information on forest resources for implementing the strategy and decision-making is lacking, with the last national forest inventory (NFI) in 1980. The FAO provided technical assistance through a TCPf project to support Belarus to 1) conduct a preliminary Land Cover Assessment of the land use situation in Belarus for designing a future NFI; and 2) develop the methodology for implementation of a future NFI. The TCPf “Assessment of the methodology for implementation of national forest inventory” (TCP/BYE/3701) with a budget of USD 60 000 was implemented between Jul 2018-Sep 2019.

3. Georgia

13. The old hunting farms network was completely destroyed after the country gaining independence in 1991. The Hunters Union ultimately lost control over hunting areas with the Wildlife Act of 1996, and an effective state administration system for hunting and fishing was never put in place. The FAO is providing technical assistance through a TCP project to pave the way for informed and evidence-based decision-making on wildlife issues in the future, using a landscape approach and focusing on livelihoods of rural population. The project aims at developing an up-to-date wildlife management system and capacity of rural population to involve in wildlife management and monitoring, as well as at reviewing relevant laws (forest, hunting, biodiversity). The TCP “Capacity building for sustainable wildlife management” (TCP/GEO/3603) with a budget of USD 485,000 is implemented between Nov 2016– Dec 2019.

14. Forests and other tree resources (fruit and palm trees) are of exceptional importance for Georgia, both in terms of the overall economy and livelihoods of the rural population, and in terms of protection of the environment and bio diversity. Currently there are 20 invasive pest species (forest and horticultural) identified in the Caucasus region with the potential to severely threaten the livelihood and environment of Georgia. The FAO provides technical assistance within the framework of the EU-UNDP Rural Development Programme (Phase II) to secure agriculture-based livelihoods by strengthening the capacity of local actors to, among other things, control of the four main invasive species (Red palm weevil, Boxwood pests, Chestnut blight and brown marmorated stink bug). A project “funded by EU under ENPARD III” (GEO/18/001/01/99) with a budget of USD 900,000 (only for forestry-related activities) is implemented between Jan 2018-Nov 2022.

4. Kosovo¹

15. Two identified challenges in the forestry sector, namely 1) the insufficient availability and quality of data on forests and 2) the creation of employment opportunities for rural poor were in the focus of the previously FAO implemented, Finnish-funded forestry project (GCP/KOS/005/FIN). Upon request and financial support of Kosovo authorities, the FAO provides technical assistance to enhance data availability and to design employment programmes for the forest sector. The developed UTF “Complementary support to Implementation of the Forest Policy and Strategy in Kosovo” (UTF/KOS/006/KOS) with a budget of USD 210,829 is implemented between Sep 2016–Jun 2020.

16. An effective management and administration system for protection and sustainable use of wildlife resources is currently lacking in Kosovo, including the Hunting Area of Special Importance “Blinaja”. The FAO provides technical assistance through a TCPf project to support Kosovo authorities to develop a general concept for the future use of Blinaja and to draft a comprehensive Development Programme, including a 10-years Hunting Management Plan. The TCPf “Preparation and operationalisation of Development Programme for Hunting Area of Special Importance Blinaja” (TCP/KOS/3701) with a budget of USD 88,000 is implemented between Jul 2018–Dec 2019.

17. Despite support for the forest sector in past decades through donor-funded projects, a number of unresolved issues hamper the further development of the sector in Kosovo, in particular illegal and unrecorded fuelwood and timber cutting, but also lack of clarity in the legislative framework, management arrangements and responsibilities. The FAO provides technical assistance through a TCPf project to develop together with Kosovo authorities a large-scale forestry project addressing in a comprehensive manner the above-mentioned and interlinked challenges of the sector. The TCPf “Support to the preparation of a Project Document for improved forest management in Kosovo” (TCP/KOS/3702) with a budget of USD 22,000 is implemented between Oct 2018–Dec 2019.

18. The project document developed under TCP/KOS/3702 has been shared with potential donors. Following expressed interest to fund activities, the FAO developed the project “Policy and technical support for improved forest management” (GCP/KOS/007/SWE) for funding by Sweden (USD 2,200,000; Mar 2019–Feb 2023) and the project “Policy and technical support for improved forest management” (GCP/KOS/653823) for funding by the EC (USD 1,700,000; Jan 2020–Dec 2022).

5. Moldova

19. Forests of the Republic of Moldova are considered an important strategic natural and renewable resource with the potential to contribute to the national economic development. There has never been a nation-wide systematic forest inventory in the country, but adequate information on forests is critical for policy and decision making, the FAO provides technical assistance to Moldova to develop the human and technical capacities, as well as to address institutional responsibilities for designing and implementing a state-of-the-art NFI. The provided assistance includes the provision of preliminary land cover Assessment of the land use situation for designing the first NFI. The TCPf “Developing the institutional capacity of the National Forestry Agency in the preparation of NFI” (TCP/MOL/3702) with a budget of USD 60,000 is implemented between May 2019–May 2020.

6. North Macedonia

20. The Government of North Macedonia adopted in 2006 the National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Forestry (valid for twenty years) with its main strategic objective to increase the contribution of the forestry sector to the national economy and rural development through sustainable management of forest land and tree resources. However, adequate information on forest and tree resources is not available, with the last NFI in 1980. The FAO provided technical assistance through a TCPf project to North Macedonia to 1) conduct a preliminary Land Cover Assessment of the land use situation for designing a future NFI; and 2) develop the methodology for implementation of a future NFI. The TCPf

¹ References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

“Assessment of the methodology for implementation of the forest inventory” (TCP/MKD/3604) with a budget of USD 64,000 was implemented between Jan 2018–May 2019.

7. Serbia

21. After the adoption of the Law on Game Management and Hunting in 2010, hunting areas were established for protection and improvement of game populations. However, game management is still unsatisfactory and the Draft Hunting Development Strategy of Serbia (2015-2029) was never adopted. The FAO is providing technical assistance through a TCP project to pave the way for informed and evidence-based decision-making on game management and hunting issues. The project aims at developing an adequate game, hunting and related trade management and monitoring system. The new game management system will be complemented by an improved game habitat assessment system. The TCP “Capacity building for a sustainable game management system” (TCP/SRB/3603) with a budget of USD 317,000 is implemented between Jan 2018–Dec 2019.

22. The Forest Law and Law on Nature protection provide the main legal framework for forest conservation and management in the Republic of Serbia. The Forestry Development Strategy sets the operational framework for forest development and planning, defining conservation and improvement of biodiversity as a part of the concept of sustainable forest management (SFM). The FAO as implementing Agency for the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) together with national stakeholders developed a GEF project addressing remaining barriers for applying SFM throughout Serbia. To this end the project aims at (i) setting up a Forest Information System and implementing the second NFI in Serbia; (ii) strengthening coordination and dialogue between public and private stakeholders, (iii) strengthening capacities to implement SFM practices; (iv) designing incentive mechanisms for private forest owners to engage in SFM, and (v) new approaches in forest management planning and implementation in two pilot regions. The total financing of the project “Contribution of sustainable forest management to a low emission and resilient development in Serbia” (GCP/SRB/002/GFF) amounts to USD. 29,454,799, with GEF contribution of USD 3,274,658, and is implemented between Jan 2018–Dec 2021.

23. FAO has been requested to develop a follow-up project under GEF7 programme on “Forest and landscape restoration of degraded lands in Serbia”. Total indicative total financing will be USD 6,000,000 with GEF contribution of USD 875,891. The tentative period of implementation is Jan 2021 - Dec 2024.

8. Ukraine

24. The promotion of restoration of degraded landscapes in the forest-steppe and steppe zones is one of the priorities in Ukraine. The FAO together with national stakeholders developed and implements a GEF project which aims at 1) creating an enabling environment for integrated natural resources management (INRM) practices; 2) restoring productivity and resilience of production landscapes through INRM; and 3) learning and sharing of lessons learned. Component 2 comprises developing capacities for improved management of shelterbelts, coupled with field demonstrations of rehabilitation and multipurpose management (erosion control, carbon sequestration, non-wood forest products). The total financing of the project “Integrated Natural Resources Management in Degraded Landscapes in the Forest-Steppe and Steppe Zones of Ukraine” (GCP/UKR/004/GFF) amounts to USD 12,099,751, with GEF contribution of USD 1,776,484 (component 2 about 60%), and is implemented between Nov 2017–Jul 2020.

B. Regional projects

25. Both the Republic of Belarus and Ukraine have great potential for forestry development, however, there are new emerging threats associated with extreme weather events. Natural disturbances such as severe and protracted drought, combined with poor silvicultural practises cause limited water and nutrition availability. As a consequence, on thousands of hectares conifer trees have become stressed and susceptible to bark beetle

attacks reaching to outbreak levels. The FAO provided technical assistance in analysing the underlying causes for the outbreaks of various bark beetle species involved in the dieback of pine forests. Available data and information on current health status of pine forests and related pest management activities in Belarus and Ukraine as well as in neighbouring countries were reviewed and primary causes of dieback of pine forests were validated through an expert meeting. International forest health experts shared their experience with large-scale pest outbreaks and management from other regions and continents in the workshop and assisted in identifying appropriate pest management measures and associated capacity building needs for Belarus and Ukraine. A regional project proposal for implementation of immediate emergency action plan for Belarus and Ukraine was developed, but an external donor organisation is yet to be identified in support for its implementation. The TCPf “Emergency action plan for combating dieback of pine forests” (TCP/RER/3701) with a budget of USD 38,000 was implemented between Apr 2018–Dec 2018.

III. SEC forestry works

26. General characteristics of Central Asia and the country needs shape the sub-regional priorities in the region. Main priority areas are sustainable management of natural resources, improved resilience to climate change and disaster, climate change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity conservation and strengthening the national capacity of the countries on the priorities.

27. Engagement of SEC in the region and in the field of forestry has two dimensions, normative work and project work. Normative work amounted in the reporting period about 15% of the total work load. It covered mainly support to operationalize Forestry-Turkey Partnership Programme (FTFP) and input for working groups of the Turkish Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) on establishment of Sustainable Forest Management Indicators & Criteria (SFM C&I).

28. Project works covered in the reporting period preparation and implementation of projects on the following four subjects: 1) Forest resource assessment & monitoring (in Azerbaijan), 2) Sustainable management of forest and land resources (in Turkey and Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, 3) Conservation of biodiversity (in Turkey) and 4) Restoration of degraded lands (in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan).

29. In total, six single country and two multi-country projects worth of over USD 22,000,000 were supported. Global Environmental Facility (GEF) 5, 6 & 7, Turkey, Ernst-Moritz-Arndt-University Greifswald (through the Internationale Klima Initiative - IKI) and the FTFP were the donors to these projects. All projects are in line with SDGs, strategic objectives of FAO, regional initiatives and country programming frameworks. Five projects are as of July 2019 ongoing (i.e. under implementation), one finalized and two of them are under preparation. Projects under implementation consisted of single country projects (two in Turkey and one in each Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan) and of a multi-country project (Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan).

A. Countries that requested technical assistance through project support from FAO to tackle country-specific challenges

1. Azerbaijan

30. Forest degradation and small-scale deforestation due to over-grazing, livestock raising and illegal cuttings and gaps in current management practices are the main challenges for forestry in Azerbaijan. “Forest resources assessment and monitoring to strengthen forest knowledge framework in Azerbaijan” project focuses on introduction of sustainable forest management to provide social and economic benefits, improve the quality of existing forests and increase the forest carbon stocks through carbon sequestration. Implementation period of the project is 2018-2020 with USD 1,400,000 from GEF 6.

2. Turkey

31. Human pressure on the limited surface water and groundwater resources and land degradation such as soil erosion, floods and landslides, declining groundwater tables and drying out of wetlands are the main challenges in Konya Closed Basin of Turkey. “Sustainable land management and climate-Friendly agriculture in Konya Closed Basin” project focuses on sustainability of farm and land management and adaptation and dissemination of low carbon technologies. Implementation period of the project is 2015-2020 with USD 5,700,000 from GEF 5.

32. Expanding cultivation and infrastructure growth, overuse of pastures by domestic livestock, medicinal plants collection, and poaching of rare species (Gazelle and Great bustard) threaten the integrity of steppes in Turkey. Species and ecosystems are affected due to the loss of connectivity in the fragmented landscape. “Conservation and sustainable management of Turkey’s steppe ecosystems” project focuses on steppe conservation through protected area management and mainstreaming steppe conservation into production landscapes. Implementation period of the project is 2016-2020 with USD 2,300,000 from GEF 5.

3. Uzbekistan

33. Inadequate data on forests for management planning, limited carbon sequestration, lacking forest cover and degradation due to livestock grazing, unsustainable harvesting of timber, fuel wood and non-forest products are the main challenges in Uzbekistan. “Sustainable management of forests in mountain and valley areas” project focuses on introduction of sustainable forest management and improved status of forest and tree resources. Implementation period of the project is 2017-2022 with USD 3,100,000 from GEF 6.

4. Kyrgyzstan

34. The FAO GEF project on “Sustainable Management of Mountainous Forest and Land Resources under Climate Change Conditions in Kyrgyzstan” aiming to contribute to the sustainable management and enhanced productivity of mountainous silvo-agro-pastoral ecosystems and improved mountain livelihoods in the Kyrgyz Republic. It aiming to move towards a more integrated cross-sectoral approach that considers the role of land and forest resources in the carbon balance, while generating multiple global environmental and socio-economic benefits by sustaining flows of critical ecosystem services, such as climate and water regulation, soil erosion control and regulation of natural hazards. Implementation period of the project is 2015-2020 with USD 5,500,000 from GEF 5.

B. Regional Projects

35. Overuse and degradation of temperate deserts by overgrazing, firewood collection and infrastructure development, losses of ecosystem services and biodiversity, and lacking integration of ecosystem services and biodiversity into land management practices are significant conservation challenges in Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. “Central Asian Desert Initiative (CADI): Conservation and sustainable use of cold winter deserts in Central Asia” project focuses on conservation and management of ecosystem services and biodiversity across borders and strengthening of stakeholder capacities through participatory approaches. Implementation period of the project is 2017-2019 by FAO and its partner, the Michael Succow Foundation (based in Germany) with USD 1,200,000 from the Ernst-Moritz-Arndt-University Greifswald (through the Internationale Klima Initiative - IKI).

C. Future Projects planned to tackle country specific challenges

1. Azerbaijan

36. Project information form (PIF) was developed for “Conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity: Strengthening network of protected areas through advanced governance and

management”. The PIF has been endorsed by the donor (GEF 7). The stage of full project preparation is approaching in 2019. Expected budget of the project is USD 2,640,000.

2. Turkey

37. Project information form (PIF) was developed for “Biodiversity conservation and sustainable forest management in Kaz Daglari”. The PIF has been endorsed by the donor (GEF 7). The stage of full project preparation is approaching in 2019. Expected budget of the project is USD 4,600,000.

3. Kyrgyzstan

38. The FAO provided technical assistance to the Kyrgyz Republic to develop a Green Climate Fund (GCF) project “Carbon Sequestration through Climate Investment in Forests and Rangelands - CS-FOR (GCP/KYR/020/GCF)” through a TCP project (TCP/LYR/3606). The GCF project proposal has three components, namely on enhancing enabling environment and policy and regulatory framework on integrated forests and rangeland management, on afforestation / reforestation and rangeland rehabilitation for carbon sequestration, and on support to climate-sensitive value chains financing to ensure sustainability of the carbon sequestration investments. The total investment has a volume of USD 50,000,000, with a GCF grant of USD 30,000,000. The project proposal has been submitted to the GCF secretariat in June 2018 and is currently under technical review for eventual approval for funding by the GCF board.

39. FAO is developing a project under GEF 7 on development of a comprehensive legal framework on biosafety in accordance with the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety in Kyrgyzstan. The project is under discussion with the State Agency on Environmental Protection and Forestry (SAEPF). Expected budget from GEF is 1.5 million USD.

40. FAO, jointly with UNDP have developed GEF 7 project proposal on Pamir–Alai Mountain Landscape for Food System, Land Use and Restoration (FOLUR) Impact Program in Kyrgyzstan. The overall goal of the project proposal is the implementation of an integrated landscape management plan, which cohesively brings together and builds on various lower-level resource management plans (e.g. forest/pasture management, PA management, etc.). The project proposal is within GEF SEC. Expected budget is 4 million USD.

4. Regional Projects

41. A concept note was developed for “Restoration of degraded forests and other lands” project under FTFP. The concept note has been endorsed by the donor (Republic of Turkey) through the Steering committee to FTFP), with the stage of full project preparation approaching. Expected budget of the project is USD 2,000,000. Focus countries for the project include Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.

IV. Points for consideration

42. The Commission may wish to encourage countries in the region to:

(a) More effectively incorporate integrated landscape approaches amongst various land management agencies responsible for agriculture, forestry, fisheries and livestock management into relevant national planning processes and enhance intersectoral collaboration at the landscape level;

(b) Provide financial and/or in-kind contributions to support the FAO regional forestry programs, in particular on phytosanitary standards in forestry in the region, and FAO project work, in particular with view to providing complementary funding for GEF and GCF projects.

43. The Commission may wish to recommend FAO to:

(a) Strengthen the integration of incorporate integrated landscape approaches in operational forestry work in the region, as well as into existing and future REU Regional Initiatives, considering the multi-functional roles of forests;

(b) Continue to support natural resource management including forests through the harmonization and strengthening of national policy, financing, incentives, taxation and governance frameworks and measures, including regulations, standards and monitoring for forest management interventions and practices, and support capacity development in this regard;

(c) Continue to support the Forest Invasive Species Network for Europe and Central Asia (REUFIS) and its activities, in particular in organising topical trainings on emerging invasive species.
