

**National Report to the Fourth Session of the
United Nations Forum on Forests**

HUNGARY

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I. Key Contacts

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II. Progress and issues related to implementation of IPF/IFF proposals for action

General

1. Please provide additional or new information on initiatives taken or lessons learned since 1997 further to the information on forests included in your national reports¹ to UNFF 2 and UNFF 3, the Commission on Sustainable Development, and other international instruments and organizations on the following points:

- **assessment (including of the relevance, priority, status of implementation, planned actions) of the IPF/IFF proposals for action in the national context**

PLEASE SEE THE HUNGARIAN NATIONAL REPORT TO CSD VIII.

- **development and implementation of your national forest programme or similar national policy framework for forests**

The development of the Hungarian national forest programme, which started in 2000, continued throughout 2003 according to the original time-table. For detailed description of the nfp process please see the national report prepared for UNFF3, chapter II.1.2.

The year 2003 was reserved for the public discussion of the draft nfp. Regional and thematic (e.g. nature protection, private forestry, state forestry, forestry administration etc.) as well as cross-sectoral discussions were organised by the NFP Programme Bureau and were attended by a large number of experts and involved or interested stake-holders. As a result of these fora sets of recommendations were formulated for the consideration of the key expert teams of the thematic areas. These teams were reconvened by the NFP Programme Bureau in November to develop the consolidated version of the programme, which contains the synthesis of the results of the public dialogue.

It should be noted that civil participation was somewhat less active, although the whole process was supported by a strong PR activity. Beside the large number of articles in dailies and journals a twenty pieces series was broadcasted by one commercial TV channels in support of the nfp process, and in addition there was a one hour round table discussion on the national channel plus several appearances in the thematic and general news programmes.

The public dialogue was concluded by a meeting with the representatives of the different governmental bodies, and Speaker of the House, the chairmen of the Agricultural Committee, the Forestry Sub-Committee, the representative of the chairman of the Environmental Protection Committee of the Parliament as well as the state secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development on the podium who shared their views on the whole nfp process and reinforced the political commitment.

The nfp process will be terminated and National Forest Programme will be enacted by a Parliamentary Decision, which is expected to be taken by the date of the accession to the EU, i.e. 1st of May 2004, also fulfilling the commitment arising from the Vienna Resolution I.

- **mechanisms or initiatives to facilitate stakeholder participation, including indigenous and local communities, in forest sector planning, decision-making and/or forest management.**

¹ National reports related to forests may be easily accessed on the CPF website at www.fao.org/forestry/cfp-mar

Please see our report for UNFF3, chapter II.1.3. Activities and actions described there together with the dialogue related to the nfp process above constitute the most recent information on the subject.

Implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action related to thematic issues of UNFF 4

Please provide information on: activities undertaken since 1997, progress made, constraints encountered, lessons learned, and issues that have emerged, as well as relevant information related to means of implementation (financing, transfer of environmentally sound technologies, and capacity-building) to support the following actions:

social and cultural aspects of forests

2. promoting the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of forest genetic resources and addressing the issue of intellectual property rights, including the identification of the origins of forest genetic resources, taking into account work undertaken by the Convention on Biological Diversity and other international agreements

The protection of forest genetic resources is guaranteed by a number of legal documents. The forest law has several provisions for protecting and promoting the indigenous species and identifies financial instruments to further this. The law regulates the collection and production of propagation material as well as the registration of the use of such materials.

The law on nature protection safeguards the biological diversity and the abundance of indigenous species.

Detailed regulation of all aspects of forestry propagation materials including its trade is provided by the respective decree of the minister for agriculture. The control over propagation materials till seed orchard gate is provided by the Institute for Agricultural Quality Control, the material used in forests are controlled by the State Forest Service.

Based on the commitments taken an in situ gene reservation programme is going on the initiative of the Forestry Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development to develop further the gene reservation network. The programme is implemented by the State Forest Service, the Forest Research Institute, the Institute for Environmental Management of the West Hungarian University, the "Kiskunság" state forest company and individual experts.

Although the establishment of the gene conservation network has always been a high priority in the Hungarian forest policy, the Vienna Living Forest Summit Declaration and the Vienna Resolution 4 contributed largely to the increased understanding between stakeholders.

3. strengthening the role of women in sustainable forest management, including through capacity building and greater participation in community-based forest management

Corresponding to the increasing public awareness and concern about environmental issues more and more women get forestry education. This profession has been dominated by men traditionally, the overwhelming majority of forestry professionals with medium level or higher education is man. In the recent years however the share of women in the higher education has increased. The Hungarian Forestry Association recognized importance and special role of the women in forestry and launched a special programme where it organizes annual reunion of lady foresters to discuss several aspects of gender issues.

It should be noted however that unlike to the higher education, women constitute a considerable share of the working force in forest planting and tending activities. These can provide an alternative and temporary source of income especially for the rural population. This can not be considered community-based forest management, since these activities most often are contracted out by large forest companies and women very often are employees of entrepreneurs.

4. integrating local and indigenous communities in sustainable forest management programmes, particularly as regards (a) recognition and respect of the customary and traditional rights and privileges of indigenous and local communities, (b) participation in decision making regarding the management of forests, (c) the attainment of secure land tenure arrangements, (d) capacity building and technology transfer for sustainable forest management directed at indigenous and local communities

- Due to the structure of the society, indigenous or forest-dwelling communities can not be found in Hungary. As far as local communities – in the general sense of the term – are concerned, the actions taken to increase their participation in forest-related planning and decision making as well as the means of disseminating relevant information for them are described in chapter II.1.3 of the national report to UNFF3. In addition, the National Land Fund was established in July of 2002 and it has contracted with the State Forest Service and Hungarian Forestry Association, so they have permanent relation with almost all communities (three thousand!) in the field of attainment of secure land tenure arrangements.

traditional forest-related knowledge

5. inventorying, cataloguing, and applying traditional forest related knowledge for sustainable forest management and promoting research on TFRK with the involvement of the knowledge holders

Not relevant because of the structure of the society, and also because forestry education started formally in the middle of the XVIII century and most of this knowledge existing at that time were gradually incorporated to the knowledge-base of the education and mixed with more modern scientific results.

6. supporting the application of intellectual property rights and/or other protection regimes for traditional forest related knowledge, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of traditional forest related knowledge, innovations and practices

Not relevant, see above

scientific forest-related knowledge

7. disseminating scientific knowledge to all interested parties, including through new and innovative ways, and strengthening capacity and mobilizing funding for national and regional research institutions and networks

Funding for forest research has been traditionally provided through research and development (RD) funds on an application basis. This resource complements the funding that is provided from the national budget and can be used on a project basis. The RD financing went through a certain evolution over the last years, and a considerably more powerful new instrument, the National Research Development Programme was launched to finance large integrated projects. Forest research was able to successfully submit three proposals, all with integrated and inter-disciplinary approaches in cooperation with Department for Research and Education of MARD:

- Forest – wood: for the integrated development of the sector
- Climatic uncertainty and the threats to our forest cover – effects, forecasts and preparedness
- The protection, sustainable use and development of the forest resources

These multi-year projects provide the backbone of the recent research work and are supplemented by a number of smaller-scale projects such as the research connected to the ICP Forests or the cooperation project under the European Forest Institute Regional Project Centre.

8. enhancing interaction between scientific research and policy processes, including priority setting of research, addressing of knowledge gaps and using scientific knowledge to support decision-making

The nfp process has brought increased cooperation and interactions between forest science and policy. The Department for Research and Education and the Forestry Department of MARD mandated the Forestry Committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the Institute of Forest Assets Management of the West Hungarian University to lead the process and provide continued scientific support in both the analytical and strategy development phases. Forest science also constitutes one of the four pillars of the national Forestry Committee, a consultative body established by the minister as mandated by the forest law.

On the other hand, the Forestry Committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences has representatives of the state administration and the business among its members in order for ensuring direct influence from main users of scientific research. Similarly, the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) of the Forest Research Institute constitutes of not only scientists but also representatives from these fields. The SAB can directly influence in streamlining research activities.

monitoring, assessment and reporting, concepts, terminology and definitions

9. improving information on national forest resources, making the information widely available, and assisting other countries in their related efforts

The information basis of the forest sector consists of three main pillars: forest resources, forest management and the forest sector statistics. Forest resources and forest management information

is collected and processed by the State Forest Service (SFS), while forest sector statistics are collected by several bodies but processed by the SFS. The data are published by the SFS and the Hungarian Central Statistical Office.

The information collecting and processing system of the SFS has been being improved continuously, however a major step if this development is being completed recently as a twinning project financed by the Phare programme of the EU. The aim of the project is to harmonize the national system with the existing EU requirements and to develop a new IT environment, which is based on GIS and relational databases using internet technology.

Due to the extremely detailed information content of the existing forestry databases, very little expansion of the coverage was needed. The information set is widened to include additional information on NATURA 2000 sites as well as on key biotopes, or more visibly differentiate semi-natural forests from plantations. Further work is needed however to achieve better representativity of statistical data for private forestry including its wood processing, non-wood goods and services and economical conditions.

Dissemination of the information is regulated by the legal framework. The minister responsible for forests prepares an annual report on the state and results of forest management and publishes in the official journal of the ministry. In addition, the SFS prepares an easy-to-use foldout with the most important forest sector data, graphs and charts. The foldout is produced in three languages. The foldout is distributed among major stakeholders and also used for PR purposes.

The SFS is obliged to prepare a detailed analysis of the forest resources in every five years. The latest of this analysis was published in late 2002. The complete study is more than 200 pages and covers all aspects of forestry. The book is disseminated among main stakeholders, used in education and research and can also be purchased in bookstores.

The SFS recently completed its website which contains all forest-relevant legal documents, the annual evaluation by the minister, several data tables with national indicators from all three main pillars of forest information. The website is going to be launched in early 2004.

criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management

10. developing and using criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management (at national level and/or subnational level and for policy, planning, management and/or monitoring purposes), and participating in regional and/or international C&I processes

Hungary has been actively participating in the MCPFE process since the beginning and applies its C&I since they are available. The regional C&I are used complementary to the national ones in use since 1970. The legal framework requires the State Forest Service to prepare and disseminate evaluation of the state of the forest resources based on the national C&I annually, and in every five years a more comprehensive analysis using both the national and the regional C&I.

The country took part on the development of the MCPFE C&I not only by representing herself with an expert but also hosting one of the four pan-European expert meetings.

The development of the national C&I is a continuous process, activities in this field most recently are associated with the development of the information system of the forest administration as part of the accession process to the European Union. For details please see chapter 9.

III. Preparation of the Report

- 11. Describe the process of preparing this report, including which government agencies and stakeholder groups were involved, and the extent to which they contributed. Provide information on successes, challenges and lessons learned in the preparation of this report.**

The report was prepared in cooperation with the Forestry Department of the Ministry of Agriculture, the NFP Programme Bureau and the State Forest Service. Materials from the Institute for Agricultural Quality Control and the Hungarian Forestry Association were also used.