

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

The Russian Federation

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

GENERAL

The scale of Russian forestry, its biosphere significance, and the industrial potential is not only of national but global importance. Not too long ago international cooperation of Russian Federation in the area of forestry was based primarily on economical interests, however in the last 10 years its priority became sustainable forest management.

Russian Federation has a leading position in a process of development of the new approaches towards the sustainable management of forest recourses mainly based on the final documentation from the Conference on the Sustainable Development held in Rio de Janeiro and the Summit Rio +10 (Johannesburg), proposals of Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) and Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF).

Forest preservation is important for maintaining biodiversity and for the prevention of climatic disasters. It also remains one of the essential components of sustainable forest management. That is why it became a priority for the Ministry of Natural Resources of the Russian federation to ensure sustainable forest management on the area that occupies nearly 1/5 of the entire forested area.

Global forestry policy influences international forest problems as well as sustainable forest development. Experts from the State Forest Service of the Russian Federation propose a number of reviewed documents, which take into consideration aspects of the global forestry policy and its application. These documents primarily include the Forest Code of the Russian Federation, Criteria and Indicators for the sustainable forest management, as well as the Concept for the forest development until the year 2010.

Russian Federation supports the immediate development and ratification of the Forest Convention. It regulates international relations as well as creates additional circumstances and makes it easy to carry out preexisting international agreements in different areas of sustainable forest management of forest ecosystems.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE IPF/IFF PROPOSALS FOR ACTION RELATED TO THEMATIC ISSUES OF UNFF 4

Social and cultural aspects of forests

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 origins of forest genetic resources, taking into account work undertaken by the Convention on Biological Diversity and other international agreements

The State Forest Service of MNR of Russian Federation attaches great importance to inventory and rational use of forest genetic resources. 7 seed selection centers, 34 functioning forest plants seed-growing stations, 25 forest management units specialized on seed-growing is present in structure of forest management of Russia.

For the preservation of valuable genetic fund 233.4 thousand ha of forest genetic reservations have been designated, 0.5 thousand ha archived clones have been created, more than 1.0 thousand ha plantations of quality trees have been established in 63 points. In 2002 it was incorporated 277 ha new seed-growing plantations, archives of clones and plantations of quality trees, 1113 ha permanent forest seed-growing sites. Now permanent seed-growing base incorporates 45 thousand quality trees, 18.4 thousand ha of quality plantations, more than 4.5 thousand ha certificated seed-growing plantations, 44.7 thousand ha permanent forest seed-growing sites. From the sites of the permanent forest seed-growing base 62.7 tons of seeds have been collected which amounts to 11.6 % of the entire seed fund in 2002. The general circuit of development of forest seed-growing is stipulated to finish the area seed-growing plantations up to 56.6 thousand ha before 2010.

Methodological guidance of harvest forecasting, seeds collection, treatment and storage and organization of forest plants seeds control is performed by SFA "Centrolesprom" and its 34 zonal forest plants seed-growing affiliates. In 2002 539.5 tons of seeds of more than 100 species of trees and bushes have been stored by forest management units of MNR for maintenance of afforestation works. Forestry of Russian Federation has been provided by seeds of main tree species for 2003. There is a stock of seeds of a pine for 2.1 year, spruce - 2.4 years, larch - 1.3 years in view of insurance funds.

Permanent and temporary nurseries with the total area of about 23 thousand represent the forest nursery system ha. The number of permanent nurseries amounts to 1.3 thousand stations with the total area of 20.6 thousand ha, including 230 irrigated stations with the area of 4.4 thousand ha. Besides, there are 979 greenhouses with the total area of 63 ha. On this basis 1.4-1.6 billion seedlings and saplings are annually cultivated for afforestation and protective forest cultivation activities

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

According to the Constitution of the Russian Federation in our country there is no discrimination to a sexual attribute. Women alongside with men occupy managing posts in structure of forest management.

According "Roslesinform" data in 2002 among the staff members occupying posts of heads and specialists of the State Forest Service, the share of women was 23 %. The share of women among heads and specialists of the Regional Departments and Committees on the Natural Resources, responsible for forest resources, makes 35 %.

The role of women in maintenance of sustainable forest management at the level of forest management units is especially important. The share of women among of heads and specialists forest management units makes only 22 %. However traditionally female there are posts of key specialists of forest management: bookkeepers (97 % of women), economists (88 % of women), engineers on afforestation (71 % of women), engineers on forest use (69 % of women). Women make a significant share among heads and specialists of nurseries (49 % of women), assistants to forest wardens (40 % of women), engineers on protection of forests (29 % of women), masters of forest (25 % of women). There is low a participation of women on posts of directors of forest management units (5 %), deputy directors of forest management units (14 %), the chief forest wardens (15 %), forest wardens (13 %).

In Russia forces of the not governmental organizations develop the projects directed on involving of women in sustainable forest management. As an example it is possible to result the project "Development of the partner relations in the field of preservation and uses of Russia's forests" which has started in 2000. The project is carried out by Representation of IUSN - the World Conservation Union for Russia and for the countries of the CIS in close cooperation with tens partner of the organizations on all country.

The given data testify to extremely important role of women in sustainable forest management in the Russian Federation.

Integrating local and indigenous communities in sustainable managements programmes, particularly as regards (a) recognition and respect of 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

According to the forest legislation, Forest Fund area and the land under the Ministry of Defense are of Federal ownership. It is allowed by the federal law to transfer the Forest Fund sites to the ownership of the subjects of the Russian Federation. Civil legislation and the Forest Code of the Russian Federation guarantee the right for free access to the forests for all the citizens of the Russian Federation. Forest Fund sites are allowed to be: leased; gratuitously used; short-term used; granted in concessions. Individuals and organizations are allowed to practice any of the above-mentioned approaches.

The period of late 20th – early 21st centuries is characterized in Russia by involvement of local self government bodies, communities of small indigenous peoples of the North, public

movements and business structures in addressing forest problems which brought into common use such concepts as "interested public", "all interested groups", etc.

Lately particular attention was paid to the problem of "small peoples", the term used to identify small national groups in places of their compact residence. The problem is related with the desire of these peoples to preserve intact forests landscapes (which serves as habitats for game species, for example fur bear ing animals) and to return to traditional subsistence economy and traditional way of life.

Besides national peculiarities, economic aspects play a big role in this issue. Thus the fate of many indigenous families in forest villages entirely depends on profitability of enterprises of the forest sector while scaling down of production deprived many people of means of subsistence focusing them on reviving the traditional ways of forest use.

The state and in the first instance regional authorities try to meet wishes of indigenous people transferring sites of the forest fund for engaging in the traditional forest uses. For example, in 1995 an unprecedented transfer of more than 10 million ha of the forest fund under the control of the Council of national tribal communities took place in the territory of Sakha Republic (Yakutia). Besides many positive aspects this transfer also has a negative side. For example, there are concerns that weakening of the state control will lead to excessive cutting of forest, inter alia for export purposes. There difficulties in finding an acceptable solution of problems relating not only to forest use, but also to forests protection and forest fires control.

The federal law "The Territories of Traditional Nature Use by the Native People of Siberia and the Far East" was passed in the year 2001. The territories of traditional nature use were declared to be protected areas. Such areas are created particularly to maintain traditional nature use with special consideration given to the interests and concerns of the native people, many of which still live in the forests.

The transition to market economy posed a new acute problem for governmental forestry bodies – that of coordination with local communities. The main goal is to raise public awareness and provide information about forest resources and forest management thereof at the local and regional levels. On the other hand, public involvement allows governmental bodies, first, to develop a better understanding of the interests of different groups and, second, to develop through dialogue a harmonized stand on problems under consideration.

The ways of addressing this problem are clearly seen since forestry management bodies, according to sociological survey, are ready to cooperate with community in the field of forest fires extinguishing, forest planting and taking care of forest plants, organization of joint forest protection patrols; joint statements in mass media, establishment of working groups (commissions) on the most pressing issues, for example in such fields as recreational activities, forest use, procurement of certain forest products, etc.

Traditional forest related knowledge

Inventorying, cataloging, and applying traditional forest related knowledge for sustainable forest management and promoting research on TFRK with the involvement of the knowledge holders

At present, the structure of forest resource assessment includes: State Forest Fund Account; State forestry Cadastre; Forest monitoring; Forest Management and Planning; Forest pathology and other inspections; Inventory of current changes in the Forest Fund.

State Forest Fund Account (SFFA). The primary responsibilities of the State Forest Fund Account (SFFA) is to ensure that there is: Sustainable forest management; Forest guard and protection; Forest reproduction; Systematic quality and quantity control.

Also, SFFA is required to provide federal and regional authorities, juridical persons, and other concerned parties with reasonable data and reliable information. SFFA data is used for keeping the State forest cadastre.

SFFA management is based on the forest inventory and planning data which is updated by the SFFA. SFFA takes stock of clearings, felling sites, areas of new forest plantations, areas that have

burned down, forest areas affected by pests and diseases, and in addition, it keeps track of the changes in forested areas and traces the growing stock.

State Forest Cadastre. The State Forest Cadastre is upkept according to the Article 68 of the Forest Code of the Russian Federation and contains information on economical, environmental and other Forest Fund characteristics. The State Forest Cadastre data is used for:

- State forest management;
- The practical implementation of forest management plans;
- The conversion of forest lands into nonforest lands to be used for purposes that not related to forest management and Forest Fund use;
- Forest Fund lands withdrawal;
- The establishment of timber prices and other forest payments;
- Assessment of the forest user's economic activity.

Forest Monitoring Forest monitoring is a system to observe, assess, and forecast the Forest Fund dynamics and its condition for the purposes of the state forest management, guard and protection, which is aimed at the increase of the forest's ecological value.

In accordance to various goals and structural divisions, monitoring consists of different methods:

- Forest resource monitoring;
- Forest Fund lands monitoring;
- Forest fire monitoring;
- Purpose-oriented, specific monitoring (including monitoring of the forests, subjected to industrial emissions and radioactive pollution);
- Monitoring of remote and little-researched forests (by means of remote sensing);
- Forest monitoring conducted within a framework of international agreements and conventions.

Taken as a whole, the structure of forest monitoring is reliable enough and meets the requirements, but its technical provision is quite low. Nowadays, all the data sources and information flows are utilized in monitoring activities and forest condition assessment.

Forest Inventory And Planning. An account of the forest in Russia is based on a periodic Forest Fund inventory conducted in accordance with forest inventory and planning procedures. Each territory must be inventoried every 10-15 years.

Forest inventory and planning has been carried on 61.4% of the Forest Fund area. About 32.6% of the forest area has been thoroughly studied, while 6% of the area was inventoried by using simplified methods, such as aerial-visual inspection and remote sensing.

At present, basic forest account information is gained from forest inventory and planning. Reliability of the data presented by administrative regions, regions of the Russian Federation and by the federal districts is strongly dependent on the volume and quality of the forest account. Forest inventory and planning is comprised of a system of measures providing for sustainable Forest Fund use, higher efficiency in management, and common and unified policies in science, technology and research. Forest inventory and planning throughout all the territories of the Forest Fund in Russia is conducted by federal state forest inventory and planning enterprises that follow common and unified rules and approaches, which are established by the federal forest management body. The following parameters are taken into account by inventory and planning operations:

- Species composition;
- Age distribution;
- The health and condition of the forest;
- Other quality and quantity indices.

In the year 2001 forests inventory covered an area 28.3 mill. ha, in the year 2002 – 30.4 mill. ha.

Inventory of Preserved Forests. Inventory of the preserved forests in Siberia and the Far East is conducted using aerial-visual inspection and remote sensing methods and covers the areas where there is no scheduled exploitation for the coming 15-20 years. These forests are mainly used for local needs. In contrast with forest inventory and planning, the preserved forests inventory does not conduct forest management and site planning. All the boundaries are marked and determined by

natural borders such as watersheds and rivers. In the year 2001 the preserved forests inventory covered an area of 5.1 mill. ha, in the year 2002 – 9.4 mill. ha.

Forest Pathology Inspection. Forest pathology inspection is carried out to detect pests, diseases and other pathological damage and aims to assess the health and condition of the Forest Fund. Forest pathology experts, working for the forest protection divisions of the Ministry of Natural Resources, implement the above-mentioned inspections. The inventory is conducted in:

- The areas which are under the mass outbreaks of pests and diseases;
- The sites damaged by windfalls, fires and other natural calamities;
- Forests suffering from industrial pollution.

Efficient and flexible monitoring and control is annually performed over an area of 7-9 mill. ha. In addition, forest pathology expeditions conduct surveys in the areas where there are complex and unfavorable pathology conditions (almost 8 mill. ha). These expeditions are conducted in order to verify the size of outbreaks and look deeper into the influencing factors, as well as to define the forest protection measures, which are necessary to be implemented. Implementation of the above-mentioned measures allows for timely detection of negative changes in the forests and assists to make forecasts and predictions easier.

In the year 2002 the forest pathology monitoring covered an area of 14.4 mill. ha

Annual inspections are conducted on the targeted sites contaminated with radionuclides and are aimed at verifying the boundaries of radioactive pollution, which are to be reflected in the maps. All the activities are conducted following the norms, guidelines and requirements adopted for the forestry sector.

Inventory of Current Changes in the Forest Fund. An inventory of current changes in the Forest Fund is a permanent duty of the forest management unit staff. The idea is to monitor the occurring changes resulting from both forestry measures and natural calamities and to reflect them in the reporting documentation. Documentation of the inventory of current changes consists of the basic statistics reported by the forest management units. It is annually submitted to the regional divisions of the Ministry of Natural Resources. The data can be obtained using ground methods (regular surveys, sampling plots) or remote sensing.

For an inventory of the current changes in the preserved forests, space and aerial photography of different scales is utilized, as well as geographical informational systems (GIS) technologies, which are established by the forest inventory and planning institutions.

When natural calamities occur, aerial- and telephotography is used for the most urgent and efficient recording. Remote sensing interpretation is used in the forest management and planning procedures to reflect the spotted changes and trends.

Documentation of the current changes in the Forest Fund is widely used in monitoring and controlling the Forest Fund and is extensively employed in forest management and planning.

Supporting the application of intellectual property rights and/or other protection regimes for traditional forest related knowledge, and the fair and equitable sharing on benefits arising from the use of traditional forest related knowledge, innovation and practices

Protection of the intellectual property is provided with the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the Law on the copyright and adjacent rights, the legislation of the Russian Federation. Now there is a preparation of changes and additions to existing laws, which will allow improving maintenance of protection of the intellectual property.

Now the Department of scientific maintenance and innovational policy of Ministry for nature resources of the Russian Federation develops the form for realization of inventory of the executed research and developmental works, gathering of the information on their introduction in practice for forestry. Inventory it is planned to finish in 2004.

Scientific forest related knowledge

Disseminating scientific knowledge to all interested parties, including through new and innovative ways, and strengthening capacity and mobilizing funding for national and regional research institution and network

Disseminating scientific knowledge to all interested parties is served with scientific and scientific-practical periodicals, methodical development, textbooks, handbooks and the terminological dictionaries regularly issued by State Forest Service of MNR of Russia for employees of forestry.

Effective way of disseminating scientific knowledge is the All-Russian congress of foresters, which will be carried out once in 5 years. Specialists of forestry of all regions of Russia take part in it, and also heads of Governmental body and Administration of the President of the Russian Federation, deputies of the State Duma, heads of the ministries and departments, representatives executive and legislature of subjects of the Russian Federation, conducting scientists, experts, representatives of mass media are invited.

Last All-Russian congress of foresters passed in Moscow in February, 2003. Within the framework of the All-Russia congress of foresters the following actions were carried out:

- Parliamentary hearings in the State Duma on a theme: "Ecological significance of Russian forests";
- the International seminar "Institutional transformations of forest management in the countries with transitive economy: problems and decisions";
- Exhibitions of achievements of forestry;
- III congress of political movement "Forests of Russia";
- Constituent session of coordination council on questions of interaction of State Forest Service MNR of Russia and a timber industry complex;
- Sessions of round-table discussions on nine most actual problems of development of forestry;
- Presentation of the "Russian forest newspaper"

Financing of scientific research institutes is carried out for means of the federal budget. Today all investigations of forestry directions are formed on a competitive basis. The basic rate is made on such research and developmental works which come to an end introduction of technological development, legal certificates, and the specifications and technical documentation. Financial assets are concentrated on the most actual for branch directions, first of all on questions of formation of the state forest policy, the economic mechanism of forest use, legislative base of a forestry and a modern supply with information of branch.

Grants offered by international sponsoring institutions have become additional sources for forestry development in the subjects of the Russian Federation has become. During the past decades the projects on sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation have been supported by the Global Bank, the US Agency for International Development (USAID), TACIS, Know-How Foundation, the British Council, Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), the Worldwide Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF), and the World Conservation Union (IUCN), INTAS, INCO-COPERNICUS.

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

Eight scientific and research institutions and one engineering bureau provide scientific support in the field of forestry. Also, several institutions of the Russian Academy of Science, a number of institutions managed by the Russian Academy of Agricultural Sciences, and forest educational institutes form a solid scientific base.

The existing system of scientific and research institutions and their traditional specialization together with scientific, research and pilot production net work (forest pilot stations, pilot forestry farms) allows to ensure sufficient scientific support of forestry activities in different regions of the Russian Federation. Based on the above-mentioned challenges of this sector the priority directions of scientific research development in the field of forestry in the nearest future include:

- Elaboration of scientific foundations of organization of sustainable multi resource use and management of forests and the mechanism of its implementation in the market environment;
- Development of environmentally sound resource saving systems, technologies and technical means for the application of the modes of cutting and forest restoration corresponding to the target designation of forests and biodiversity conservation;
- Development of activities in the field of biodiversity conservation, reproduction, increase in productivity and quality of forests on a selective genet development of new and efficient methods of forests protection from fires, pests and diseases;
- Improvement of forest organization and establishment of harmonized programs of forest resources use and reproduction at different levels of forest management;
- Introduction of efficient market mechanisms of forest use and on this basis increase of forests profitability and provision of forests financing that ensures sustainable forest management;
- Scientific support of the international negotiating process on forests.

Present task of science is to provide innovative-technological break for formation a profitable forestry and sustainable forest management. In such conditions the special importance is got with productivity of scientific researches, introduction of scientific development in practice of forest management. For example, 144 scientific engineering have been introduced by forestry institutes into practice per 2002.

For maintenance of interaction between scientific researches and practical needs of the State Forest Service last years the special centers working on priority directions and providing support decision-making were created.

Center of Analysis and Forecast of the Growing Stock Prices was established in 2002 in order to improve the system of forest payments, to increase budget replenishment, and to stimulate market developments. The Center collects and analyzes commercial information on forest use and exploitation. It also predicts economic development based on price and costs development.

In order to secure further development and perfection of the normative and legal base of the Russian forestry, a Center on Legal Research, Handling and Control of the Forest Practices was established in the year 2002. The major tasks of the Center include: elaboration of the related laws and documentation including concepts, projects, and economic justifications; analysis and generalization of the practiced regulations; submission of the scientifically grounded suggestions on how to improve the situation. In 2002 there were developed 80 legal documents. Some of them determine harvesting operations and reforestation in the forests that belong to different categories. The central topics for the perfection of the forest legislation include: clear definition of legal status of forests; keeping and supporting state forest ownership; introduction of the market mechanisms in the forest sector.

Today all scientific support activities in the field of international cooperation are coordinated and implemented by the International Center on Forests established in the All-Russian Research Institute for Silviculture and Mechanization of Forestry. International cooperation is extremely important for the Russian forestry and forest science. In our view it is particularly important to fulfill international obligations arising from the UN Conference on Environment and Development held in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro reflected in the instruments entitled "Forest Principles" and "Agenda 21", as well as the provisions and recommendations of follow up agreements on forests conservation and sustainable forest management (Montreal, Helsinki and other processes). Increased attention is paid to international cooperation within the framework of the Program of action on forests of the Big Eight (1998), Convention on Biological diversity (1995), UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (1994) and its Kyoto Protocol (1997).

Monitoring, assessment and reporting, concepts, terminology and definitions

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

It should be noted that considerable volumes of information were declassified only in the period of structural adjustment and in the years of intensive democratization. For example, public at

large has for the first time obtained access to the materials of state accounting of the Forest Fund as of January 1, 1988. Despite positive changes the problem of access to information and transparency of decisions taken at the regional and local levels is still visible.

Resolution of the Russian Government "On provision of access to information on the activities of the Government of the Russian Federation and federal executive bodies", No. 98 of February 12, 2003 obliges state bodies to provide information on their activities. The Resolution contains a detailed "List of information on the activities of the Government of the Russian Federation and federal executive bodies which are to be disclosed in the informational systems of common use".

The State Forest Fund Account (SFFA) data is a principal source of information about the forests of Russian Federation. SFFA management is based on the forest inventory and planning data which is updated by the SFFA. Up to the year 1999, the SFFA was carried out every five years. It was crucial to get region based summarized forestry characteristics and to present them by the start of each five-year plan. Presently, taking into account the dynamic character of civil society development and, also, the demand for precise and updated information, the State Forest Fund Account is conducted annually.

Annual reports "About state and using of forest resources of the Russian Federation", statistics published by Goskomstat and forestry periodicals make the information widely available and assisting better inform policy-makers and other stakeholders on national progress toward sustainable forest management.

The State Forest Service lets out brochures and books about forests and forest management of Russian Federation in Russian and English languages, and also gives the information for FAO of the United Nations and in the European forest institute for preparation of the international reports and databases on global forest resources. It provides an easy approach of the public and all interested parties to the information on forests and forest resources of Russia.

Criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management

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

The main goal of the State Forest Service of Russia (SFS) is to represent the country at negotiations with other states and international organizations on the issues of sustainable forest management, environmental protection and global forest policy developments. The SFS takes an active part in the process of international negotiations on forests and explains the position of Russia on the issue of implementation of national strategies and programs on sustainable forest management. SFS experts take an active part in the Intergovernmental Working Group on Criteria and Indicators of nature conservation and sustainable management of boreal and temperate forests (Montreal process). Another important regional forum actively attended by SFS is the Pan-European process including the Ministerial Conference on Protection of Forests in Europe.

First National Report on the Montréal Process Criteria and Indicators for the Conservation and Sustainable Management of Temperate and Boreal Forests

State Forest Service of Russia published First National Report on the Montréal Process Criteria and Indicators for the Conservation and Sustainable Management of Temperate and Boreal Forests in Russian and English in 2003. This report was presented at the XII World Forestry Congress, held in Quebec (Canada) in September 2003. The full text of the report in Russian and English is placed at the Montréal Process web page http://www.mpci.org/2003Contents_e.html. The National report of the Russian Federation is developed based on the Russian obligations to follow Principles of sustainable forest management, adopted by the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio-de-Janeiro, 1992) and confirmed by the Declaration on the Sustainable Development (Santiago, 1995). This report is designed to provide objective information about the state and the use of Russian forests and to convey to policy makers and the public the state of and trends in forests at the national level based on contemporary scientific understanding of forest ecosystems and their values to society.

The report provides information on 42 indicators out of 67 possible. Major reasons for not providing information on the remaining 28 indicators are: lack of statistical data and lack of understanding of how to interpret and assess certain indicators.

Criterion 1 of the report is focused on the issue of biodiversity conservation and is discussed in details. Here is information on the 8 out of 9 possible indicators. The analysis of these indicators shows that Russian forests play vital a role in biodiversity preservation of temperate and boreal forests of Eurasia at all three levels: ecosystem level, species level, and genetic level. There are two positive factors contributing to biodiversity preservation: the increase of land area covered with forest vegetation and the increase of forested area that provides protective functions.

Using Criterion 2, which assesses forest productivity, there is enough information obtained on all 5 indicators. Maintenance of forest productivity and preservation is provided by regular inventory of forest resources and includes the definition of the exploitation volume. Timber harvesting is going to stay a key component of the forest use and can be performed at the area, which is 46% of the total land area, covered with forest vegetation. Presently, Russia is characterized by insufficient use of the forest resource, where only 22% of the Annual Allowable Cut is harvested. The areas of reforestation, which were already smaller than felling sites, have considerably decreased during the past years. Only 2002 reforestation areas exceeded the areas of felling sites. Besides the high timber volumes of the Russian forests they are also rich with non-timber forest products.

Using Criterion 3, which assesses health of forest ecosystems and its vitality, there is data obtained on all the 3 indicators. There are annual analysis and generalizations made on forest fires, sanitary, and pathological forest condition. Forest fire is the major damaging factor, however, it also play a serious role in the environmental evolution, defining the structure and development of the taiga forests. To ensure fire safety, the Russian government passed a plan of urgent measures to prevent forest fires. To suppress fires and to mitigate the consequences of forest and peat ignitions, all fires fighting means are used, including ground units, forest fire suppression aviation brigades, Ministry of emergency divisions and Ministry of defense subdivisions. Forest protection from pests and diseases is based on the data provided by the monitoring activities on sanitary conditions of the forests as well as on forest pathology surveys.

Due to incomplete information, only 3 out of 8 possible indicators characterize Criterion 4, which describes soil and water resources. The available data shows the increase of the Group I forests, which mainly provide soil and water protection functions. This tendency indicates improvements in soil and water protection. Additional research has to be conducted in order to obtain data on indicators, reflecting chemical, physical, and biological characteristics of forest soils and water ecosystems.

There is detailed information available on all three indicators under Criterion 5, which reflects the contribution of the Russian Federation into the global carbon cycle. The estimations of the total carbon pool stored in the organic matter of the forest ecosystems (233 billion tones) prove the exceptional role of Russian forests in the global carbon balance. About 500 million tones of carbon are accumulated in the Russian forests, which completely compensate the domestic industrial emission of C-CO₂.

As for Criterion 6, reflecting socio-economic functions of the forests, only 9 out of 19 possible indicators are presented. The received information illustrates the importance of socioeconomic functions of the Russian forests, although Russian forest sector is presently undergoing a crisis. This tendency is reflected in the decrease of final felling volumes, timber export volumes, and in the considerable decrease of the involvement of the local population in the forest sector. Additional research is especially desired in the areas of: cultural, social and spiritual inquiries and values, as well as needs, demands and necessities of the population.

As for Criterion 7, 11 indicators out of 20 possible were presented, which shows the necessity for additional information. The Criterion 7 survey illustrates that the principle of sustainable forest management has been already reflected in the forest legislation of the Russian Federation. Thorough changes and further improvements of juridical, structural and economic backgrounds of the preservation of forests and their sustainable use are envisaged in the ongoing reform. The National Forest Policy is presently under the revision. Its major goals are to bring forestry into the leading positions, to reconstruct forest sector towards sustainable development, and to improve forest management.

As a whole, all the indicators of the Montreal process that are described in the Report illustrate that the Forest sector of the Russian economy is on its way towards the sustainable forest development.

Criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management in the Russian Federation

Criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management in the Russian Federation approved by the Order of the Federal Forest Service of Russia No 21 of February 5, 1998. It is instructive document of Federal level for coordination activities both within the forest management system and with related sectors.

The main objective of this document is to provide for basic conditions ensuring the fulfillment of international obligations on forests, that Russia has assumed by ratifying UN Convention on biological diversity, UN Framework Convention on climate change, as well as decisions of UN Conference on environment and development (Rio de Janeiro, 1992) concerning the sustainable forest management ("Forest principles", "Agenda 21"), the Special Session of the UN General Assembly (New York, 1997) that have outlined the tasks of different countries governments in providing for a sustainable development of all kinds of forests in order to meet requirements of present and future human generations.

The document is based on results of discussions on criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management developed for European forests (Helsinki Process) and for temperate and boreal forests of the World (Montreal Process). The respective lists of criteria and indicators were considered from standpoint of their acceptability for Russian conditions. Were taken into account not only natural, social and economic particularities of Russia, but also State-stewardship peculiarities of forest management.

The criteria of sustainable management and indicators for their assessment included in this document are designed for substantiating the forest policy of the Russian Federation as whole, as well as in the Federation members.

List of criteria for the sustainable management of forests in Russia contain: 1) Maintenance and conservation of productive capacity of forests (9 indicators); 2) Maintenance of acceptable health and vitality of forests (4 indicators); 3) Maintenance and conservation of protective functions of forests (4 indicators); 4) Conservation and maintenance of biological diversity of forests and their contribution to global carbon cycle (7 indicators); 5. Maintenance of social and economic function of forests (7 indicators); 6) Instruments of forest policy for forest conservation and sustainable management (5 indicators).

III. Preparation of the Report

Preparation of the present report was carried out by employees of the International Center on Forests of the All-Russian Research Institute for Silviculture and Mechanization of Forestry. The head of State Forest Service MNR of Russia V.P. Roshchupkin, the head of Department of Forest Use V.V. Nefediev, and also deputy head of Department of scientific maintenance and innovational policy of MNR A.V. Panfilov, deputy head of Department of the staff, improvements of professional skill and social security of MNR I.V. Kolmogorova, director of "Roslesinfor" V.F. Fomchenko, director of Forest program of Representation of IUSN (the Word Conservation Union) for Russia and for the countries of the CIS V.K. Teplyakov took part in the work.