

**NATIONAL REPORT TO THE FOURTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
FORUM ON FORESTS**

Ukraine

October 2003

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?? Progress and issues related to implementation of IPF/IEF proposals for action

General

Forest legislation is set out in the Forest Code of Ukraine (1994), other legislative documents and government regulations. Parliamentary adoption of a new Land Code (October, 2001) caused the necessity to change the Forest Code of Ukraine. The national forest policy is developed according to the following principles:

- retention of the main state ownership for forests with the simultaneous development of forest communal and private ownership;
- improvement of the state administration structure for management and exploitation of forests;
- improvement of the forest exploitation system on the base of market mechanisms development: lease, auctions, open outcries;
- development of forest industry;
- introduction of financial-economy mechanism of management that increases the profitability of forest management, coordinates interests of forest owners and subjects of management;
- improvement of information technologies in forest management and planning, distribution of forests according to their ecological and commercial value, improvement of forest monitoring;
- improvement of forest protection, development and introduction of new efficient mechanisms for the state control of forest health and forest management;
- development of hunting management
- development of forest education and research.

State Committee of Forestry of Ukraine (Derzhkomlisp) is a state authorized body, responsible for implementation of the national forest and hunting policy.

National forest strategy is implemented through national and state programmes, such as “State Programme of Forest Management and Forest Industrial Complex Development to 2015” (1993); “National Programme of Protected Territories Development in Ukraine” (1994); “National Programme of Dnipro River Basin Environmental Sanitation and Improvement of Drinking Water Quality” (1997); “National Programme of Ecological Network Development in Ukraine for 2000-2015” (2000).

In 2001, the government of Ukraine adopted a resolution “On Immediate Activities for the Plantation of Protective Forests in Useless Agricultural Lands and River Basins”. According to this resolution, about 300,000 ha of protective forests will be planted till the year 2015. In April 2002, in Ukraine there was adopted the State Programme “Forests of Ukraine” for 2002-2015. The programme sets the following objectives:

- to extend forest covered territory to the optimal level;
- to improve the productivity and quality of species composition in forest plantations;
- to intensify nature-protective function of forests and to conserve their biological diversity;
- to increase forest ecosystems resistance to negative impacts and climate change;
- to apply widely sustainable forest resources management techniques;

- to extend protective afforestation and forest agro melioration;
- to improve forest management legislation and to make it consistent with international sustainable development and forest management principles;
- to intensify state control of protection, conservation, exploitation and regeneration of forests;
- to encourage the development of forest research and education;
- to improve social protection of forestry workers.

Ukraine has joined the Common European Process of forests protection and signed the following resolutions of Ministerial Conference on Protection of Forests in Europe:

Strasbourg Resolutions: S1 - European Network of permanent Sample Plots for Monitoring of Forest Ecosystems; S2 – Conservation of Forest Genetic Resources; S3 - Decentralized European Data Bank on Forest Fires; S4 – Adapting the Management of Mountain Forests to New Environmental Conditions; S6 - European Network for Research into Forest Ecosystems.

Helsinki Resolutions: H1 – General Guidelines for the Sustainable Management of Forests in Europe; H2 – General Guidelines for the Conservation of the Biodiversity of European Forests; H3 – Forestry Cooperation with Countries with Economies in Transition; H4 – Strategies for a Process of Long-term Adaptation of Forests in Europe to Climate Change.

Lisbon Resolutions: L1 – People, Forests and Forestry – Enhancement of the Socio-Economic Aspects of Sustainable Forest Management; L2 – Pan-European Criteria, Indicators and Operational Level Guidelines for Sustainable Forest Management.

To date Ukraine has not signed only one Strasbourg resolution yet: S5 – Expansion of the EUROSILVA Network of Research on Tree Physiology.

Social and cultural aspects of forests:

Fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of forest resources. Ukrainian forests are state owned and state administrative institutions are responsible for the distribution of the benefits arising from the utilization of forests among all strata. An equitable sharing of the benefits, first of all, depends upon the transparency of decision making in forest resources utilization. Currently it is not enough. The situation is gradually improving. The draft of the new Forest Code provides for the objective sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of forest resources.

The role of women in sustainable forest management. The role of women is not declared in forest programmes and sustainable forest management of Ukraine as long as the equal rights of sexes is stated in the Constitution of Ukraine. It has deep historical roots and is proved in practice. In particular women work in all the spheres and divisions of forest management. In some forestry spheres, for example on forest research and education the share of working women runs up to 50%.

Enhanced role of indigenous and local communities in sustainable forest management. Sustainability of forest management was established in Ukrainian legislation in times of the Soviet Union in form of principles of rational and inexhaustible exploitation of nature. It is proved by a constant extension of forest territories and growing stock in Ukraine after the Second World War. The Draft Forest Code provides for communal forests that will increase the role of territorial communities in the sustainable forest management. All governmental and branch-wise projects and programmes, developed in Ukraine are based on the principles of sustainable development and sustainable forest management. In forest areas of Ukraine, for example in Carpathians, forest sector plays an important role in the livelihood of the local people. In such regions there implemented a number of programmes aimed to improve the life standards. These programmes are closely connected to forest sector. The local population is involved into the sustainable forest management. They have part-time and full-time jobs, are provided with forest products (some forest products are provided free of charge, non-wood products such as mushrooms, berries, medicinal plants and etc. are also free), forest services for recreation, hunting (in accordance with the Ukrainian legislation).

Social aspects addressed in national forest programmes.

In Ukraine there has been worked out a project of the national forest policy that reflects interests of different regions, communities. It is aimed at consolidation of the society to attain sustainable forest management. The evaluation and monitoring mechanisms are being developed.

Scientific forest related knowledge:

Functional interaction between science and policy. In Ukraine forest research functions on the principle of interaction with executive power. Applied research is ordered by forestry administrative organizations, which are, according to the legislation, responsible for the decision-making and implementation of forest policy in Ukraine. Lately forest and environmental researchers are oftener involved into policy processes. For example the Project of National Forest Policy and the Programme Forests of Ukraine were developed on background of long-term prospects EFISCEN, worked out by forest researchers. A thorough analysis of international forestry initiatives, forest management and forest exploitation in Ukraine contributed to the development of the National Ukrainian Criteria and Indicators of sustainable forest management.

Setting the research priorities and addressing the knowledge gaps. In Ukraine research priorities of forestry are determined at the national and regional levels and enumerated in the National Forest Policy. The research priorities of the national forest policy are:

- to improve the legislative base with consistence to the international requirements;
- to provide stable financing in fundamental and applied research;
- to train researchers and their social protection;
- to develop a strategy of sustainable forest management and exploitation on the base of models reflecting the present-day condition and development of forest ecosystems;

- to improve the process of forest management, to introduce differential (considering the regional nature-economical peculiarities) management, to transfer to the profit-benefit method of plantation.
- to develop methods and mechanisms of introduction the economical evaluation for forest territories and resources;
- to reequip forest sector by developing specialized engineering complex;
- to introduce the national criteria and indicators of a balanced forest management development;
- to develop forest monitoring and certification systems;
- to develop and implement the strategy of forest ecosystems adaptation to environmental changes;
- to improve the dataware in forest sector.

Promote efficient sharing of information and strengthen networks. The information is disseminated by traditional means (Mass Media) and modern technologies (Internet). The web-page “Forests and forest management in Ukraine” was created in cooperation with the European Forest Institute.

Means of implementation. Lately the technical base in forest sector has changed a lot. That promotes the introduction of modern informational technologies and efficient distribution of information.

Public participation: apply participatory mechanisms to involve research into planning process. The public uses modern informational technologies hence it has an access to influence the defining the priorities in forestry research.

Monitoring, assessment and reporting, and concepts, terminology and definitions

Collection and dissemination of national information on forests. Centralized collection and dissemination of information on forests is fulfilled by state forest administration. The evaluation of national forest resources is improved by the development of the monitoring programme and GIS technologies. The theoretical research is developed at the international level but the application of the results is prevented because of insufficient financing. Moreover the introduction of modern selective inventory is hindered by the lack of financial resources and modern equipment. The inventory mentioned, together with forest monitoring, will provide the more precise and objective evaluation of forest resources and will make the information open to all interested. To introduce this system of collecting information in Ukraine, it is necessary to engage international financing.

Improved and streamlined international reporting and information system on forests. Now the information-analytical forest inventory system is harmonized with the international requirements. Transition to modern technologies and dissemination of forest information may be improved and streamlined on condition that Ukraine receives technical and financial support.

Concepts, terminology and definitions. Ukrainian experts participate in international initiatives to learn the main terminology that is used for estimation of forest resources, criteria and indicators of SFM.

Means of implementation. Ukraine is limited in opportunities of sending the national experts to participate in international meetings, conferences and workshops. More frequent participation of Ukrainian experts in international initiatives and financial support will improve the quality of national reports.

Develop, test and implement criteria and indicators at national, subnational and operational levels. In Ukraine there was the project of national criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management. The mechanisms of encouragement and control of their implementation is being developed.

Promote the use of criteria and indicators at regional and global levels. Forest certification, as a means to improve forest management according to the SFM criteria and indicators and to supply Ukrainian forest products to market, is being developed.

Further develop biodiversity indicators. Ukrainian specialists have worked out the first version of forest biodiversity indicators and developed the national report of the Convention of Biodiversity with the assistance of the project GEF “The Second Phase to support Ukrainian biodiversity”.

Means of implementation. The financial and technical resources of forest management are limited. The international support of Ukrainian forest sector is not sufficient in comparison to other European countries. Lately the attention of foreign institutions and organizations to Ukrainian forest sector is growing, the number of international projects in forest sector is growing. Besides there held consultations with the World Bank as to the national forest policy, forest certification scheme, joint projects of carbon sequestration, and strategy of the national forest sector development.

Public participation: encourage the formulation and implementation of criteria and indicators of SFM with full participation all interested parties. Now there being developed the mechanisms to encourage public participation in the formulation and implementation of criteria and indicators of SFM with full participation of all interested parties, including non-governmental organizations.

???. Preparation of the Report

The report was prepared by the State Committee of Forestry in cooperation with the Ukrainian Research Institute of Forestry and Forest Melioration (Kharkiv).