

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

Norway

Implementation of the NLBI

1A. Strengthening Political Commitment for SFM

National level:

Forest resources in Norway are increasing: from 1925 to 2007, the standing volume of timber has doubled. The annual cut (8,2 million m³) is below the annual increment (25 million m³). *Forest health:* The Norwegian Monitoring Programme for Forest Damage has run since 1985. Its main objective has been to monitor forest condition in relation to air pollution. Effects of climate change is now included in the monitoring programme. The Norwegian Institute for Forest and Landscape has developed a report on the possible effects of climate change on forests.

Results during the last years have shown a slight improvement in tree crown condition, and that the forest is healthy and in good growth and condition.

It is an important aspect of Norwegian forest policy to enhance public awareness of the multiple values of forests.

Legal, policy and institutional framework:

The current Forestry Act was authorized by Parliament in 2005 and entered into force in 2006. One of its main objectives is to promote sustainable management of forest resources. The Forestry Act applies to all categories of ownership.

The “Living Forests” Project is a broadly based project working for sustainable forest management in Norway. The development of a set of performance level standards has been the main outcome for “Living Forests”. In March 1998, the “Living Forests” Project successfully completed a consensus among all involved stakeholders on 23 performance level standards for sustainable forest management in Norway. The basis for establishing the project was the increased international focus on forest and environmental issues, e.g. within the market, as well as the desire within Norwegian forestry to practice sustainable forest management. The “Living Forests” Standards were based on the Pan-European Criteria for Sustainable Forest Management, and the corresponding indicators were included among the 95 “Living Forests” Indicators. All of these indicators have though not yet been fully implemented in the context of national forest policy development, implementation and evaluation

A revision in 2006 resulted in revised requirements and rules which describe what the forest owner must do to achieve the goals set by Living Forests. Requirements may be a clarification of statutory obligations on the managers of forest holdings in general, requirements for planning and documentation at the holding level, or specific requirements for harvesting and forest management. The ISO 14001 certification system in combination with the Living Forests Standard is applied to practically all commercial forestry in Norway. By certifying forestry through the forest owners associations, the challenge of certifying small forest properties has been overcome without making the costs unbearable for the forest owners. The

system is accepted under the Pan European Forest Certification umbrella system and endorsed by the PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes).

Forest management plans are important tools for managing forests actively and in a sustainable way. Under the Forestry Act, the forest owner must have an overall view of the environmental values in his or her own forest and regard to them when carrying out all activities in the forest.

International level: Through the leadership of MCPFE from 2008 to 2012, Norway is active in promoting sustainable forest management on the European level.

1B. Financing SFM

National level: A regulation under the Forestry Act requires forest owners to set aside between 4 and 40 per cent of the revenues from harvested timber into a government administrated fund; the Forest Trust Fund. This fund was established to secure long term investment in sustainable forestry. In addition to the tax relief granted through the Forest Trust Fund, economic support is given for a similar range of activities supporting sustainable forestry. The economic support for forestry, granted through the State Budget and the Agricultural Agreement, which is locally administrated, was increased by NOK 20 million in 2007. The total budget for forestry and bioenergy in 2007 was NOK 190 million.

International level: Norway has traditionally contributed financial resources to forest related projects in developing countries. In 2007, the contribution amounted to 28 million Norwegian kroner (NOK). In relation to the increased attention on forests in developing countries, Norwegian financial contributions for forests will be increased remarkably through the Government of Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative. During the climate negotiations in Bali 2007, the Norwegian Government presented its International Climate and Forest Initiative. As emissions from deforestation and forest degradation represent 17 percent of the annual global emissions, it was recognised that measures against these processes are key factors in combating climate change.

The climate and forest initiative has three concrete aims. The most important aim is to work for the inclusion of emissions from forests in a new international climate regime under the Climate Convention. This is an essential basis for permanent, substantial reductions of emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. Furthermore, the aim of the project is to implement measures likely to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. During the initial phase, capacity building will be important, and concrete results concerning emissions will not be probable in this phase. Lastly, it is an aim for the project to contribute to the conservation of natural forests in order to secure its ability to sequester carbon.

The state budget for 2009 allocated NOK 1,5 billion for immediate use by the Norwegian Climate and Forest Initiative and another NOK 1,5 billion if needed to be pledged for additional commitments in 2010

The appropriations are to be channelled through both multilateral and bilateral programmes. The two most important multilateral channels will be UNREDD and the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) of the World Bank. The proposed Forest Investment Program of the World Bank will also be a potential channel. Bilateral projects are for the time being planned in Brazil and Tanzania.

Furthermore, Norwegian official development aid has a strong priority of sustainable management of natural resources, as well as of developing renewable energy in developing countries.

1C. Capacity Building and Technology Transfer

Reference is made to section 1 B as well as 2 F.

1D. Stakeholder Participation

National level: Consultations with relevant groups are common, as well as some decision making in boards and committees. Living Forests is referred to in the regulation on sustainable forest management under the Forestry Act. This private-public partnership is an example of a participatory process, see section 1A.

Another example of stakeholder participation is the voluntary protection project, described under section 2C.

International level: Public participation is central in development assistance in general.

1E. Enhanced International Cooperation

By taking over the leadership of MCPFE in 2008, Norway obtained a more central role in international cooperation.

2A. Forest Law Enforcement and Governance

The Forestry Act was passed by Parliament in 2005, and entered into force in January 2006. The purpose of the law is to promote sustainable management of forest resources, aiming at active local and national value creation, as well as protection the biological diversity and the respect for landscape, outdoor recreation and cultural values in forests. The responsibilities and duties of forest owners have been drawn tighter in the new law. The duty to regenerate after felling has been dated; it is to be done after 3 or 5 years.

Forest owners are obliged to have a complete overview of the environmental values in the forest. They are also obliged to control that forest workers comply with the law and its regulations. Environmental issues are described in detail in a regulation on sustainable forest management, adopted in 2006.

2B. International Trade in Forest Products

Promoting international trade from sustainably managed forests

International trade has been a major element in the Norwegian forest sector since the first sawmills were established more than 400 years ago. Norway has been a significant exporter of saw timber and later newsprint and magazine paper to the European and global markets. Since about 1970 between 10 and 50 per cent of the pulpwood consumption in the forest industries has been imported. There is also an extensive trade with Sweden, as Norwegian and Swedish regions are part of the same regional wood market.

Unsustainable harvest caused by export of roundwood and saw timber resulted in substantial changes in the Norwegian forest policy about 100 years ago. The amount of timber harvested in Norway is now at a sustainable level and less than half of the total annual growth. Norway

exports newsprint due to its comparative advantage in long fibres from spruce, hydro electric power and technical skills, and imports spruce pulpwood to utilise the industrial capacity.

Negative impacts of imports are related to a potential danger of biological pollution due to unintended imports of alien invasive species. One significant example of such negative impact is the Dutch elm disease that probably has been spread through illegal importation of elm (importation of elm has been prohibited since 1952). The danger of introduction of foreign insects and fungus as a side effect of imports of roundwood is considered to be a major threat.

Norway regards unsustainable and illegal harvesting and trade as a major international concern. To some extent sustainability of imported roundwood from Europe has been discussed, but a main focus has been on the sustainability of import and trade with products from tropical timber. The Norwegian Government follow with interest all initiatives against illegal logging and trade in UNFF, CBD, FAO, ITTO, UNEP and WTO, and by governments to pave the way towards a guaranteed sustainability in the resource management and trade

In addition, Norway has a certain Act on the right to environmental information about production processes and products both from private and public enterprises

2C. Protection of Forests

The Norwegian Government has introduced voluntary protection as its main instrument for protection of privately owned forests. Voluntary protection of forests is a project developed in cooperation between The Norwegian Forest Owners Association and the Directorate for Nature Management, in addition to representatives of the County Governors. 45 fields are protected through this collaboration, a total of 160 km², of which 56,1 km² productive forest. Furthermore, 100 fields (250 km² productive forests) are under consideration as subjects for voluntary protection.

By february 2009, 1,7 % of the productive forest area is protected.

In addition to strictly protected areas, Norway has a wide spectre of measures aimed at protecting fragile ecosystems. Approximately 20 % of the forest area in Norway is defined as protective forests. In protective forests, the management is clearly directed to protect forest ecosystem functions, or to protect infrastructure and managed natural resources against natural hazards.

As mentioned in earlier reports to UNFF, there are different processes ongoing in Norway dealing with related topics. Examples of ongoing work that may influence forest conservation and protection in the future are the program for registration and monitoring of biodiversity and an evaluation of the legislation on biological diversity

2D. Science and Research

Public financing of research is effected through processes of interaction with several stakeholders taking part. This applies for most fields and subjects of research in general, as well as for the forestry sector. There are several financial means from the different Ministries, mainly administered by The Research Council of Norway. Research is also partly financed by public budgets for universities and different advanced colleges.

The public priorities for scientific knowledge are defined in political documents (White Papers to the Parliament and the annual State Budget), as well as in the processes of building up and carrying out research programs. Important stakeholders are represented and take part in the management systems of the Research Council as well as in the management committees of the research programs. The representatives cover different demands and roles, and include researchers, administrators and users. The individual researchers and the research institutions give important contributions to science-based knowledge for the future through networks with other researchers/institutions and through new and ongoing research programs. This includes national networks as well as participation in international research networks, programs and projects, as EU programs, IUFRO, European Forest Institute and the networks built up by the Nordic Council of Ministers.

The overall strategy is to adopt interdisciplinary research as well as to cover the entire value chain when establishing research programs. Different scientific disciplines and different parts of a generic entity are being encouraged to form meaningful, larger and coherent research units. Planning of research involves a large number of stakeholders. Dissemination of research results is mainly the responsibility of the research institution or the research program in question. Open seminars during the program period, at the start of the program or at the end also offer arenas for disseminating results as well as recognition of new demands for knowledge based upon research (knowledge gaps). In general the public administration makes use of new knowledge as a basis for policy implementation. Moreover, they commission scientific studies and analysis for specific political or administrative purposes.

The Ministry of Agriculture is also providing financial support directed to extension service and distribution of scientific results to the forest industry and to stakeholders in general. The Forestry Extension Institute offers a wide range of courses and training seminars targeted at actors within the forest sector, and provide forest related information to different stakeholders and the public. Other important tasks for the Forestry Extension Institute include bringing together scientists and the users of information, and to “translate” scientific results into applicable information for decision makers and practitioners.

The Forestry Act authorizes a research fee drawn from all harvested wood sales to a research fund, which is supporting research and development projects and programs within forestry. The Board of this institution counts representatives from forest sector. The Forestry Act also authorizes a mandatory contribution to a forest trust fund on all wood sales for investments purposes to the benefit of each single forest estate. This is administrated by the Forest Fund (Skogtiltaksfondet), which considers application for competence building and training activities for forest owners, as well as financing of training and capacity building.

2E. Public Awareness and Education

Det norske Skogselskapet (the Forestry Society) is a nationwide member organisation providing information on the importance of and the benefits of the forest to the public. The Ministry of Agriculture grants around one million kroner to the Forestry Society each year. The Forestry Extension Institute provides further education for forest owners and forest workers. Both institutes have important roles in communicating forestry knowledge to children and young people. The Ministry of Agriculture and Food supports a project called “Learning with the Forest”, which is an interdisciplinary teaching program designed for all levels from kindergarten to college level. The state owned company State Forests is also

involved in this project. State Forests has an important task in providing access to forests for the public.

2F. Private Sector and Industry

For 2007 the turnover in the Norwegian forest- and wood industry amounted to 44,2 billion kroner, which constitutes 5,5 per cent of the total industrial turnover. The gross product from forestry and services related to forestry increased by 1,1 billion compared to 2006; 5,4 billion kroner in 2007. The growth was a result of increased logging as well as of increased timber prices.

Through the Wood-Based Innovation Scheme, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food supports research, development and innovation in the forestry- and wood sector. Aid is granted to private enterprises and research institutions. In 2007, 39 million kroner was granted through the scheme. The Ministry also finances the Bioenergy Scheme, which aims at enhancing the production and sale of bioenergy in Norway. In 2007, 30 million kroner was granted to producers of bioenergy, as well as for providers of training measures for bioenergy producers.

2G. Indigenous and Local Communities

The Finnmark Act was passed by Parliament in 2004. The Finnmark Act is based on international law pertaining to indigenous peoples and minorities. In particular, the UN Convention on Civil and Political Rights and the ILO Convention 169, have been taken into account.

Specifically, the law proposal addresses the influence of the Sami people and local communities in local resource management. The land owned by the state in this county has been transferred to a new corporate body called "Finnmarkseiendommen" (Finnmark Land Property). The area in question comprises about 95 % of the county, or approximately 45 000 km². The new body will be managed by representatives officially appointed by the Finnmark County Council and the Sami Parliament. The Finnmark Act contains rules for the use of the natural resources, which are to be managed in a sustainable and balanced way to benefit the Sami culture and heritage, reindeer husbandry, economic life in general as well as other inhabitants and the public of the community and the county. The law stipulates that the local people as well as the public in general are entitled to use and employ to the best purpose the renewable resources, including forest resources. It provides that the diversity and productivity of the nature should be preserved. Due to the climatic conditions, this region contains only modest forestry resources and little forestry activities.

Several special reports has been vital to the writing of the Finnmark Act the most important being the Sami Rights Commission report published in NOU1997: 34 "Naturgrunnlaget for samisk kultur" (The nature as a basis of the Sami culture).

The Sami Rights Commission II started working on the Sami areas south of Finnmark in 2001, and in 2007 a report was presented. In the same way as the previous report, this report deals with existing rights and land use as well as the utilisation of natural resources in areas with Sami population. The report suggests a number of law amendments in order to comply with the obligations under international law. The report is currently on public hearing. The participation and influence of the Sami population as well as other local people will be addressed in this report too.

The Sami Parliament, which was instituted according to the Sami Act of 6 June 1987, is an advisory body entitled to comment on all matters affecting the Sami people as an indigenous

people. In accordance with the Sami Act the scope of the Sami Parliament includes all matters and cases which the Parliament in their own understanding finds of concern to the Sami people as a minority or ethnic group. The Sami Parliament was in this respect entitled to comment on the draft of the Forestry Act.

2H. Monitoring, assessment and reporting

The National Forest Inventory (NFI) of Norway, established in 1919, is the main source of information on forest resources at national and regional levels. The NFI is designed as a sample survey. In the period of 1986-1993, a grid of permanent sample plots was established. These plots are revisited every fifth year. The ninth forest inventory was started in 2005, and will be finalized in 2010.

Based on experience from forest inventories and forest management planning, Norwegian experts and companies have been involved in several international projects for assisting countries in reconstructing or enhancing systems for forest resource management.