

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

Slovak Republic

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Contacts

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¹ The report is largely based on the previous voluntary national report on progress in 2007-08 in implementing the Non-Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests (NLBI) and the progress towards achieving the four Global Objectives on Forests, as submitted by the Slovak Republic in November 2008.

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Substantive matters of the Forum (See Annex 1: Provisional Agenda of UNFF9)

**Assessment of the progress made towards sustainable forest management,
on the implementation of the Forest Instrument, and towards the achievement of
the four Global Objectives on Forests**

Part 1: General information on the implementation of UNFF/IPF/IFF commitments

Part 1.1: National forestry policy actions

Adoption of the National Forest Programme and its Action Plan by the Government of the Slovak Republic.

The National Forest Programme (NFP) was adopted by the Government on 27th June 2007 (resolution No. 549/2007).

The NFP is based on the current relevant forest policy documents, processes and commitments that have been adopted at national and international levels. It updated forest policy priorities and provides a framework for relations and impacts of other sectors on forests and forestry. Fundamental objectives of the NFP are to implement sustainable forest management (SFM) and to enhance multi-functionality of forests in the Slovak Republic.

Sustainable forest management, as defined by the pan-European forest policy process (MCPFE / Forest Europe), is a fundamental principle of the programme. Sustainable forest management, as a policy concept, consists of 3 main pillars: economic, environmental and social.

The Action Plan of the National Forest Programme identifies concrete measures and actions to implement overall objectives and priorities of the National Forest Programme. It was adopted by the Government on 11th June 2008 (resolution No. 380/2008).

When analysing the contribution of national forestry policy to the implementation of relevant forest-related international commitments, following aspects have to be taken into consideration:

- National Forest Programme is based on the fundamental strategy document for forestry – “Policy for Development in Agricultural Sector 2007-2013 – Part Forestry” adopted in 2005,
- National Forest Programme is based on the previous national policies and strategies that were adopted for the forestry sector (element of “long-term continuity” in forest policy), obviously, as well as on recent developments in the field of international forest related policies,
- based on the measures of the Action Plan for implementation of the National Forest Programme, some consequent legal, institutional and strategic actions are being or going to be implemented in the period of 2008-2013.

The National Forest Programme does not introduce a completely new policy in the Slovak Republic. It is based on previous forestry policies and strategies updating priorities and overall objectives. At national

level, successful implementation of the NFP is significantly dependent on implementation of other policies/programmes related to forest sector (e. g. National Rural Development Programme).

Part 1.2: International dimension

The Action Plan of the National Forest Programme includes measures that aim at:

- effective implementation of all forest-related commitments of the Slovak Republic resulting from negotiations of relevant international institutions and processes (NFP framework objective No. 41),
- ensuring active participation of the Slovak Republic in international processes, initiatives and institutions (NFP framework objective No. 42),
- increasing awareness of national forestry community (professional foresters) and general public on international forest-related policy issues (NFP framework objective No. 43).

Activities of bilateral cooperation: e. g. involvement of Slovak researchers in ODA projects in Serbia and Ukraine (projects mainly addressing the issues of marketing forest reproductive material and sustainable forest management).

In the context of the international cooperation, the accession of the Slovak Republic into the MCPFE/Forest Europe General Coordinating Committee (coordinating body of the ministerial process) in November 2007 provides a unique opportunity for the Slovak Republic to influence forest related policies and processes at a pan-european level.

Part 1.3: Additional data and information

Additional data and information can be found in the national report on pan-European qualitative indicators for sustainable forest management.

Part 2: The Forest Instrument

Question: Has the Forest Instrument been translated into your country's official language?

YES

NO

The NLBI has been unofficially translated into the Slovak language. The Slovak version of the document is available on www.land.gov.sk/sk/index.php?navID=2&navID2=2&sID=37&id=419.

Question: Has your country introduced normative, administrative or other measures for the implementation of the forests instrument?

The Government of the Slovak Republic adopted the National Forest Programme (fundamental national forest policy document) in June 2007. The programme has introduced measures focused, *inter alia*, on the implementation of the relevant UNFF (United Nations Forum on Forests) commitments. As the NLBI was adopted by the Economic and Social Council/General Assembly in the second half of 2007, it has not been explicitly recognized through the National Forest Programme.

Part 2.1: Strengthening political commitment to sustainable forest management

See part 1.

Part 2.2: Financing sustainable forest management

The Action Plan of the National Forest Programme has identified potential funding sources to implement its measures.

Moreover, the Action Plan includes measures that aim at:

- support of development and activities of private forest owners associations, voluntary associations of small-sized forest land owners and public-private partnerships with participation of forest-related enterprises (NFP framework objective No. 36),
- application of a system for an economic internalisation of societal demand for all benefits from forests, including draft legal and institutional instruments to support entrepreneurs in forestry and marketing of non-wood forest products and services (NFP framework objective No. 32).

Part 2.3: Capacity-building and technology transfer

The Action Plan includes measures that aim at:

- increasing economic effectiveness of production process in forestry by optimising planning, decision-making, marketing and innovate procedures (NFP framework objective No. 26),
- improving economic, legal, institutional and information instruments to strengthen forest research, technological development, innovations and transfer of knowledge into practise (NFP framework objective No. 28),
- application of a system for an economic internalisation of societal demand for all benefits from forests, including draft legal and institutional instruments to support entrepreneurs in forestry and marketing of non-wood forest products and services (NFP framework objective No. 32, also listed under “Financing SFM”),
- support research focused on effective use of environmental, economic and social potential of forests (within NFP framework objective No. 35),
- development and application of a system of advisory services in forestry (NFP framework objective No. 38),
- development and application of a comprehensive system of long-life learning for forest owners, managers and workers in forestry, with the aim to contribute to the development of knowledge based economy (NFP framework objective No. 40).

Part 2.4: Stakeholder participation

The Action Plan includes measures that aim at:

- support of development and activities of private forest owners associations, voluntary associations of small-sized forest land owners and public-private partnerships with participation of forest-related enterprises (NFP framework objective No. 36, also listed under “Financing SFM”),
- promoting importance of certification of forests and wood-based chain of custodies for the society (NFP framework objective No. 53).

The Action Plan was developed in cooperation with other sectors relating to forests (environment, economy, defence, interior, public health, education, regional development, transport, labour, and social affairs) as well as with forest owners and managers, and professional forestry organisations.

Part 2.5: Enhanced international cooperation

The Action Plan includes measures that aim at:

- effective implementation of all forest-related commitments of the Slovak Republic resulting from negotiations of relevant international institutions and processes (NFP framework objective No. 41),
- ensuring active participation of the Slovak Republic in international processes, initiatives and institutions (NFP framework objective No. 42),
- increasing awareness of national forestry community (professional foresters) and general public on international forest-related policy issues (NFP framework objective No. 43).

Activities of bilateral cooperation: e. g. involvement of Slovak researchers in ODA projects in Serbia and Ukraine (projects mainly addressing the issues of marketing forest reproductive material and sustainable forest management).

In the context of the international cooperation, the accession of the Slovak Republic into the MCPFE/Forest Europe General Coordinating Committee (coordinating body of the ministerial process) in November 2007 provides a unique opportunity for the Slovak Republic to influence forest related policies and processes at a pan-european level.

Part 2.6: Forest law enforcement and governance, international trade in forest products

The Slovak Republic, as a Member State of the European Union, implements policy actions related to international trade in forest products, including eliminating illegal logging and related trade, fully in accordance with the following international policy processes:

- EU FLEGT Action Plan (Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade),
- ITTA 2006 (International Tropical Timber Agreement),
- ENA-FLEG policy process (Europe and North Asia Forest Law Enforcement and Governance).

In this regard, the Action Plan of the National Forest Programme includes measures that aim at:

- promoting importance of forest certification for the society (NFP framework objective No. 53; also listed under “Stakeholder Participation” and “Forest Law Enforcement and Governance”),
- application of a system for an economic internalisation of societal demand for all benefits from forests, including draft legal and institutional instruments to support entrepreneurs in forestry and marketing of non-wood forest products and services (NFP framework objective No. 32; also listed under “Capacity Building and Technology Transfer”),
- elaboration of a proposal for national public procurement policy for wood and wood-based products by 2013.

Reviewing the international commitment of the Slovak Republic to implement sustainable forest management, it is necessary to mention that all forest land in the Slovak Republic is managed according to forest management plans. Moreover, more than 70% of forest land is certified by the international certification schemes (PEFC, FSC).

Part 2.7: Protection of forests

The Action Plan includes measures that aim at:

- ensuring adequate road networks in forests as a prevention measure against different threats (NFP framework objective No. 6),

- maintaining and, if appropriate, enhancing biological diversity in forests with prevailing ecological and social functions (NFP framework objective No. 7),
- developing and maintaining legal, technical and economic conditions for differentiated forest ecosystem management in protected areas, including protection of habitats and species (NFP framework objective No. 9),
- developing and maintaining conditions to conserve biological diversity in commercial (productive) forests (NFP framework objective No. 10),
- adapting structure of forest stands to expected climate change and its consequences by means of adaptation measures (NFP framework objective No. 12),
- developing an effective system for preparation, funding and implementing projects of forest protection (NFP framework objective No. 14),
- developing effective system of forest fire monitoring and implementing preventive measures against forest fires (NFP framework objective No. 15),
- improving research of forest threats and diseases and their impacts on forest ecosystems, including investigation of options to solve the consequences in forest areas under high degree of nature conservation (NFP framework objective No. 16).

Part 2.8: Science and research

The Action Plan includes measures that aim at:

- improving economic, legal, institutional and information instruments to strengthen forest research, technological development, innovations and transfer of knowledge into practise (NFP framework objective No. 28, also listed under “Capacity Building and Technology Transfer”),
- support research focused on effective use of environmental, economic and social potential of forests (within NFP framework objective No. 35, also listed under “Capacity Building and Technology Transfer”),
- improving research of forest threats and diseases and their impacts on forest ecosystems, including investigation of options to solve the consequences in forest areas under high degree of nature conservation (NFP framework objective No. 16, also listed under “Protection of Forests”),
- improving methods of identification, quantification and valuation of non-wood forest goods and services (NFP framework objectives No. 22 and 30).

Part 2.9: Public awareness and education

The Action Plan includes measures that aim at:

- development and application of a system of advisory services in forestry (NFP framework objective No. 38, also listed under “Capacity Building and Technology Transfer”),
- development and application of a comprehensive system of long-life learning for forest owners, managers and workers in forestry, with the aim to contribute to the development of knowledge based economy (NFP framework objective No. 40, also listed under “Capacity Building and Technology Transfer”),
- promoting importance of certification of forests and wood-based chain of custodies for the society (framework objective No. 53, also listed under “Stakeholder Participation”, “Forest Law Enforcement and Governance” and “International Trade in Forest Products”),
- elaborating and implementing a comprehensive strategy for public relations activities in forestry and related sectors (NFP framework objective No. 54),

- improving coordination and cooperation amongst forest and “non-forest” organisations in public relations activities in the field of forestry (NFP framework objective No. 55),
- improving institutional framework, including funding, in the field of public relations activities in forestry and related sectors (NFP framework objective No. 56).

Activities implemented at a national level in 2007-2010:

- proposal for a national strategy of public relations and communication in forestry was prepared in 2007,
- establishment of the expert working group on communication in forestry,
- development and operation of new internet sites on forests and forestry: www.forestportal.sk, www.lesnapedagogika.sk (forest pedagogics), www.lesnickedni.sk (forest days),
- media communication on forest events, forestry and forests through press releases, press conferences, media trips, articles in papers and magazines, interviews with forestry experts in national and regional TVs,
- national events of the European Forest Week 2008,
- event “National Forest Days” (every year).

Part 2.10: Private sector and industry

The Action Plan includes measures that aim at:

- supporting development and activities of private forest owners associations, voluntary associations of small-sized forest land owners and public-private partnerships with participation of forest-related enterprises (NFP framework objective No. 36, also listed under “Financing SFM” and “Stakeholder Participation”),
- application of a system for an economic internalisation of societal demand for all benefits from forests, including draft legal and institutional instruments to support entrepreneurs in forestry and marketing of non-wood forest products and services (NFP framework objective No. 32, also listed under “Financing SFM” and “Capacity Building and Technology Transfer”),
- promoting importance of certification of forests and wood-based chain of custodies for the society (NFP framework objective No. 53, also listed under “Stakeholder Participation”, “Forest Law Enforcement and Governance” and “International Trade in Forest Products”),
- development and application of a system of advisory services in forestry (NFP framework objective No. 38, also listed under “Capacity Building and Technology Transfer” and “International Trade in Forest Products”),
- increasing economic effectiveness of production process in forestry by optimising planning, decision-making, marketing and innovate procedures (NFP framework objective No. 26, also listed under “Capacity Building and Technology Transfer”).

Part 2.11: Indigenous and local communities

Partly implemented. In this regard, some NFP priorities and measures concerning private forest sector development (including community forests) are relevant.

Part 3: The Global Objectives on Forests

Global Objective 1: Reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through sustainable forest management, including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, and increase efforts to prevent forest degradation.

Implementation at a national level:

There are two aspects of the global objective 1:

- (1) “reversing the loss of forest cover”: Not relevant at a national level. In the Slovak Republic, forest cover (forest land, area of forest stands) has been continuously increasing since the beginning of the 20th century. Concerning international dimension, the Slovak experts have been involved in ODA projects aimed at improving sustainable forest management practices in Serbia and Ukraine.
- (2) “preventing forest degradation”: see part 1.

Global Objective 2: Enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including by improving the livelihoods of forest dependent people.

Implementation at a national level:

Adoption of the National Forest Programme and its Action Plan by the Government of the Slovak Republic

Global Objective 3: Increase significantly the area of protected forests worldwide and other areas of sustainably managed forests, as well as the proportion of forest products from sustainably managed forests.

Implementation at a national level:

There are 2 aspects of the global objective 3:

- (1) “Protected forests”: Not applicable in the Slovak Republic. The total area of protected territories in the Slovak Republic is 1.14 million of hectares, including buffer zones (23.2% of the Slovak territory). Total forest coverage of the protected territories is 72.6% (which indicates high proportion of forests under certain degree of nature conservation). Currently, qualitative parameters of some protected territories and sites are being assessed and protected areas network is going to be revised.
- (2) “Sustainably managed forests”: All forest land in the Slovak Republic is managed according to forest management plans. Moreover, more than 70% of forest land is certified by the international certification schemes (PEFC, FSC). The Action Plan of the National Forest Programme includes measures aiming at support of on-going forest certification process (listed under NLBI clusters “Private Sector and Industry”, “Stakeholder Participation”, “Forest Law Enforcement and Governance” and “International Trade in Forest Products”).

Global Objective 4: Reverse the decline in official development assistance for sustainable forest management and mobilize significantly increased, new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of sustainable forest management.

Implementation at a national level:

Adoption of the National Forest Programme and its Action Plan by the Government of the Slovak Republic

Protection of the environment and land management have been identified as two of the priority sectors of the Slovak official development assistance (National Programme for Official Development Assistance)

Part 4: Other additional comments and information

We can identify several principal actions and measures that have been implemented at a national level and may contribute to implementation of the Global Objectives on Forests (GOF 1 and 3) and national and international provisions of the NLBI (6b, 6k, 6o, 6p,6q, 6v, 7d) related to forest biodiversity:

- adoption and application of the national criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management (conservation of biological diversity in forest ecosystems as one of the criteria),
- forest genetic resources conservation implemented, in particular, through the Act on Forest Reproductive Material,
- monitoring of invasive forest tree species within the national forest inventory (results available in 2007),
- existence of a national legal framework on forest regeneration limiting a transfer of non-autochthonous forest reproductive material (the Act on Forest Reproductive Material),
- active participation of the Slovak Republic in the European Forest Genetic Resources Programme EUFORGEN (international dimension),
- on-going process of forest certification,
- applying the ecosystem approach to the management of all types of forest through forest management planning (principle of differentiated approach in relation to natural conditions is applied),
- monitoring forest ecosystems through, so called, ecological surveys within the process of forest management plans elaboration,
- implementation of information systems in forestry (data and information concerning, *inter alia*, forest biodiversity are gathered, processed and stored),
- implementation of Natura 2000 network² on forest land.

² Network of protected areas established according to the relevant European Union law (conservation of species and habitats important from the European Union perspective).

ANNEX 1: UNFF 9 Agenda

UNFF NINTH SESSION 24 January - 4 February 2011, UNHQ, New York

Provisional agenda

1. Election of officers
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters
3. Assessment of progress made on the implementation of the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests and towards the achievement of the four global objectives on forests.
4. Regional and sub-regional inputs
5. Forests for people, livelihoods and poverty eradication:
 - a. Community-based forest management;
 - b. Social development and indigenous and other local and forest-dependent communities, including forest land tenure;
 - c. Social and cultural aspects.
6. International Year of Forests 2011
7. Emerging issue
8. High-level segment
9. Multi-stakeholder dialogue
10. Enhanced cooperation and policy and programme coordination, including the provision of further guidance to the Collaborative Partnership on Forests.
11. Means of implementation
12. Forum trust fund
13. Other matters
14. Dates and venue for the tenth session of the Forum
15. Provisional agenda for the tenth session of the Forum
16. Adoption of the report of the Forum on its ninth session