



FOWECA UPDATE

Vol.1 August 2004



Forestry Outlook Study for West and Central Asia

FOWECA UPDATE is a link between the FAO team, all country focal points and other partners of the forestry outlook study in the West and Central Asia countries. It aims at regularly providing general information, progress reports on FOWECA implementation, and guidance for further activities. The UPDATE is a starting point for establishing a network among all partners of FOWECA. The FOWECA UPDATE is presently available in English. It will also be translated into Arabic and Russian and addressed to the respective countries.

Since the invitation of the Director-General of FAO in February 2004, 17 countries of 23 in the West and Central Asia (WECA) region have officially nominated a FOWECA focal point. The list of the focal points is given in annex. The FOWECA process is progressively taking place: the first sub regional planning workshop was organised in Beirut in May 2004; working groups have already been established in some countries; contacts are being made to channel the study FAO contribution to the focal points.

To facilitate communication with and between focal points, the FOWECA team is also organizing a second planning workshops for Caucasus and Central Asia countries. This grouping is temporary and made only for organizational reasons.

Progress report

Planning Workshop for West Asia countries held in Lebanon, 23 May 2004

A one-day FOWECA planning workshop was held on 23rd May 2004 in Beirut, in conjunction with the 16th Session of FAO Near East Forestry Commission (NEFC). FOWECA focal points from Afghanistan, Cyprus, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and Yemen, participated in the workshop.

The main objectives of the workshop were to introduce to the focal points the process and activities of FOWECA study, to discuss the structure and the preparation of the country outlook paper, and to identify the thematic outlook study topics and issues. Three presentations were made by the FAO team focusing on the introduction to the study process, the driving forces having an

impact on the forestry sector in the region, and the trends and scenarios of the forestry sector to the horizon 2020. Discussion was active and constructive, the structure of the country outlook paper was agreed, and topics and issues were identified for consideration as thematic outlook studies.

The US\$ 2,000 FAO contribution was provided to the focal points and an explanation of this financing assistance was given. The focal points agreed to establish in-country working groups, to prepare a work plan for the study activities and the drafting of the country outlook paper.

Many thanks to Mr. M. Akl, focal point from Lebanon, and to the Forestry Department staff for the warm welcome, the perfect organization and the fascinating field trips.

Planning Workshop for Central Asia and Caucasus Countries to be held in September 2004 in Budapest

Invitations have been sent to the focal points of the Central Asia and Caucasus countries to attend the planning workshop that will be held in Budapest from 27 to 30 September 2004, at the FAO Sub Regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe. The agenda will include training and discussion, as well as a field trip. The focal points will be requested to make a short presentation describing the main issues impacting the future of the forestry sector in their respective countries.

Preparation of Country Outlook Papers

Cyprus, Georgia, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Uzbekistan have sent their work plans and provided the name list of the in-country working groups to the FAO FOWECA team.

Turkey held two meetings of the Core Working Group (CWG) on 16th June and 24th July 2004. The FOWECA process has been explained and the task of the CWG has been identified. The preparation of the first national workshop, which will be held on 21st September 2004 was the main objective of the second meeting. In addition, a Website has been created, please see:

<http://www.ogm.gov.tr/foweca/foweca.htm>



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Georgia has held its first working group meeting on 16 July 2004, where the participants discussed the concept of FOWECA and how to proceed with their future work for the preparation of its country outlook paper.

FAO team assistance

Intensive correspondence between the FOWECA team and the focal points has allowed information to be exchanged regarding the study and workshops.

Makiko Uemoto from the FAO team visited Uzbekistan in June and Georgia in July. Many thanks to Mr. M. Ganiev and his staff and Mr. G. Chkonia and his staff for their welcome and support.

FOWECA thematic Studies

A series of thematic studies will be implemented in the framework of FOWECA. These studies will analyse common themes of interest or issues for several countries. The main themes will be selected by the focal points during the planning workshops.

Some themes have already been identified:

- Integrated sustainable management of forests and range lands;
- Role of forests and woodlands in protecting the environment;
- Impacts of socio-economic changes to forests and forestry
- Wildlife: main issues and opportunities
- Livelihood: understanding the link between access to forest resources and the livelihood of poor people.

Partnership

Cooperation with AAAID: The Arab Authority for Agricultural Investment & Development (AAAID) is supporting three FOWECA thematic studies for a total amount of US\$15,000.

The FAO Sustainable Livelihood Program – 3.1. financed by DFID is supporting the implementation of the thematic studies on access to forest resources and livelihood. Afghanistan, Georgia, Iran, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey, Uzbekistan might be involved in this thematic study.

Other organizations such as IUCN, CCD, LFCC have shown interest to be involved in FOWECA.

Further guidance and info

Efforts are being made to promote FOWECA in countries where the focal points have not yet been nominated.

It is important that the FOWECA working group should include representatives of the sectors having an impact on the future of forestry. These representatives can bring relevant information on the present and future development policies for their sector.

The National Forest Programme Facility is active in many countries. FOWECA is complementary to this programme. More information is available on: <http://www.fao.org/forestry/nfp>

Please feel free to contact us. Requests for specific assistance of the FAO team can be sent to:

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17 of 23 countries have nominated their FOWECA focal point

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