



Tomasz Markiewicz
V-ce President
Activity report

GCM of UEF,
14th of June 2019 (Maienfeld, Switzerland)



According to the Article 7.7. of the UEF Constitution

„the Vice-Presidents shall assist the President and act for him/her in case of his/her absence or other hindrance.”

I was elected at the last Congress in 2017 (Mainz - Germany).





What is Forest Europe?

FOREST EUROPE (The brand name of the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe) **is the pan-European voluntary high-level political process for dialogue and cooperation on forest policies in Europe.** FOREST EUROPE develops common strategies for its **47 signatories** (46 European countries and the European Union) on how to protect and sustainably manage their forests.

Since 1990 the FOREST EUROPE process has led to achievements such as **the guidelines, criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management.**

Commitments endorsed by the ministers serve as a framework for implementing sustainable forest management in the European countries, adapted to their national circumstances and done in a coherent way with the rest of the region, and strengthen international cooperation at the same time.

FOREST EUROPE is involved with other global and regional processes and initiatives dealing with issues of highest political and social relevance related to forests.

Slovakia currently holds FOREST EUROPE co-chairmanship.



Expert Level Meetings are the decision-making bodies between the conferences **Strasbourg 1990, Helsinki 1993, Lisbon 1998, Vienna 2003, Warsaw 2007, Oslo 2011, Madrid 2015**. The Expert Level Meetings are attended by representatives of FOREST EUROPE signatories (European states and the European Community) as well as by observers from non-European countries, international organizations and a variety of stakeholders, including environmental and social NGOs, forest and land owners' associations, forest industry and the scientific community.

Oslo, Norway, 24-25 November 2009;

Oslo, Norway, 23-24 March 2010;

Geneva, Switzerland, 14-15 December 2010;

Oslo, Norway, 30-31 March 2011;

Madrid, Spain, 14-15 February 2012;

Madrid, Spain, 6-7 March 2013.

Valladolid, Spain, on 4-5 February 2014 Cuenca, Spain, 6-7 November 2014

Madrid, Spain, 30 June – 02 July 2015

Bratislava, Slovakia, 11-12 May 2016

Bratislava, Slovakia, 28-29 November 2017

Bratislava, Slovakia, 19-20 September 2018

Bratislava, Slovakia, 5-6 December 2018

Bratislava, Slovakia, 19-20 March 2019



At the FOREST EUROPE Ministerial Conference, Oslo 2011, the ministers adopted the Oslo Mandate for negotiations of **the legally binding agreement (LBA) on forests in Europe** and decided to take further international action and established an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC).

Four sessions of the INC were convened during 2012-2013.

The Committee elaborated the substantive part of the agreement through negotiations at INC1 (Vienna, 2012), INC2 (Bonn, 2012), INC3 (Antalya, 2013) and its resumed session (St. Petersburg, 2013), INC4 (Warsaw, 2013) and its resumed session (Geneva, 2013) and concluded ad referendum on the substantive part of the text.

At the Resumed Fourth Session of the INC held in Geneva (Nov. 2013) the Committee concluded its work; however **the full agreement was not reached due to significant differences of views on some issues.**

LBA on forests in Europe would have an added value.



Situation after last 3 meetings:

- transferring the process under FAO and UNECE umbrella - it was a request from Russia - infinity, unspecified rules.

Result: the main topic is going out the process FE

- Last meeting (19-20.03.2019)
 - Three days before the meeting, Russia sent the note and the Russian delegation didn't come to the meeting „*the Russian Side believes that the entire text of the draft convention should be opened for negotiations in order to reflect global decisions concerning forests which have been taken since 2013 as well as to take fully into account current developments in global European forest industry*”
 - without the Russian delegation they didn't want to discuss further negotiations on the LBA and transfer the process under FAO and UNECE umbrella
 - although there were voices about continuing negotiations without the participation of Russia
 - it was decided to negotiate with Russia



After this meeting - exchange of correspondence between Russia and Slovakia.

The last letter from FE to participants of the FE process informs

„I am pleased to confirm that I have received a letter dated 24 April 2019 from the Russian Federation, responding to my request for clarification of 1 April 2019, in which the Russian Federation, inter alia:

- 1. Confirms the Russian Federation's agreement to transfer the LBA negotiating process to the UNECE, with the support of the FAO;*
- 2. Confirms its understanding that once the process is transferred to UNECE (with the understanding that FAO will support UNECE) it will be governed by UNECE rules under UN auspices and no longer under FOREST EUROPE rules or auspices;*
- 3. Expects that, if the process is resumed under the auspices of UNECE, the UNECE Executive Committee will take the decisions on the establishment of the negotiating body as well as its mandate, composition, terms of reference and rules of procedure;*
- 4. Reserves the Russian Federation's position on the draft negotiating text of the LBA and suggests that any negotiations of the LBA thereon be held no earlier than the end of 2019.*



FOREST EUROPE Expert level meeting will be held:

- **October 2019** – discussion about the concept note + endorsement of future steps
- **Spring 2020 - in Bratislava, Slovakia** – ELM adoption of draft outcome documents (Ministerial resolution, declaration)

8th Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (FOREST EUROPE Ministerial Conference) – 28-29. October 2020, Bratislava, Slovakia



Conclusion:

UEF should continue its involvement into
Forest Europe process

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!