



Council of the
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NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Council

Subject: ASEM meeting on sustainable management and use of forests in policy
and practice (Ljubljana, 25 and 26 May 2015)
- Information from the Slovenian delegation

Delegations will find attached an information note from the Slovenian delegation on the above mentioned subject to be dealt with under "Any other business" at the meeting of the Council (Agriculture and Fisheries) on 13 July 2015.

**ASEM meeting on sustainable management and use of forests in policy and practice
(Ljubljana, 25 and 26 May 2015)**

- Information from the Slovenian delegation

The ASEM (Asia Europe Meeting) event was held in Slovenia, Brdo pri Kranju, between 25 and 26 May 2015. ASEM is an informal process of dialogue and cooperation bringing together 28 EU Member States, 2 other European countries, and the EU with 21 Asian countries and the ASEAN Secretariat. The ASEM dialogue addresses political, economic, as well as social, cultural, and educational issues, with the objective of strengthening the relationship between the two regions in a spirit of mutual respect and equal partnership.

The aim of the ASEM meeting in Slovenia titled “Sustainable forest management and use of forests in policy” was to exchange experiences, good practice and challenges of the sustainable forest management. The meeting was organized by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food of the Republic of Slovenia, with the co-organization of the People’s Republic of China. Due to very actual topics it was attended by 63 participants from 23 countries: 14 countries from Europe (Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Sweden) and 9 from Asia (Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Korea, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam). Representatives of the European Commission and the Asian-Pacific Network for Sustainable Forest Management (APFNet) also participated at the meeting. The mission of APFNet, which has 31 member countries from Asia, Australia, North and South America, is to help promote and improve sustainable forest management and rehabilitation through capacity building, information exchange, and support for regional policy dialogues and pilot projects.

At the ASEM meeting in Slovenia 14 professional contributions of the experts from different institutions and countries on the topic of sustainable forest management were presented. Future challenges of forest and forestry were exposed, which are quite different in Asia and Europe region.

For Europe, future challenges which were foreseen in the meeting conclusions are the following:

- To ensure that all forests in the EU are managed according to sustainable forest management principles,
- Further developing of non-wood products and services,
- Participatory planning (avoid conflicts, public support etc.),
- In the management of forests environmental conditions (e.g. climate change) and social conditions (e.g. new demands), must be taken into account,
- All forests should cover all functions,
- Systematic stakeholder involvement in policy development and implementation,
- Consolidation of the system of knowledge and research in the forest sector,
- Enhancement of the forest heritage and the national wood product,
- Modernization and simplification of the forestry legislation.

For Asia, future challenges which were foreseen in the meeting conclusions are the following:

- Stop forest conversion,
- Implementation of sustainable forest management,
- Prevention of forest pests and diseases,
- Improving forest health and ecological services,
- Speeding up the transforming of wood harvest from natural to planted forests,
- Making application Tree doctor program,
- Slowing deforestation of forest resource,
- Promotion of reforestation,
- Expanding forest plantations within private lands,
- Increasing timber importation, switch to wood substitutes,
- Sharing knowledge and experiences on multi-functional forest restoration,
- Increase awareness of the local population (especially children) on forests,
- Increase of the forest area and growing stock.

On second day of the ASEM meeting the field trip was organized to the Slovenian Karst region, with the aim of presentation of Slovenian good practices of forest management. Forest management was introduced in Slovenia 150 years ago. Modern forestry is based on the main principles of sustainability, close-to-nature management and multipurpose use of the forest.
