



***PAN-EUROPEAN BIOLOGICAL AND LANDSCAPE  
DIVERSITY STRATEGY***

Geneva and Strasbourg, 23 February 2005

STRA-CO (2005) 13

**COUNCIL FOR THE PAN-EUROPEAN  
BIOLOGICAL AND LANDSCAPE DIVERSITY STRATEGY**

---

Ninth meeting  
16-17 March 2005  
Palais de l'Europe, Strasbourg  
Room 11, 9.30 am

**THE PAN EUROPEAN UNDERSTANDING OF THE  
LINKAGE BETWEEN THE ECOSYSTEM APPROACH AND  
SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT: DRAFT JOINT POSITION  
OF THE MCPFE AND THE eFe/PEBLDS**

*Document prepared by  
the Joint Secretariat for PEBLDS*

*This document will not be distributed at the meeting. Please bring this copy.  
Ce document ne sera plus distribué en réunion. Prière de vous munir de cet exemplaire.*

### **Minutes of the Informal Meeting of the PEBLDS with the MCPFE Liaison Unit Bangkok, 7 February 2005**

It was suggested at the 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the PEBLDS Bureau (Geneva, 25 October 2004) that Norway, Switzerland, Italy, Russian Federation, IUCN and EcoForum meet as a small core group with a few MCPFE members to propose to both the PEBLDS Council and the MCPFE Expert Level Meeting text to assist in coming to an agreement regarding the *Joint position of the MCPFE and the Efe/PEBLDS on the Pan European Understanding of the Linkage Between the Ecosystem Approach and Sustainable Forest Management* (as adopted by the MCPFE ELM on the 14-15 October, 2004), as well as a solution for the bracketed text remaining in the PEBLDS Forest Biodiversity Action Plan.

A small group met informally on 7 February 2005 during SBSTTA 10 at the UNEP office in the UN Conference Centre in Bangkok. Albania, Italy, the Netherlands, Russian Federation, Switzerland, European Commission, IUCN, the MCPFE Liaison Unit-Warsaw and the PEBLDS Joint Secretariat were present at the meeting. Italy chaired the meeting. The PEBLDS Council members had been informed on 3 February that this meeting would take place in Bangkok on 7 February, but many could not attend due to other conflicting commitments. It had been hoped that a few members of the MCPFE process would be able to join the meeting but none were participating in SBSTTA-10.

The PEBLDS Joint Secretariat and the MCPFE Liaison Unit presented two items under the agenda to be discussed at the meeting:

1. Joint position of the MCPFE and the Efe/PEBLDS on Pan European Understanding of the Linkage Between the Ecosystem Approach and Sustainable Forest Management.
2. The PEBLDS Forest Biodiversity Action Plan.

With regards to Item 1 of the agenda, IUCN briefly expressed the concerns they had raised at the 10<sup>th</sup> Bureau Meeting about the statement on the relationship between the Ecosystem Approach and Sustainable Forest Management on page 2 of Annex 1 of this document. The PEBLDS members were asked to give proposals on the text with which IUCN disagreed. The PEBLDS Council members suggested changing the text in the *Joint Position* in order to agree with the text of CBD Decision VII/11, Annex II, A.2: “SFM can be considered as a means of applying the ecosystem approach to forests.<sup>1</sup> *Although the concept of SFM and the ecosystem approach are not identical, the two are similar in many respects. Both need to be applied as an integrated whole. Both are also rapidly evolving. Both have a non-legally binding nature, allowing for flexibility and experimentation. SFM and the ecosystem approach are overarching frameworks--both with due consideration to societal, ecological, and governance issues--although the former has undergone substantial refinement over the last decade, being primarily an outcome-based approach. The ecosystem approach is still in need of further elaboration to be translated into good operational practice in a particular situation. As far as challenges are concerned, both SFM and the ecosystem approach need to deal with complex issues such as law enforcement, land tenure rights, and the rights of indigenous and local communities. In this regard, implementation of both approaches requires political will, including that of institutions and communities.*”

Therefore, line 6 of paragraph 1 on page 2 of the *Joint Position*: “*SFM is the concrete means of applying the Ecosystem Approach to forest ecosystems in the pan-European Region*” should be amended to read “*SFM can be considered as a concrete means of applying the Ecosystem Approach to forest ecosystems in the pan-European Region*”.

The IUCN proposed to also add as a footnote: “*demonstration areas to implement the ecosystem approach through SFM should be established in the pan-European region*”.

---

<sup>1</sup> *Emphasis added by the PEBLDS Joint Secretariat*

It was decided that the PEBLDS Joint Secretariat would propose these changes to the *Joint Position* to the PEBLDS Council for adoption at their 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 16 March 2005 in Strasbourg.

With regards to item 2 of the agenda, the PEBLDS Council members present at the meeting were informed that the MCPFE expert level meeting (ELM) of October 2004 (Warsaw) did not agree to adopt the amendments to the Forest Biodiversity Action Plan and therefore did not agree to amend the current MCPFE Work Programme. The PEBLDS Council members present at the meeting stated that in order to make a proposal it was necessary to ask the MCPFE expert level meeting for the reasons they could not agree to the amendments to the Forest Biodiversity Action Plan and amend the joint PEBLDS/MCPFE activities under their programme of work. The meeting asked the PEBLDS Joint Secretariat to draft a letter to the MCPFE ELM from the PEBLDS Council. The draft letter would be presented to the PEBLDS Council at their ninth meeting on 16 March 2005 in Strasbourg for discussion and agreement.

The meeting was then closed by Italy at 20.00.

**THE PAN EUROPEAN UNDERSTANDING OF THE LINKAGE BETWEEN THE  
ECOSYSTEM APPROACH AND SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT**

*Joint position of the MCPFE and the Efe/PEBLDS  
to be submitted to the CBD and UNFF Secretariats*

*Adopted at the ELM, 14-15 October 2004 Warsaw, Poland*

*For adoption at the PEBLDS Council, 16-17 March 2005, Strasbourg, France*

**INTRODUCTION**

The Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE) is the high level forest policy process in Europe, addressing all dimensions of sustainable forest management (SFM), including forest biodiversity issues. "Environment for Europe" is the high-level process for environment related co-operation in Europe. Within the ministerial process "Environment for Europe", the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (PEBLDS) constitutes the coordinating framework for efforts to conserve biological and landscape diversity in Europe, including forest biodiversity.

Both the Ministers responsible for forests of 40 European countries and the European Community at the 4<sup>th</sup> Conference (Vienna, April 2003) as well as the European Ministers responsible for environment at the 5<sup>th</sup> "Environment for Europe" Ministerial Conference (Kiev, May 2003), endorsed a Framework for Co-operation between the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE) and the Environment for Europe/Pan European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (Efe/PEBLDS).

The clarification of the linkages between the Ecosystem Approach (EA) and sustainable forest management (SFM), building on the work achieved so far by the MCPFE on SFM, is one of the joint activities within the Framework of cooperation. The Framework follows up, therefore, on the decisions taken by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) (6th Conference of the Parties to the CBD, Expanded Work Programme on Forest Biological Diversity, 2002) and the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) (2003, third session, Resolution 3/4, para 8) with respect to the clarification of the two concepts at the regional pan-European level.

Following the MCPFE Work Programme and the PEBLDS Forest Biodiversity Action Plan, the session of the Ad-hoc working group on "*Development of Pan-European Understanding of the Linkage Between the Ecosystem Approach and Sustainable Forest Management*" took place on 19-21 April 2004 in Krakow, Poland. The outcome of the Ad-hoc working group is presented in the Annex.

This statement, building on the outcomes of the above Ad-hoc working group and approved by both the MCPFE Expert Level Meeting on 14-15 October 2005 in Warsaw, Poland as well as the PEBLDS...on .... in....., aims at contributing to the implementation of the MCPFE Work Programme, the PEBLDS Forest Biodiversity Action Plan, and the Expanded Programme of Work on Forest Biological Diversity of the CBD, as referred in the CBD COP Decision VI/22, paragraphs 15 and 18, as well as to the CBD COP Decision VII/11 and the UNFF Resolution 3/4 adopted at its 3<sup>rd</sup> session. It is a concrete effort for operationalising the EA by applying SFM at the implementation level.

## **PAN -EUROPEAN UNDERSTANDING OF THE LINKAGE BETWEEN THE ECOSYSTEM APPROACH AND SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT**

At the pan-European level the concept of SFM is defined in Resolution H1: General Guidelines for Sustainable Management of Forests in Europe of the Helsinki Conference (1993) and developed through all other commitments, resolutions and declarations of the Ministerial Conferences held in Strasburg – 1990, Helsinki – 1993, Lisbon – 1998 and Vienna – 2003. Taking them all into account it is understood by the MCPFE and the PEBLDS processes *that the SFM is the concrete means of applying the Ecosystem Approach to forest ecosystems in the pan European region.*<sup>2</sup>

The conceptual linkages between SFM as defined by MCPFE and the EA are described in details in Table 1 of the Annex. The existing tools and processes, the MCPFE and the PEBLDS consider as appropriate for implementing Ecosystem Approach through SFM in Europe's forests are also listed in the Annex which is integral part of this document.

The MCPFE and the PEBLDS note, following the FAO Forest Management Working Paper entitled "Sustainable Forest Management and the Ecosystem Approach: Two concepts, one goal" that the two concepts aim at promoting conservation and management practices which are environmentally, socially and economically sustainable, and which generate and maintain benefits for both present and future generations.

The MCPFE and the PEBLDS welcome the recognition by CBD (Decision VII/11) that SFM can be considered as a means of applying the Ecosystem Approach to forests.

On the issue of cross-sectoral integration and inter-sectoral collaboration (COP 7th Meeting, Kuala Lumpur, 2004: Decision VII/11) to further integrate the concepts of the Ecosystem Approach and SFM, the MCPFE and the PEBLDS consider that the principles of national forest programmes, following the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action, adopt a holistic and inter-sectoral approach, the integration with national sustainable development strategies as well as consistency with international commitments. This approach was adopted as Resolution V1: Strengthening synergies for sustainable forest management in Europe through cross-sectoral cooperation and national forest programmes at the Vienna Ministerial Conference in 2003.

The issues of interactions between forests and other biome/habitat types within a landscape are considered by the MCPFE and the PEBLDS mainly as issues to be taken at the implementation level, although already recognized at the ministerial conferences. In the European context the MCPFE addressed the concern about the effects on other ecosystems in Resolution H1: Sustainable Forest Management is the stewardship and use of forests and forest lands in a way, and at a rate, that maintains their biodiversity, productivity, regeneration capacity, vitality and their potential to fulfill, now and in the future, relevant ecological, economic and social functions, at local, national, and global levels, and that does not cause damage to other ecosystems."

Conservation of forest biodiversity is considered by the MCPFE and the PEBLDS as an integral part of SFM. Forest biodiversity was a concern at the Helsinki Conference (1993) where the Ministers adopted general guidelines for the conservation of biodiversity of European forests (Resolution H 2). At the 3rd Ministerial Conference (Lisbon, 1998) the Ministers adopted a set of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management, subsequently revised and endorsed at the Ministerial Conference in Vienna (2003), which includes Criterion 4: Maintenance, Conservation and Appropriate Enhancement of Biological Diversity in Forest Ecosystems. Furthermore, the area of forests and other wooded land protected to conserve biodiversity, landscapes and specific natural elements are Pan-European indicators for SFM.

---

<sup>2</sup> *Emphasis added by the PEBLDS Joint Secretariat*