

Europe, Central Asia and North America

This is a highly diverse region; a good number of countries in this region, some with a majority of state-owned forests, have centralized forest management. They said to be careful of the significance of decentralization as it depends on government structures/constitution, and that decentralization was only one tool to improve forest governance.

Some outcomes of the last 10 years with improved forest governance:

- Higher participation by stakeholders and general public (forest certification, national forest programmes, etc.)
- Some difficulties with managing different/conflicting forest interests
- Increased number of national forest programmes
- Development of pan European Criteria and Indicators



Question 2 concerning changes in representation of diverse groups, coordination, and devolution of authority

On representation:

- New groups are now active, especially with the advent of social media: environmental NGOs, sports enthusiasts, women, hunters, consumer groups, energy companies, private owners

On coordination:

- Higher involvement of other sectors

On allocation of funds:

- Provision of forest funds (or other funds) to local governments (variable depending on financial situation).
- As a result, local authorities have increased responsibilities for managing funds from the federal government but also with conditions to invest own funds



Question 3 on challenges and key issues for good forest governance

- Meaningful involvement of indigenous peoples
- Economic interests overriding indigenous peoples' interest
- Local authorities/communities need to have the capacity and willingness to report/be accountable
- Shift and increased workload to local authorities on forest management without adequate funding from the national or local levels
- Adequate balance of shared responsibilities between the central and local levels; as well as between forest related sectors
- Conflicting interest of different stakeholders in forestry



Question 4: Recommendations

- Decentralization, where needed, needs to be made in systematic way with adequate funding and capacity, addressing the problems being experienced, with full participation of relevant stakeholders
- UNFF should actively build bridges to engage with other sectors (i.e. water, agriculture, energy, biodiversity, construction, tourism, etc.)
- UNFF should encourage member States to establish multi-stakeholder platforms at different levels, and involve them in inter-sessional activities
- UNFF should carry out an analysis of social, economic and environmental costs and benefits of good governance.
- The forest sector should contribute to the work being carried out under the system of environmental-economic accounting under the UN to reflect the value of forests in national accounts.
- Countries should support mechanisms (i.e. private owner associations) to increase the efficiency of small scale forestry
- Explore ways to strengthen the active and positive engagement of indigenous peoples in forest management
- Carry out further work to establish incentive mechanisms (such as PES) that allow forest owners to capture the benefits for providing ecosystem services

