

## **JOINT STATEMENT**

### ***Basic information***

Representatives of the state institutions, local self-governances, civil society, non-governmental sector, economy, private sector, professional institutions, international donors' organizations, forestry experts and young people who will connect their professional future to forestry, have gathered at the First Montenegrin Forest Forum, held on 9th and 10th February in Podgorica, hotel Crna Gora, to talk about the "Development of Forestry Sector in Montenegro within the context of international initiatives and state challenges".

The host of the Forum was Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, with support of the Project of „Forestry Development in Montenegro“, FODEMO project, jointly funded by the Government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the Government of Montenegro.

Objectives of the First Montenegrin Forestry Forum were:

- To emphasize the significant role of forestry for rural and total economic development of Montenegro;
- To present the concept of National Forestry Programme (NFP), commitments connected to the process of Ministerial Conference on Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE) and EU expectations;
- To show progress that has been achieved in total sector development and especially in area of improved forest management planning and National Forest Inventory
- To present progress that has been made in implementation of international projects in forestry area and provide synergies of future donors activities, especially of those projects for whose implementation it would be necessary to provide missing funds
- To organize 2 panel discussions: Panel 1 “Legislative framework and program of forestry sector development” and Panel 2 “New technical standards and methods for sustainable forest management and monitoring of forests”, aiming at assessing the progress and plans for certain parts of the framework for NFP in Montenegro
- To present expectations of private sector and forestry institutions regarding future development and implementation of forestry sector reform
- To improve the Matrix for NFP that has been developed earlier by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, FODEMO project and SNV (Dutch development agency) on basis of findings obtained from the panels, comments and plenary discussions;
- To adopt this joint statement on priority activities of state forestry institutions and international organizations within the context of NFP.

### ***Current condition and initiatives***

Forests and forest land cover around 54% of Montenegrin territory, and around 60% of population is connected to village and areas that are abundant with forests. Forest eco

systems are very important in all segments of life and economy: they are a significant producer of biomass, source of healthy and high quality forest trees, main game habitat, key factor for conservation and regulation of water system; provide protection against erosion and purtify air, and are a backbone of local economy development.

In the process of comprehensive forestry sector reform in Montenegro, the Government adopted the National Policy of Forest and Forest land Management – National Forest policy (2008) and the national Action Plan for combatting against the illegal activities in forestry (2009). In addition to that, development of the new Forest Law is at its final stage, with support of SNV and FODEMO project, and work on national Forest inventory has started beginning of 2009 with support of FODEMO project, while activities on advancement of procedures and instruments for forest management planning last for several years. Besides, Montenegro is actively included in regional political process of the Ministerial Conference of Protection of Forests in Europe (participated at the Fourth Ministerial Conference on Protection of Forests in Europe held in 2003. In Vienna, and at the Fifth Ministerial Conference on Protection of Forests in Europe held in 2007. In Warsaw), and adopted and is currently developing and applying the concept of the National Forest Programme.

### ***Vision***

Each of the above named initiatives offers support for enforcement of sustainable forest management. Vision of forestry in Montenegro is to improve the existing condition of all the forests so that the protection, ecological, social and economic functions of forests are balanced, and sustainability ensured.

### ***National Forest Programme***

The concept of NFP in Montenegro was presented in this Forum in more details. Adoption of the NFP process as the key instrument for accomplishment of sustainable forest management and work on its results have marked and shall mark the work of the state institutions and forestry sector in the following period. Namely, the NFP in Montenegro in itself is not a document, but a process of forestry sector reform which under its framework develops series of documents and activities of vital importance for guiding the forestry sector reform. Discussion in the Forum(plenary and at panels) considered the key elements of the NFP and the following was stated:

- a) **National Forest Policy** (adopted in 2008.) is the document that defines objectives of Montenegro towards the forestry sector development, whereat it clearly indicates activities that will be implemented for accomplishment of these objectives. Its implementation, due to the numerous proposed tasks, has not been fully completed and will require higher and more coordinated cooperation of all the stakeholders. In connection to that, civil sector is encouraged to take higher participation, as well as state institutions to carry out the priority tasks: establishment of the National and local Forestry Councils, establishment of the Extension Service in accordance with the new Forest Law
- b) **Legislative framework** – two recently adopted laws: Law on Reproductive Material of Forest trees (2007) and the Law on Game and Hunting (2008) provide qualitative framework for future system set up of subject issues being processed by these Laws. Development of subject documents' by-laws has not been fully done and presents the challenge that has to be responded to this year. In connection to that, it is necessary to intensify activities and complete the development of missing by-laws in this year

New Forest Law which was adopted at the Government Commission for Economic Policy yesterday will set up the legislative framework for enforcement of the National Forest policy and will harmonize the effective legislation with the European policies and standards. Support of both FODEMO and SNV was of extreme importance in its preparation. It will be necessary to engage all the professional capacities of state institutions and international support in the next period, in order to have this Law enacted at the shortest possible notice, with active participation of civil society and wider professional and scientific public. This is the priority task for 2010. Which is the obligation of the respective Ministry in accordance with the Government Program for this year

- c) National Forest Strategy / Program of sector development:** In order to provide sustainable and multi functional forest management it will be necessary to pass the National Strategy with Forest and Forestry Development Plan – which is defined in the new Draft Forest law as a „long-term document, which specifies and enforces the objectives and guidelines for development of forests and forestry, stipulated within the National Forest policy, and contains the plan of necessary measures as well as financial and incentive means for their execution“. Currently, reality is that the work on this document will be done after adoption of the new Forest Law, and certain parts of the Strategy basis(data, studies, reviews) , should be done earlier, through international support and existing personnel, technical and financial potentials, with previous approval of state institutions

National Action Plan for combatting illegal activities in forestry was adopted in 2009. and dynamics of its enforcement will to a large extent depend on limited personnel capacities, but a significant improvement was made especially when speaking about cross border cooperation and cooperation between the institutions. Within that meaning, it will be necessary to train Inspection authorities in both personnel and technical manner in order to ensure more efficient implementation of legal solutions. Stronger logistical and professional support with respect to substantial funds that are defined in framework budget of this document will be needed in 2010.

- d) Monitoring Plan** – will define key standards and indicators of progress in implementation of the National Forest Policy and all the other plans that come out of the National Forest Program. It will define the manner in which the different stakeholders will participate in regular analysis of sector performance. This document will be done as the „compositional part“ or as the follow-up document of the National forest strategy, and because of the limited human resources it will be done when legal conditions are met (it is treated within the draft of the Forest law), but surely not before 2011.
- e) New institutional framework** – will harmonize functions, responsibilities, structures and activities of Governmental institutions with the role they are going to have within the forestry sector in order to enable adequate enforcement of the policy in the sector. It will clearly distinguish functions of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management in regulatory area, forest management and provision of services, as well as of Forest Administration, and will define the key role of the civil society in management and monitoring of forests in Montenegro. After accepting certain recommendations of administrative bodies provided by recently completed Functional review of institutions in forestry sector, the following step will be the Business Process Review that will be funded by FODEMO project. Work on the new systematization of Forest administration has already started as a response to numerous challenges expecting this institution in further reform of the forestry sector

- f) Building human resources in forestry** – focus of international projects (FODEMO, UNDP, SNV, NFG) was strengthening capacities of state institutions, which gave significant results. New proposal of the Project „Support to Capacity Building in Forestry Sector” prepared by the Ministry of Agriculture, forestry and Water management and Forest Administration was submitted to the delegation of the European Commission in Montenegro, for financing through IPA 2010 fund. Purpose of the Project is building capacities of forestry sector of Montenegro through setting up and training for systems of sustainable forest management, in accordance with EU standards, especially with upcoming EU regulations regarding marketing of wood products to EU market and EU regulations on rural development. In addition to that, the common objective that requires synergy of all the projects within the sector is to develop the plan of continuous training and vocational education, which will strengthen capacities of employees of state institutions of forestry sector, pursuant to new institutional framework, for the needs of more efficient and effective enforcement of their new mandates. For example, during the implementation of the National Forest inventory we shall build the personnel capacities within the Montenegrin forestry sector who will be able to work alone in next cycles of forest inventory and use obtained results for purposes of continuous monitoring of forest resources.
- g) Support to establishment of sustainable private sector in forestry**– this activity is essential for forestry reform and is being continuously performed for the last several years, especially through providing assistance to private forest owners associations by SNV. National Forest policy has made the step forward within the meaning of higher engagement of the state when speaking about private forest owners and support to private forestry sector in general. Principal components of that support are as follows: professional and financial (subsidies) support to private forest owners and associations, support to development of entrepreneurship, increase of productivity, quality and profitability that private forests provide to their owners; ensure the forestry gives higher contribution to rural development and increasing competitiveness of Montenegrin forest products in European markets. Draft of the Forest Law provided direct benefits to associations of private forest owners in respect of utilization of non-wood forest products. It is necessary to have better utilization of wood biomass as a renewable energy source from private forests and to ensure Montenegrin forest products meet standards required for accessing the EU markets. Special attention and support must be given to institutions and private forest sector enterprises, especially professional service providers in forestry, having in mind the need for recent introduction of licences for carrying out these jobs
- h) Improvement of informational basis** – implementation of the National Forest inventory, introduction of improved instruments and procedures of forest management planning and setting up of forest informational system will all improve planning and monitoring in national and local level. All of these activities will be enforced (or their major part) in 2010.

Work on the National Forest inventory that will last for 2 years, started beginning of 2009., a part of necessary equipment for data collecting was procured; advisory team working on defining the methodology was selected; field training of local forestry experts carried out. Field work is anticipated for 2010 so that it will collect relevant information on status and distribution, structure characteristics, utilization and changes of forest fund.

When speaking about forest management planning, previous planning model did not provide compliance of interventions in the field with plans. Key reasons for inefficiency of

this model are: insufficient cooperation of planners and personnel implementing management plans in the field; unclearly divided responsibilities for enforcement of plans and opposition of interests of forest beneficiaries and authority implementing management. With assistance of FODEMO project, in the next period we shall set up the new model for interactive forest silvicultural planning that implies joining responsibilities for forest management planning and interventions in the field, which will help in obtaining the higher responsibility of local forestry engineer

***NFP Matrix***

NFP Matrix being updated during this Forum will be additional worked on and published by state institutions in the first half of 2010., as a coherent framework for implementation of NFP.

***Partnership and public information***

In implementation of the above mentioned activities it is necessary to have the partnership of all the stakeholders. It is especially important to provide all the conditions for informing public in a manner that shall be in accordance with the best positive practices

***Promotion of forestry***

Signatories of this Statement commit to put their efforts to promote activities of forestry workers in adequate manner and realistic to wider public

***Organization of Forum***

Montenegrin Forest Forum will be held each year, in its first quarter. Forum organizers will be state institutions – the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management and Forest Administration, with assistance of international institutions/projects. Organizational Committee will be established and it will deal with current topic/s that marked or will mark the sector reform in that period

Compositional part of this Statement is Conclusions from Panels organized within the Forum (Annex 1).

Dr. Milosav Anđelić, Deputy Minister  
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management \_\_\_\_\_

Radoš Šućur, Director  
Forest Administration \_\_\_\_\_

Miodrag Bakić, president  
National Association of Private Forest Owners \_\_\_\_\_

James Acworth, Chief Technical Advisor  
FODEMO project \_\_\_\_\_

Franc Ferlin,  
SNV Montenegro \_\_\_\_\_

***In Podgorica, 10th February 2010.***