

## **FOURTH FOREST MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING**

Venue: 'SIRIUS' HOTEL, Prishtina

Date: December 18, 2012

### **MEETING AGENDA**

- 14:00 – 14:10 Welcome speech and adoption of meeting agenda,  
Mr. Kushtrim Cukaj, Chairman of Forest Management Board
- 14:10 – 14:20 Overview of developments in forestry sector in 2012  
Mr. Blerand Stavileci, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development
- 14:20 – 14:50 Adoption of minutes of the Third Forest Management Board meeting and revised  
concept papers on Kosovo Forest Information System and Monitoring and  
Evaluation System for PSP implementation
- 14:50 – 15:20 Brief overview of major developments in Forestry sector between two board  
meetings
- JAR and Preparation of the Sector Progress Report
  - Status of the Draft Forest Law and Laws on National Parks
  - Private Forestry Sector since the strategy is adopted
  - Current and planned projects in Forestry sector
- 15:20 – 15:40 Discussion about the FAO report on Socio-economic aspects of the forestry sector in  
Kosovo
- 15:40 – 16:00 Presentation of Draft Training Plan for Forest Management Board
- 16:00 – 16:15 AOB
- 16:15 – 16:30 Conclusions and further steps

Participants on the meeting:

Forest Management Board

- Mr. Kushtrim Cukaj, Chairman of the Forest Management Board
- Mr. Kapllan Halimi, Member, General Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development
- Mr. Arben Çitaku, Member, General Secretary of the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning
- Mr. Naim Ismajli, Member, President of the Association of the Municipalities in Kosovo

- Mr. Bashkim Gashi, Member, President of the Association of the Private Forest Owners in Kosovo
- Mr. Brian Fahey, Member, USAID Representative

***Special Guest***

Mr Blerand Stavileci, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development

**Absent:**

- Mr. Naim Baftiu, Member, General Secretary of the Ministry of Finance
- Mr. Xhavit Dakaj, Member, General Secretary of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
- Mr. Matti Maatta, Member, EU Representative

***Coordination Unit, project staff and consultants, observers:***

- Mr. Aleksandar Nikolovski, FAO Chief Technical Advisor, "Support to the Implementation of the Forestry Policy and Strategy in Kosovo", member of the Coordination Unit
  - Mr. Naser Krasniqi, FAO National Team Leader, "Support to the Implementation of the Forestry Policy and Strategy in Kosovo", member of the Coordination Unit
  - Ms. Vera Muhaxhiri, FAO National Consultant for Institutional and Policy Development "Support to the Implementation of the Forestry Policy and Strategy in Kosovo"
  - Mr. Auberon Kelmendi, Translator of the FAO project "Support to the Implementation of the Forestry Policy and Strategy in Kosovo".
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## MINUTES OF THE MEETING

1. Mr. Kushtrim Cukaj, Chairman of the Forest Management Board (further in the text - FMB) opened the fourth FMB meeting by wishing a welcome to the Board Members and other participants.

Initially, Mr. Cukaj presented the agenda of the fourth FMB meeting asking the members of the Board to give comments or add new topics on the proposed meeting agenda and in same time he proposed to add two topics for discussions: (i) Letter of Chairman of the Forest Management Board to Minister and (ii) Laws on National parks approved by Assembly of Kosovo, into the topic "AOB". The Agenda has been approved including the two additional topics proposed. Mr. Citaku's proposal to keep the discussions short was agreed by FMB members.

2. Chairman informed the FMB members that Minister of Agriculture Forestry and Rural Development will join the meeting later.

3. The Chairman of the Board requested the FMB members to comment and approve the minutes from the third FMB meeting. Mr. Halimi suggested that the Minutes of the third meeting to be amended, in 'page 4' the word "orthophotos" should be replaced into "aerial photograph", this suggestion was accepted by Chairman. The FMB secretariat committed to do the amendments. The Minutes of the meeting held on October, 17<sup>th</sup>, were adopted unanimously by FMB members present in this meeting.

4. The Chairman of the Board requested from the Coordination Unit (FAO project for support the implementation of the forest policy and strategy in Kosovo) brief information regarding the latest developments for establishment of Monitoring and Evaluation System and Kosovo Forest Information System:

Mr. Krasniqi informed the FMB that FAO project consultants have further discussed with MAFRD about the concept papers for developing and establishing the System for Monitoring and Evaluation of Forest Policy and Strategy implementation and Kosovo Forest Information System. All comments received by MAFRD are included into the revised versions of concept papers for M&E and KFIS. This was confirmed by Mr. Halimi. The chairman asked FMB members for further comments on the revised concept papers, and asked the FAO Support Project to incorporate comments received by FMB member Mr. Maatta. Mr. Cukaj committed to provide Mr. Krasniqi with these comments and concluded that concept papers for M&E and KFIS are acceptable for FMB.

Mr. Nikolovski informed FMB members that FAO Support Project will prepare the draft ToR for developing Kosovo Forest Information System, which will be initially presented to FMB Board.

5. The Chairman has proceeded with the next topic of the agenda, he invited the members of Coordination Unit to update about the JAR process and preparation of the Annual Progress Report 2012 (APR 2012) for the Forestry Sector in Kosovo.

Mr. Krasniqi informed FMB members that the FAO project will support MAFRD on drafting the Annual Progress Report 2012, preparations has already started in this month. Collection and analyses of sector performance data using M&E system will start during the month of January 2013 and these information will be a main input to APR 2012. The draft of APR 2012 will be presented and

discussed in FMB and then in Joint Annual Review Workshop that will be held in the second part of February 2013.

6. Regarding the status of draft Forest Law and two Laws on National Parks, the chairman has informed FMB members that the Laws on National Parks “Bjeshket e Nemuna” and “Sharri” are adopted by the parliament while the draft Law on Forest is returned back to the government. Mr. Cukaj has stressed that despite the comments prepared and given from MAFRD about the practical and sectorial importance of the Laws on National Parks, their impacts on related development aspects, such as environment, social and economic development, the comments are not taken into account by Assembly of Kosovo. In this context, Mr. Cukaj, proposed to review the Laws by requesting from President of Kosovo to return the Laws to Assembly of Kosovo for further discussion and review. This request has been supported by almost all FMB members.

Mr. Çitaku explained that the “Sharri park” has been always a national protected zone, and it still fulfils the criteria of continuing to be a national park. The area called “Bjeshket e Nemura” is announced as a national protected zone but it can still be used for economical purposes.

Mr. Çitaku stressed that the benefit of announcing these areas as national parks is to protect them from the illegal activities which are happening a lot recently.

Mr. Halimi was complaining that no one from his Ministry has been invited from MESP while the drafting of these Laws were conducted. He emphasised the fact that besides that the MAFRD is fully right on its requests on Laws, the MAFRD staff were not fully involved to support it in “public hearing meetings organised by Assembly of Kosovo”. Mr. Halimi believed that there is a need to prepare a cost/benefit analysis of managing with these zones before any decision is taken. Mr. Halimi further urged on consideration of the economic and social aspects by using the forest which will contribute for decreasing the unemployment rate in rural areas, which is also one of the Government’s objectives.

Mr. Ismajli suggested to everyone to contribute to this issue as an expert, without supporting interest of the institution they present. By not being satisfied with approval of these Laws, he emphasised the need for reviewing the three related Laws. He agrees with Mr. Çitaku that the zones should be protected but in other side forest area can be used for national economic and social interest and still not harming the environment.

Mr. Ismajli proposed that FMB to draft a Letter to be sent to President of Kosovo with request for returning the Laws to Assembly of Kosovo for reviewing. The consensus on this proposal has been achieved by almost all FMB members present in this meeting.

There was a consensus from all FMB members that if one of the Laws gets amending then other two ones should follow, in order to be consistent.

Mr. Cukaj also stressed that the Laws are in contradictions with Law on Nature Protection where in Article 11 of that Law says that the “national protected zones cannot be used economically”. Mr. Cukaj committed himself that will start drafting the Letter for president and asked the members present to give their contribution too.

7. The FMB chairman invited Mr. Gashi from Private Forest Sector to brief about the status of private forestry in Kosovo. Mr. Gashi requested from the Kosovo Institutions to not only look at the forest in terms of environment protection but as well as in terms of private ownership and welfare. He stated that in ideal conditions, the Government should compensate the private owners for their ownership in the forest lands being announced as national protection areas. He, also, reminded to FMB that the Policy and Strategy paper on Forest Sector Development clearly emphasize the role of integrating and supporting the private owners and private sector participation for development of forestry in Kosovo, which in reality is not happening.

Mr. Çitaku agrees with that that the Government of Kosovo shall compensate the private owners but this might be a long process forward since the ownership of most of the forest land is not clear.

The Minister Mr Blerand Stavileci jointed the FMB meeting, the chairman asked FMB members to go back to topic 2 of the Agenda. In his speech, the Minister stressed his concern regarding the recent developments in forest sector. The Minister informed the FMB that in his speech during the Closing Event of Twinning Project supporting Forestry Sector, he stated that project was not very successful and this can be easily proved by the latest disapproval of MAFRD comments into the new Law on Forest by Assembly of Kosovo, because the comments were not properly prepared. In regard to Laws on National Parks, Minister expressed his dissatisfaction to Assembly of Kosovo by approving the Laws without involving any professional judgement. In his opinion, it is not too late to react therefore he supports the idea of requesting the President of Kosovo to return the Laws to Assembly for further review, and that the review should be done by experts of different fields (environment, social, and economic development), i.e. by using the multidisciplinary approach. The Minister has also stated that the competences in forestry sector between Governmental and Local (municipal) authorities may be reviewed-again done by experts of different fields.

Mr. Halimi proposed to discuss the remaining topics of Agenda as well as some other issues in an extraordinary FMB meeting, which could be held on December, 28<sup>th</sup>. The Chairman asked FMB members for their comments to this proposal. The proposal has been approved unanimously. The FMB secretariat has confirmed the organisation of the meeting and committed to prepare the Agenda for next meeting including the following topics:

- Draft Letter to President of Kosovo
- Reviewing the FMB role and functions
- Presentation of Draft Training Plan for Forest Management Board
- Discussion about the FAO report on Socio-economic aspects of the forestry sector in Kosovo

The next meeting of the FMB should be held on **December, 28<sup>th</sup> 2012, at 10:00, at Hotel Sirius.**

Prepared by:

Kushtrim Cukaj, Chairman of the Forest Management Board, &  
The Coordination Unit of the Board

December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012