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Alimentación

**Project: Support to Implementation of the Forest Policy and Strategy in Kosovo
GCP/KOS/005/FIN**

Report

Kosovo Forest Management Board Study Tour to Finland

21 to 25 May 2012

Prepared by:

Aleksandar Nikolovski, Chief Technical Adviser
Naser Krasniqi, National Team Leader

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Introduction

FAO project “Support the Implementation of Forest Policy and Strategy in Kosovo” project symbol GCP/KOS/005/FIN started in May 2011. The focus of the project activities is on provision of technical assistance to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Development in implementation of forest sector policies and strategies. The Government of Kosovo has adopted the Policy and Strategy Paper on Forest Sector Development 2010–2020 (PSP) in 2010. The PSP as document stresses the meaning of economic significance of the sector taking into consideration also the multi-functional role the forestry.

Soon after the adoption of PSP the Government of Kosovo formed the Forest Management Board (FMB). The board is established as inter institutional entity for supervision of forest policy and strategy implementation. The Forest Management Board is composed of nine members, seven national and two international members, representing different stakeholders including four ministries. Formally the Forest Management Board was established on 14 December 2011. After establishment of the Forest Management Board, the initial activity undertaken was determination of tasks and responsibilities of the FMB members.

To support the functioning of FMB, the FAO project team is acting as a Coordination Unit (secretariat) of the FMB. The role of Coordination Unit is to facilitate the work of Forest Management Board. The role of Coordination Unit is defined in component one of the project document which aims to strengthen the institutional capacity of the government for implementing new forest policy and strategy and its action plans.

In order to enhance the competencies of the Forest Management Board, FAO in close cooperation with Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development in Kosovo, organized a study tour to a Finland. As a country with well advanced forestry sector Finland offered unique opportunity to the FMB members to expand their views how to prepare themselves to support forestry development process in Kosovo.

1. The objective of Study Tour

The objective of the FMB study visit in Finland was to obtain information on organization of the Finnish Forestry Sector. The study tour participants also exchanged views with forestry experts and other stakeholders in Finland on lessons learnt during implementation of National Forest Program in Finland. These lessons could be used in the process of implementation of the policies and strategies for development of the forestry sector in Kosovo.

The study tour program was organized taking into consideration to the priorities and issues identified in the forest policy and strategy in Kosovo 2010 - 2020. In accordance with these priorities, information's were collected from the following institutions and organizations:

- Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Finland;
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland;
- Finnish Forest Research Institute - METLA;
- Natural Heritage Services, State Enterprise – Metsähallitus;

- Finnish Forestry Centre
- Forestry Development Centre – TAPIO
- Associations of Private Forests Owners;
- Centre for Education, Research and Development – TTS;
- Vocational Forestry Education Center in EVO;
- Päijänne national park;
- Private forest enterprises.

Specific focus was given on:

- Organization of the forestry institutions;
- Forest planning and management;
- Forest harvesting and protection;
- Capacity building;
- Nature protection;
- Private forest sector;
- Tourism and bio-energy.

The FMB study visit was hosted by the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Finnish Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. Main organizer and institution in charge for the program implementation was Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

2. Study tour participants and place visited

The Kosovo Forest Management Board includes nine members representing four ministries, private forest sector, association of municipalities in Kosovo, an independent expert and two internationals representing EU and USA. Due to various reasons, seven FMB members participated at the study tour, accompanied by the Coordination Unit and Minister Representative.

The participants of the study tour in Finland are indicated in the table below:

	Name	Title	Organization of origin	Role in the project
1	Mr. Kushtrim Cukaj	Chairman of the Forest Management Board	Ministry Of Agriculture Forestry and Rural Development	Member of Forest Management Board
2	Mr. Kapllan Halimi	Permanent Secretary	Ministry Of Agriculture Forestry and Rural Development	Member of Forest Management Board

3	Mr. Xhavit Dakaj	Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Science, Education and Technology	Member of Forest Management Board
4	Ms. Emine Telaku	Head of budget department	Ministry of Finance	Replacement of Member of Forest Management Board
5	Mr. Naim Ismajli	Chairman of Association of Municipalities in Kosovo	Association of Municipalities in Kosovo	Member of Forest Management Board
6	Mr. Bashkim Gashi	Chairman of the Association of Private Forest Owners	Association of Private Forest Owners	Member of Forest Management Board
7	Mr. Matti Maatta	Regional Director	Metsähallitus, Finland	Member of Forest Management Board
8	Mr. Ahmet Zejnullahu	Chief Executive	Kosovo Forest Agency Ministry Of Agriculture Forestry and Rural Development	National Project Coordinator
9	Mr. Bashkim Thaçi	Adviser to the Minister of Agriculture Forestry and Rural Development	Ministry Of Agriculture Forestry and Rural Development	Member of the Project Coordination Unit
10	Mr. Agron Bajraktari	Adviser to the Minister of Agriculture Forestry and Rural Development	Ministry Of Agriculture Forestry and Rural Development	Minister representative
11	Mr. Agron Bërdyna	Officer on European Integration	Ministry Of Agriculture Forestry and Rural Development	Member of Project Steering Committee
12	Mr. Bekim Hoxha	Chief of Permanent Secretary office at Ministry Of Agriculture Forestry and Rural Development	Ministry Of Agriculture Forestry and Rural Development	Member of Task Force established for Forestry Joint Annual Review
13	Mr. Aleksandar Nikolovski	Chief Technical Adviser	FAO	Member of the Coordination Unit
14	Mr. Naser Krasniqi	National Team Leader	FAO	Member of the Coordination Unit

Place visited:

- Tuesday 22 May, 2012: Seminar: Forestry and agriculture in Finland, Hotel Grand Marina Helsinki
- Wednesday 23 May, 2012: Farm Proagria, Markku Lappi, Karkola Yli – Airolantie 17; Wood in building and design, Pro puu centre, Lahti; Forestry Vocational Education, EVO; Forester's estate Haintintie 792 Janakkala
- Thursday 24 May, 2012: Forest planning and wood harvesting (on the way in Lammi region), Anti Alhola, Logistics Manager, Paijat-Hame Private Forests Owners Association; Chipping and heating plant in Lammi: Pasi Ruuska, LNI Vattenfall; Päijänne national park, Asikkala.

3. Topics and issues addressed during the Study Tour

Forestry and Agriculture in Finland. The heads of institutions dealing with forestry and agriculture in Finland presented the status of these sectors, organization, planning and management of the resources and current trends of developments of these sectors.

Mr. Juha Ojala the Director General in the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, presented organizational set up, current status and functioning of the forestry sector in Finland. Processes of change in forest sector and reforms of forest administration in Finland (Finnish Forestry Centre, Forestry Development Centre Tapio, Metsähallitus), amendments of Act on Forests and government efforts to ensure balanced and equal competitive positions in the forestry sector were also in-depth elaborated. The Director General further informed on the forestry institutions in Finland, mandates and responsibilities and their roles for implementation of the Forest Policy and National Forest Programme in Finland.

Mr. Veli-Pekka Talvela from Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry presented to the study tour participants the status of agriculture sector in Finland. Emphasizes was given to structure and mandate of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry land use, structure and agriculture production.

Finland's National Forest Program. Ms. Marja Kokkonen, Secretary General of National Forest Program (NFP), presented the objectives of the National Forest Program in Finland 2015 and responsible institutions for supervising and implementation of the program.

Finland's National Forest Programme 2015 has three objectives, aiming to; strengthen forest based business and increase the value of production; improve the profitability of forestry and strengthen forest biodiversity, environmental benefits and welfare implications. All these objectives are defined with clear targets, actions and measures for implementations.

The implementation of Finland's National Forest Programme is coordinated by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, with support from the Forest Council and its Secretariat. The steering groups of projects and working groups under the Forest Council promote and follow

the implementation work. The size and term of the working groups vary according to the specific areas.

State Forest Management in Finland. Mr. Matti Maatta, Regional Manager, Metsähallitus, presented the mandate and activities of the Metsähallitus “Administration of Forests” which is in charge of management of state-owned lands and waters. The field operations of Metsähallitus are oriented on forestry, management of state-owned protected, hiking and wilderness areas, monitoring and protection of threatened species, nature tourism and hiking services, hunting and fisheries on state-owned lands and waters, processing and sale of soil resources, sale and lease of holiday plots and sale of forest estates, seedling and seed production. The Metsähallitus manages with 39,000 sq km of land: 37 national parks; 19 strict nature reserves; about 500 other nature reserves; 12 wilderness areas in Lapland; 32,000 sq km of public waters.

Metsähallitus operates primarily within the framework laid down by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry; Metsähallitus's nature conservation duties are guided by the Ministry of the Environment.

Forest research in Finland. Mr. Jari Varjo, Director, METLA, informed the study tour participants on the Finnish Forest Research Institute (Metla) and its international activities. Mr. Varjo was focused on presenting the tasks and functions of METLA Forest Research Institute, its mandate is to conduct research and development activities; to generate and disseminate research information and technology transfer; to promote national and international cooperation and networking and anticipate future development in forestry and forest research; to manage long-term research field experiments, research material and databases.

Main research areas of METLA are; Forest-based enterprise and business activities; societal impact of forests; structure and functioning of forest ecosystems; information data banks on forestry and forest environment.

Mr. Varjo presented international activities of the METLA Institute along with a strategy and mission for international cooperation. Metla’s international activities are to strengthen the scientific and societal impacts of Metla’s research, and promote building of the future for the forest sector. The aims of Metla international strategy 2007- 2011 are to: **Maintain cutting edge know-how:** Forest inventory and monitoring forest ecosystem; production technology in Boreal forests; Sustainable management and harvesting in Boreal forest conditions **Develop scientific excellence in:** Forest bio-energy; Timber properties and utilization; Mitigation and adaptation to climate change in boreal forests and to **Increase the competence on:** Public acceptance of forest production and decreasing the carbon footprint of forest based products; International forest policy and related development policy research.

Small scale forestry and bio-energy technologies. Mr. Arto Kettunen, Director TTS (Centre for Educates, Researches and Develops) presented the activities of this centre with a

focus on vocational training offered by the centre for individuals and small and medium forestry enterprises. The mission of TTS centre researches is to; Improve productivity and well being connected to housing and the services in connection with housing, Productivity, increasing work productivity, Development of working methods in agriculture, Forest work and forest energy, Development of entrepreneurship.

They provide training and research on use of bio-energy and forest machine operators with topics on new methods and technologies in harvesting energy wood + planning, measuring and trading energy wood, small scale boilers and burners using biomaterials as fuel (new inventions, different manufacturers).

These trainings are tailored for forest owners, entrepreneurs, and employees dealing with forest energy.

Development cooperation of Finland in the field of Forestry and Agriculture. Mr. Vesa Kaarakka Forestry Adviser at Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Mr. Ismo Kolehmainen Deputy Director Unit for Western Balkan, Ministry of Foreign Affairs presented Finland's development cooperation in forestry, agriculture, rural development and food security.

The new development policy 2012 of Finland is based on provision of assistance for development aiming to ensure that most vulnerable groups are aware of their rights, strengthening the status of poor, reduce social inequality and absolute poverty. Key focal areas are: environment and sustainable management of natural resources; green economy and; society that promotes human rights and democracy. The main focus of Finnish cooperation is on the least developed countries of Africa and Asia.

The purpose of Finland's development cooperation in forest sector is to enhance sustainable forestry and forest management and through that equitable economic growth, reduction of poverty and risk of environmental threats. Policy Guidelines for Forest Sector are revised. Sustainable use and management of natural resources Climate sustainability, links between forests / climate change, Land and resource rights, especially indigenous, local peoples, forests etc.

Finland's development cooperation in forest sector, aims to; Support national forest programs; Enhance the role of forests in mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change; Take into consideration the role of forests in agriculture, land use and rural development (and other relevant) policies; Support international forest policy processes; Establish strategic partnerships with research and funding agencies to increase cooperation, improve change of information and knowledge between donors, forest research and management organizations (e.g. FAO, World Bank, CIFOR, IUFRO, GEF, ICRAF, CATIE, EFI).

Multipurpose farming– field visit. The study tour participants visited a farm in Karkola Yli – Airolantie 17. Mr. Markku Lappi, a farmer, presented his farm with the focus on

agriculture, forestry and bio-energy combined activities. The multipurpose farming was introduced to participants.

Wood in building and design. The study tour participants have visited Pro puu centre in Lahti, where they observe the exhibition of the wood used for building and design purposes. Various wood joints and designs were exhibited that could be used as interiors or exteriors solutions.

Forestry Vocational Education in Finland– field visit. Mr. Timo Hokka, Program Leader at Evo forestry school presented to the study tour participants the forestry vocational education in Finland and the organization of Evo forestry school. The Evo forestry school provides forestry vocational education through two study programmes, Education for forestry engineers, 4 years studies and Education for basic forestry, 3 years studies. The curricula for forest engineers is based on forest resource management and entrepreneurship, while secondary forestry education offers education for forest technicians, forest service entrepreneurs and wood energy specialist.

Forestry school in Evo offers also on job training for forestry engineers for these topics: GIS, forest fire management, bio-energy, laser application in forestry, forest estate management. They organize short courses for forest owners in silviculture and special tailor-made courses.

The projects in forestry schools in Evo are related to; laser scanning in forest inventory, wood energy and harvesting, international environmental monitoring, nature tourism, wildlife management.

Forestry school in Evo manages 7500 hectares of state forests. This area is under Natura 2000 Network Initiative for conservation, education & research, recreation and sustainable forest management. This area is visited by 60 000 people annually. The school provides facilities for recreational fishing, hiking trail network, extensive campground, etc.

Private forestry sector - organization and operational activities. Mr. Bjarne Hagman presented to study tour participants the organization and the role of private forestry sector in Finland. Approximately 52% of forests in Finland are privately owned by Finnish citizens. The number of private forest holdings of at least one hectare is about 440.000. The number of individual private forest owners is estimated at 920.000, which means that almost every fifth Finn is a forest owner.

Average size of private forest holding in Finland is around 25 hectares. In southern Finland the holdings are smaller compared to the sizes in northern Finland, where the average is 65 hectares. For many forest owners forest revenues are an important source of income. In average a forest holding's annually generate gross income from timber sales amount of 3.600 Euros. 65-70% of the annual increment and 80-85% of the commercial felling of timber comes from privately owned forests.

Maa- ja metsätaloustuottajain Keskusliitto MTK's Forestry Council is the forest owners' national organization. It operates through the Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners (MTK). The MTK's Forestry Council looks after private forest owners' interests by providing information on wood markets and prices, influencing forest policy and developing the operation of regional Forest Owners' Unions and local Forest Management Associations.

The purpose of 8 regional Forest Owners Unions is to develop private forestry, look after private forest owners' interest in the region and to guide the Forest Management Associations operations. 112 Forest Management Associations assist forest owners in forest management and wood sales, carry out silvicultural and forest improvement work and raise the professional knowledge and skills of forest owners.

Forest planning and wood harvesting – field visit. The study tour participants have seen in practical the forest operations in private forest. The private forest owner requested thinning to be done in his forests and private forest company was contracted to do the job. The participants of the study tour had an opportunity to see how harvester works and how a trained forest worker operates with the machine.

Wood chipping and heating plant– field visit. The participants of the study tour visited a heating plant which uses the wooden chips as a raw material for production heat energy for the needs of local community. The participants were introduced with capacities and operation of the plant and visited the place where chipping machine produces wood chips from thinning operations for the plant needs.

Päijänne national park – field visit. One the way back to Helsinki, the study tour participants visited Päijänne National Park, where they have been informed and they have seen the advantages of the national park in terms of nature conservation and organization of the recreational and touristic activities.

4. Conclusions and follow-up

The conclusions on the structure, usefulness, adequacy and quality of the Study Tour in Finland are derivated from the discussions on impressions of the study tour participants. The main conclusions of the Coordination Unit are as follows:

- The Forest Management Board study tour in Finland was well organized and generally speaking meets expectations of the participants;
- The organizers selected adequate places to visit;
- The topics presented to the study tour participants were appropriate and useful for the future Forest Management Board activities as well as for the other forestry institutions in Kosovo;
- The presenters were well prepared and open for further discussions about details;
- The current status and trends in Finnish forestry sector are desirable developmental targets for Kosovo forestry sector;

- The institutional setup for forestry sector in Finland could be used as a model for restructuring of institutional capacities in Kosovo;
- The organization of the forestry education in Finland can be used as an example for establishment of forest vocational education and training in Kosovo;
- Cooperation between private forest owners association in Kosovo with private forest owners associations in Finland should be established for know-how purposes;
- Bio-energy is a very interesting topic for Kosovo's forestry sector, best practices from Finland should be used extensively in development of this sub-sector in Kosovo;
- The experiences in management of the national parks and protected areas in Finland could be used as development objectives in Kosovo management of the national parks and protected areas.

Follow-up

The information and experiences gathered by study tour participants during the stay in Finland are very useful for implementation of forest policy and strategy and development of forestry sector in Kosovo.

In particular, Forest Management Board members with the knowledge gained at the study visit in Finland can easily adopt a comprehensive work plan with objectives and priorities for implementation of forest policy and strategy in Kosovo.

The experiences from a advanced forestry sector, such is in Finland, are very much welcomed to decision makers in Kosovo to build new institutional vision for sustainable use of forest resources. These experiences should be carefully considered by Forest Management Board and other forestry institutions as model how to upgrade the status of forest sector and its contribution to overall economy in Kosovo. As an example, during the decision making process on selection of priority projects for implementation of forest policy and strategy in Kosovo, the Forest Management Board members can consult people from forestry institutions in Finland. Maintaining contact further is very useful habit in particular for development of projects related forestry vocational education and training, development of private forestry sector, bio-energy and use of bio mass and management of protected areas.

5. Evaluation of the Study Tour by the participants

The evaluation sheet is prepared by FAO office in Pristina. The study tour participants are questioned two weeks after the study visit, to evaluate the visit in Finland through four on segments:

- I. Relevance of study tour
- II. Informative and training material
- III. Assessment of Study tour facilitators and Finnish presenters
- IV. Logistic and communication

Without presenting the details expressed in percents aiming to be more coherent in presenting the findings, the Coordination Unit (Project Team) interprets the finding of the evaluation as follows;

- Impressions of the participants from the study tour are very positive, in particular regarding the **content, the institutions presented and field visits**. The study tour was evaluated as **very relevant** for Forest Management Board activities.
- The **informative and training materials** were at satisfactory level, yet some participants expressed opinion that information's disseminated through presentation were satisfactory but handouts of the materials (hard copies) could be of better quality, perhaps prepared at a level of manual and handbook.
- **Study tour organizers and facilitators** were evaluated as very capable in organizing the study tour events and presenting selected topics. The time management, presentation abilities, facilitation of communications is also well evaluated.
- With **logistic of the study tour** the participants were satisfied in particular accommodation, catering and transportation provided by the organizers. **Communication** with organizers, people from Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and people from Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland was assessed as very satisfactory.

ANNEX I

Visit of Kosovo Forest Management Board to Finland from 21 to 25 May 2012

Study Visit Programme

Monday 21 May	
23:20	Arrival and Accommodation at Hotel Grand Marina, Helsinki
Tuesday 22 May	
08:00	Breakfast at hotel
09:30-12:30	Seminar: Forestry and agriculture in Finland (Hotel Grand Marina)
	Forestry in Finland, Juha Ojala, Director General, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
	Agriculture in Finland, Veli-Pekka Talvela, Director General, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
	National forest program, Marja Kokkonen, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
	Development cooperation of Finland in the field of Forestry and Agriculture, Vesa Kaarakka, Sanna-Liisa Taivalmma, Ministry for Foreign Affairs
12:30-14:00	Lunch with Veli-Pekka Talvela, Director general, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (restaurant Makasiini, Grand Marina)
14:00-15:00	Forest research in Finland, international activities, Jari Varjo, Director, METLA
15:00-16:00	Small scale forestry and bioenergy technologies, Arto Kettunen, Director TTS
16:00-17:00	State Forest Management in Finland, Matti Maatta, Manager, Metsähallitus
19:30	Dinner with Heikki Granholm, Director, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (restaurant, Grand Marina)
Wednesday 23 May	
07:30	Breakfast at hotel
08:30	Transport to Lahti (distance 110 km)
	Farm visit: agriculture, forestry, bio-energy, Proagria, Markku Lappi, Karkola Yli – Airolantie 17
12:30-14:00	Lunch, Restaurant Casseli, Lahti

14:00-15:00	Wood in building and design, Pro puu centre, Lahti
15:00-16:00	Transport to Evo (distance 65 km)
16:00-17:30	Forestry education in Finland, Evo forestry school, Timo Hokka, Program Leader
17:30-18:30	Transport to Forester's estate Haintintie 792 Janakkala (50 km)
19:00-20:30	Buffet dinner at Forester's estate
20:30	Accommodation at Forester's estate
Thursday 24 May	
07:30-	Breakfast at Forester's estate
08:30-	Presentation of private forestry sector organization and operational activities in Finland, Bjarne Haggman, Forestry and Environmental expert, Forestry Development Centre Tapio
10:00-	Field visit: Forest planning and wood harvesting (on the way in Lammi region). Anti Alhola, Logistics Manager, Paijat-Hame Private Forests Owners Association
12:00-12:45	Lunch
13:00-15:00	Presentation of chipping and heating plant in Lammi: Pasi Ruuska, LNI Vattenfall Coffee/Tea break
15:00-	Transport to Asikkala (distance 35 km)
15:30-18:30	Visit to Päijänne national park, cruise M/S Elbatar Jere Rauhala Director of National Park, Metsähallitus
18:30-	Transport to Helsinki and accommodation at Scandic Hotel Marski
Friday 25 May	
04:00	To the Helsinki airport
11:50	Arrival at Pristina airport