

**National Report to the Fifth Session of the  
United Nations Forum on Forests**

**CYPRUS**

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## **I. Key Contacts**

### **Head of Forestry in Cyprus**

Name: Mr. Aristides P. Ioannou

Title: Director of the Department of Forests

Contact information:

Address: Department of Forests  
1414 Nicosia

Cyprus

Phone: 00357-22805500

Fax: 00357-22781419

E-mail: [planning@fd.moa.gov.cy](mailto:planning@fd.moa.gov.cy)

### **UNFF national focal point for Cyprus**

Name: Mr. Aristides P. Ioannou

Title: Director of the Department of Forests

Contact information:

Address: Department of Forests  
1414 Nicosia

Cyprus

Phone: 00357-22805500

Fax: 00357-22781419

E-mail: [planning@fd.moa.gov.cy](mailto:planning@fd.moa.gov.cy)

### **Person to contact concerning the national report, if other than the UNFF national focal point:**

Name: Mr. Charalampos Alexandrou

Title: Planning officer

Contact information:

Address: Department of Forests  
1414 Nicosia

Cyprus

Phone: 00357-22805517

Fax: 00357-22781419

E-mail: [planning@fd.moa.gov.cy](mailto:planning@fd.moa.gov.cy)

## **II. Progress and issues related to implementation of IPF/IFF proposals for action**

### **General**

*Please provide additional or new information on initiatives taken or lessons learned since 1997 further to the information on forests included in your national reports<sup>1</sup> to UNFF 2, UNFF 3 and UNFF 4, the Commission on Sustainable Development, and other international instruments and organizations on the following points:*

- *assessment (including of the relevance, priority, status of implementation, planned actions) of the IPF/IFF proposals for action in the national context*

The Department of Forests has initiated a process for a thorough and detailed assessment of the relevance, priority and the progress of implementation of the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action in the national context. This process is still ongoing and it is expected to be concluded with a report in 2005.

- *development and implementation of your national forest programme or similar national policy framework for forests,*

Forestry in Cyprus has been based on multiple use since a long time ago. In ancient times the forests were more extensive and the population smaller; timber was felled for building houses and ships, and the forests were a source of food, fodder and other needs. The capacity of the forest to meet peoples' demands was not questioned and sustainability was not an issue. Timber production based on the principle of "sustainable yield" was introduced by European foresters in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and has been practiced in Cyprus throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In recent years the importance of forests as a source of a wide range of benefits, including biodiversity, climate amelioration, water, amenity and scenery, has been recognized and the sustainability concept has been expanded to cover them. It is now focused on protection of forest resources, so that their capacity to continue to provide goods and services of all kinds, for future generations, is not impaired.

In Cyprus the need to manage forest resources for multiple purposes has been clearly set out, right from the first official forest policy declaration in 1950. However, the emphasis previously given in practice to timber production and meeting domestic requirements for wood products is no longer appropriate and a new balance is emerging. Therefore, it was important to reinterpret the sustainability concept to allow for a different mixture of uses, and to focus on the maintenance of environmental quality while meeting the needs of local people and foreign tourists.

In this concept, a National Forest Programme (NFP) was adopted in 2002 covering the 10-year-period 2002-2011 and consists of three parts: the strategy, the projects and activities and the new National Forest Policy. The state of the forest resources was taken into account and measures for the betterment of the forests were proposed.

For the formulation of the NFP a steering committee was set up consisting of government and non-government organizations aiming at an inter-sectoral and holistic approach.

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<sup>1</sup> National reports related to forests may be easily accessed on the CPF website at <http://www.fao.org/forestry/foris/webview/cpf/index.jsp?siteId=2461&siteTreeId=6947&langId=1&geoId=0>, however UNFF4 reports are available only at <http://www.un.org/esa/forests/reports-unff4.html> at the time of writing.

The Strategy that was adopted in the National Forest Programme, known as the Rural Betterment Strategy, has the following objectives:

- Better conservation of natural resources,
- better facilities for visitors,
- better forest villages and
- better rural development

This strategy aims at safeguarding forest resources for the benefit of the whole community while capturing the advantages of development on ecotourism. The strategy is achieved by:

- action to protect and enhance forest cover, water supplies, wildlife and the national heritage in State forests,
- afforestation and the restoration of degraded land in the wider countryside,
- safeguarding particular places such as national parks, nature reserves etc, which have outstanding scenery, cultural importance, exceptional ecological or scientific interest, and developing them for recreation and tourism where this does not conflict with conservation aims. These special sites will be delineated both inside and outside the State forests,
- encouraging, guiding and controlling recreation and tourism development through Local Plans, zoning and development permits, in conformity with Town and Country Planning Regulations, on the strict proviso that State forests will on no account be used for building development,
- providing information and publicity about the forests and the flora and fauna they contain, directed particularly at schools, colleges, tourists and the general public, using up-to-date information technology and interpretation techniques.

The five main aspects of the strategy represent target areas in which the activities in the programme are concentrated. They include areas distinguished by geography and areas of interest connected with particular functions. For convenience they are labelled *action areas*. They relate to (i) the State forests and surrounding areas, (ii) the wider countryside, (iii) special sites, (iv) ecotourism promotion, and (v) information, publicity and education.

Action area I is focussed on the State forests and land near them; it includes the main forest areas in the mountains, which are surrounded by village communities, private land and unclaimed land that has reverted to the Government. Protection, conservation and management of these vital forest resources are closely linked with what happens on adjacent land and in the villages.

Action area II is concerned with the need to improve and restore land outside the forests, where it has been deteriorated, eroded or degraded, in order to protect water catchments, safeguard the flora and fauna and improve the scenery. Afforestation offers the best way of achieving this, although progress has been slow in the past, mainly for institutional reasons.

Action area III deals with particular sites, which have special significance for recreation and tourism, on account of their scenery or other special features, or contain important ecosystems, rare or endangered flora and fauna, or wildlife habitat, which form part of the

national heritage. Their value as national assets needs to be recognized by giving them special status in law, as national parks, nature reserves or monuments.

Action area IV concentrates on the need to stimulate, guide and regulate the provision of facilities for recreation/tourism and development in villages, so that a high quality rural environment is maintained and the national heritage is respected. Ecotourism promotion can bring substantial benefits to village communities and contribute to the general quality of life in Cyprus.

Action area V involves extending the Forestry Department's existing geographic information system (GIS) and forest inventories to cover aspects of forest management and conservation, which are not related to timber production. They include the mapping of ecosystems, recording the numbers and distribution of the flora and fauna, details of 'giant' trees and other natural monuments. The eventual aim should be to develop a national environmental database to which the Forestry Department contributes significantly. Information will then be available to support visitor centers, publications, educational projects, Internet sites, research and many other purposes.

The National Forest Programme is currently in the process of implementation. There is not any interim evaluation yet.

The Rural Development Plan for the three-year period 2004-06, which is co-financed by the European Union has generated the first considerable and streamlined interest by the public for its four forestry measures.

During the year 2004, a new attempt to thoroughly revise the Forest Legislation has been initiated under a Technical Co-operation Programme of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

- ***international cooperation, including development and implementation of partnerships***

FAO – Regional Statutory Bodies: a) Near East Forestry Commission and b) European Forestry Commission: Cyprus is traditionally a constant participant to the regional Commission for Near East where its role is considered to be very active. It is currently working on the Forest Outlook Study for the Western and Central Asia. Furthermore, there has always been a close attendance of the activities of European Forestry Commission. After the accession of Cyprus to European Union, the participation to the European Forestry Commission has gained a deeper interest.

FAO- Technical Statutory Bodies: a) Committee on Mediterranean Forestry Questions (Silva Mediterranea) and b) International Poplar Committee: Cyprus participates in both of these bodies but its role is more active in the former one.

Economic Commission for Europe – Timber Committee: There is a close cooperation with the Timber Committee regarding the exchange of forest statistics and other information.

MCPFE: Cyprus participated in the last Ministerial Conference in Vienna and signed all MCPFE's Resolutions.

Forestry issues within European Union: As full member of EU, Cyprus is in the position to participate in all activities relevant to forest matters, i.e. EU Forestry Strategy, Forest Focus Framework Regulation, Natura 2000 Programme, etc.

Cyprus-Greece co-operation programme in the field of rural sector: It is a cooperation programme in the field of which several forestry measures are included, particularly the

exchange of technical and scientific knowledge and expertise. The programme is renewed on a biennial basis, according to emerging issues.

There are also several other intergovernmental agreements or cooperation programmes in which occasionally, there are forestry-related provisions.

- *mechanisms or initiatives to facilitate stakeholder participation, including indigenous and local communities, in forest sector planning, decision-making and/or forest management*

The Forest Policy gives the opportunity to all interested parties (inhabitants of communities, forest owners and environmental NGO's) to express their opinion and make comments on each future management project. Their comments and opinions are taken into consideration in the planning and later on in decision-making. The multi-stakeholder participation in the procedure of National Forest Programme formulation has been proven of vital importance, and it can be considered as an excellent example of broad social dialogue for matters relevant to the forest sector. Currently, there is broad public consultation and stakeholder participation for the revision of Forest Legislation.

***In this general context member States may wish to refer also to the resolutions of UNFF relevant to the above elements, in particular resolution 3/4 paras. 1-13., and provide information on the implementation of these resolutions or their contribution to facilitating the implementation of IPF/IFF Proposals for Action.***

### **Implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action related to thematic issues of UNFF 2**

*Please provide information on: activities undertaken since 1997, progress made, constraints encountered, lessons learned, and issues that have emerged, as well as relevant information related to means of implementation (financing, transfer of environmentally sound technologies, and capacity-building) related to the following elements:*

#### ***Combating deforestation and forest degradation***

2. *preparing diagnostic studies to analyse historical and underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation, including processes outside the forest sector*

There is not any specific diagnostic study that analyses historical and underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation, so far. However, from historical sources and data, Cyprus was described as a heavily forested island and the minerals and timber were its two main export goods. The forests of Cyprus were exploited not as a renewable resource but rather as a mine. Large quantities of wood were used for pyrotechnology during the Bronze and Iron Ages, until the Middle Ages. During the Turkish rule (1571 – 1878) the forests were heavily degraded because of misuse and the lack of measures for their protection.

The most important factors of forest degradation in ancient times were: drought, overgrazing, misuse of forests, forest fires and the high demand for fuelwood and charcoal to meet basic energy needs. Many of these factors were interacting and some were synergistic.

The systematic management of forests started after 1878. The British rule established the Department of Forests and started the scientific management of forests based on the principle of sustainable management. The main measures taken for the protection of forests were the demarcation of the state owned forests and the institution of forest legislation.

Today the main factors causing deforestation or forest degradation are drought and successive forest fires. When these factors are followed by grazing, they have tremendous consequences on the ecosystem. In forested areas adjacent to inhabited areas or areas under urban development, the pressure for change in the land use is very high, especially for development of facilities for public use i.e. churches, sporting centers, restaurants, etc.

**3. *formulating and implementing national policies and strategies, through an open and participatory process, for addressing the underlying causes of deforestation***

During the formulation of NFP and the Rural Development Plan, as well as the ongoing process for revision of the Forest Legislation, the underlying causes of deforestation and forest degradation have been addressed and all relevant stakeholders involved are well aware of the current threats for forests.

**4. *raising awareness of the importance of issues related to deforestation and forest degradation and the multiple values of forests***

Education and training of people are crucial for the protection of forests against the main degrading factors. Responding to this need, the Department of Forests organizes lectures in schools, the army and other organized groups about the benefits of the forests, the forest enemies, which can lead to deforestation and forest degradation and measures, which should be taken for the protection of woodlands. Many articles are written by foresters in newspapers and magazines every year about matters related to forests. Also a number of radio and television interviews are given through the various TV and radio networks in the country. However, there is much work to be done in the field of raising awareness among farmers and shepherds mainly, to control grazing especially in recently burnt areas.

***Forest conservation and protection of unique types of forest and fragile ecosystems***

**5. *creating or expanding protected areas to safeguard forest and related ecosystems and their full range of values and, developing and applying criteria and methodologies for assessing the conditions and management effectiveness in protected forest areas***

The protection of ecosystems and their functions is supported by the National legislation.

Since 1997, two Nature Reserves with a total area of 3745 ha and three National Forest Parks with a total area of 158 ha were added to the existing list of protected areas.

In 2004 thirty-two (32) sites were preliminary selected and proposed for addition to the European Network of special Areas of Conservation, which is also known as Natura 2000 Network. Among them, ten (10) sites with a total area of 57 728 ha are exclusively located in forest areas, while some other sites include forests as well.

The condition and management effectiveness in protected forest areas as well as the entire forest area of the island can be assessed using evaluation tools like the Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management.

**6. *developing and implementing partnership mechanisms to engage forest owners, private sector, indigenous people and local communities in the planning and management of forest conservation areas and developing and implementing a range of innovative mechanisms for financing and encouraging forest conservation***

Due to several social and environmental conditions, the development of partnership mechanisms to engage public in the planning and management of forest conservation areas is not a challenge, so far. The management of areas included in the Natura 2000 Network may give the first examples of such mechanisms.

Provisions for financial aid to forest owners taking measures for the protection and conservation of their forest areas were included in the Rural Development Plan (2004-2006). This is the only financing mechanism until now.

**7. *giving high priority in national forest programs to the rehabilitation and sustainable management of forests and trees in environmentally critical areas, recognising the linkage between forest protection and sustainable development and improving the coordination among such policies and programmes***

The National Forest Programme includes provisions for the protection and restoration of degraded land, watershed protection, the maintenance of ecosystems and biodiversity and the conservation of the flora and fauna of Cyprus. High priority has been given in the Rural Development Plan to protect and restore woodlands and single trees in environmental critical areas or of important ecological value.

***Rehabilitation and conservation strategies for countries with low forest cover***

**8. *expanding forested area, establishing and managing plantations to enhance production of forest goods and services, while avoiding the replacement of natural ecosystems, and recognizing the role of imports in satisfying the needs for forest products and services***

Despite the fact that the forest cover of the island is about 19% of the total land area, Cyprus cannot be classified as a country with low forest cover since the total wooded area is estimated to be around 42% of the total land area. However, climatic and edaphic conditions are such that they hinder forest productivity and do not allow extensive exploitation of timber products.

Afforestations and reforestations are principally guided by the necessity to primarily provide forest services like the improvement of aesthetic values, erosion control and conservation of soil and water, protection of landscapes, conservation of wildlife and flora and recreation and tourism.

For afforestation and reforestation, only local species are nowadays used. The planting areas are selected according to the prevailing conditions and after taking into considerations all the parameters relevant to the status of ownership, availability of land, etc. Since 1997, about 2 266 ha have been planted; out of which 810 ha were aforestations aiming to the provision of the above-mentioned services. In the past, some introduced species were selected to serve specific purposes like the stabilization of road batters or embankments, the drying of marshy areas etc, but they are not any more preferred.

Generally, as Cyprus is a minor timber producing country, imports are the main source to cover the local needs for timber products. Some timber products are currently being replaced by non-wood substitutes, like laminated floorings, artificial Christmas trees, etc.

**9. *promoting the regeneration and restoration of degraded forest areas including through partnerships and building capacities to promote effective participation in decision making, and development and transfer of environmentally sound technologies***

Forest degradation is mainly the result of overgrazing, fires in forest and rural land, quarrying and mining as well as land clearance for agricultural purposes. Furthermore, development for tourism frequently leads to degradation of natural vegetation.

Emphasis has been given to mitigate the degree of degradation through the control of forest fires and grazing as well as the stricter licensing for quarrying and mining. Furthermore, the precaution is not always fully effective and thus restoration measures are needed. The Rural Development Plan provides for incentives for public and private owners to restore burnt areas through grants.

**10. *improving the efficiency of international cooperation to support the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests and building capacity to monitor forest resources***

Cyprus participates in a range of international and regional activities, initiatives and processes through which there has been significant support in the improvement of forest management, conservation and sustainable development of forests and the capacity to better monitor forest resources. Such international cooperation activities are the FAO Global Forest Resources Programme, the Natura 2000 Network, the Proposals for Actions of IPF/IFF and the UNFF resolutions and decisions, the Ministerial Conference for the Protection of Forest in Europe activities, etc.

***Rehabilitation and restoration of degraded lands and promotion of natural and planted forests***

**11. *promoting the creation of new forest resources through plantations and recognizing their role in rehabilitation of degraded lands and forests in environmentally critical areas***

Forests in Cyprus are mainly natural and their regeneration is based on natural processes. Only small scale of afforestation/reforestation, with the use of native species is applied, particularly in marginal areas or in areas where the natural regeneration fails after consecutive fires or other damaging factors.

During recent years, there has been a considerably high effort to rehabilitate lands that were previously used for mining and are now abandoned. In these areas, the Department of Forests applies planting and sowing using several techniques to maximize the success and accelerate the rehabilitation of these degraded sites.

The afforested/reforested area during the period 1997-2003 by the Department of Forests is shown in the following table.

Year	Area (ha)
1997	291

1998	249
1999	233
2000	242
2001	513
2002	345
2003	393
Total	2266

The expansion of the forest cover is of great importance and the Cyprus Government initiated a long-term programme for increasing the forest area. The implementation of the programme started through the declaration of marginal degraded state land into state forests and nowadays through the "Rural Development Plan (2004-2006)" adopted with the accession of Cyprus in the E.U.

**12. promoting policies to meet increasing demand for wood and non-wood forest products and services, through sustainable forest management.**

In the past, there were programmes and efforts to increase the growing timber stock to meet or partly satisfy the increasing local demand for wood products.

Nowadays, the concept of sustainability through the consideration of its ecological, economic and social parameters has change the whole approach for forest management from timber-oriented to multiple-use forestry.

The new strategy, known as the Rural Betterment Strategy, seeks to protect and improve the natural environment of Cyprus in order to fulfill the above concept and it is based on the multiple-use of the forest resources. It is directed at improving the condition of the forests, conservation of soils and watersheds, protection of the flora, fauna, biodiversity and heritage sites, the promotion of ecotourism, and sustainable production of wood and non-wood products.

The Department of Forests has given great emphasis to increase the provision of recreational facilities in the State forests and provides technical support to local authorities for the creation and expansion of such facilities. Furthermore, the creation of new recreational facilities is also promoted through the Rural Development Plan.

***In addition, member States may wish to refer to the resolutions of UNFF relevant to the above elements, i.e. resolution 2/2 A paras. 1-7., 2/2 B paras. 1-6., 2/2 C paras.1-3, 2/2 D paras. 1-4., respectively, and provide information on the implementation of these resolutions or their contribution to facilitating the implementation of IPF/IFF Proposals for Action.***

***Implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action related to thematic issues of UNFF 3***

***Please refer to your national report if appropriate, or provide new or updated information on: activities undertaken since 1997, progress made, constraints encountered, lessons learned, and issues that have emerged, as well as relevant information related to means of implementation (financing, transfer of environmentally sound technologies, and capacity-building) to support the following actions:***

***Economic aspects of forests, including trade***

**13. valuation of forest goods and services (this may include, among other things, the development and use of new valuation methodologies, valuation of a wider range of goods and services, and policy decisions that reflect a more comprehensive assessment of forest values)**

The only attempt to evaluate forest goods and services was made in 1999, during the preparation of the National Forest Programme, and it was restricted in the benefits derived from recreation and tourism, water production from boreholes and improvements in agricultural yields due to soil conservation. The valuation of these non-market services was carried out using the Cost Benefit Approach. Using this approach, the Department of Forests attempted to measure values in terms of the benefits generated, which are typically not recorded in prices paid by consumers or beneficiaries.

**14. the amount, scope, or quality of market data and information for wood and non-wood forest products and their substitutes**

Information on marketed wood products like round wood, Christmas trees, medicinal and aromatic plants, soil, rocks, etc are collected by the Department of Forests and are presented in the Annual Report of the Department. This information includes quantities and prices.

Trade data are collected by the Department of Customs of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism. The recording is based on the Harmonised System of the European Union.

All relevant data on wood products are gathered by the Department of Forests for the needs of the Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire of ECE Timber Committee.

**15. use of economic and policy instruments to facilitate progress toward sustainable forest management (these may include improved tax policies and forest revenue collection systems)**

The National Forest programme is considered as a national instrument for enhancing sustainable forest management. The NFP provides a new strategy for the forest sector development, which is designed to protect and enhance the islands natural environment and natural heritage while promoting recreation and tourism.

The Forest Policy Statement is another instrument, which provides the general conditions, strategic aims and specific objectives towards sustainable forest management.

The Rural Development Plan, which covers the three-year period 2004-2006, is an economic instrument, which is co-financed by the European Union and facilitates progress towards sustainable forest management. Funds arising from this Plan are used for forest expansion, reforestation of burned areas, protection of forests against fires etc, in order to promote sustainable forest management.

**16. efforts to reduce negative impacts of trade,**

See answer to Question 18.

**17. participation in forest certification and labelling schemes and work toward mutual recognition and comparability of such schemes, and**

Forest certification has not been yet introduced and adopted in Cyprus due to the following reasons:

- A small quantity of round wood is harvested. The annual fellings for the period 2002-2011 range between 6000-8000m<sup>3</sup>.
- Private forests are not managed intensively and are not used for the production of timber.

However, the issue either to participate or not in a forest certification scheme will be the subject of study.

**18. efforts to reduce illegal trade (exports from or imports into your country) in wood or non-wood forest products. Please indicate achievements made, lessons learned, constraints encountered, and planned initiatives.**

Cyprus is considered as a net importing country of wood and wood products. Approximately 97% of the overall wood market is satisfied by imports of wood either in an unprocessed form or as finished wood products. In 2001, 530 000m<sup>3</sup> of wood and wood products were imported to cover the local market demands, whereas the national annual timber yield was set to 8 000m<sup>3</sup>.

Cyprus, as a net wood importing country, might import illegally harvested wood either in the form of finished wood products or in the form of unprocessed wood, since 20 000 m<sup>3</sup> of imported sawn wood came from high risk countries of Eastern Europe, Africa and South-East Asia in 2001. The majority of the imports however, are coming from places like European Union or North America.

The majority of the timber ending up in Cyprus is in the form of finished products. Therefore, it is very difficult to prove their connection to illegal felling unless the timber producing countries indicate and black list companies involved in such activities or in bribery and corruption. Very small quantities of unprocessed round timber are imported by small sawmills found within small forest communities in order to cover their needs for raw material. Their small output cannot control or affect the market in any way.

Cyprus Government has been involved in EU Action Plan for Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) since 2003. The Action Plan aims to reinforce improved governance in developing and transition countries, with the legal instruments and leverage offered by the EU internal market. The core components of the Action Plan are support for governance reforms and a licensing scheme to ensure that only legal timber enters the EU and which will be implemented through voluntary partnerships with affected countries. A Regulation for the licensing scheme is currently under preparation.

In addition, Cyprus Government is in the final stage of the process to ratify the International Tropical Timber Agreement, which refers to the international cooperation for management and trade of timber sourced from tropical forests.

In an effort to resolve the problem of illegal felling and trade, the Government strongly supports:

- the introduction and adoption of an international legislation aiming at halting the imports and trade of illegally sourced timber,
- the introduction of appropriate certification and licensing for the exportation and shipping of wood and wood products,

- the prosecution and black listing of companies or individuals found to be involved in bribery, corruption and illegal felling and trade of wood and wood products.

### *Forest health and productivity*

**19. If damage to forests from air pollution is a significant problem in your country, please provide information on recent national strategies or programmes to minimize damaging air pollution. Please indicate if your country is involved in any international cooperation efforts aimed at strengthening scientific knowledge, increasing information access or reducing the impacts of long-range air pollution on forests, as well as your views on the role of enhanced cooperation at the regional and international levels to facilitate such work.**

Damage to forests from air pollution is not a significant problem in Cyprus.

Cyprus participates in the “*International Co-operative Programme on the Assessment and Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects on Forests*” since 2001. This programme has been established under the UN/ECE Convention on Long – range Transboundary Air Pollution in 1985. Furthermore, Cyprus implements the Council Regulation of European Union EEC No 2152/2003 (*Monitoring of forests and environmental interactions in the Community, Forest Focus*).

Monitoring of the effects of air pollution on Cyprus forests is important due to the increasing trend of national emissions and the possible future impacts of the long – range transboundary air pollution. Furthermore, the participation of the country in the above activities strengthens the scientific knowledge, increases information access and enhances co-operation at regional, European and international level.

Cyprus Government has signed the Kyoto Protocol. The Council of Ministers has adopted the national strategy for the reduction of greenhouse gases in 2003. A number of measures has already been taken towards the implementation of this strategy.

### *Maintaining forest cover to meet present and future needs*

**20. Please indicate progress made and lessons learned in efforts to harmonize or to make compatible policy frameworks in your country (e.g. national forest programme or a similar policy framework for forests, biodiversity strategies and action plans, national action plans to combat desertification, etc.) that collectively address the full range of forest values.**

National Forest Programme

See answer to Question 1 (General).

Action Plan for the Protection of the Environment

An Action Plan for the protection of the Environment was also prepared based on an environmental review and the action plan prepared by the World Bank in 1993. The W.B. action plan is a comprehensive report prepared in 1995 comparing the country’s environmental policy and legislation with those of the EU. The plan was discussed by the council for the environment and approved by the Council of Ministers and is the formal environmental policy document of the government. The plan was formulated and expanded in 2000 to become the national programme for the adoption of the environmental acquis communautaire of the EU. The action plan includes a series of

measures for the reinforcement of the policy management and protection of nature, landscape and wildlife etc.

This Action Plan is in line and fully covers the aspects of the Action Plan of European Union.

***21. Please provide information on recent efforts to assess long-term trends in national supply and demand for wood, non-wood forest products and services and whether your country's national forest programme or similar policy framework for forests takes into consideration future needs for forest goods and services. Please provide views on how enhanced cooperation at the regional and international levels, including through UNFF, could further facilitate implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action***

Cyprus is a net importing country with imports making up approximately the 97% of the overall wood market. The productivity of forests is very low and the timber supply from national sources is limited and specific. The demand for wood products may increase in the long – run, but it is not supported by any scientific quantified assessment. Likely, the demand for non-wood forest products and services especially for forest recreation and tourism, is certainly sure that it will be increasing in the future but again, it is not based on any scientific assessment.

The National Forest Programme takes into consideration all these needs and trends. During its formulation and in order to identify which strategy should be adopted for the future, four different and alternative scenarios were examined based on expectations for future trends. These scenarios indicated the main choices open to the Government about the kind of forest sector that is desired, and the sort of activities and contribution to the national economy that may be expected in each case.

From the discussion, it was clear that the most appropriate forest strategy for Cyprus should combine important elements from scenarios that aimed at safeguarding the natural resources of Cyprus for present and future generations while focusing also on a balanced and control development of recreation and tourism.

***In addition, member States may wish to refer to the resolutions of UNFF relevant to the above elements, i.e. resolutions 3/1 paras. 1.-12., 3/2 paras. 1.-7., 3/3 paras. 1.-13, , respectively, and provide information on the implementation of these resolutions or their contribution to facilitating the implementation of IPF/IFF Proposals for Action.***

**Implementation of the IPF/IFF proposals for action related to thematic issues of UNFF 4**

***Please refer to your national report if appropriate, or provide new or updated provide information on: activities undertaken since 1997, progress made, constraints encountered, lessons learned, and issues that have emerged, as well as relevant information related to means of implementation (financing, transfer of environmentally sound technologies, and capacity-building) related to the following elements:***

***Social and cultural aspects of forests***

**22. *promoting the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of forest genetic resources and addressing the issue of intellectual property rights, including the identification of the origins of forest genetic resources, taking into account work undertaken by the Convention on Biological Diversity and other international agreements***

Forests of Cyprus are mainly natural and the regeneration is based on natural seeding. Only small-scale afforestations / reforestations are applied where only autochthonous species are used. There is no need of using improved genetic material since in all above cases, the genetic material used is well adapted to the local conditions, ensuring thus the adaptation of forest to the particular climatic/ edaphic conditions and the resistance to various pests and diseases. Protection of the biodiversity is achieved as well.

The production and marketing of forest reproductive material is regulated under a law that it is in line with the Council Directive 1999/105/EC. The enforcement of this law ensures the protection of forest genetic resources and biodiversity as well.

**23. *strengthening the role of women in sustainable forest management, including through capacity building and greater participation in community-based forest management***

In Cyprus, legislation and constitution give the same opportunities to men and women either in rural or urban areas. However, the presence of women in the forestry sector is negligible, as the topic has been socially considered, even until now, as a “male” sector, at least in certain forest works.

**24. *integrating local and indigenous communities in sustainable forest management programmes, particularly as regards (a) recognition and respect of the customary and traditional rights and privileges of indigenous and local communities, (b) participation in decision making regarding the management of forests, (c) the attainment of secure land tenure arrangements, (d) capacity building and technology transfer for sustainable forest management directed at indigenous and local communities***

The Cyprus forest law offers privileges and rights to inhabitants of certain village close to forests.

The inhabitants may, after a licence issued by a Forest Officer and without the payment of any fee or charge, and for their own domestic needs and not for sale, within the State forest or part of it prescribed in a Minister's Order Published in the official Gazette of the Republic and every one of such village,

- gather dead and dry fuel but not charred of same and,
- cut the part above the ground of any kind of growing bush prescribed in the Minister's Order.

*b) Participation in decision-making regarding the management of forests.*

Realizing the importance of the participation of the local communities in sustainable forest management, the Department of Forests takes into account the views of forest communities and Non-Governmental Organizations regarding the issues related to the forest management.

The Forest Policy gives the opportunity to all interested parties like inhabitants of communities, forest owners and environmental NGO's, to express their opinion and make comments on each future management project. Their comments and opinions are taken into consideration in the planning and later on in decision-making. The multi-stakeholder participation in the procedure of National Forest Programme formulation has proved to be of vital importance, and it can be considered as an excellent example of broad social dialogue for matters relevant to the forest sector. Currently, there is broad public consultation and stakeholder participation for the revision of Forest Legislation.

*c) the attainment of secure land tenure arrangements*

The long history of Cyprus and the numerous conquerors of the island, account for the existence of the various land ownership categories.

The main land tenure types encountered today in Cyprus are the following: Private land, joint holders land, company land, co-operatives land, state land, community land, church land and other land.

Communal land covers the communal grazing land and the communal forests. The communal forests, which belong to village communities or town municipalities, were established mainly for the provision of fuel wood to their inhabitants. Today these needs ceased to exist and therefore the communal forests have been mostly converted to parks or recreation grounds.

The only land tenure problem, which is encountered in Cyprus, is the small size of holdings.

*d) capacity building and technology transfer for sustainable forest management directed at indigenous and local communities.*

The Department of Forests, understanding the vital role of local communities for sustainable forest management, gives lectures, offers advice and vocational training to these communities in order to let them become aware and trained on the different forestry subjects. All these activities will be further strengthened with the Rural Development Plan covering the period 2004-2006.

***Traditional forest-related knowledge***

***25. inventorying, cataloguing, and applying traditional forest related knowledge for sustainable forest management and promoting research on TFRK with the involvement of the knowledge holders***

Not Applicable. There is no traditional forest related knowledge

***26. supporting the application of intellectual property rights and/or other protection regimes for traditional forest related knowledge, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of traditional forest related knowledge, innovations and practices***

Not Applicable. There is no traditional forest related knowledge

***Scientific forest-related knowledge***

***27. disseminating scientific knowledge to all interested parties, including through new and innovative ways, and strengthening capacity and mobilizing funding for national and regional research institutions and networks***

The scientific knowledge, which is obtained through various research activities, is disseminated to all interesting parties through official publications, seminars, scientific meetings, etc. The Republic of Cyprus has signed (1998) and ratified (2003) the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision – making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) of UNECE and is now a Party to the Convention. Furthermore, it is noted that Cyprus is fully harmonized with the relevant EU Aquis (Directives 90/313/EEC and 2003/4/EC).

The capacity of national and regional research institutions has been strengthened, especially during the last years, through various projects and co-operations on national and regional level. Funding is ensured either through the national budget or other international sources. The accession to European Union creates a better environment for improved financing of research activities and institutions in Cyprus.

***28. enhancing interaction between scientific research and policy processes, including priority setting of research, addressing of knowledge gaps and using scientific knowledge to support decision-making***

Scientific research and knowledge are always involved in policy processes, contributing to the priority setting of research, policy and decision – making. At national level, an improvement has been made towards the linkage between forest science and forest policy processes. Scientific research and knowledge has been the backbone of most policy-related decisions and actions. For instance, the development of the National Forest Programme and the formulation of the new Forest Policy were based on such knowledge. Similarly, the adoption of forestry measures in the Rural Development Plan and the procedure for formulation of the Cyprus Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management have also taken into consideration the scientific research and knowledge. Consecutively, this approach contributes significantly to the priority setting of research, policy and decision – making.

The research priorities and needs are basically undertaken according to the regional and national demands. Joint research / monitoring ventures are undertaken involving both the public and private sector.

***monitoring, assessment and reporting, concepts, terminology and definitions***

***29. improving information on national forest resources, making the information widely available, assisting other countries in their related efforts***  
***improving information on national forest resources***

During the last years, there has been a noticeable improvement on the quality, the quantity and accuracy of information recorded in the several databases of the Department of Forests, concerning the national forest resources. Collection mechanisms have been readjusted or reset to comply with modern trends and needs whereas some totally new ones like GPS, etc, have been adopted. The personnel in charge for the collection of data is well trained on the use of instruments and methodologies for proper and effective measurements. Furthermore, advanced systems, like GIS, are now in use.

The recent process of introducing Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management has given the chance to identify gaps and re-examine the compatibility of relevant information and mechanisms. This procedure also assists in the collection,

verification, synthesis and interpretation of information on progress in sustainable forest management.

*making the information widely available*

Improvement has also been made in the dissemination of this information. The Department of Forests makes this information available, on request or through publications, to interested groups. In addition, all this information on forest resources is submitted on a constant basis, to the various international bodies and organizations (FAOSTAT, EUROSTAT, etc) through several questionnaires, like Joint (UNECE, FAO, Eurostat, and ITTO) Forest Sector Questionnaire, TBFRA questionnaires, MCPFE, etc.

*assisting other countries in their related efforts:*

The Department of Forests has many times shared its experiences and other relevant information with other countries through the participation in regional and international meetings, seminars and workshops, as well as through the exchange of experts' visits. It is also worth to mention the bilateral Programme of Co-operation between Cyprus and Greece, in the Agricultural Sector. This co-operation aims at the mutual exchange of technical assistance through experts visits and programmes.

In addition, the Government of Cyprus through the Cyprus Forestry College offers a number of scholarships on forestry related courses to students from developing countries.

*criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management*

***30. developing and using criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management (at national level and/or subnational level and for policy, planning, management and/or monitoring purposes), and participating in regional and/or international C&I processes***

The Department of Forests completed, in 2004, the work for the development of a set of national Criteria and Indicators to serve as an evaluation tool to measure the forest condition and track the Department's progress towards the conservation and sustainable management of Cyprus forests.

The preparation of the Criteria and Indicators for SFM, which constitute a significant part of the National Forest Programme was based on the Pan-European Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management.

The application of these Criteria and Indicators will ensure that the forest resources will continue to be managed in a sustainable way, strengthened with further scientific and technical examination, including field testing, and providing valuable experience to assist forest development.

The Department of Forests participated in various international and regional activities on Criteria and Indicators, like the:

- MCPFE workshops on the improvement of Pan-European Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management,
- National Coordination Meeting on Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management, in the Near East Countries, Tehran, Iran, 2000.
- International Conference on Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management, Guatemala, City, 2003.

- FAO / ITTO Experts Consultation on Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management, Philippines, Cebu, 2004.

There is also an active participation in the regional process for preparation of Criteria and Indicators in the Near East Region (FAO-UNEP).

*In addition, member States may wish to refer to the resolutions and decision of UNFF relevant to the above elements, i.e. resolutions 2/2 E paras. 1-4., 4/1 paras. 1-16., 4/2 paras. 1-8., 4/3 paras. 1-18, respectively, and provide information on the implementation of these resolutions or their contribution to facilitating the implementation of IPF/IFF Proposals for Action.*

### **III. Preparation of the Report**

*31. Describe the process of preparing this report, including which government agencies and stakeholder groups were involved, and the extent to which they contributed. Provide information on successes, challenges and lessons learned in the preparation of this report.*

This report has been prepared by the Department of Forests of the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment. Depending on the topic, the chapters of this report were segregated and assigned to the Departmental Sectors with the relevant authority and responsibility in order to work and report on them. All answers were gathered by the Planning and European Union Section and were compiled into the final form. For the answers, all available data and information were utilized.