**Role and functions of the General Coordinating Committee (GCC) of the FOREST EUROPE process**

Oslo, 10th June.2011

**Key functions and obligations of the GCC members**

* To guide politically and strategically the work of the process between ministerial conferences
* To host a ministerial conference (each country once)
* To discuss and propose political priority issues for consideration by the Expert Level Meetings, and further by each of ministerial conferences
* To provide resources to the core budget of the process and Liaison Unit, on the basis of agreed shares between GCC members
* To host a Liaison Unit for a period of its (each GCC member) chairmanship of the process

**Modus operandi**

The General Coordinating Committee of the FOREST EUROPE acts on the basis of informal agreements between its members. The general terms of the GCC are following:

* Participation in the work of the GCC for a term of 6-8 years
* Participation in the GCC meetings (3-4 times each year)
* Periodically hosting the GCC meetings (rotation between the members, normally country hosts one meeting per 2 years period)
* Active input to policy debates
* Strategic and policy guidance for Liaison Unit
* Co-chairmanship of a ministerial conference (each GCC member once)
* Hosting and chairmanship of a ministerial conference (each GCC member once)
* Representation of the process at other international policy arena, if required

**Added value and benefits of membership in the GCC**

* Influence on the shape of international cooperation on forest policy in Europe
* Influence on priority issues to be taken up by forest policy forum in Europe
* Visibility at the international arena
* Promotion through hosting ministerial conference
* Promotion of country-national forests and forestry solutions at the international arena through the whole period of membership in the GCC by information sharing and other means of cooperation

**Current status and composition of the GCC**

At present the GCC consists of 5 member countries: Germany, Norway, Poland, Slovakia and Spain. Norway currently holds the chairmanship of FOREST EUROPE and will convene the next ministerial conference on 14-16 June 2011. At this conference Spain will take over the chairmanship of the process and the Liaison Unit (which will be transferred to Madrid in the second half of 2011, for the next few years) and will be a host of following ministerial conference. At the conference in Oslo, Poland will step out from the GCC and a new member will be announced.

**Financial Contributions 2011**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Share** | **in N O K** | **in E U R O** |
| **Norway** | 60% | 4 200 000 | 528 694 |
| **Spain** | 16% | 1 120 000 | 140 985 |
| **Slovak Republic** | 8% | 560 000 | 70 493 |
| **Germany** | 8% | 560 000 | 70 493 |
| **Poland** | 4% | 280 000 | 35 246 |
| **New GCC country** | 4% | 280 000 | 35 246 |
| **Total Budget Estimation** | **100%** | **7 000 000** | **881 157** |

**FOREST EUROPE**

**The Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe**

FOREST EUROPE is the pan-European policy process for the sustainable management of the continent’s forests. It develops common strategies for its 46 member countries and the European Union for the protection and sustainable management of forests. Founded in 1990, the continuous co-operation through FOREST EUROPE has led to achievements such as the guidelines and criteria for sustainable forest management.

High-priorities for FOREST EUROPE are to strengthen the role of forests in mitigating climate change, to secure the supply of good-quality fresh water, to enhance and preserve forest biodiversity, and to provide renewable forest products. Other important tasks are to develop a framework for future political collaboration and to prepare options for decision by ministers on a possible legally binding agreement on forests in Europe.

[www.foresteurope.org](http://www.foresteurope.org)

Dear Mr. Ismail Belen,

Thank you for your positive response to the invitation for Turkey to join the GCC.

Please find attached a short note explaining the role and functions of the GCC. The fact that Turkey will join the GCC will be announced during the second day (June 15th ) of the Ministerial Conference (Agenda item: Other Matters). The chair will introduce the topic and thank Poland for their time and effort in the GCC. Then he will inform that Turkey has accepted to join GCC. He will then give the floor to Poland and Turkey respectively. I hope this is ok for you. We can find some time after your arrival for clarification of the details, if needed.

Sincerely,

Knut Øistad

Deputy Director General

Ministry of Agriculture and Food

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**Kopi:** 'furkanbelen@yahoo.com'  
**Emne:** Ministerial conference Oslo

Dear Mr. Belen,

I hope everything is fine and I look forward to meeting you in Oslo next week.

I have an important issue for the preparation of the ministerial conference that I would like to discuss informally with you. I do hope it is possible for you to call one of my telephone numbers as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Knut Øistad

Deputy Director General

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