

## **Mandate for the ECCP Working Group on Forest-Related Sinks**

### **1. Background**

From its beginning, the European Climate Change Programme intended to establish a working-group on forest-related carbon sequestration (sinks) once the rules and procedures for the accounting of carbon credits and debits from different forest types and their management became clear. With these rules and procedures being agreed at COP7, in November 2001, the working group can now start identifying and assessing forestry measures that can enhance the potential for forest-related sinks in Europe, taking into account the EU Forestry Strategy (COM(98)649 final).

At COP7 it was agreed that the eligible activities for Annex I countries will include activities under Art. 3.3 of the Kyoto Protocol (afforestation, reforestation and deforestation) as well as those under Art. 3.4 such as forest management. Sink credits gained by activities under Art. 3.3 are unlimited while debits can be off-set up to a certain amount by activities under Art. 3.4. At the same time credits for parties under Art. 3.4 are subject to individual quotas for forest management (incl. Joint Implementation).

While there is now certainty on the sinks credits that EU Member States (and accession countries) can obtain from forest management (5.17 MtC) there are only approximate figures for credits from afforestation and reforestation. Estimates on the basis of current data suggests that the potential for these two Art. 3.3 activities are around 3.3 MtC. However, these figures are probably underestimated since not all Member States (accession countries) provided figures on the potential of these activities.

### **2. Objective**

The objective of the ECCP working group on forest-related sinks is to assess the potential of EU Member States' forests that could contribute to achieve the EU emission reduction target of -8%. Equally, appropriate policy instruments for realising this potential in the time-frame 2008-2010 should be identified. The WG will co-ordinate closely with the ECCP WG on the scientific aspects of sinks which focuses on monitoring and verification aspects.

### 3. Scope

Stakeholders are invited to address the following issues (on the basis of existing data) with a view to making recommendations for appropriate policy action :

- (a) evaluating existing data on the potential sink credits for activities under Art. 3.3,;
- (b) assessing technical measures that could increase existing afforestation and reforestation programmes (Art. 3.3) with regard to costs, environmental and other ancillary effects. Ranges of **uncertainties** should be assessed and particular attention must be paid to impacts on **biodiversity**. An assessment should also be made on future developments with regard to deforestation.
- (c) assessing technical measures under Art. 3.4 that could enhance sinks in managed forests (**provided they are direct human induced and carried out since 1990**) with regard to costs, environmental and other ancillary effects and uncertainties.
- (d) analysing existing and potential policy instruments to implement measures under (b) and (c).

### 4. Expected Outcome

On the basis of the identified technical options, their environmental effects and their costs the Working Group is expected to put forward recommendations to the Commission on appropriate EU policy initiatives. In this respect, the WG should follow the format used in previous ECCP WG (e.g. energy, transport).

### 5. Organisation of Work and Working Schedule

The Working Group is expected to meet four times with meetings foreseen on:

3 May 2002

July 2002

September 2002

November 2002

At each meeting specific tasks will be attributed to participants in order to prepare for the next meetings. Papers will be made available to participants by electronic mail. Between meetings participants will communicate by e-mail and telephone.

Close co-operation should also be ensured between the WG on sinks and the sub-working on soils (agriculture).