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Guidelines on the Promotion of Green Jobs in Forestry



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ABSTRACT

This publication is intended to assist stakeholders in the forestry sector to successfully navigate the transition to a forest sector that is fully engaged in the green economy. New and increasing opportunities for providing forest-based services and products, growing business and revenue as well as creating jobs arise from this transition. Application of the guidelines will assist in ensuring that the forestry workforce is fit for purpose and forestry is able to attract workers in the 21st century's labour market.

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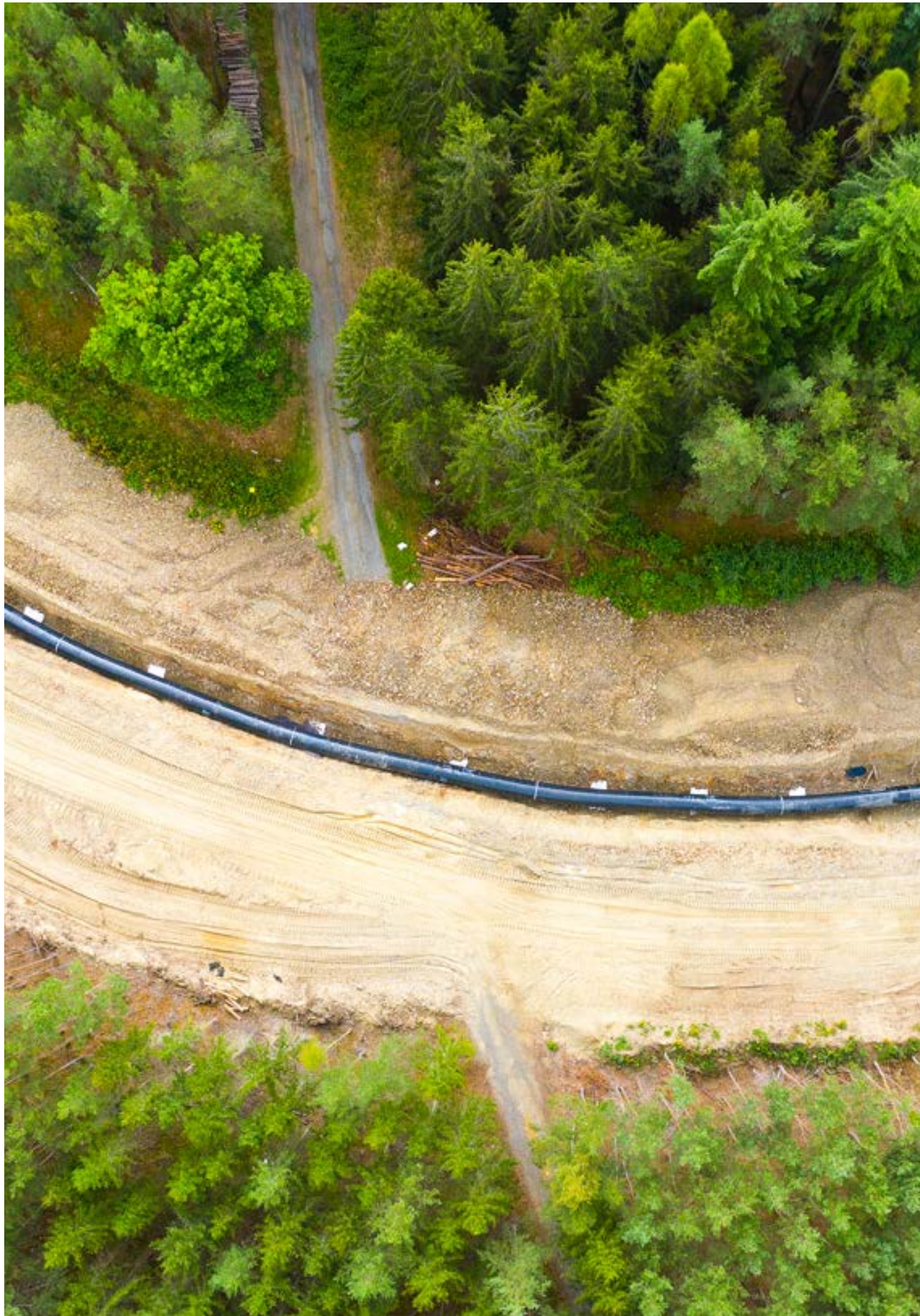
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CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	iii
Executive Summary	vii
Background	xi

Chapter 1. Introduction xii

1.1. Definitions	1
1.2. Purpose and scope of the guidelines	2
1.3. Premises on which the guidelines are based.....	2
1.4. Action areas, format and structure of the guidelines	4

Chapter 2. Guidance on five action areas 6

2.1 AREA 1 Workforce data, information, analysis, strategies for human resources development	7
2.2. AREA 2 Making the workforce in traditional forestry fit for purpose	9
2.2.1. Identifying changes in job requirements and overcoming skills gaps.....	9
2.2.2. Working conditions matching the requirements for decent work.....	10
2.2.3. Occupational safety and health	15
2.2.4. Work organization and contracting of service providers.....	17
2.3. AREA 3 Just transition.....	18
2.4. AREA 4 Seizing and expanding new opportunities for forests in a green economy	20
2.5. AREA 5 Recruiting, retraining and retaining the workforce of the future.....	23
References.....	27



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The role of forests and forestry is changing rapidly and profoundly. Societies, policy makers and markets are placing a renewed focus on an expanded and universal vision of sustainable development with prosperous and inclusive societies living within planetary boundaries. Forests are central to this vision. This opens major opportunities for forests and forestry but also poses significant challenges. The Guidelines are intended to assist stakeholders in the forestry sector to successfully navigate the transition.

New and increasing opportunities for providing forest-based services and products, growing business and revenue as well as creating jobs arise from this transition. The importance of environmental services is becoming increasingly evident to society, in particular carbon sequestration, biodiversity protection and water treatment and retention. Markets for products are growing including in bioenergy, modern wood-based mass construction and a range of non-wood forest products. Moreover, the demand for downstream services such as environmental education, health services, recreation and tourism based on forests is rising significantly in many parts of the UNECE region.

Continued globalization of economies and advancing technology are two major challenges ahead for the forestry sector. In their wake, mechanization, reorganization of forestry supply chains, and increasing incorporation of information and communications technology, are reducing the number of workers needed in traditional forestry. Accelerating climate change and rising concern about biodiversity stress the importance of sustainable forest management. While employment in traditional forestry, focused on timber production, will most likely continue to decline, the remaining workforce will be critical for achieving effective and sustainable management of forests. At the same time, deficits in decency¹ of work in forestry, ageing workforces and populations combined with continued urbanization make it both more urgent and more difficult to attract the talent needed for the future.

A large and growing body of evidence shows that a skilled and enabled workforce is indispensable to meet the challenges and to seize the opportunities resulting from the transition to a green economy and sustainable development. Due attention has to be paid not only to the new and growing role of environmental goods and services, but also to greening production processes, the organization of work and the development of skills which would enable this transition. At present, there is a lack of competent and adaptable workforce in many forest enterprises, administrations and service providers. Following current trends, this workforce deficit may be even larger in the future.

Key areas for action

Five key areas for action emerge from the analysis of the above drivers of change and their impact on forests and the forestry sector:

1. Understanding the current workforce in forestry and its future needs

Information on the workforce, including on occupational safety and health (OSH), is vital but often missing and increasingly difficult to obtain. Stakeholder cooperation can overcome these difficulties, through increasing efforts to

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