MANAGEMENT OF FOREST

* **THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA –**
* **COUNTRY REPORT -**

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# 1. Introduction: General information about the country

The Republic of Macedonia is situated in the central part of the Balkan Peninsula and has a very favourable geographical location. It extends between 40°50’ and 42°20’ north geographical latitude, and 20°27’30” and 23°05’ east geographical longitude. Very important road sections pass through the country, connecting Central and Eastern Europe with south and southeast parts of the continent and continuing towards the countries of the Near East and farther. The total area of the country is 25.713 km2. The last Census was 2002 and according to that data the Republic of Macedonia has about 2 mil inhabitants, of which 56,7% urban and 43,3% rural (Janeska and Bojnec, 2012). Since independence in 1991, the Republic of Macedonia has faced a number of economic and political challenges that have strongly influenced the national economy. Real GDP grew by 3.8% in 2014, but we expect a slowdown to 3.2% in 2015 due to political uncertainty. Forestry provides 0.3-0.5% of the GDP, but if the multifunctional uses are valorized, the contribution will be bigger The wood industry (primary and secondary wood processing, furniture, paper industries) accounts for 2.5-3.0% of the GDP ((Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy of RM, 2006). Unemployment rate in Macedonia, particularly youth and long-term unemployment, remained persistently high, pointing to deep-rooted structural impediments in the labour market. The Republic of Macedonia – along with other Western Balkans countries – was identified as a potential candidate for EU membership during the [Thessaloniki European Council](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/gena/76201.pdf) summit in 2003.  Its Stabilisation and Association Agreement is in force since 2004, the first in the region. It applied for EU membership in March 2004 and the Council decided in December 2005 to grant the country candidate status, based on the Commission’s favourable opinion. Since October 2009, the Commission has recommended to open accession negotiations with the country, until 2015 when it made this conditional on continued implementation of the Pržino agreement and substantial progress in the implementation of the "Urgent Reform Priorities".

(<http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/countries/detailed-country-information/former-yugoslav-republic-of-macedonia/index_en.htm>, 25.11.2016)

## **2. Assessment of the Forest sector**

### 2.1. Forest resources and management

***Forest area by management and protection regime***

Table 1: Size of forest area by management (economic, non-economic) and protection regime

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Forest type | Available surface in [ha] | | | | | |
| Economic | Non-economic | Protected | Special purpose | Protective | Total |
| 1. High forest | 255.484 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2. Coppice forest | 546.179 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1+2. All forests | 801.663 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3. Shrubs | 18.972 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4. Bare land | 256.802 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3+4. Shrubs and bare land | 275.774 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5. Other forest areas - plantations | 14.459 |  |  |  |  |  |
| FAO forest (1+2+3+5) | 1.091.896 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 6. All forest and forest land | 1.091.896 | 80.000 | 184.137 |  |  |  |

The total forest land in the Republic of Macedonia is 10 918 km2 out of which forests are 835 055 (76,5%) ha or 42,5% of the whole territory and 256 801,77 ha (23, 52%) is not overgrown (shrubs and bare forest land). The most of the forests (63,4%) are coppice forests and about 30,4% are high forests. The rest of 6,2% are forest plantations and other forest areas (annex – figure 1) The last forest census in the Republic was in 1979 and at the moment there are no public data for special purpose forests and protective one. The complete data can be found only for the forests that are managed by the PE Macedonian forests (or economic forests) and for the non-economic and protected forests only the total surface data can be found.

***Growing Stock, increment and felling and (if possible) carbon stock***

The total growing stock is around 75 mil m3 and total annual increment is about 1 mil m3. Total anticipated increment for 10 years in forest under competence of PEMF amounts to 10.948.149 m3, or annually 1.094.815m3.( <http://www.mkdsumi.com.mk/index_mkd_sumi_en.php?page=1>

25.11.2016) Its planned exploitation amounts to 70-75%. The average annual increment per hectare amounts to 2.02 m3. (Table 2). Thus, it has to be stressed that there is lack of disaggregated data for high and coppice forests for the growing stock and annual volume increment.(annex -figure 2). Data about carbon stock are not available for the forests in Macedonia. Although in 2013 the Third Plan for Climate changes in Macedonia under the GEF and UNDP financial support is produced, but there are no data for the forestry sector and carbon stock.

Table 2: Growing stock, increment and felling, and (if possible) carbon stock

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Forest types | Publicly owned | | Privately owned | |  | Total |
| 000 m3 | m3/ha | 000 m3 | m3/ha | 000 m3 | m3/ha |
| Growing stock | | | | | | |
| High forests | 255,484 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Coppice forests | 546,179 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Total | 68592,167 | 84,0 | 5750,955 | 64,6 | 74343,122 | 82,1 |
| Total annual volume increment | | | | | | |
| High forests |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Coppice forests |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Total | 1675,491 | 2,05 | 153,539 | 1,72 | 1829,030 | 2,02 |

Source: Forest Inventory 1979

***Forest types and ownership by management regime***

According to the new Law on Forests (2009) there are only two types of ownership: public and private. The forests on public ownership are managed by PE Macedonian forests, except for forests within protected areas which are managed by the Public Institutions for Protected Areas. Private forests are also managed by the PE because they need to issue permit from the PE for any activity that should be taken in their forest, due to the fact that private forest owners do not have management plans for their forests. Out of the total area of the forest, state owned is 89,1%, while their part of the total wood mass is 92, 2%. Private owned forests are 10,9% (State Statistical Office of RM, 2015). The private forests are small scaled and fragmented. The average size of the private forests is 0,6 ha. (Trendafilov et al 2008)

The main tree species per area in the forests in Macedonia is oak which is present with about 30%, then beech with about 23% from the broadleaves and from the coniferous black pine (0,85%) and fir (0,65%).

Table 3: Main tree species (up to 5, only %) according to public and private forests (for example broadleaves, conifers, mixed forests);

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Forest category | Public forests | Private forests | Total | |
| ha | ha | ha | % |
| Oak | 258272 | 49786 | 308058 | 31.30 |
| Beech | 209055 | 23188 | 232243 | 23.60 |
| Black pine | 40029 | 5331 | 45360 | 4.60 |
| Scots alba | 7473 | 986 | 8459 | 0.86 |
| Fir | 5699 | 148 | 5847 | 0.60 |

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### 2.2. Forests in support of rural communities

In the R. Macedonia the annual fire wood demand, as it was mentioned above is around 800 000 m3 and the demand is mostly satisfied with the production of firewood from the forests in state and private property. The wood industry processes around 100 000 – 120 000 m3 which comes from the forests, but due to the deficit in resources that Macedonia has in industrial wood from coniferous tree species, the import is much bigger than the production.

The production of firewood and technical wood requires engagement of manpower for logging, supplying and transporting and revenues covering their income. Most of these people are residents of villages in the mountainous regions. Other economic potential for the rural communities related to forest products, include: herbs, fruits, mushrooms and game. Each year part of the population is collecting forest products and uses them for self-subsistence or sells them on the market. Some 50 species of mushrooms are collected, and the annual export amounts to around 320 tonnes, equalling to a value of about 1,9 million EUR. From herbal - medical spices annually about 1100 tons with a value of approximately 1, 3 million EUR are exported. Purchase and export are done by several companies (Alkaloid Bilka, Jaka, Coro and others). Among wild fruits blueberry is notable, which in 2001 was exported in quantity of 83 tons and worth 76 786 EUR. Chestnuts are collected at the amount of 250 tons per year. This includes hawthorn, raspberry, blackberry, cornel cherry and blackthorn. In addition, wild apple, pear, cherry, sour cherry are requested as additives in fruit teas. (Strategy for Biodiversity of RM). On the other hand, village and mountain tourism is of increasing importance for the development of rural areas. People living near forest areas have the opportunity to take advantage of this type of tourism through the provision of services to tourists who want to stay in the woods.

***Public forests and public forest companies***

Public Enterprise ”Macedonian forest” begins to operate with its activities on 1.07.1998 as a legal successor of already existing thirty independent forests enterprises. Management of the public enterprise is established and regulated according to according to Article 17 of the Law on Forests and by the law on public enterprises, forest law, law on trade companies, accounting law and other relevant laws and regulations. Relations in the public enterprise are regulated by the statute and inner general acts of the enterprise and its responsibility is to manage state forests that have commercial and protective character (Article 87).

***Employment in the forest sector***

The Public Enterprise Macedonian Forests (PEMF) (total: Head office and 30 branches) has a total of 2,232 employees. According to their qualifications, they comprise two with a PhD; 15 with an Msc; 410 graduates (mainly forestry engineers); 74 with two years of college; 1,140 with a high-school certificate (mainly forestry technicians); and 591 with primary school education (forestry workers). (PE Macedonian Forests, 2016)

Despite its low contribution to the national GDP forestry and forest industry play an important role in the national economy especially in the rural areas, because they provide employment for the rural population. According to official statistics, about 7 000 people are directly employed in forestry and the forest industry sector. Indirectly, the sector provides job opportunities (part-time jobs) to additional 35 000 - 40 000 people through multiplier effects. Tens of thousands of people rely on the forest industry for a living. The public enterprise signs contracts with more than 200 small enterprises for services like logging, transport of the wood assortments which means that it strengthen the enterprises. Also, all produced sawn wood goes to the small enterprises which means that they are not calculated as employed in the forestry sector and they are indirectly supporting these employee. As 40 % of the population lives in rural areas and since a high proportion of these people are unemployed, forestry is likely to be of particular importance in raising living standards in rural areas (tourism, NWFPs,…).

### 2.3. Fostering competitiveness of the forest sector and added-value chains

Public enterprises are the main component of the public sector, with mixed-enterprises (based on state ownership and private) and controlled in a more or less by public authorities. (Maican, 2013) Thus, the PE which is managing state owned forest in Macedonia somehow has exclusive monopoly rights which are granted for various reasons of public interest (clean water, soil, air). These exclusive rights can impede the creation of a genuine internal market in these sectors, as it is the case in the country. It means that they are the main actor in the wood market in the country. But, they do not produce chips, bricketts, pellets, they just sell fuel wood and industrial wood. Private forest owners has recently started to show interest for their assets, but in the most cases they only satisfy their internal needs from the forests, they do not sell or they are not some significant actor at the market (Stojanovska, 2012). Maybe that is the reason why this enterprise is not interested for value added chain. Forestry sector in the country should start immediately changes in this direction, due to the fact that there are a lot of possibilities that can be used for competitiveness and added-value chain.

***Forest products and services***

According to the statistical data for export – import for 2004, the import of wood products is bigger for 50 million EUR than the export. The biggest part of the import comes from plywood, coniferous lumber, carpentry and parquet. Part of the deficit of domestic products which are covered by imports is due to the closure of former production facilities from forest industry, and part is due to the deficit in resources that Macedonia has in technical wood from coniferous tree species. Only 4-5% of forests are pure coniferous plantations and 4-5% is the participation of conifers in mixed plantations.

It is very hard to find quantities for NWFPs, because Statistical Review presents data for every NWFP separately and it is very hard to make analyses. You have to go for each mushroom, medical herb, blueberries, etc. That is an issue that should be improved in order to have real data which can also help or motivate the rural population to be more active in that field. Services that are coming from the forests are not evaluated in the country.

***Contribution of the forest sector to GDP***

Forestry in Republic of Macedonia is an economy branch that contributes from 0.3 to 0.5% share to GDP. Although, if multifunctional uses of the forests would be valorised, the contribution of forests to the GDP of the country would be considerably higher. The share of the forest industry (primary and secondary wood processing, furniture, paper and pulp) to the GDP is estimated to 2.5 and 3%. These data can be gathered from some internal reports of relevant enterprises or institutions.

***Illegal logging***

In total, the volume of illegally logged wood in RM presumably ranges from 25% to 30% (mostly fuel wood – more than 40%). Concerning the combat against illegal logging cooperation between the forest police and the police from the Ministry of Internal Affairs takes place: The police authorities which are responsible for suppression of all illegal activities in the country, including forest activities, take action against perpetrators together with the forestry police. However the low number of police workers, lack of material equipment, insufficient professional capacity seemingly impedes an efficient combat against illegal logging. The institutional capacities for prevention of illegal logging inside the institutions are insufficient.

The main reasons for illegal logging in RM are unfavourable social and economic conditions, insufficient number of forestry policemen and inefficient administration of the justice department. There is also a difference in the cost of the logged wood when obtained on the illegal way as it is sold at a cheaper price. Facing these problems, the term “sustainable” management” was included in the Strategy for sustainable development of forestry and in the Law on Forests.

### 2.4. Protection forests and enhancing ecosystem services

***Forest health and damages***

One of the most detrimental factors for forests and nature in the Republic of Macedonia are forest fires. According to data from the MAFWE, in the period between 2004 and 2013 there were a total of 2,0465 forest fires in the country, the total burned area was 91,805.9 ha, and the total volume of burned timber 931,258.52 m3. Within the same period, Forest Fires Country Study — Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 10 there were an average of 205 forest fires per year and the average size of the burned area was 9,180 ha annually (State Inspectorate for Forestry and Hunting, 2014). The total damage (burned timber volume plus suppression costs) caused by forest fires in this period has been estimated at around EUR 51,000,000. The main reasons for forest fires are:

- pyromania, which is very rare in the country; and

- economically motivated, mainly due to illegal logging.

There have been some cases of fires being started intentionally in order to “cover” illegal logging activities already carried out (Nemeth 2015). In the period from 2010-2015 the most of the forest damages were human (114157 m3) and insects has made the least forest damages (4758 m3). There were no registered damages by plants during this period.

Table 14: Forest damages in Macedonia in the last five years

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Types of forest damages | 2011  2010 | 2012  2011 | 2013  2012 | 2014  2013 | 2015  2014 | Total for the period 2011-2015 |
| 1000 m3or ha | | | | | |
| Human made (m3) | 11557 | 25189 | 26239 | 25942 | 25230 | 114157 |
| Damages by insects(m3) | 3513 | 327 | / | 300 | 618 | 4758 |
| Natural disasters (m3) | 1743 | 2211 | 20584 | 870 | 1063 | 26471 |
| Damages by plant diseases | / | / | / | / | / |  |
| Damages by forest fires (ha) | 3283 | 8702 | 19312 | 2844 | 1150 | 35291 |
| Other (define) |  |  |  |  |  |  |

***Biodiversity conservation and management***

The system of protected areas according to the Law on Nature and IUCN categorization, consists of protected areas and areas proposed for protection. It was established for the protection of biodiversity within natural habitats, abiotic and landscape diversity. Protected areas include natural habitats, ecosystems, and natural geological and geographical formations characteristic of the territory. There are total 86 protected items that cover 230.083 ha. (<http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/download/4308081ec007.pdf?expires=1475157427&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=B2C3E0140E4B8BCFBF25A69462A2E94D>)

***Forest certification in your country***

Forests in Macedonia are not certified yet. Thus, with the demand for sustainable forest management growing in the Balkans, the 2014 PEFC Collaboration Fund is supporting a project in Macedonia to begin the development of national forest certification system for the country.

Following on from an initial outreach project carried out in the Southwest Balkans, the [2014 PEFC Collaboration Fund](http://pefc.org/projects/collaboration-fund/2014-competition) is now supporting a follow-on project to guide Macedonia through the system development process, up to their application to PEFC for the endorsement of their national system. A key aspect of this project is building consensus on the criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management among the various stakeholders in the country. Using Stakeholder Mapping to ensure the participation of all relevant stakeholders, a working group has been created to develop the national standard. Once finalized, this standard will go through a public consultation and a pilot test to ensure it meets expectations.

(http://www.pefc.org/projects/forest/macedonian-national-system)

### 2.5. Institutional set-up of the forest sector, legal and policy governance

***Organization of the forest sector***

The Government of the Republic of Macedonia administers the forests and forest lands in state ownership through the following institutions:

* Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy (MAFWE) [www.mzsv.gov.mk](http://www.mzsv.gov.mk),

The State Inspectorate of Forestry and Hunting, as a body within the MAFWE, controls and supervises the enforcement of the Law on Forests, the Law on Hunting and all other laws and legally binding acts in the field of forestry and hunting. The Forestry Police, as a sector within the MAFWE, protects the forests in accordance with the Law on Forests.

* Public enterprise Macedonian Forests (PEMF) [www.mkdsumi.com.mk](http://www.mkdsumi.com.mk). The public enterprise for managing state forests, as the legal successor to the former enterprises for forest management has the following core activities: silviculture, protection and utilisation of forests through the restoration, nurture, protection, afforestation and utilisation of forests and forest land, and other activities for the maintenance and improvement of forest functions.
* Saints Cyril and Methodius University of Skopje, Faculty of Forestry [www.sf.ukim.edu.mk](http://www.sf.ukim.edu.mk). The Faculty of Forestry in Skopje was established in 1947. Today, the faculty offers three undergraduate academic programmes, 10 postgraduate academic programmes, and doctoral studies with a tutoring system. The main mission of the faculty is education and the establishment of a highly educated and scientific staff in the field of forestry, landscape design, eco-engineering and eco-management. There are 4 **forestry secondary schools** located in Kavadarci, Skopje and Demir Hisar and in Tetovo. The secondary school produce forest and landscape technicians and the Faculty has three types of engineers: foresters, landscape architects and eco-engineers.
* Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning [www.moepp.gov.mk](http://www.moepp.gov.mk). In the framework of efforts towards integration into the modern trends of environmental protection in Europe and beyond, and as an important aspect of the reform process, the Macedonian Government established the Ministry of Environment (Law on the Amendment to and Supplementing the Law on Public Administration Bodies, Official Gazette of RM No. 63/98). Article 122 of the above law defines the competences of the ministry, among which those closely related to forests and the forestry sector are: - monitoring of the state of the environment; - protection against noise and radiation; - the conservation of biological diversity; - the conservation of geological diversity, national parks and protected areas; and - the supervision of inspection in fields within its scope. Operating within the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning is the State Inspectorate for the Protection of the Environment, which is competent for the control of all legal and physical entities in the field of environmental protection.
* Private forest owners [www.naps.com.mk](http://www.naps.com.mk) The National Society of Private Forest Owners (Nacionalno Zdruzenie na Sopstvenici na Privatni Sumi) was founded in 1997, although its current name was only adopted in 2010 (Official Gazette of FYRM No. 52 of April 16, 2010). It is a non-governmental and non-political organisation, the main mission of which is the “protection of the individual and common interests of private forest owners without affecting the principles of sustainable forest management”. The society currently has a membership of around 6,000. Special purpose forests Subject to the forest functions (production, protection and useful functions) as well as the forest management measures, the forests are divided into commercial forests, protective forests, special purpose forests and forests in protected areas.

***Legal forest framework***

**Forest Law**

In the present forest law, (Official Gazette of RM, No 64/2009) is stipulated that forests in Macedonia are in state and private ownership (article 2). This means that there should not be any differences between treatments of state or private forests, but unfortunately that is not a case in practice. Forest inventory is envisaged to be done with this law (article 25), this is essential to sustainable forest management, for the reason that Macedonia has done its last inventory of forests in 1979, so in order to have proper and sustainable management first thing to be done is forest inventory, than comes planning and management of forest resources. Also introducing of forest and forest land cadastre is a new regulation that will contribute to improvement of the forestry sector as a hole, and relations between different owner groups (state, private, municipal, churches). (Article 77). Availability of data in forestry (management plans, inventory data, cadastre documents) with the new law are publicly available, so any interested party can obtain those documents for a certain fee paid to the original owner of the data. (Article 40) New information system will be introduced in forestry in order to connect all relevant actors in this sector in one network where all data will be kept, this is one step forward to democratization and openness of this traditional sector, in this case public will have access to the data about state of forestry in certain moment, transparency in working will go on a higher level. (Article 78) Involvement of public and all interested parties in decision making process in forestry is also stipulated with this law (article 38). This is first time that in a forest law is recognized the role of other stakeholders in the decision making processes.

**Strategy for sustainable development of forestry**

The Strategy for sustainable development of forestry was established in 2006. It has a vision for the forestry sector that predicts that forest covered areas will increase, through afforestation of bare lands with quality plants, mainly of domestic species. Care and protection of artificial stands will be prompt and appropriate, providing quality forests, both biologically and economically. Non-wood forest product management will create significant economic benefits for the forestry sector and the state, and will be appropriately legislated. Contemporary infrastructure and facilities for collecting, processing and packaging will secure competitiveness of the products on European markets. Macedonia will be a popular destination for recreation, sport, eco-tourism and commercial hunting tourism, enabling significant foreign currency income. Besides the renowned tourist centers, a large portion of activities and destinations will be directed to forest areas managed by the forestry sector.

**Environmental legislative**

As regards the **environment**, in the area of horizontal legislation the national environmental strategy   has   not   yet   been   adopted.   Administrative   capacity   for   implementing   the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directives was improved, but remains insufficient, notably at local level. A coordination body has been set up for cooperation and dialogue with civil society. (<http://www.env-net.org/environmental-acquis/approximation-env-net-countries/republic-of-macedonia/>). The policy on environment protection is based on the Law on Environment and Nature Protection and Promotion (see item 2.1 of the Regulatory System). The Republic of Macedonia is actively included in the ministerial process "Environment for Europe". As part of this process, the Government has prepared and adopted the National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP), as a main strategy for environment protection. The Republic of Macedonia has accessed the Convention on Biodiversity with the adoption of the Law on Ratification (Official Gazette of RM no. 54/97). The Law entered into force on 2 March 1998. The Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, in cooperation with the other competent bodies in the country, is the responsible body for implementation of the Convention in the Republic of Macedonia. The Republic of Macedonia signed the Cartagena Protocol on 26 July 2000, and started the procedure on its ratification. The National Strategy and Action Plan on biodiversity conservation and sustainable use (NBSAP) was adopted in January 2004. Law on Nature Protection represents a core law or “lex generalis” relating to the other nature protection laws defined as special laws or “lex specialis”. Furthermore, the Law on Nature Protection is followed by the Law on Environment which represents the second level Laws of related legislation. And the third level of nature protection related legislation are Laws dealing with parts of nature like Law on Forests, Law on Waters, The Law on Pastures, Law on Protecting Plants etc.

***Implementation & approximation of EU law***

Political and economic changes in the country in accordance with the EU integration processes require prioritising and focussing on the multifunctional use of forests and their management, integrating much wider aspects where protection, biodiversity and the care of the nature and the environment are placed first. Macedonia has accepted them and introduced in the forest policy documents. The main problem is the implementing phase.

The country's current biodiversity legislation is in the process of approximation with the EU legislation. While approximation of the EU Habitats and Birds Directives will be a major step forward, further steps are necessary to address all of the country's responsibilities under the Convention on Biological Diversity (e.g. bio safety. The weight in the process is to seek and achieve the maximum possible synergy between development of the NBS and that of NEAP2, NSSD, EU approximation, and the PanEuropean Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (under the Ministerial 'Environment for Europe' process, (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy of RM, 2007) The Bird and Habitat Directives (2000) are ratified by Macedonia and they are part of Law on nature protection. At the moment the process has been started for NATURA 2000.

* Rural Development Regulation /IPARD

The aim of IPA is therefore to enhance the efficiency and coherence of aid by means of a single framework in order to strengthen institutional capacity, cross-border cooperation, economic and social development and rural development. Republic of Macedonia is one of the three countries which benefited from the use of IPARD 1 (the others being Turkey and Croatia). Its national IPARD 1 Programme for 2007-2013 was approved by the European Commission in 2007, with the total indicative budget of 87,53 mil EUR. In 2009, funding was authorized for the three measures:

-investments in agricultural holdings

-investments in the processing and marketing of agriculture and fishery products

-diversification and development of rural economic activities.

Since 2009, the government has issued nine public calls for application to use IPARD funds. To date, about 18% of remaining IPARD 1 budget has been committed to fund about 300 projects.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management is prepared to consumed IPARD 2 funds 2014-2020, which will have the same scope as IPARD 1, plus forestry and advisory services. For 2014 European Commission (EC) allocated 106 mil EUR grant for the development of agriculture in rural communes of Macedonia. However, economically we still need direct activities which will produce jobs to keep the people in villages. These jobs should be directly connected with food processing from agriculture and forest products and rural tourism. Our focus and our plan to work toward the solution to the problems of food production and rural development, is on one side and to also focus on private sector promotion, local entrepreneurs, loans, and energy efficiency, as the other side of activities.

* EU Timber Regulation: This regulation is at the initial phase, it is mentioned together with the debate for certification of the forests, thus it cannot be said that Macedonia is following these requirements yet.

There are other directives that are transposed within national legislation too.The membership in WTO is preconditioned by the harmonization of the sanitary and phytosanitary measures with the international standards. This prescribes supplementing and amending of the respective laws and procedures on harmonization with the international conventions applied in the 7 National Biosafety Framework for Republic of Macedonia field of veterinary protection (OIE - Office International des’Epizooties), phytosanitary systems (International Convention on Plant Protection) and safety of food (the Alimentarius Codex).

### 2.6. Forest knowledge base

***State of forest inventories***

As it was mentioned above, Macedonia should perform a forest inventory, due to the fact that the last one was in 1979. It could be a solid base for further sustainable development of the forestry as an economic branch.

## **Recommendations**

As the first and most important activity which is recommended should be the forest **inventory**. That will tell the forest sector at which stage is at the moment and which steps need to be taken to improve the situation in the future.

The problem of marking borders between state and private owned forest should be done and introducing **GIS** for forestry should be also priority in the country. Introducing modern **information system** can help, not only to the private forest owners, but also to the employee of the PE. **NWFP**s started to be an activity that is mentioned between the rural populations, but if it is more organized and planned, it can be a significant for the national economy as well. **Rural** **tourism** is the most promoted in the protected areas. Taking into account that there are potentials for this kind of activity, the forest sector needs to follow global trends for sustainable forestry and include this into their plans. At the moment the forestry sector is still **traditional** and only **wood focused**. **Monopoly of the PE** should be turned on to market economy. Every branch of the PE should establish their price for the products at the market, private forest owners should be also a factor influencing the market. At the same time, to consider the fact that they serve the public interest. State measures taken in this area should be adequate to achieve the objectives.

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