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## **NEW DIRECTOR FOR UNECE'S SUSTAINABLE ENERGY DIVISION**

Scott Foster has been appointed Director of UNECE's Sustainable Energy Division as of 1 February 2011. He has more than 30 years' experience in the energy field. Mr. Foster has worked extensively with governments and international organizations on energy policy, market design and regulation, climate change, investment promotion, and renewables technology and policy. While at the International Energy Agency he was deeply engaged in analyses of the various dimensions of energy supply security. Mr. Foster also undertook assessments of ownership, structure, and regulation of the energy industry.



Mr. Foster has led numerous strategy engagements on the question of climate change – how to change portfolios of policy, investment and behaviour in light of the science and politics of climate change. In his own words, "We live in interesting times, and I believe that we are moving progressively into a new market structure in which renewables, domotics, smart grids, and electric vehicles will play a critical and interactive role. Achieving a sustainable energy balance will require the competitive contribution of many technologies in a sensible policy setting." Mr. Foster's particular focus recently has been assisting governments, policy makers, investors, energy producers, and consumers as they address the critical challenges of sustainability, technology choice, and investment mobilization.

Before founding Nomad Energy Consulting in 2004, Mr. Foster was Vice President of global regulatory affairs with AES Corporation, Senior Director for global power with Cambridge Energy Research Associates (CERA), and senior expert in the energy diversification division of the International Energy Agency. Mr. Foster holds a BA from Dartmouth College, an MS in Civil Engineering from Stanford University, and an MBA from UC Berkeley. □

Mr. Foster is an expert on energy market fundamentals and market design, including analysis and assessment of the major driving forces shaping demand, supply, and price. He has led major studies of the long-term outlook for European gas markets from pricing and supply security perspectives, and has advised governments, regulators, and industry on the strategic implications of those outlooks.



## **UNECE CELEBRATES LAUNCH OF INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF FORESTS**

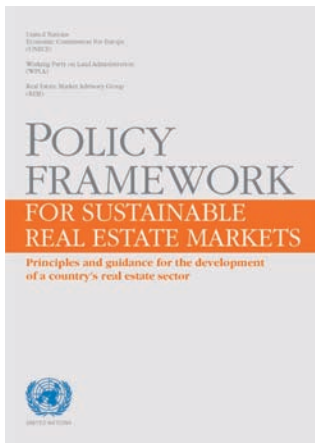
As a reflection of the growing appreciation of the contribution of forests to economic, environmental and social wellbeing, the International Year of Forests opens officially on 2 February during the high-level segment of the 9th session of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF9) in New York. Andrey Vasilyev, UNECE Deputy Executive Secretary, will deliver a speech to the high-level segment, reminding delegates of the importance of working towards a consolidated and coherent institutional framework for forests in the pan-European region.

UNECE has also taken this opportunity to inform UNFF delegates of the key role played by the UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section in promoting and supporting Sustainable Forest Management in the UNECE region. Paola Deda, Section Chief, moderated a session on 25 January where success stories about Sustainable Forest Management from across the region were presented. Ms. Deda reminded participants of the contributions made by the joint UNECE/FAO programme over the years and highlighted its current work that will provide policymakers with options for further enhancing the forest sector's contribution to a green economy.

In particular, an Action Plan on the Role of the Forest Sector in a Green Economy is under development and will be considered by the next joint session of the UNECE Timber Committee and the FAO European Forestry Commission. Ismail Belen, delegate of Turkey to UNFF9, and Deputy General Director of the Turkish General Directorate of Forestry, officially announced that Turkey would host this joint session in Antalya, from 10 to 14 October 2011. □

*For more information, please visit:*  
<http://timber.unece.org/index.php?id=2>.

## **ROUNDTABLE IN PORTUGAL EXAMINES POLICY REFORMS TO BOOST THE REAL-ESTATE SECTOR**



Real estate and property markets underpin our national economies. They are the principal destination of a household's savings and the most solid component of a country's capital stock. For many UNECE member States with economies in transition, improving their legal and institutional frameworks for the real estate sector is an urgent priority. But the issue is also

being seriously discussed in the countries of Western Europe worst hit by the economic downturn.

As part of its initiatives to promote sound regulations for the real estate sector, UNECE held a roundtable in Lisbon on 27 January. The event was jointly organized by the International Real Estate Federation (FIABCI), the Portuguese Real Estate Agents and Professionals Association (APEMIP) and the UNECE Real Estate Market Advisory Group.

Participants examined the relevance for Portugal of a recent UNECE publication aimed at authorities engaged in regulatory reforms, Policy Framework for Sustainable Real Estate Markets: Principles and Guidance for the Development of a Country's Real Estate Sector.

Speakers included Mr. Paulo Campos, Secretary of State for Public Construction and Communications of Portugal and Mr. João Tiago Silveira, Secretary of State for the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of Portugal. They said that market actors were confident and optimistic and that the real estate sector was showing resilience despite the current adverse

economic and financial conditions. However, Portugal needed to create incentives for rehabilitating old building units and simplify the rules for leasing property.

Government officials, representatives of professional associations, the private sector and academics also participated in the roundtable. Speakers discussed how the principles contained in the Policy Framework publication might be applied to Portugal's present challenges:

- The need for appropriate spatial planning regulations on land use to prevent speculation on the value of land.
- The need to streamline the registration of real estate transactions and mortgages through e-government reforms.
- The need to increase the size of the rental sector so as to provide more affordable housing for vulnerable populations.
- The need to promote increased foreign investment to spur economic growth.

One of the conclusions of the discussions was that multi-stakeholder involvement would be fundamental to ensuring further policy change. The UNECE Real Estate Market Advisory Group offered to support continued consultations among international experts and national authorities to help implement legislative reforms on the above challenges.

As a follow-up to the roundtable, Portuguese officials will be invited to report on planned reforms in these areas at a REM Advisory Group sponsored side event during the annual meeting of *Marché international des*

*professionnels de l'immobilier (MIPIM)* to be held in Cannes, France, on 10 March 2011. □



*Download the Policy Framework at:*  
<http://unece.org/hlm/documents/Publications/policy.framework.e.pdf>.

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