



PRESS RELEASE

European Parliament paves the way for the Commission to propose an ambitious and self-standing EU Forest Strategy

Brussels, 8 October 2020 - **Yesterday the European Parliament gave a “go” to the Com Agri Report prepared by MEP Petri Sarvamaa on the “European Forest Strategy – the way forward”. This plenary vote sent a positive signal for forest owners and managers and the 4 million workers involved in the forestry value chains.**

For forest owners and managers all across Europe, it was a vote that was expected on a firm footing. MEPs have listened to those who actually work in forests and proposed a balanced text that recognises multipurpose forestry and the positive impacts of the sustainable forest management practices implemented in our forests.

For the whole sector, it was essential that the crucial role of forests in achieving the goals of the European Green Deal, including climate neutrality by 2050, biodiversity preservation and green economic growth, was recognised in the first place. An ambitious, coherent, and self-standing EU Forest Strategy post-2020 is needed to support this flagship policy of the Union.

As a result of this recognition, forest owners and managers are expecting strong actions to ensure long-term stability and predictability for managing EU forests so they can continue to provide their many benefits. EU-based forest organisations also welcome the specific attention given to the need to further promote the bioeconomy, the importance of risk management measures to address the very serious impacts of climate change on forests, and the possible incentives to appropriately remunerate climate, biodiversity and other ecosystem services.

One important point highlighted by the sector is that we should not try to reinvent the wheel by changing the definition of sustainable forest management which was internationally agreed as part of the pan-European “Forest Europe process” and has been incorporated into national legislation and practice, and into the voluntary systems, such as forest certifications. Forest owners and managers remain open for its further enhancement through a transparent and inclusive dialogue among relevant actors.

The EU Forest Strategy will also need to be consistent with other relevant policies in place at different levels to enable local players to benefit fully from it.

Forest owners and managers ask the Commission to take this report fully into account in their current work on the strategy and that its publication will be made without any delay at the beginning of 2021.

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The Confederation of European Forest Owners (CEPF) is the umbrella association of private forest owner organisations in Europe. At EU level, CEPF promotes the values of sustainable forest management, private property ownership and forest sectors economic viability.



Copa and Cogeca are the united voice of farmers and agri-cooperatives in the EU. Copa represents over 22 million farmers and their families whilst Cogeca represents the interests of 22,000 agricultural and forestry cooperatives.



EUSTAFOR represents the voice of European state forest management organisations who have sustainable forest management and the production of wood as major concerns.