



The future EU Forest Strategy should be inclusive

The number of forest-related policy initiatives developed very often in an uncoordinated manner through forest measures and non-forest measures impacting on forests, lead the forest sector stakeholders to call for a comprehensive, coordinated and focused Forest Strategy for the EU.

The forest owners, both public and private, and the forest products industries of the EU urge the Commission to develop a Forest Strategy that would not only take into consideration the forests of Europe, their sustainable management, and the multiple functions, goods and services they supply to the European society, but also the downstream uses of forest resources.

Amongst others, the EU Forest Strategy should recognise and articulate the various ongoing and upcoming policy initiatives, like:

- the EU 2020 strategy, as it is the guiding document for all actions in the EU. The Forest Strategy could and should significantly contribute to the achievement of its green economy, green growth and green jobs targets.
- the follow-up to the Green Paper on forest protection and information currently handled by DG Environment
- the upcoming revision of the Communication on the Innovative and Sustainable Forest-based Industries in the EU of February 2008, to be carried out by DG Enterprise
- the rural development policy forest specific measures, as part of the future Common Agricultural Policy, currently under the responsibility of DG Agriculture

Since the EU forest products industries are heavily depending on domestic forest resources, but also contribute actively to the rural livelihood, they are influenced by the measures that address forests in Europe (e.g. green economy, rural development, climate change, biodiversity). Therefore the European forest and forest-based sector asks for a full and inclusive recognition of forest industries in the future Forest Strategy.

Moreover, the European forest sector cannot envisage a EU Forest Strategy if it is not rapidly accompanied with an Action Plan, that would specify a number of focused concrete actions aiming at fulfilling the vision and objectives of the Strategy. The Strategy should therefore provide for the development of such an Action Plan, as the concrete tool for the implementation, monitoring, the reporting and, whenever needed, the improvement of defined EU actions. The Strategy should be the guiding framework for EU Member States national forest programmes and action plans.