



PRESS RELEASE – 5.12.2017

Seeking momentum on the European Union's Forest Strategy

Forest owners, managers, experts and scientists call for an effective and coherent policy framework for unlocking the potential of forests to respond to key societal challenges. The statement comes following a series of forestry-related events on the EU Forest Strategy held in the European Parliament this week.

To kick off the discussions and provide input on the review of the EU Forest Strategy, a public hearing took place in the European Parliament on 4 December, followed by an event hosted by MEPs to further discuss among policymakers and stakeholders. "The Review of the EU Forest Strategy: Fostering policy coherence on the multifunctional role of forests" was hosted by MEP Ulrike Müller, MEP Miapetra Kumpula-Natri, and MEP Andrzej Grzyb and was organized in cooperation with the European Parliament Intergroup on Climate Change, Biodiversity, and Sustainable Development.

Peter Mayer, Director of the Austrian Research Centre for Forests, delivered an inspiring keynote speech putting forests in perspective with societal megatrends and addressing the role of governance to foster policy coherence.

The panel discussion focused on the current EU Forest Strategy and its contribution towards fostering the coherence of forest-related EU policies. The role of forestry in facing climate change and how the EU forest-based sector can contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were discussed. The importance of research, innovation, knowledge exchange, investments, fostering practice-science-policy dialogue and, in particular, the need for a coherent policy framework were highlighted in the context of a fragmented policy environment and increasing expectations as well as opportunities for forest-based solutions.

It was concluded that while many policy developments in the EU have an increasing impact on forests and the forest-based sector, they do not sufficiently take into account the challenges and benefits of multifunctional sustainable forest management and the versatile and cross-sectoral potential of wood-based products. One key message that emerged from the discussions was that the EU Forest Strategy should be the reference for the development of EU forest-related policies.

For further information

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