

Preparation of the EU Forest Strategy post-2020

- Information from the Commission -

The European Green Deal announced in December 2019 an ambitious vision for the European Union to become a sustainable and climate neutral economy by 2050. In the Green Deal Communication, it was also announced that, building on the 2030 EU Biodiversity Strategy, the Commission will prepare a new EU Forest Strategy covering the whole forest cycle and promoting the many services that forests provide. The EU Forest Strategy will set the policy framework to deliver the forests we want in the EU in the future and will enable the contribution of the forest sector to the new Commission priorities of building a new growth model through the European Green Deal, including advancing rural areas.

An EU climate-neutral economy will require a substantial amount of nature-based solutions, including an increase in the quantity and quality of forests for carbon sequestration. Forests account for 43% of the EU's land area and are essential for our environment and climate, for our economy, and for our wellbeing. Forests and the forest-based sector will be an essential part of Europe's transition to a modern, climate-neutral, resource-efficient and competitive economy. They can help preserve lively and prosperous rural areas, landscapes, culture and heritage, as well as play a role in the new European Bauhaus.

In this spirit, the EU Forest Strategy will help ensure that forests can satisfy all these environmental, social and economic functions and services and that supply chains do not contribute to deforestation in the EU and globally. To achieve this, its key objective will be to ensure growing, healthy, diverse and resilient EU forests, which contribute significantly to our strengthened biodiversity and climate ambition, secure livelihoods and support a sustainable forest bioeconomy. Taking into account the latest Council Conclusions, that referred to the need to further promoting and enhancing sustainable forest management, including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, the strategy will propose actions to ensure EU forests are preserved and managed sustainably including providing guidance on close-to nature forestry.

The EU Forest Strategy will present a vision and a concrete plan for 2030, underpinned by scientific data, on how to achieve these goals. This will provide orientation and consistency to many other work streams and legislative initiatives that have a direct impact on forests.

The strategy will seek the engagement of all relevant actors, from Member States to forest owners and managers, forest-based industries, scientists, civil society and other stakeholders.
