Forest-based industries call for recognition of their role in mitigating climate change

Brussels, 25 November 2008 - Over 200 participants from the forest-based industries in Europe met in Brussels today to discuss the role of the forest-based sector in mitigating climate change. The seminar ‘From forest management to wood products and paper: The unique link against climate change’ organised by the three European trade associations representing the industry: CEI-Bois (the European Confederation of Woodworking Industries), CEPF (the Confederation of European private Forest Owners) and CEPI (the Confederation of European Paper Industries) concluded with the signature of a message from the industry to the UN Forum of the Climate Change Convention COP14 meeting to be held in Poznan in December.

The seminar provided a high-level platform for discussion and key note addresses were given by Frieda Brepoels MEP; Martijn Quinn, Member of Commissioner Dimas’ Cabinet; Marie-Laurence Madignier from the Ministry of Agriculture, France representing the current EU Presidency and Wulf Killman from FAO.

These presentations and the conclusions of the ICCP 4th Assessment Report, which stated that sustainable forest management is the key to climate change mitigation, were used to debate a common position for the industry and a clear message drafted showing that the contribution of the pulp and paper industry as being part of the solution when it comes to combating climate change must be recognised and that the increasing competition for wood must not be allowed to result in a negative impact on the competitiveness of the sector in Europe.

This message was signed on behalf of the industry by Christer Segersteen, President of CEPF, Mikael Eliasson, Chairman of CEI-Bois and Magnus Hall, Chairman of CEPI and will be transmitted by the industry to the COP14 meeting.

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Notes to the Editor

CEPI
The Confederation of European Paper Industries (CEPI) is a Brussels-based non-profit making organisation regrouping the European pulp and paper industry and championing this industry’s achievements and the benefits of its products. Its mission is to promote the member’s business sector by taking specific actions notably, by monitoring and analyzing activities and initiatives in the areas of industry, environment, energy, forestry, recycling, fiscal policies and competitiveness in general. Through CEPI, the paper industry increases its visibility and acts on emerging issues, making expert and constructive contributions on behalf of the industry.

Through its 18 member countries (16 European Union members plus Norway and Switzerland) CEPI represents some 800 pulp, paper and board producing companies across Europe, ranging from small and medium sized companies to multi-nationals, and 1200 paper mills. Together they represent 27% of world production.

CEPF
Forward looking and responsible care of their forests is the main priority for family forest owners. Improving stability and richness of species are only some of the goals of sustainable forest management.

Family forest owners manage their forests in the sense of a generation contract. Today they cut trees that were planted by their ancestors 100 or more years ago. They are very dedicated to their forest, always aware of their responsibility to their descendents. Through this long-term responsibility Family forest owners are always interested in maintaining and enhancing their forest knowledge – they are the forestry and sustainable experts.

The Confederation of European private Forest Owners (CEPF), via its member associations, consolidates the concerns and proposals of 16 million family forest owners from 23 European countries. It targets its activities to all relevant Directorates General in the Commission, European Parliament and European Council, enabling family forest owners from the local level to voice their concerns and provide their knowledge to the European level.

CEI-Bois
CEI-Bois, the European Confederation of woodworking industries, was founded in 1952 and represents the interests of the European woodworking and furniture industry, which includes more than 350,000 companies employing around 2.9 million workers in EU27.

The sector is responsible for an annual turnover of about 237 billion euro and is largely composed of small and medium-sized companies.

The primary goal of CEI-Bois is to further the interests of the European woodworking sector.