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## Press release

# European Parliament raises climate ambition and recognizes multiple roles of forests

Brussels, 8 October 2020

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This week, the European Parliament had its first real political say on two files of high relevance, not only for the EU climate agenda and Green Deal roll out, but also for the role that EU forest-based industries and forest-based products will be allowed to play in the race to climate neutrality by 2050.

As a leading member of the forest-based industries, Cepi, the Confederation of European Paper Industries, takes stock of the European Parliament adoption of **MEP Jytte Guteland (SE, S&D)** report on the climate neutrality law, calling for a 60% emissions cut by 2030, even going beyond the European Commission recent proposal for a 2030 emission reduction target of 55% and for this objective to be binding not only EU-wide, but also at national level.

*“To implement a 60% cut would be very challenging for any industrial sector and with big differences between national realities. Already the impact assessment underpinning the 55% target shows that, if other countries don’t align with the EU ambitions, it will have a detrimental effect on most industry sectors, including paper. We are already fully committed to support a climate neutral Europe by 2050: our industry has a strategic interest in being at the forefront of the decarbonisation efforts as reflected in our [CEO initiative](#) published last November. However, to continue reducing our emissions while increasing resilient production in Europe would require a supportive and stable regulatory framework, affordable clean energy – in particular in current natural gas-dominated countries – and financing tools to support the significant stepping up in investments”,* commented Jori Ringman, Cepi Director General.

Having now formed its position on the file, the European Parliament can expect tough negotiations with EU Member States in the coming months, especially because the European Parliament decision is also meant to raise pressure on EU countries to rally behind an ambitious 2030 goal.

Earlier this week, MEPs also widely backed the own initiative report by **MEP Petri Sarvamaa’s (EPP/FI)** on the European Forest Strategy, anticipating the discussions on the revamped strategy expected next year. The Strategy will be one of the key contributions of the EU for COP26 negotiations.

*“The adopted report manages to strike a balance between the many expectations that policymakers and citizens have about the role of forests and forest management for society as a whole, recognizing that forest resources offer multiple services, including wood, clean water, healthy soil and biodiversity. As a next step this recognition should be reflected in the upcoming strategy with enhanced focus also to the parts beyond forests and forestry in order to better tap into the full climate change mitigation and adaptation potential of the entire business ecosystems. Forests cannot be considered as a way to substitute other sectors’ emissions and thereby allow loopholes as regards emission reductions.”* said Jori Ringman.

Further development of a non-end-use specific sustainability approach should be a key element in the EU’s new Forest Strategy, the development of this approach is now also encouraged by the European Parliament in the adopted report.

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In most cases, forests management aims at producing high quality timber and pulpwood, then residues, that come as side product along the way. All forest-based products tap into these diverse sources. There should be one sustainability approach embedded in different EU policies where needed.

In view of the upcoming Forest Strategy revamp, Cepi encourages the European Commission to acknowledge and boost the synergetic climate benefits brought by resilient forests and forest-based products. Substitution of fossil-based raw materials with renewable and recyclable alternatives is essential when moving towards more circular economies.

This will boost the viability of the entire forest-based industrial value chain, a sector which contributes to valorise and ensure healthy forests thanks to active and timely sustainable forest management.