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The EU Forest Strategy should ensure that Sustainable Forest Management is consistently demonstrated in different EU policies

Cepi's response to the public consultation on the EU Forest Strategy

A [public consultation](#), launched on the 25th of January 2021, gives relevant stakeholders an opportunity to voice their views on the EU Forest Strategy, which will serve as a contribution to the preparation of said Strategy.

Cepi welcomed this opportunity to provide its views on the potential objectives and actions of the new EU Forest Strategy, various forest aspects including threats and challenges, actions to be taken to promote and enhance forest biodiversity, adapt forests to climate change as well as strengthen carbon sequestration. Cepi's main comments can be summarised as follows:

Sustainable Forest Management should be consistently demonstrated in different EU policies

The Standing Forest Committee should be mandated to establish the European risk-based approach and sustainability criteria for sustainable forest management, which has been adopted in the recast of the Renewable Energy Directive as a non-end-use specific sustainability system for forest biomass. The EU Forest Strategy should serve as a reference point to make sure that the approach is applied in a uniform manner across different policies, e.g. concerning bioenergy, financial instruments or sustainable fibre-based products. Doing so would not only strengthen active and sustainable forest management in the EU and promote the development of the bioeconomy but also ensure the consistency of policies.

Increased Policy Coordination via the new Strategy is needed.

Due to an expected increase in European initiatives concerning forests and the forest-based sector, policy coordination should be enhanced through the new Strategy, with the principle of sustainable forest management- as established in Forest Europe, H1 resolution, as the cornerstone.

Adaptation of forests to climate change should be done through active and sustainable forest management.

The EU Forest Strategy should foster adaptation of forests to climate change through active and sustainable forest management as opposed to adaptation through conservation when it comes to the future of forests, as the latter carries a risk of spreading diseases such as pests and insect outbreaks.

Forest sinks should not be treated as compensation for certain 'difficult-to-decarbonise' sectors.

Doing so is not efficient nor fair as forests are threatened by sectors outside forests and the forest-based sector along with climate change particularly, as opposed to sustainable forest-based bioeconomy.

For further information, please refer to: Ulrich Leberle Raw Materials Director at u.leberle@cepi.org

Cepi is the European association representing the paper industry. We offer a wide range of renewable and recyclable wood-based fibre solutions to EU citizens: from packaging to textile, hygiene and tissue products, printing and graphic papers as well as speciality papers, but also bio-chemicals for food and pharmaceuticals, bio-composites and bioenergy. We are a responsible industry: 92% of our raw materials are sourced in Europe and certified as sustainable, 91% of the water we use is returned in good condition to the environment. We are the world champion in recycling at the rate of 72%. At the forefront of the decarbonisation and industrial transformation of our economy, we embrace digitalisation and bring 20 billion value addition to the European economy and €5.5 billion investments annually. Through its 18 national associations, Cepi gathers 500 companies operating 895 mills across Europe and directly employing more than 180,000 people.
