Cepi
RENEWABLE
RECYCLED
RESPONSIBLE
EUROPEAN PAPER

CONTRIBUTION TO 3 BILLION TREES OBJECTIVE

3 BILLION ADDITIONAL TREES INITIATIVE

Under the umbrella of the Confederation of European Paper Industries (Cepi), we, the companies owning and managing forests, would like to express our support in further elaborating the European Commission initiative to plant 3 billion additional trees by 2030.*

Our companies, operating in the European forest-based sector have a longstanding history in owning and managing forest land in Europe. We have well established relations with public and private forest owners which are crucial to ensure vitality and health of forest resources. This is an important starting point to secure provision of multiple benefits and solutions for growing societal needs. We are ready to use our potential to reinforce our efforts towards the objective of the initiative from our own forests to those from which wood is sourced.

Consequently, we would like to contribute actively to the success of the EU's 3 billion additional trees initiative. It is closely linked to the relevant EU policy frameworks such as the ones stemming from e.g. the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 or the upcoming regulatory framework to address carbon removals. It is of utmost importance that these policies would tackle the biodiversity and climate issues without creating unintended consequences on wood availability which is a prerequisite for the further development of the circular bioeconomy in Europe.

A consistent EU and national policy framework for forests and the forest-based sector in Europe enable us to fully contribute the successful transition towards fossil-free and sustainable solutions for everyday needs of the citizens. Afforestation and reforestation efforts should be done in close cooperation among national authorities and companies involved.

*This initiative has been adopted by Cepi Board of Directors and is supported by the entire pulp and paper industry.

1

WE BELIEVE THAT FORESTS ARE, AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE, ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS FOR HUMAN SOCIETY, AND ENVIRONMENT STABILITY AS WELL AS ECONOMIC

In Europe, forest resources are growing in terms of volume and area unlike in the other continents of the world[1]. Many still perceive the forest industry and economic use of forests as an obstacle for forests to fully deliver ecosystem functions such as climate change mitigation and the provision of habitats enhancing biological diversity. However, European pulp and paper industry has a strategic interest in keeping healthy and growing forests in Europe. It uses wood that has been legally harvested and comes from sustainably managed forests: 90% of the wood used by the industry comes from the EU. 74% of the wood is thirdparty certified as coming from responsibly managed forests.

A forest land with a value remains as forest land and companies have an economic interest in keeping forest resources healthy and vital. It should be noted that in Europe, forest cover is increasing whereas in the other parts of the world deforestation driven by the sectors outside the EU forest sector is causing severe consequences for climate and biodiversity. The European pulp and paper industry, together with other parts of the forest-based sector, contributes to viability and thus active sustainable forest management.

We embrace effective reforestation, ensure regeneration of harvested areas, contribute in safeguarding biodiversity and preserving valuable habitats via SFM and fully support active restoration of forests degraded by natural disasters such as fires, storms, erosion, drought, floods or biological calamities mainly caused by climate change.

Forests must be seen beyond trees in order to tap into full climate change mitigation and adaptation potential of forests and the forest-based sector. The economic use of wood encourages forest owners and managers to keep their forests as such and manage them with a long-term perspective. The sector promptly reacts to emergency situations like storms, insect outbreaks or fires, helping to restore forest ecosystems by draining wood from affected areas and minimizing risks of future pests and diseases while contributing to reduce economic losses of both private and public forest owners. Simultaneously, the forest-based industry provides the wider society with forest fibre-based products which replace fossil-based alternatives which are detrimental in terms of climate and environment.

2

THE EUROPEAN PAPER INDUSTRY SUPPORTS THE INITIATIVE IN THE UPCOMING FOREST STRATEGY TO PLANT 3 BILLION ADDITIONAL TREES BY 2030 AND DECLARES AN INTEREST TO CONTRIBUTE TO IT

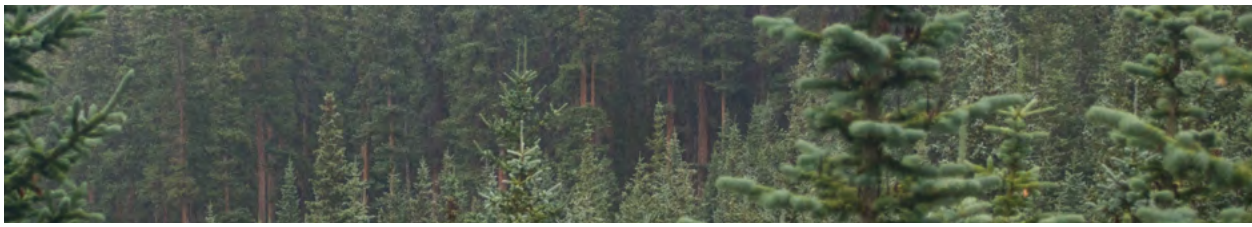
We declare our willingness to contribute to the 3 billion trees objective to enhance overall growth, health and resilience of the EU's forests and other land areas. Both bioeconomy and biodiversity can be enhanced outside today's forests by converting more land areas into forests. Thus, new areas to be afforested and reforested could provide high added value for Europe. We are ready to contribute to this objective in the following ways:

2.1 MAKING USE OF OUR EXPERIENCE IN ENSURING REGENERATION OF HARVESTED AREAS, AFFORESTATION AND REFORESTATION

Many of us have nurseries that produce climate change adapted forest reproductive materials such as seedlings from breeding programs. We constantly explore the possibilities of using such materials in areas with a history in natural regeneration to accelerate the regeneration of forests damaged by recent forest calamities. It is of utmost importance that healthy and resilient forests will rapidly take over in these areas to ensure e.g. carbon removals and future provision of various ecosystem services.

2.2 CLIMATE-SMART FORESTRY

Climate-smart forestry use a targeted approach or strategy to increase the climate benefits from forests and the forest sector, in a way that creates synergies with other needs related to forests. We explore the potential for additional growth in existing forests by making best use of digitalisation to optimize forestry practices, such as planting, thinning and harvesting activities. Climate-smart forestry will lead to climate benefits by sequestering CO_2, additional growing stock and providing the opportunity to replace fossil-based raw materials and products.



2.3 KEY POSITION IN THE FOREST-BASED VALUE CHAIN – ENSURING HEALTHY AND VIABLE FOREST RESOURCE

Our wood procurement and forest management organisations have long-standing relations with millions of public and private forest owners. We will use the potential to multiply the efforts towards the objective from our own forests to those from which we source wood. This will be done by sharing experience, supporting land owners, making available recent technology and forest management improvements.

2.4 AFFORESTATION AND REFORESTATION

Contribution to afforestation and reforestation can be done in several ways e.g. through participation in EU or nationally funded programmes. In addition, other way of contributing would be to support investments in afforestation and reforestation on land owned by third parties. Moreover, provision of timely silvicultural services can play an important role in contributing to afforestation and reforestation.

Agricultural and abandoned land that is not essential for food production or other purposes could be converted into forest land by supporting landowners with know-how, machinery, seedlings from forest nurseries and services. Forest owning and managing companies have longstanding experience in successful forest regeneration to be applied also in afforestation and reforestation.

Cepi's members have contacts with land owners due to wood sourcing activities and silvicultural services (e.g. planting of forest trees). As a part of services for forest owners, we support them on understanding the value of afforestation and reforestation and bring our expertise for their good.

2.5 FOREST MANAGEMENT AND TREE PLANTING ARE LONG-TERM COMMITMENTS

Plantation programs and activities have often been extremely short term, not leading to forests that could be sustainably managed over the longer term. It is important that after planting, the long-term management needs to be supported to make the area one that contributes to the carbon cycles, bioeconomy and biodiversity objectives of the European Green Deal.

2.6 FOSTERING RESEARCH AND INNOVATION ON GENETIC ADAPTATION

Research on genetic adaption suggests that natural processes might not be enough to keep up with current climatic trends. In this respect, selection of species, artificial regeneration and assisted migration with suitable seed sources may thus be a way to forests that are adapted to future climatic conditions. The development of planting stock via adaptative breeding and with desirable genetic traits and genetic variation may be a promising avenue to counter changes in the local climate.

2.7 USING DIGITAL TOOLS TO REGISTER QUANTITATIVE PROGRESS AND CONTINUITY - MAKING THESE TOOLS MORE BROADLY ACCESSIBLE AND AVAILABLE.

As forest owners we use satellite images, surveys and geographic information systems to describe and register our forests' status and development. Our experience in digitalization could be made available to a broader range of users, enhancing afforestation and later on regeneration activities in afforested areas. Use of satellite imagery play a key role in monitoring forests and in combination of field assessments they provide a liable system for monitoring. Digital tools can be used to optimise machinery and to identify areas available and suitable for creation of additional forests.

2.8 ACTIVITY REPORT

Cepi will carry out regular surveys on the abovementioned activities and contributions at European and national level and publish them in an activity report.

2.9 WE HAVE A ROLE BEYOND 2030 TO ENSURE THE CONTINUITY OF THE PROJECT

While we see the greatest potential of our contributions in the above-mentioned areas, we welcome that the initiative is also looking beyond forests. In the lifecycle of forests 10 years is a very short time. In order to substantially contribute to the climate objectives of the Union, it is of utmost importance to support that these additional forests will be actively and sustainably managed beyond 2030.

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