



Forest Europe 10th Ministerial Conference - Stockholm

Joint statement of the European Forest-based Sector

Sustainably and actively managed forests support European climate action, biodiversity, economic growth, rural livelihoods, and social and human well-being. They contribute to strengthening Europe's competitiveness and resilience in a rapidly changing climate and geopolitical landscape. They form the backbone of European forest-based industries, which depend fundamentally on a stable and sustainable supply of raw materials.

The concept of Sustainable Forest Management (SFM), as defined within the Forest Europe process in the pan-European context, has been guiding the sustainable forestry practices and the multifunctional role of forests across the continent for more than three decades. This process contributed to the significant modernisation and development of forest legislation and forest practices in Europe and ensured a sound contribution from Europe to a global debate on forests. Furthermore, it provides a widely recognized framework for the responsible management and use of forest resources, maintaining their biodiversity, productivity, regeneration capacity and vitality both today and in the future.

SFM relies on complex, integrated, and long-term decisions, grounded in field experience, scientific research, and broad system perspectives, to ensure the multifunctionality, health, and resilience of forest ecosystems. Its daily implementation delivers tangible results, as reflected both on the ground and in the successive State of European Forests' reports.

At a time when forests are facing unprecedented climate-change-related effects, their management requires adaptation and flexibility embedded in a dynamic approach. After several decades, the SFM concept remains fit for purpose, yet further improvement of its foundations in Europe is more important than ever. This is why possible adaptations and developments of SFM criteria, indicators and other tools should continue to be analysed and explored. Forest Europe is the right forum where this work should continue, as Forest Europe is and should remain the main European Forest Policy Forum.

Forest Europe is an asset that must be maintained and strengthened. We encourage European Ministers responsible for forests and forestry to provide strong political and financial support to this process, ensuring that it continues to play its essential role for the future of Europe's forests, their sustainable management and their multifunctional role. As Observers to Forest Europe, we remain committed to support the process by bringing the expertise and perspective of the European forest and forest-based sector. Maintaining active and sustainable forest management

and ensuring the availability of renewable forest resources, including wood and wood fibres, are essential to achieving Europe's climate, biodiversity and bioeconomy objectives together.

We therefore highly welcome the upcoming 10th Forest Europe Ministerial Conference and would like to express our support for the Stockholm Ministerial Declaration "FOREST EUROPE – Sustainable Forests for Resilient Societies" and its Annex, to be adopted by the European Ministers responsible for forests and forestry. We also wish to express our gratitude to the Swedish Liaison Unit for organising this event and for its work over the last two years. We look forward to this event and the adoption of the new Ministerial Declaration, which we trust will set a strong basis for the future of SFM and the Forest Europe process.

Signatories

CEI-Bois – European Confederation of the Woodworking Industries

CEPF – Confederation of European Forest Owners

Cepi – Confederation of European Paper Industries

Copa-Cogeca – European Farmers and Agri-Cooperatives

ELO – European Landowners' Organization

EOS – European Organisation of the Sawmill Industry

EUSTAFOR – European State Forest Association

FECOF – European Federation of Municipality Forests

UEF – Union of European Foresters

USSE – Union of Foresters of Southern Europe