

THE NORDICS A REGION OF FORESTS

Recommendations of
Nordic Family Forestry
for the incoming EU
Commission and
Parliament

NSF
NORDIC FAMILY FORESTRY



FORESTRY CONTRIBUTES TO MITIGATE AND SOLVE EUROPEAN AND GLOBAL CHALLENGES

01

Strengthening Europe's strategic autonomy by ensuring a domestically sourced sustainable wood supply

02

Boosting a vibrant circular bioeconomy enabling a shift away from the fossil-based economy

03

Expanding CO₂ retention capacity, forest biodiversity and attractiveness of the countryside

04

Creating new jobs in rural areas supporting the green transition

05

Embracing market-based and voluntary solutions as important complementary tools for implementation of EU policies and regulations



EU AND GLOBAL CHALLENGES

Climate crisis, energy security, scarcity of non-renewable resources and loss of biodiversity are major global challenges. Furthermore, the past few years have laid witness to significant geopolitical changes. Russia's invasion of Ukraine together with the Covid-19 pandemic have accentuated the importance of self-sufficiency of domestically sourced, renewable to strengthen national and regional resilience.

Addressing these global challenges are an integral part of EU's core values of maintaining peace, prosperity and security through trade and cooperation.

Europe is a continent of forests.

Forests are a pool of renewable materials for a rapidly widening range of uses from construction to transport electrification, an essential living complex to fight climate change, while these precious ecosystems host the highest terrestrial biodiversity of our continent. At the same time the active sustainable management of forests creates jobs and livelihood, particularly in the rural areas of Europe. Furthermore, these are jobs that contributes substantially to EU's green transition.

The new EU legislature and executive branch will have the opportunity to create an enabling regulatory environment, where multifunctional, sustainably managed forests can be used in their full potential to contribute to addressing these challenges.





FOREST-BASED SECTORS ARE PART OF THE SOLUTION TO GLOBAL CHALLENGES

There is no simple solution to turn the European Union and Member States towards a carbon neutral, sustainable future. However, long term sustainable forest management holds a potential to contribute significantly and positively to these challenges and move Europe further towards a sustainable future and a circular bioeconomy.

The Alliance of Nordic Family Forestry (Nordiska Skogägarorganisationernas Förbund - NSF) encourages the incoming EU Commission and EU Parliament to see this potential and support a strong and invigorate forest sector within the individual Member States. **Forest owners need incentives and tools that motivate them to manage their forests actively as a long-term commitment.**

In the Nordic countries alone, there are more than one million private forest owner spanning from large estates to a few hectares. Despite difference in size and capability, they all actively contribute positively to addressing global challenges.

Most of Nordic forests are owned by private individuals, often by families who have managed their forests for several generations with a sincere commitment to pass it on in a better state than they received it. In the Nordic Countries we share common values and approaches towards forest management, but also recognize that national forest policy, regional conditions, local traditions, and landowners' rights vary significantly across the EU member states.

Climate change will have great impact on all parts of society in the years to come and forest management is no exception. Choosing the right management methods, including choice of tree species that will reach stand maturity by the end of this century must be left to the individual forest owners.

Thanks to long-term forest management, the carbon stock of forests has grown continuously, and forests sequester significantly more carbon than they emit. Healthy, well-managed forests which provide renewable materials to substitute fossil and non-renewable resources is a prerequisite for EU's green transition.

MAIN AREAS OF INTEREST FOR THE NORDIC FAMILY FORESTRY ALLIANCE



EU regulatory framework tailored to local conditions that provide forest managers with freedom of choice and incentives to plant more forests, based on trust and responsibility, stemming from private ownership.



Market-based mechanisms and voluntary measures to help sustainable transition and a growing circular bioeconomy.



Combatting the degradation of ecosystems and biodiversity loss.

EU cooperation...

should support the promotion of circular bioeconomy, based on renewable bio-based raw materials, and a wide range of ecosystem services that forest can provide. At the same time, the need to shift away from fossil-based economy and the expansion of novel application of wood-based materials dedicates higher role for European forests.

Forest owners are the key stakeholders who translate well-designed policies into meaningful action on the ground. The sustainable management of our forest entails strong focus on social and economic sustainability of our countryside. Forest ownership and forest stewardship go hand in hand only if continuity in planning and management are safeguarded. To ensure the supply of sustainably sourced wood and forest-based materials in Europe, forest owners and foresters need long-term, streamlined policies and financial mechanisms - within and besides the Common Agricultural Policy. With special regard to support through market-based solutions, this career path and way of life must become attractive to generations to come, while ensuring steady livelihoods for those who own and steward European forests.

A circular bioeconomy...

based on sustainable use of renewable resources is an important part of EU's green transition. Part of it will come from farm residues and waste, but the use of wood-based materials is rapidly taking up in an expanding range (e.g. textile fibers, chemical and biomedical purposes, packaging, transport electrification), as non-renewable materials are depleting. Further investments and funding supporting research and development within the fields of circular bioeconomy will provide Europe with a new sector for growth and workplaces.

Family forestry is an integral part of rural life...

which provides an abundance of valuable assets to society at large. Family forestry also contributes to the long-term vision for the EU's rural areas to make the countryside stronger, connected, resilient and prosperous. Wood-based materials and their production originate from rural areas, why supporting the wood-based value chain's jobs and future wood-based investments play a key role in securing rural livelihoods.

BUILDING ON THE STRATEGIC APPROACH AT EU LEVEL

The EU Forest Strategy announced a number of policy instruments with the aim to support the European forestry sector. While Strategic approach can be beneficial for an EU policy area within member state competence, the current Strategy falls short to address several issues of paramount importance. Nordic Family Forestry owners believe that actions need to be taken for the following points:

01

Promoting the sustainable forest circular bioeconomy for long-lived wood products

02

Providing financial incentives for forest owners and managers for improving the quantity and quality of EU forests

03

As part of the review of the construction products regulation: establish a standard, robust and transparent methodology to quantify the climate benefits of wood construction products and other building materials, reflecting the most advanced dynamic life cycle analysis methodologies





The Alliance of Nordic Family Forestry (Nordiska skogägarorganisationernas förbund – NSF) is the cooperation of Norwegian, Swedish, Danish and Finnish forest owners' federations NSF represents over a million Nordic private forest owners.

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