Informal Meeting of EU Forest Directors
21 October, 2026, Dublin, Ireland

Joint Statement of CEPF and Copa-Cogeca
Sustainable production of wood and wood products

European forest owners firmly believe that the sustainable management of forests, as widely practiced in our continent and enshrined under the Forest Europe intergovernmental process, is a proven and credible route to meeting wood supply needs without compromising the multiple other ecosystem services which forests deliver.

Wood production is an essential part of the sustainable forest management equation. It is what enables the economic viability of this management, while supplying their multiple ecosystems services, cost free. Moreover, the active SFM needed for wood production allows for supporting forests health and resilience to natural disasters and changing climate. At a time when Europe's strategic autonomy is deeply tied to secure access to sustainable raw materials, the EU must deliver a strong political signal in favour of supporting the provision of domestically and sustainably sourced renewable biomass.

While increased use of secondary raw materials improves resource efficiency, it cannot replace the need for a continuous supply of primary biomass from sustainably managed multifunctional forests. A competitive, scalable forest-based bioeconomy requires clear support for sustainable and active forest management and sustained growth of Europe's renewable forest resource base.

The EU needs to thrive to replace fossil-based materials in a rapidly widening range of industrial uses, with special regard to those of long-lasting wood products. However, the potential of wood products to substitute their fossil-based counterparts varies from short- to long lived products or energy. The market can and must act as the most efficient driver of forest-based materials towards different use purposes. While long-lived, high-quality wood products remain the main driver of wood production, residues and low-quality wood unfit for higher quality use need to continue to play a role in shot-lived products as well as energy production, especially in remote areas and outermost regions of the EU. Importantly, these developments should be accompanied by continuous improvement in the efficient use of biomass resources, for all uses of biomass.

Europe is a continent of forests[1]: an abundantly present renewable resource in our Union, which harbours biodiversity and acts as a potent terrestrial carbon sink to fight climate change.

[1] https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/state-union-addresses/state-union-2023_en

European forest owners would like to highlight that wood mobilisation for the forest-based bioeconomy and environmental ambition are not competing goals. They commit to ensure as much synergies as possible although they sometimes need to arbitrate trade-offs. However, this commitment is increasingly challenged due to climate change constraints which put forests at risks, highlighting the need to accelerate adaptation of both forest management and the forest-based value chain.

In this context, European forest owners therefore welcome the new EU Bioeconomy Strategy and the Intergrated Wildifre Risk Statregy. Active sustainable forest management and bio-based values chains are recognised as crucial enabler to develop lead markets that rely on forest biomass. These markets can help strengthen demand for sustainable forest-based products, support investment and innovation, and contribute to the EU's broader climate resilence and circular economy objectives.

Supporting sustainable and active forest management is essential for keeping EU forests healthy and resilient and strengthening EU autonomy. There can be no sustainable forest management without timber. The sustainable production of wood and wood products is an asset that the EU should rely on to become stronger and cleaner. This is why the implementation of the bioeconomy should be among EU high priorities of the EU political agenda. European forest owners are aware of, and committed to, their role in developing this asset.

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