



# Policy conference

**Brussels, European Commission, 23 May 2016**

## Why this conference?

After centuries of deforestation and degradation, during the last 200 years Europe's forests have been recovering to cover some 40 per cent of the EU today. They are currently getting growing attention as a provider of wood for the bioeconomy and for energy generation. But they offer many more services to our economy, our environment and our societies, making them a key asset of Europe's natural capital.

Forests are remarkable ecosystems, a precious natural resource and a source of income and wealth in many respects for EU citizens. Forests capture and store carbon and thus mitigate climate change; they prevent soil erosion; they provide water quality, retention and management; they clean the air; they protect from floods and landslides and support climate adaptation; they represent some of the richest biological areas in Europe; and they support leisure and recreation. In sum, Europe's forests contribute to citizens' health and wellbeing and provide green jobs and growth, all in addition to providing timber and other forest products.

Forests in the EU are also under pressure and are increasingly vulnerable. Demand for wood and biomass is on the rise. Storms, fires and pests are expected to damage forests more frequently and more intensely as a result of climate change. And forests suffer from continued habitat and biodiversity loss, while high nitrogen depositions are a concern. All this is affecting their resilience and ability to secure multiple products and ecosystem services.

There is therefore a need to strike the right balance and to preserve and appropriately manage forest ecosystems and forested landscapes, if we want them to stay in good shape and to provide their many benefits not only to us but also to future generations. Concepts such as Sustainable Forest Management have been conceived to deliver multiple benefits at the same time.

## What's in it for you?

'Beyond Wood' is for **anyone** working to ensure that the benefits and prosperity provided by Europe's forests will continue for the future: National, regional and local authorities; EU and international institutions; spatial planners; environmental organisations; land owners; forest managers; citizens' groups; businesses and trade associations and so on.

### 'Beyond Wood' will

- involve the key players working in the relevant fields
- raise awareness and bring the main challenges on the table
- showcase good examples and practical solutions
- discuss what needs to be done and how EU action can provide support and added value.

## Practical information

### Web page and registration

Learn more about 'Beyond Wood' and register your participation online on <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/forests/conference.htm>. Participation is free of charge.

### Venue and directions

'Beyond Wood' will take place in the European Commission's Charlemagne building (Rue de la Loi 170; 1040 Brussels). Map and directions: <http://ec.europa.eu/oib/pdf/34-loi.pdf>

### Contact

Organisation/logistics: [xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx@xx.xxxxxx.xx](mailto:xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx@xx.xxxxxx.xx)

Programme: [ENV-FOREST-PROTECTION@ec.europa.eu](mailto:ENV-FOREST-PROTECTION@ec.europa.eu)

## 'Beyond Wood' will take place...

- right after the **International Day for Biological Diversity** ([www.cbd.int/idb](http://www.cbd.int/idb))
- before the European Commission's **Natura 2000 Award Ceremony** (on the same day, right after Beyond Wood, in the building opposite the conference venue).  
Separate registration required! <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/awards> )
- one week before the **EU Green Week 2016** (<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/greenweek>)

# Programme and speakers

8:30 – 9:15	Arrival & Coffee
9:15 – 10:30	<b>Opening</b> Chair: <b>Daniel Calleja Crespo</b> (Director-General for Environment, European Commission) > <b>Jyrki Katainen</b> (Vice-President for Jobs, Growth, Investment and Competitiveness, European Commission, tbc) > <b>Karmenu Vella</b> (European Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries) > <b>Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy</b> (Member of the European Parliament, tbc)
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee
11:00 – 12:00	<b>Theme 1: EU forest ecosystems – challenges and opportunities</b> <i>A close look at their provisioning, regulating, habitat and cultural services: situation on the ground; scenarios and trends; threats posed by climate change, pests and forest fires; knowledge gaps; risks and opportunities, including for growth and jobs around the EU</i> > [REDACTED] (Forests and Environment, European Environment Agency, Copenhagen) > [REDACTED] (Professor at the Department of Forest Sciences, University of Helsinki, Finland) > [REDACTED] (UNIQUE forestry and land use, Germany)
12:00 – 13:00	<b>Theme 2: Preserving and enhancing EU forest ecosystems – three experiences</b> <i>Managing forest landscapes and enhancing their benefits in different contexts; possible pathways towards the achievement of the EU biodiversity targets.</i> > [REDACTED] (Public Relations and Management, Black Forest National Park, Germany) > [REDACTED] (Natura 2000 and Protected Areas Expert, WWF Bulgaria) > [REDACTED] (Ministry of Environment and Territory, Regional Government of Andalusia, Spain)
13:00 – 14:30	Lunch
14:30 – 15:30	<b>Theme 3: EU action to benefit from, and preserve, forest ecosystems</b> <i>Forest ecosystems provide ecological, social and economic benefits to rural areas and cities alike. How does the EU support healthy and resilient forest ecosystems, with what results and why?</i> Chair: <b>Aldo Longo</b> (European Commission, DG Agriculture and Rural Development) > [REDACTED] (European Commission, DG Agriculture and Rural Development): Rural Development Policy > [REDACTED] (European Commission, DG Environment): Policies for nature and biodiversity > [REDACTED] (European Commission, DG Environment): Forest information
15:30 – 16:00	Coffee
16:00 – 17:30	<b>Enhancing forest ecosystem services- what should be done?</b> <i>Moderated panel debate. What are our key challenges and opportunities? Where should we go? What does it take to get us there, and who needs to take action? Moderator: <b>Aminda Leigh</b> (AMROS Media Solutions, former BBC journalist)</i> > <b>Jan Szyszko</b> (Minister for the Environment, Poland) > [REDACTED] (European Economic and Social Committee) > [REDACTED] (European Commission, DG Climate Action) > [REDACTED] (Land & Forst Betriebe Austria/on behalf of CEPP) > [REDACTED] (IUCN - EU Representative Office)
17:30 – 17:45	<b>Final wrap up and close</b> <i>Final conclusions and follow-up</i> > <b>Aldo Longo</b> (European Commission, DG Agriculture and Rural Development) > [REDACTED] (European Commission, DG Environment)
17:45 -	Reception