



The forest sector urges to increase the forest component in the post 2013 CAP

Forestry and agriculture are almost equal in terms of socio-economically beneficial land use in the EU. Forests, like agriculture, cover about 40% of the EU territory and maintain key environmental benefits. The EU financial resources earmarked to rural development programmes, however, have been showing a vast inconsistency in proportions as funding for forestry related measures consist of only 1 % of the current total CAP budget.

The future CAP is supposed to address the economic, environmental and territorial challenges of the EU. Nevertheless, the Commission communication from the 18th November 2010 hardly offers any possibility to unlock the vast potential of the forest based sector. Focusing solely on the production of food would not provide ways to meet the common EU challenges such as increasing demand for fuel and fiber in the future. The production of food, fuel and fiber must be equally addressed in order to ensure the future of both the EU citizens as well as the EU's rural areas.

Ensuring the integrity of goals and challenges

Policies that block out the economic and social needs of society are no solutions for the current challenges. The EU cannot afford strategies that promote only the direct traditional values of security and quality of the food production. Thus the forest sector needs a stronger political recognition and integrity in the ongoing CAP reform.

To boost up its unrevealed potential the forest sector urges to consider in further course of action the following elements ideally in a section of the future CAP dedicated to forests and forestry:

- Comprehensive recognition of the multipurpose role of forests and the benefits they provide including the recognition of the critical role of forest owners and managers.
- Clear connection and support to the EU 2020 strategy and the identified grand societal challenges.
- Consistency between the different EU policies affecting forests and their different functions, understanding that forest protection against disasters and the likely effects of climate change is a prerequisite to the delivery of such functions.
- Greater flexibility allowing the Member States for better management and implementation of the programs.
- Simplification of the administrative procedures for better access to funding for the whole forest sector

The future CAP must include a clearly defined forestry component. As a consequence, the forest sector believes that adequate measures targeting the specificity of Europe's forests and sustainable forest management should be established. In particular these should target:

- Advisory services for training and education.
- Initial support to establish forest cooperatives and other economical groups of forest owners and managers.
- The relevant recognition and support of public services provided by forests in connection with the challenges highlighted in the CAP Health Check from 2009 including biodiversity, renewable energy, water management and climate change mitigation (together with the carbon benefits of forest and harvested wood and cork products).
- Increase of sustainable forest production, including afforestation to produce biomass and other services.
- Support to sustainable mobilization of wood to fulfil the current and future needs created by the energy and climate change policies¹ also by development of adequate infrastructures (sorting, storage, conditioning and marketing)
- Support innovation and technology transfer in order to develop the added value of wood and wood based products.

¹ E.g. in facilitating practices listed in the recently published good practice guidance by DG AGRI, Forest Europe and UNECE/FAO to be found at http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/fore/publi/forest_brochure_en.pdf



Contributing to sustainable growth in a green society

Forestry is an essential component of the rural life but also affect multiple aspects of the European society as a whole. Supply of timber, biomass, carbon removals from the atmosphere, clean water and fresh air as well as various ecosystem services, including protection of biodiversity, are just some examples of goods and services that forests provide. Sustainable forest management and the downstream industry secure millions of jobs and the livelihood of the 16 million of forest owners. The forest industry creates employment for around 4 million of people, which in turn provides annual turnover of around 400 Billion Euros. Sustainably produced wood and other forest products are the most promising and multifunctional natural resource to trigger a carbon neutral and sustainable economy in Europe.

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