



2022/0000(INI)

3.6.2022

OPINION

of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

for the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development

on the new EU forest strategy for 2030 – sustainable forest management in Europe
(2022/0000(INI))

Rapporteur for opinion: Luisa Regimenti

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety calls on the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

- A. whereas the EU is home to approximately 5 % of the world's total forest area, with forests accounting for 43 % of the EU's land area and containing 80 % of its terrestrial biodiversity¹;
- B. whereas forests are essential for people's physical and mental health and wellbeing, drive the transition towards a fossil-free economy and play an important role in the lives of local communities, especially in rural areas where they contribute in an important way to local livelihoods;
- C. whereas forests in the EU provide many benefits for society, including essential functions such as climate regulation, water supply and regulation, clean air, and erosion control; whereas forests are also often used as recreational areas which provide many benefits for eco-tourism, forest schools, and culture, as well as being a locally important source of employment and economic growth, while contributing to sustaining viable rural areas across the Union;
- D. whereas forest ecosystems with their respective carbon pools are essential for climate mitigation and climate adaptation, and whereas their protection and restoration is needed to limit global warming, to achieve climate neutrality by 2050 and to achieve the EU target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55 % by 2030; whereas forests are also major hosts of biodiversity;
- E. whereas the EU has committed to the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 15, which is to protect, restore and promote the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss;
- F. whereas a long-term vision based on 'close-to-nature', sustainable forest management is necessary to uphold and reconcile ecological, economic and social values;
- G. whereas the sustainable forest management framework will have to be clearly defined, in particular as regards the criteria, indicators and thresholds relating to ecosystems' health, biodiversity and climate change, if it is to become a more detailed and useful screening tool for determining and comparing different management approaches, their impact and the overall status and conservation of European forests;
- H. whereas an 'ecosystem' is a physical environment made up of living and non-living components that interact with one another and, from these interactions, ecosystems create a flow of benefits to people and the economy called 'ecosystem services';

¹ Science for Environment Policy (2021) *European Forests for biodiversity, climate change mitigation and adaptation*. Future Brief 25. Brief produced for the European Commission DG Environment by the Science Communication Unit, UWE Bristol. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/science-environment-policy>

whereas climate change and the loss of biodiversity and the associated ecosystem services pose a systemic threat to society;

- I. whereas a greater understanding of potential climate-driven natural disturbances to European forests should further support guidance on forest management and inform adaptation policies aimed at addressing these vulnerabilities;
- J. whereas forests are increasingly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, in particular the increasing prevalence of forest fires; whereas quantifying the effects of such disturbances on forests' resilience and productivity at a large scale is still a major challenge;
- K. whereas data available on forests at EU level is incomplete and of varying quality, which hampers EU and Member State coordination of forest management and conservation;
- L. whereas, according to the European Environment Agency's report entitled 'The European environment - state and outlook 2020: knowledge for transition to a sustainable Europe'², Europe has experienced a massive decline in biodiversity, of which intensive forest management is one of the drivers, and is facing environmental challenges of an unprecedented scale and urgency;
- M. whereas the EU biodiversity strategy for 2030 has proposed an overall target to protect at least 30 % of the EU land area under an effective management regime;
- N. whereas in order to help tackle the biodiversity loss and climate crises, it is essential that forests are protected, restored and managed in such a way as to maximise their capacity for carbon storage and biodiversity protection;
- O. whereas protecting forests, including all remaining EU primary and old-growth forests, is crucial for preserving biodiversity and mitigating climate change;
- P. whereas according to a 2021 Joint Research Centre report³, only 4.9 million hectares of Europe's primary and ancient forests remain, representing only 3 % of the Union's total forest area and 1.2 % of the Union's land mass;
- Q. whereas primary and old-growth forests play a key role in biodiversity conservation; whereas they are often highly biodiverse compared with other forests in the same ecological region, are species-rich and host specialised flora and fauna; whereas primary and old-growth forests also provide a wide array of other critical ecosystem services;
- R. whereas illegal logging, including logging in protected areas such as Natura 2000 areas, is an ongoing and unresolved problem in a number of Member States;
- S. whereas the Member States should develop strategic forest plans with interim targets

² European Environment Agency, *The European environment — state and outlook 2020: knowledge for transition to a sustainable Europe*, 11 May 2020, p. 83, <https://www.eea.europa.eu/soer-2020/>

³ Barredo, J., Brailescu, C., Teller, A., Sabatini, F.M., Mauri, A. and Janouskova, K., *Mapping and assessment of primary and old-growth forests in Europe*, EUR 30661EN, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2021.

with a view to ensuring long-term planning and continuity of EU forest strategy principles in the mid to long term; whereas the Commission should provide constructive feedback on those plans and assess the extent to which they meet the requirements of the Union's climate and biodiversity goals;

- T. whereas the principle of subsidiarity must be respected in implementing the deliverables of the forest strategy; whereas the EU has equally important shared competences and responsibility on forests;
1. Welcomes the EU forest strategy, which is anchored in the European Green Deal; highlights the importance of the three dimensions of sustainable development: environmental, economic and social; recalls that the environmental dimension, including biodiversity and ecosystem conservation, underpins the two other dimensions and is the fundamental basis for the sustainable development of EU forests; emphasises that the measures for implementing the EU forest strategy should contribute to reaching the EU's climate and biodiversity goals and its binding targets;
 2. Underlines the multi-faceted role of forests and the importance of healthy, ecologically resilient forest ecosystems that provide a multitude of services to society; insists that biodiversity preservation and habitat protection and conservation should be encompassed within sustainable forest management;
 3. Stresses the essential role of forest ecosystems in mitigating and adapting to climate change and contributing to the EU objective of achieving climate neutrality by 2050 at the latest; in this context, underlines the need to strengthen their resilience, notably by increasing the structural, functional and compositional diversity of forests; insists that structurally rich, mixed forests displaying a broad ecological amplitude have a higher resilience and increased capacity to adapt;
 4. Underlines that forestland, with its respective carbon pools of living trees and deadwood, is a crucial factor to limit global warming, contribute to the EU's climate neutrality targets and enhance biodiversity; considers that the promotion of biologically diverse forests is the most effective insurance against climate change and biodiversity loss;
 5. Expresses concern about adverse factors linked to climate change, such as the exposure of forest areas to prolonged periods of drought and tree diseases, including those caused by pests, which cause damage to the environment;
 6. Calls on the Commission to collect and disseminate knowledge among Member States about how to adapt forests to current and expected climate change, in line with the new EU adaptation strategy and biodiversity strategy; insists in this regard on the need for dedicated support and increased cooperation for disaster prevention, preparedness and response;
 7. Notes that forest biodiversity and its unique ecosystems provide an exceptional variety of ecosystem services that contribute to climate mitigation measures, soil stability and fertility, water quality and educational and tourist services; stresses that the sound management of Natura 2000 sites is essential for maintaining and enhancing European biodiversity and ecosystems and the services they provide;

8. Welcomes the Commission decision of 4 June 2021 on the licensing of the Natura 2000 logo; notes that the Natura 2000 labelling scheme should promote the strictest EU ecological standards for the protection of the most vulnerable habitat types and species on land; recalls that Natura 2000 covers around 18 % of the EU territory on land; highlights that the Member States should ensure that no activities occur that cause damage or disturb species in Natura 2000-designed habitats; calls for ambitious targets under the EU forest strategy to maintain and restore ecological values of the designated sites taking into account the social and cultural requirements and the regional and local characteristics of the area; notes that conservation efforts in Natura 2000 sites should be fully in line with the Habitats and Birds Directives and the EU's biodiversity strategy for 2030;
9. Notes that Natura 2000 sites provide valuable ecosystem services to the public; highlights that the Natura 2000 logo placed on any goods or services should mean that those goods and services are contributing to the conservation objectives of the Natura 2000 site from which they are derived;
10. Welcomes the Strategic EU Ecolabel Work Plan 2020-2024 published by the Commission; recalls that the EU ecolabel is a voluntary label of environmental excellence; notes that the ecolabel scheme promotes the EU circular economy and contributes to sustainable consumption and production practices; calls for strict standards and monitoring as well as the promotion of increased use of the ecolabel in the EU forest sector;
11. Stresses the importance of extending the scope of the ecolabel for wood products to include the sustainability level of these products; calls on the Member States to encourage producers to increase the use of the Natura 2000 label for non-wood forest products;
12. Recalls the important economic and social functions that healthy forests play in sustaining viable rural areas; underlines the importance of non-invasive economic forest activities that respect the ecological boundaries of forest ecosystems, while intensive economic activities related to forests can have varying disruptive effects on forest ecosystems; notes that large-scale clearcutting can have serious effects on local ecosystems and contributes to biodiversity loss; stresses that the EU forest strategy should encourage economic activities that respect the sustainable boundaries of forest ecosystems; points out the importance of boosting non-wood forest-based economic activities in order to diversify local economies and jobs and reverse the depopulation trends of rural and remote areas;
13. Emphasises the importance of the EU promoting preservation, conservation and restoration of forest ecosystems, taking into account the upcoming EU Nature Restoration Law and improving their resilience, while supporting the development of an economically viable, vibrant forest sector and local communities; calls for a long-term vision for the protection and restoration of Europe's forests;
14. Stresses the importance of incorporating the public health and One Health dimension in the EU forest strategy; highlights that natural forest ecosystems and accessibility to forests and green urban and peri-urban woodlands provide several benefits that promote

a healthy lifestyle and contribute to the wellbeing of EU citizens;

15. Stresses the role of the forest-based circular bio-economy in promoting sustainable growth, using as its guiding principles circularity and the cascading and efficient use of biomass and forest resources;
16. Stresses the need for the availability of timely, frequent and comparable data across all Member States and underlines the crucial role that analysis of such data plays in supporting sustainable forest management and protection of forests, including in preventing illegal logging and in anticipating and mitigating the impacts of natural disturbances, such as storms, wildfires and pests; highlights the need to retroactively create a database of all sites fulfilling the criteria for old-growth and primary forests; in this context, welcomes the Commission's commitment to put forward a legislative proposal for a forest observation, reporting and data collection framework;
17. Calls on the Commission to ensure a coordinated EU forest monitoring, data collection and reporting system, to be used by Member States' competent authorities for preparing their strategic plans for forests and for the forest-based sector; underlines that this integrated EU-wide forest monitoring system should be based on harmonised and scientifically sound indicators and should include mechanisms to avoid errors, such as double-counting, in the processing of data reported by Member States;
18. Highlights the benefits of using cutting-edge technologies, for data collection, for instance, to carry out national forest inventories, to improve public access to data and to ensure the consistency, quality and comparability of reliable forestry data;
19. Reiterates the call for all remaining old-growth and primary forests to be strictly protected, in line with the EU's biodiversity strategy for 2030; insists that protection must also be provided to the buffer zones adjacent to primary and old-growth forests to support the development of old-growth forest attributes; stresses that expanding appropriate protection to buffer zones will improve the connectivity of habitats of high ecological value, which will significantly contribute to conservation and mitigate the negative impacts of fragmentation;
20. Underlines the importance of strictly protecting areas adjacent to primary and old-growth forests in order to improve the conservation status as well as mitigate the extinction risk of protected species and reduce their vulnerability; in this regard, where Natura 2000 areas surround such forests, the management guidelines for these areas should be adapted to support the development of secondary old-growth forest and/or the development of old-growth forest attributes;
21. Regrets that the guidelines on the definition of old-growth and primary forests were not adopted by the Commission in 2021 as indicated in the EU's biodiversity strategy for 2030; highlights the urgent need to agree on an operational definition of primary and old-growth forests in the EU in order to ensure that they are strictly protected; stresses that this definition must be based on ecological principles and take into account the diversity of European forests, the shifting climatic zones and the varying local circumstances;

22. Stresses that, according to research⁴, old-growth forests and forests grown old continue to accumulate carbon, contrary to the view that they are carbon neutral or even sources of CO₂;
23. Highlights that the EU goal of growing larger, resilient and diverse forestland also requires access to genetic resources best available in high-value old-growth and primary forests; stresses the importance of supporting national seedling gene pools in order to provide local and regional reforestation and afforestation initiatives with a sufficient number of native tree species; recalls that planting trees is dependent on the support of local stakeholders and regional planning;
24. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to urgently complete the framework for the mapping and monitoring of old-growth and primary forests by filling in the knowledge gaps regarding their geo-location, including by using the latest digital technologies such as satellite monitoring and integrating other best available on-site data; in this context, calls on the Commission and the Member States to create a transparent and easy-to-access database of all potential sites fulfilling the criteria to be classified as old-growth and primary forests and to introduce a temporary moratorium on logging in primary and old-growth forests in order to legally ensure the non-intervention status of these sites without delay;
25. Expresses serious concerns about the ongoing issue of illegal logging, including in areas protected under Natura 2000 and the Birds and Habitats Directives; highlights that illegal logging affects biodiversity and may have effects that are difficult, if not impossible, to reverse and repair;
26. Considers that illegal logging should be treated as a criminal offence and be subject to appropriate criminal sanctions, and should therefore fall within the scope of the revised Environmental Crime Directive; calls on the Commission and the Member States to take urgent action to stop illegal logging and to tighten the control of illegal timber trading, through close monitoring and enforcement of existing regulations and the use of geo-spatial and remote-sensing technologies; calls on the Commission to extend the mandate of the European Public Prosecutor's Office to include environmental offences;
27. Stresses the importance of increasing the role of the Member States' competent authorities in combating illegal logging based on the lessons learnt from the implementation and enforcement of the EU Timber Regulation, and calls for improved provisions on the quantity and quality of monitoring and controls and for proper protection of forest rangers;
28. Welcomes the re- and afforestation roadmap for planting at least 3 billion additional trees in the EU by 2030; emphasises that such initiatives should be carried out in compliance with clear ecological principles and be fully compatible with the biodiversity objective prioritising the restoration of forest ecosystems; in this context, calls for ambitious science-based guidelines on biodiversity-friendly re- and afforestation objectives, which will ensure that forests are resilient, mixed and healthy and avoid the negative effects that monocultures can have on forest ecosystems; underlines that resilient, mixed and healthy forest ecosystems are generally more

⁴Luyssaert S. et al., 2008: *Old-growth forests as global carbon sinks*. In Nature.

resilient than mono-culture forests or forests that have short harvesting cycles;

29. Underlines that the implementation of the re- and afforestation road map should take due account of the diversity of European forests, types of ownership and management traditions, and should be done in close cooperation and consultation with Member States and all relevant stakeholders;
30. Calls on the Commission to develop evidence-based indicators and thresholds to complement the sustainable forest management framework, in particular as regards the development of clear criteria relating to ecosystems' health, biodiversity and climate change, aimed at making them an efficient tool for improving the sustainability of EU forests and ensuring that forest management contributes to the EU's climate and biodiversity objectives; considers these additional indicators and thresholds to be crucial tools for biodiversity protection and restoration and for climate mitigation and adaptation of the forest sector;
31. Welcomes the Commission's initiative to enhance the sustainable forest management framework to increase the quality and diversity of forest ecosystems; highlights that close-to-nature forestry and sustainable forest management have the potential to bring similar or better economic benefits while preserving and promoting the integrity and resilience of ecosystems;
32. Underlines that the conscious choice of non-intervention or close-to-nature forest management improves the potential of forests as carbon sinks and biodiversity refuges and of biodiversity recovery;
33. Stresses that, in certain circumstances, neglecting forests may result in loss of employment in rural areas and may lead to increased dependency on imports of forest-based products from parts of the world where forest management is less sustainable;
34. Stresses the importance of supporting and encouraging environmentally beneficial activities and close-to-nature forest management, in particular ecosystem-based approaches undertaken by forest owners and managers that take into account best practices and scientific evidence;
35. Underlines the importance of appropriately assessing the environmental impacts of sustainable forest management plans and swiftly acting on them; calls on the Commission and the Member States to ensure the implementation and enforcement of the Birds and Habitats Directives, including Natura 2000;
36. Calls on the Member States to continue their efforts to properly implement both national strategies and legislation related to sustainable forest management, and to adapt them to their national, regional and local circumstances; calls on the Member States to adequately transpose and implement the EU legislation and binding objectives on forests; calls on the Commission to improve compliance with EU law and on Member States to cooperate in aligning the frameworks on sustainable forest management to enhance the EU framework for sustainable forest management and to continue developing sustainable forest management practices;
37. Regrets that data from the latest reporting period under the Habitats Directive showed

that the percentage of EU forests which had unfavourable status during the period 2013–2018 increased to 84.5 %, up from 82 % in the 2007–2012 assessment; highlights that, by region, boreal forest habitats of Community interest have the highest proportion of unfavourable bad assessments (56 %) and the highest percentage of habitats with deteriorating trends (43 %), while Macaronesian forests in the Azores, Madeira and the Canary Islands (which have a unique biogeography related to the flora of pre-ice age Mediterranean) had the highest percentage of confirmed good and improving assessments⁵;

38. Highlights that the implementation of the forest strategy deliverables needs to comply with the principle of subsidiarity; stresses, nevertheless, the equal importance of EU shared competences and responsibility on forests, particularly within the framework of EU environmental policy, including on issues related to forest sustainability and biodiversity protection; underlines the diversity of forest types in the EU with different ownership structures and management practices, as well as cultural and ecological conditions, compositions and silvo-cultural traditions; points out that most resilient forests are structurally and genetically diverse with a rich intraspecific web and rich symbiotic relationships, and as such are self-sustaining ecosystems;
39. Stresses in this regard that tailor-made sustainable forest management solutions should be promoted, building on the experience and knowledge of local, regional and national stakeholders and close-to-nature forestry principles and guidelines, stresses in this regard that a one-size-fits-all solution should not be envisaged;
40. Acknowledges that forest management is site-specific and that varying forest conditions and forest types may require different management approaches based on different ecological needs and forestland characteristics and take into account the rights and interests of forest sector workers, owners and other concerned actors;
41. Welcomes the Commission's initiative to develop, in close cooperation with the Member States, locally adapted guidelines on closer-to-nature forestry and a voluntary certification scheme that would result in an EU quality label for promoting the most biodiversity-friendly management practices;
42. Calls on the Commission to ensure that these initiatives improve forest ecosystems, protect biodiversity and ensure added value from the practices of nature-friendly forest management; notes that most of the existing voluntary certification schemes have proven to be credible and effective tools in driving sustainable forest management practices across Europe and that their scrutiny by the EU institutions is welcome as it helps to continuously improve them;
43. Stresses that, in addition to carbon sequestration, agroforestry has important co-benefits for wildlife and biodiversity (improved wildlife habitats, more pollinators, insects),

⁵ Science for Environment Policy (2021) *European Forests for biodiversity, climate change mitigation and adaptation*. Future Brief 25. Brief produced for the European Commission DG Environment by the Science Communication Unit, UWE Bristol. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/science-environment-policy>

improves soil health and protects it from erosion, nitrate leaching and flooding^{6,7,8};

44. Stresses that more funding should be geared towards supporting new forest-related policies and identifying specific, dedicated funding for measures to increase sustainability and enhance climate mitigation; underlines that this funding should be used to incentivise forest owners and managers to invest in strengthened forest protection and restoration and promote biodiversity-friendly sustainable forest management;
45. Emphasises that the transition to a close-to-nature forestry model in the EU must be a just transition that supports the forestry sector in moving towards economically viable and ecologically healthy forests;
46. Calls on the Commission to assess the adequacy of different EU funding instruments to ensure the necessary support for the forestry sector in its transition to sustainable biodiversity-friendly practices and the development of forest ecosystem services, and to assess the consistency of these funds with the commitments and targets set out in the EU's forest strategy and biodiversity strategy; stresses in particular the importance of assessing whether sufficient funds have been provided by Member States and the Union to protect forests in Natura 2000 areas;
47. Calls on the Member States to increase the human and financial resources of state forestry agencies; stresses the importance of maintaining public expertise; underlines that state forestry agencies can provide private forest owners with much needed expertise regarding close-to-nature forestry and adaptation to the effects of climate change, as exemplified by the Giono Project conducted by the French National Forests Office (ONF);
48. Stresses the importance of the common agricultural policy and points out that there is scope for improvement in the uptake of rural development funds by Member States, especially in programmes related to improving forest biodiversity;
49. Calls on the Member States to use the available support measures for the conservation of forests and biodiversity; highlights also the importance of ensuring sufficient resources for the implementation of the EU forest strategy; recalls that two of the key sources of funding under rural development funds for supporting sustainable forest management in achieving EU biodiversity and climate priorities for the period 2014-2020 were found to be far below the scale of implementation required for Member States to meet their legal obligations under the Habitats and Birds Directives;

⁶ Kay, S.; Rega, C.; Moreno, G.; den Herder, M.; Palma, J. H.; Borek, R.; Crous-Duran, J.; Freese, D.; Giannitsopoulos, M.; Graves, A.; Jäger, M.; Lamersdorf, N.; Memedemin, D. et al. (2019): *Agroforestry creates carbon sinks whilst enhancing the environment in agricultural landscapes in Europe*. In: Land Use Policy 83, pp. 581–593. DOI: 10.1016/j.landusepol.2019.02.025.

⁷ Burges, P.; Newman, S.; Pagella, T.; Smith, J.; Westaway, S.; Briggs, S.; Knight, I.; Whistance, L.; Raskin, B.; Osborn, S. (2019): *The Agroforestry Handbook: Agroforestry for the UK 1st Edition*. Bristol, UK. - Agroforestry for the UK. Soil Association, UK., 2019.

⁸ Torralba, M.; Fagerholm, N.; Burgess, P. J.; Moreno, G.; Plieninger, T. (2016): *Do European agroforestry systems enhance biodiversity and ecosystem services? A meta-analysis*. In: Agriculture, Ecosystems & Environment, 230, 150-161. DOI: 10.1016/J.AGEE.2016.06.002.

50. Welcomes the Commission's commitment to set up EU ecosystem services payment schemes through a forest-related intervention under the common agricultural policy for the period 2023-2027;
51. Welcomes the Commission communication on carbon farming, which aims to incentivise new business models from public and private sources by rewarding management practices for increasing sequestration in living biomass and soils, respecting ecological principles, enhancing biodiversity and respecting the Union's environmental and climate objectives, as well as the 'do no significant harm' principle;
52. Emphasises the need for initiatives on carbon farming based on robust scientific methodology and stresses that the conscious choice of a non-intervention regime in high-carbon stock and high-nature value ecosystems and in line with the objectives of the biodiversity strategy could be eligible for carbon farming schemes and be classified as certified carbon removal projects;
53. Welcomes the Commission's plan to propose a binding EU regulatory framework for the certification of carbon removal by 2022 in order to correctly quantify, report and certify carbon removal efforts and avoid the risk of misrepresentation and greenwashing;
54. Recalls the importance of an advanced cooperation strategy closely involving all relevant actors in the forestry sector that have competence in preserving, protecting and improving the quality of the environment and maintaining healthy and resilient forests, operating at all levels of policymaking, in order to carefully and thoroughly evaluate and urgently find ways to achieve the objectives of the new forest strategy for 2030 and to ensure the protection of Europe's forest species and habitats;
55. Is concerned about the projected expansion of fire-prone areas and longer seasons with a high risk of fires in most European regions, in particular in high emissions scenarios; stresses the lack of capacity-building support through advisory services, as well as the limited guidance on how to implement forest-based adaptation activities and measures to prevent and reduce the risks of climate change (for example, wildfires, soil erosion, diseases and floods); calls on the Commission to collect and disseminate knowledge among the Member States on how to adapt forests to current and expected climate change, in line with the new EU adaptation strategy; invites the Commission, on the basis of improved Copernicus products, artificial intelligence and other remote-sensing data, to create forest fire risk assessments and maps to support preventive action;
56. Highlights the importance of further developing and making full use of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism in relation to forest fires and other natural disasters;
57. Emphasises the need for additional support for Member States, in particular with regard to dealing with natural disasters, such as bark beetle infestations and forest fires, among others;
58. Calls for existing platforms, expert groups and other similar entities on all matters related to forests to ensure inclusive representation of different stakeholders, including an adequate representation of the indigenous peoples of Europe; recalls the importance of an advanced cooperation strategy to ensure the much needed cross-border

cooperation in ensuring the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats;

59. Calls on the Commission to encourage the establishment of skills partnership initiatives involving forestry stakeholders, to ensure the creation of quality jobs, good working conditions, higher health and safety standards, protection against hazards, and access to vocational and specialised training with opportunities for upskilling and reskilling in the transition to close-to-nature sustainable forest practices aimed at preserving existing forests and ensuring the implementation of afforestation and reforestation initiatives;
60. Urges the Member States to recognise the arduous nature of jobs in forestry, construction, carpentry and cabinet-making and to establish or maintain early retirement or redundancy schemes for workers in these sectors; stresses that workers in these sectors should benefit from social and medical assistance tailored to their needs upon retirement;
61. Calls on the Commission to take initiatives, in coordination with manufacturers of forestry machinery, to improve the environmental design of such machinery in order to reconcile a high level of protection for workers and a minimum impact on the soil and water in forests;
62. Underlines the importance of involving civil society in decision-making concerning the forestry sector and insists on transparent access to forestry data;
63. Emphasises the importance of innovation in the forest-based bio-economy and supports the need for continued research into new forest-based products and innovations;
64. Underlines the need for research and innovation in the forest-based sector and stresses that the focus must be on new forest-based products, innovations, and sustainable forest management; recalls that research and development partnerships must build on existing EU research and innovation cooperation initiatives, such as the European Forest-based Sector Technology Platform (FTP), initiated by the Commission in 2004, and the European Forest Institute (EFI);
65. Calls on the Commission to promote EU standards and ambitions for protecting forests at an international level;
66. Welcomes the Commission decision to include European forests in the scope of its regulation on the ban of certain commodities and products associated with deforestation and forest degradation in order to ensure a level playing field in the fight against deforestation and support Europe's innovative forest sector;
67. Calls on the Commission to restart the negotiations for an international legally binding forest convention that would contribute to the management, conservation and sustainable development of forests and provide for their multiple and complementary functions and uses, including action towards reforestation, afforestation and forest conservation, while taking into account the social, economic, ecological, cultural and spiritual needs of present and future generations, recognising the vital role of all types of forests in maintaining ecological processes and balance, and supporting the identity, culture and rights of indigenous people, their communities and other communities and

forest dwellers.

INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

Date adopted	2.6.2022
Result of final vote	+: 62 -: 13 0: 10
Members present for the final vote	Nikos Androulakis, Maria Arena, Bartosz Arłukowicz, Margrete Auken, Simona Baldassarre, Marek Paweł Balt, Traian Băsescu, Aurélie Beigneux, Monika Beňová, Sergio Berlato, Alexander Bernhuber, Malin Björk, Simona Bonafè, Delara Burkhardt, Pascal Canfin, Mohammed Chahim, Tudor Ciuhodaru, Nathalie Colin-Oesterlé, Esther de Lange, Christian Doleschal, Marco Dreosto, Bas Eickhout, Cyrus Engerer, Eleonora Evi, Agnès Evren, Pietro Fiocchi, Raffaele Fitto, Malte Gallée, Catherine Griset, Jytte Guteland, Teuvo Hakkarainen, Martin Hojsík, Pär Holmgren, Jan Huitema, Yannick Jadot, Adam Jarubas, Petros Kokkalis, Ewa Kopacz, Joanna Kopcińska, Peter Liese, Sylvia Limmer, Javi López, César Luena, Marian-Jean Marinescu, Fulvio Martusciello, Liudas Mažylis, Joëlle Mélin, Tilly Metz, Silvia Modig, Dolors Montserrat, Alessandra Moretti, Ville Niinistö, Ljudmila Novak, Grace O’Sullivan, Jutta Paulus, Stanislav Polčák, Jessica Polfjärd, Nicola Procaccini, Luisa Regimenti, Frédérique Ries, María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Sándor Rónai, Rob Rooken, Silvia Sardone, Günther Sidl, Ivan Vilibor Sinčić, Linea Sogaard-Lidell, Maria Spyraiki, Nicolae Ștefănuță, Nils Torvalds, Edina Tóth, Véronique Trillet-Lenoir, Petar Vitanov, Alexandr Vondra, Mick Wallace, Pernille Weiss, Emma Wiesner, Michal Wiezik, Tiemo Wölken, Anna Zalewska
Substitutes present for the final vote	Manuel Bompard, Annika Bruna, Catherine Chabaud, Stelios Kympouropoulos, Christel Schaldemose

FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL IN COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

62	+
PPE	Bartosz Arłukowicz, Hildegard Bentele, Traian Băsescu, Nathalie Colin-Oesterlé, Christian Doleschal, Agnès Evren, Adam Jarubas, Ewa Kopacz, Stelios Kypourouopoulos, Peter Liese, Marian-Jean Marinescu, Fulvio Martusciello, Liudas Mažylis, Dolors Montserrat, Ljudmila Novak, Stanislav Polčák, Luisa Regimenti, Maria Spyraiki, Pernille Weiss, Esther de Lange
Renew	Pascal Canfin, Catherine Chabaud, Martin Hojsík, Jan Huitema, Frédérique Ries, María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Linea Sjøgaard-Lidell, Véronique Trillet-Lenoir, Michal Wiezik, Salima Yenbou, Nicolae Ștefănuță
S&D	Nikos Androulakis, Maria Arena, Marek Paweł Balt, Monika Beňová, Simona Bonafè, Delara Burkhardt, Mohammed Chahim, Tudor Ciuhodaru, Cyrus Engerer, Jytte Guteland, César Luena, Javi López, Alessandra Moretti, Sándor Rónai, Christel Schaldemose, Günther Sidl, Petar Vitanov, Tiemo Wölken
The Left	Malin Björk, Manuel Bompard, Petros Kokkalis, Silvia Modig, Mick Wallace
Verts/ALE	Margrete Auken, Bas Eickhout, Eleonora Evi, Pär Holmgren, Yannick Jadot, Tilly Metz, Ville Niinistö, Grace O'Sullivan, Jutta Paulus

13	-
ECR	Sergio Berlato, Pietro Fiocchi, Raffaele Fitto, Joanna Kopcińska, Nicola Procaccini, Rob Rooken, Alexandr Vondra, Anna Zalewska
ID	Sylvia Limmer
PPE	Alexander Bernhuber, Jessica Polfjärd
Renew	Nils Torvalds, Emma Wiesner

10	0
ID	Simona Baldassarre, Aurélie Beigneux, Annika Bruna, Marco Dreosto, Catherine Griset, Teuvo Hakkarainen, Joëlle Mélin, Silvia Sardone
NI	Ivan Vilibor Sinčić, Edina Tóth

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention