

**TO THE MEMBERS OF THE STANDING FORESTRY COMMITTEE AND TO THE MEMBERS OF THE CIVIL DIALOGUE GROUP ON FORESTRY AND CORK**

**Subject: Seminar on Sustainable Forest Management (15 October)**

Dear colleagues,

The Seminar on how to secure and demonstrate Sustainable Forest Management in the EU in the context of the EU Green Deal and the new EU Forest Strategy will take place soon, so we wish to provide you with some further information.

The Seminar will take place on Thursday 15 October 2020 over the Webex platform. We will send the invitations to the AGM registered participants, so we invite you to register accordingly to the instructions in the Invitation. As informed, the Seminar is voluntary for interested participants.

The aim of the Seminar is to discuss amongst interested delegates in an informal, open and constructive way, how the Sustainable Forest Management concept, criteria and indicators, can further be used for demonstrating the contribution of forests and the forest-based sector to the policy priorities, while continuing to address all dimensions of sustainable development.

To stimulate the discussions at the meeting, we propose to structure the discussion around three initial questions. When discussing the questions, we would like you to consider and come prepared to address specific issues, such as those indicated in the text accompanying them.

**QUESTIONS AND TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION**

- *Currently some aspects of the SFM seem easier to demonstrate (e.g. economic) than others. How can the EU and its Member States demonstrate the contribution of EU forests and the forest sector to the Green Deal and international sustainability commitments?*

Possible topics to structure the discussion:

- How to better demonstrate the **social roles** of forests, notably in rural areas, including their role on supporting direct and indirect jobs.
- How can SFM concepts, criteria and indicators and forest management planning can be best used or reinforced to depict **forest resilience**, and support **adaptation**, considering uncertainty (e.g. under climate change, pest outbreaks...).
- What is SFM potential for informing forest restoration and afforestation with a view to increase **mitigation**, support carbon certification schemes, etc.
- SFM as a tool for supporting the provision of raw materials for the **bioeconomy** and for the transition to low carbon economy (including e.g. in construction).
- Role of SFM relevant indicators in support of **biodiversity** monitoring and policy
- How can SFM be further used in the context **of international policies**, agreements and Conventions.

- *There are already systems for reporting and several reports presenting information on forests' status and trends. However, there might be a need to improve or reinforce them, in view of the many EU and global objectives related to forests. What additional actions/commitments should the Member States and/or the Commission pledge to further ensure and demonstrate the sustainable management of EU forests?*

In the discussion, you are invited to address the following topics:

- Additional efforts to secure implementation of SFM across all EU (e.g. through forest management planning)
  - Potential for optimising existing reporting mechanisms, and alternative possible options/commitments
  - Where can the process of SFM be reinforced? Concept, criteria, indicators, standardisation, reporting, communication, governance
  - Potential role of harmonisation/NFIs
  - Role for Forest Europe (e.g. to develop new indicators on additional aspects of SFM)
- How can the contribution of sustainable and multifunctional forest management to the many priorities be best communicated to different actors?

Topics for discussion may include:

- How to address the challenges and criticism to the SFM concept
- Fostering better understanding of SFM in other sectors
- SFM in the political debate
- Connecting with the (mostly urban) public opinion: forests, forest management and wellbeing (including with reference to the current health crisis)

As background to the seminar, we are sending you additional background information, including:

1. Seminar background paper
2. SFC WG Final Report on SFM C and I
3. Final Annexes to Report
4. SFC - Working modalities - reflection paper

At the end of the seminar, the Commission will prepare a summary of the discussions and will present them to the Joint Meeting of SFC and CDGFC for their further input and consideration.