



Bld Anspachlaan 111 b13 – 1000 Brussels
Tel.: +32 (0)2 274 22 06
Fax: +32 (0)2 400 71 26
e-mail: ceettar@ceettar.eu
website: www.ceettar.eu
EC Register: 15086733813-03

European Organisation of Agricultural, Rural and Forestry Contractors

Confédération Européenne des Entrepreneurs de Travaux Techniques Agricoles, Ruraux et Forestiers

Europäischer Zentralverband der land- und forstwirtschaftlichen Lohnunternehmer und ländlichen Dienstleistungsunternehmer

CEETTAR Position Paper on the new European Forest Strategy

CEETTAR Members support a new European Forest Strategy

Forestry contractors make a significant contribution to the European economy, by creating jobs, by combating climate changes and achieving the commitment to have a green economy that ensures a healthy life in harmony with nature.

CEETTAR believes that the new European Forest Strategy should firstly **improve competitiveness of the forest value chain**. More competitive companies along the value chain automatically entails a higher sustainability of economic activities. Forests are also important for the viability of rural areas. By addressing the competitiveness of the sector, the strategy improves the living standards and the viability of rural areas.

Secondly, the EU forest strategy should be parallel to **the EU biodiversity strategy** and they should be complementary to each other. Forests are important for biodiversity conservation and it is clear that forestry has to assume not only the productive component but also the component associated with conservation, which will require the development of completely different and diverse forest models.

However, CEETTAR believes that the Green Deal and the new European Forest Strategy should focus on financing the forestry sector, from the creation of new forest areas to the use of wood in construction, with an emphasis on the sustainable management of Europe's forests. At the same time, the strategy should increase efforts made to improve the resilience of forests against various hazards. This is done in everyday work by taking care of sustainability (biodiversity, carbon sink and storage issues and quality of water) in harvesting. Some new business models will also go through the development of agroforestry, where the income will have an agricultural component associated with the forest yield.

Thirdly, forestry contractors contribute to a modern, climate neutral, resource-efficient and competitive economy and they want to do more! CEETTAR welcomes the strategy **support to new training, skills and jobs** that reflects the multiple functions of forests. Taking care of knowledge and skills development of forestry contractors and their employees is the crucial factor in this.

What is CEETTAR asking for?

CEETTAR proposes three priorities for the new European Forest Strategy: preserve the existing situation, plan the forest of the future and the forestry industry and improve the governance framework.

- **PRESERVE THE EXISTING SITUATION:** to nurture the forests that we have in Europe, the strategy should **ensure the sustainable management of all EU forests**, maximising the provision of their multiple functions while enhancing their productive capacity. In particular, the strategy should decrease the loss of forest coverage, preserve stocks and increase the EU carbon sinks in forests – in their soils and in harvested wood products. The Strategy should include the prevention of disaster risk events and of damages, secure forest resilience to natural hazards, while supporting the restoration of damaged areas and degraded ecosystems.
- **PLAN THE FOREST of the FUTURE:** the Strategy should foster afforestation and tree planting by setting out a roadmap for planting at least three billion additional trees in the EU by 2030, as announced in the Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, in full respect of ecological principles, contributing to climate neutrality, bio-economy and biodiversity. The Strategy should foster **new training opportunities for the sector**, to develop skills and offer jobs that reflects the multiple functions of the sector. Forestry activities will increasingly involve specialized personnel opening new opportunities for companies as long as they can keep up with this development. It should be coupled with a strong research and innovation agenda.
- **IMPROVE THE GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK:** to manage the existing and the new forests it will be important to have a strong and inclusive governance framework engaging all relevant stakeholders. A stronger coordination between national forest policies and the European Green Deal's objectives is necessary, together with a better monitoring of forests to demonstrate the effective contribution of sustainably managed forests to the EU objectives. Coordination also concerns financing instruments. It is essential to ensure a **consistent approach among different funding opportunities** (CAP – which should not be considered as the only source of funding, Horizon Europe, Next Generation EU...) and launch innovative financial incentives, including payments for ecosystem services and result-based schemes ('carbon farming') for forest managers that provide public goods such as carbon sequestration.
- Finally yet importantly, the sector contributes to rural development, by promoting local entrepreneurship and initiatives in relation with forests' multiple functions. Therefore, the Forestry Strategy should be **consistent with the new long-term vision for rural area**.

In brief, the strategy will involve diversifying the landscape, associated with the creation of new industries and the development of new business models. In the future, the exploitation of large extensions with the same species will be limited. Efforts with afforestation and species management will be increasingly greater, as climate change tends to challenge the success of plantations. There will be a greater use of all products and services associated with the forest, with no place for waste. This strategy will force a greater demand for companies capable of providing technologically advanced services. The European Union can then rely on the benefit brought by forestry contractors towards an economic, social and environmental sustainable future.

About CEETTAR:

The European Confederation of Agricultural, Rural and Forestry Contractors, established in 1961, represents about 150,000 companies and nearly 600,000 workers. It aims to represent the interests of land-based contractors in Europe. In 2014, the European Network of Forestry Entrepreneurs decided to merge with CEETTAR, resulting in a stronger and more representative single organisation representing land-based contractors at EU level.

CEETTAR aims to be a proactive force to benefit the contractors and the rural economy at European level. Its objectives are:

- to represent the national federations and defend their professional interests in relation to the institutions of the EU. This way, CEETTAR is recognised as representative organisation for contractors towards the European Institutions;
- to represent the national federations and defend their professional interests towards other private organisations, which are active at European level and beyond. CEETTAR maintains constructive relations with COPA-COGECA (farmers), CEMA (agricultural machinery industry), EFFAT (workers)...;
- to help organisations in the new Member States to fulfil their national objectives as rapidly as possible and under the best conditions through the expertise transfer developed by the CAP.