Candidate European Partnership Forests and Forestry for a Sustainable Future

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Policy context and relevance

EU GREEN DEAL

EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2030

EU Forest Strategy for 2030

3 Billion trees

Improve the quantity and quality of EU forests and strengthen their protection, restoration and resilience – **resilient** and **multifunctional** forests

- *Proposed forest monitoring law*
  - *Guidelines on closer-to-nature forest management*
  - *Guidelines on biodiversity-friendly afforestation, reforestation and tree planting*
  - *Guidelines for defining, mapping, monitoring and strictly protecting EU primary and old-growth forests*
  - *Guidance on the development of public and private payment schemes for ecosystem services*

R&I - Key driver *« In order to strengthen EU cooperation, **a research and innovation partnership** on forestry will be proposed **to overcome the fragmentation of public research efforts in the EU** and to reinforce work on research priorities that call for a stronger coordination."*

- Addressing **multiple functions of forests**: climate, biodiversity, bioeconomy etc.
- EU's **greenhouse gas emission reduction target of at least 55% in 2030**, as set out in the European Climate Law
- Promote forest-related interventions in the **CAP (2023-2027)** and in other EU financial instruments

European Commission

Policy context and relevance

- **Nature Restoration Law**
  - Put in place restoration measures on 20% all EU land and sea by 2030
  - On all EU ecosystems in need of restoration by 2050
  - Targets based on existing legislation for specific habitats types including forests
  - Specific forest ecosystems restoration targets
- **The EU Bioeconomy Strategy**
  - EU Bioeconomy Strategy update in 2025
  - Biotechnology and Biomanufacturing Communication
  - Primary producers' role in bioeconomy value chains
- **Carbon removals certification framework**
  - Carbon farming, such as restoring forests and soils and avoiding soil emissions, and other innovative farming practices
  - Binding carbon in long-lasting products and materials, such as wood-based construction materials or biochar.
  - New business models for foresters

European Commission

Forestry research under Horizon Europe (2021-24)

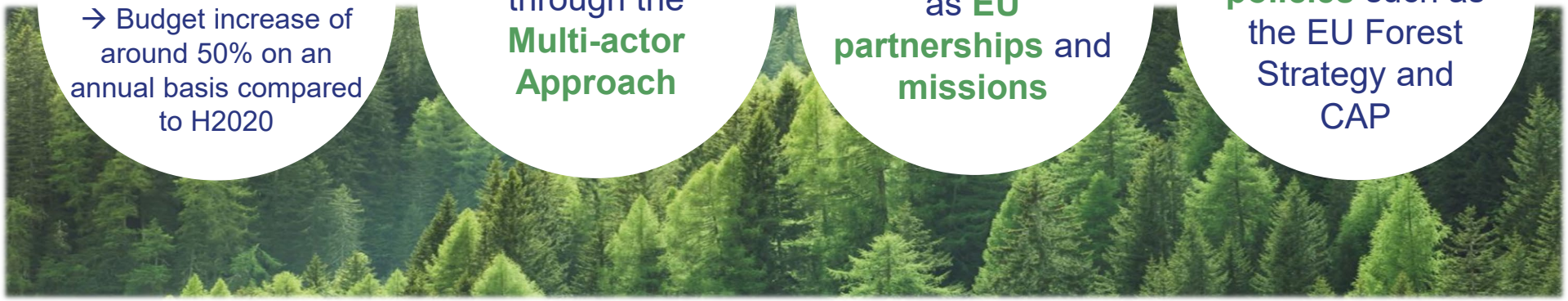
€ 140 million
22 projects

→ Budget increase of around 50% on an annual basis compared to H2020

Interactive innovation model through the **Multi-actor Approach**

Large-scale instruments such as **EU partnerships** and **missions**

Supporting European policies such as the EU Forest Strategy and CAP



European Commission

Toolbox for promoting R&I in forests

Research & Innovation

Cluster 6 Work Programme

EU partnerships

Candidate partnership:
Forests and forestry for a sustainable future

Circular Bio-based Europe Joint Undertaking

Innovation & Knowledge exchange

Missions

'A Soil Deal for Europe'

Horizon 2020 / Horizon Europe

Common Agricultural Policy

Candidate European Partnership, Strategic Plan 2025-2027

Forests and Forestry for a Sustainable Future

Tentative basic data

- **Implementation mode:** Co-funded European Partnership
- **Cluster:** 6 (Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment)
- **Call for proposals:** Draft Cluster 6 Work Programme 2025
- **Envisioned duration:** 2025-2031 (7 years)
- **Tentative EU contribution:** 70 M€ (30%)

  + MS/AC contribution 163 M€ (70%)

  = 233 M€

European Commission

Candidate European Partnership, Strategic Plan 2025-2027

Forests and Forestry for a Sustainable Future

- **Objectives**: A research and innovation-oriented transdisciplinary instrument that supports the EU Forest Strategy simultaneously with climate targets and the Biodiversity Strategy.

- **Expected impacts:**
  - Stronger consistency between social, environmental and economic dimensions of forests and forestry
  - Better understanding of the role of forests in climate change and biodiversity targets
  - Improved guidelines on adaptive forestry regimes in European regions
  - New knowledge to support major transitions and innovations in the forest-based bioeconomy towards higher added value
  - Improved, consistent, comprehensive and timely monitoring of forests
  - New green forestry business models

Candidate European Partnership, Strategic Plan 2025-2027

Forests and Forestry for a Sustainable Future

Overall/effectiveness: rationale for a European Partnership approach

- Improved cross-coordination of the European R&I landscape
- Improved coordination across different areas and sectors
- Stronger focus on the processes that lead to transformations toward sustainability in the forest-based and bioeconomy sector at EU level
- Building of capacities, education and training, and a better connection of these with research
- Mutualised benefits from the greater diversity of forest-related experiences and forest conditions at the European level

Draft proposal & consortium development

- Supported by the SCAR* FOREST Strategic Working Group
- Draft proposal prepared by a core writing team of MS organisations
- Proposal was prepared in the context of the request for national commitments to co-funded partnerships launched in summer 2024
- First Consortium Development Meeting: 7 October 2024

*Standing Committee on Agricultural Research

MS/AC commitments

- COM (DG Research and Innovation) **request for commitments** to European Partnerships from Member States and Associated countries: 20 June 2024
- Recipients were: national R&I ministers, perm reps/missions, Research Working Party Members
- **DL for replies** on MS/AC envisaged financial contributions extended**: 22 November 2024**
- Majority of MS have replied and willing to contribute

Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA)

- The SRIA outlines key strategic research themes for the future of forests and the forest-based sector.
- Future calls will enable multidisciplinary projects to address these themes and adapt to societal and technological developments impacting forests.

Key EC suggestions for the 1st SRIA draft:

- Balance economic, environmental, and social sustainability dimensions
- Clarify the intervention logic for selected themes
- Focus on specific areas:
  - Forest ecosystem services, restoration, and tackling degradation
  - New business models, including non-timber bioeconomy and services
  - Upgrading wood-treatment and studying hardwood resilience to climate change
  - Forests' role in climate adaptation and mitigation
  - Emerging trends like interdisciplinary forest management approaches
  - Substituting fossil materials with forest-based alternatives
  - Address regional barriers and opportunities in forest management adoption
- Other recommendations:
  - Detail research maturity, gaps, and innovation opportunities
  - Ensure synergy with related initiatives, partnerships, and missions

Thank you

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