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Executive summary

This report on the "Rules of Procedure" (RoP) represents the procedural design of the EUFORE stakeholder engagement hub. It describes institutions and procedures for stakeholder engagement within the project and towards the European Partnership for Forestry. It describes:

- Institutions of stakeholder engagement hub
- Mechnanisms of stakeholder engagement
- Decision making and deliberation approach within the hub
- Connections to existing platforms and networks (i.e., the European Forest-Based Sector Technology Platform (FTP), other partnerships and national platforms).

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1. Introduction

The EUFORE stakeholder engagement hub is the platform to ensure the appropriate engagement of relevant stakeholders in the process of the development and elaboration of a European Strategic Research & Innovation Agenda for forests and the forest-based sector (SRIA) in the context of a future European Research & Innovation Partnership "Forests and Forestry for a Sustainable Future". The EUFORE stakeholder engagement hub serves as a platform to initiate and facilitate exchange and discussion among stakeholders to generate essential content for the SRIA through targeted co-creation formats. It will prepare the basis for the successful implementation of the European Partnership. The EUFORE stakeholder engagement has to be credible, legitimate, and useful to support the inclusion of topics that lead to scientifically and practically relevant research and innovation agenda setting. The SRIA will reflect the needs and expectations of the involved stakeholders as well as the expectations of the future users and beneficiaries of the activities implemented under the European Partnership.

Several groups and people will be directly and indirectly affected by the implementation of the SRIA under the European Partnership as well as by the funding decisions based on that SRIA. Be it because they are researchers that have to apply for funding administered by the European Partnership or because they are foresters that have to implement certain activities based on such research results. It might also happen that citizens are affected who have to adapt to changed functions or possibilities of use of forests. Furthermore, entrepreneurs in the wood and forest based value chains might have to deal with changing business models and opportunities.

As all these groups of different stakeholders are likely to be affected by the implementation of the SRIA, they should have the opportunity to influence it to make sure that the R&I programme described within this document meets there expectations in terms of research gaps and innovation needs. This will further ensure stakeholder ownership. Thus, stakeholder engagement institutions and mechanisms as described at a later stage of this report, provide the means towards such stakeholder involvement.

Based on this assumption, stakeholder engagement within the EUFORE project is "premised on the notion that `those groups who can affect or are affected by the achievements of an organisation´s purpose`[1] should be given the opportunity to

[1] Freeman, R. E. (2015). Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach. Cambridge University Press. retrieved from: https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139192675 [retrieved on 16th March 2023]

comment and input into the development of decisions that affect them"[2]. The cited achievements of an organisation's purpose refer in the case of the EUFORE project to the SRIA, as the SRIA is understood as one of the main achievements of the project.

Grounded in these theoretical considerations, we will base the practical approach towards stakeholder engagement and co-creating the SRIA on the concept of of "Responsible Research and Innovation". This concept dates back to the year 2001 when the Commission of the European Communities emphasised to strengthen public participation in policy-making[3] when it states that the "quality, relevance and effectiveness of EU policies depend on ensuring wide participation throughout the policy chain – from conception to implementation. Improved participation is likely to tcreate more confidence in the end result and in the Institutions which deliver policies"[4]. Based on that, Responsible Research and Innovation is understood as a "transparent, interactive process by which societal actors and innovators become mutually responsive to each other with a view on the (ethical) acceptability, sustainability and societal desirability of the innovation process and its marketable products (in order to allow a proper embedding of scientifc and technological advances in our society)"[5]. Or, to put it with more simple words and to apply it for the process of SRIA development within the EUFORE project, research and innovation activities have to consider the needs and expectations of the affected stakeholders and therefore should incorporate these stakeholders in a trustful and appreciative process of co-creation.

This is the angle from which the EUFORE project consortium is establishing the EUFORE stakeholder engagement hub. Therefore it is indispensable to define certain rules of procedure according to which the hub is organised and managed. The present report elaborates on these "Rules of Procedure" (RoP). It has five objectives:

1. Definition and establishment of the institutions for stakeholder engagement: Each of these institutions will have a particular role during the development of the SRIA. The report describes the flow of information between single institutions of the stakeholder engagement hub.

[2] Jeffrey, Neil. 2009: Stakeholder Engagement: A roadmap to Meaningful Engagement. Doughty Centr, Cranfield School of Management, p 13
retrieved from: Wayback Machine (archive.org) [retrieved on 16th March 2023]
[3] Commission of the European Communities. 2001. European Governance. A White Paper. COM(2001) 428.
retrieved from: ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/DOC_01_10, [retrieved on 14th March 2023]
[4] ibid
[5] Von Schomberg, René. 2011. Towards Responsible Research and Innovation in the Information and Communication Technologies and Security Technologies Fields. Brussels: European Commission.

2. Definition of stakeholder engagement mechanismus: certain mechanisms are elaborated in order to to ensure that relevant stakeholder can participate in the SRIA development process in an appropriate way[6].
3. Explanation of the mechanisms of deliberation and decision taking: The focus is on mechanisms applied when involving stakeholders it does not cover any decision taking within partnership consortium. This part will mainly focus on the SRIA development process, but will also present some insights from existing partnerships which might be useful when it comes to designing such mechanisms for the European Partnership on Forestry.
4. Description of the mechanisms to exchange with existing institutions, platforms and partnerships.
5. Description of the timeline for the establishment of the stakeholder engagement hub with its different institutions.

Each of these is explained and elaborated further on the following pages.

[6] For a better understanding which level of stakeholder participation is addressed by each mechanism, the IAP Spectrum of Public Participation is applied.
Internnational Associaon of Public Participation (IAP2), 2007, IAP2 Spectrium of Public Participation, retrieved from Spectrum_8.5x11_Print (iap2.org.au) [retrieved on 14th March 2023]

2. Synthesis of the reportMethodology

The RoP was developed based on the outcome of three research instruments:

(1) A desk study analysis to (a) identify which institutions were set up in each of the partnerships in order to engage relevant stakeholders. An additional focus was put on (b) the identification of mechanisms of stakeholder involvement and (c) the processes of decision-making.
(2) Interviews which focused on the practical implementation of the stakeholder engagement process to identify lessons learned with regards to advantages and constraints that those other processes faced.
(3) An online EUFORE consortium workshop with external stakeholders to receive feedback on a preliminary version of the RoP

For the (1) desk study FNR focussed on European Partnerships under the Cluster 6 "Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Environment" of the Horizon Europe Programme, as the future European Partnership is expected to be implemented under the same pillar. The following seven partnerships/partnership candidates were identified and analysed accordingly:

- European Partnership for Safe and Sustainable Food Systems
- European Partnership water security for the planet (Water4All)
- European Partnership for a climate neutral, sustainable and productive Blue Economy (SBEP)
- European Partnership for rescuing biodiversity to safeguard life on Earth (Biodiversa+)
- European Partnership for Agriculture of Data
- European Partnership for Animal Health and Welfare
- European Partnership accelerating farming systems transition: agroecology living labs and research infrastructure

Furthermore, the following three European Partnerships were analysed:

- Built4People – People-centric sustainable building environment
- Clean Energy Technology Partnership
- European Partnership smart networks and services

The latter three partnerships were analysed in order to understand whether stakeholder engagement would be different in partnerships addressing other topics than those related to bioeconomy, environment and natural resources. It turned out that this was not the case and that the approach of stakeholder involvement in European partnerships seems to be very similar.

Focus of the investigation was to learn which bodies and institutions were set up in each of the partnerships in order to engage relevant stakeholders. An additional focus was on mechanisms that have been applied for stakeholder involvement. The process of decision making was analysed as far as information was available.

For the analysis documents were used that were publically available on the partnership websites as well as the website of the European Commission[7].

For the (2) interviews the seven partnerships under the Cluster 6 were contacted. Six representatives replied and declared their willingness to be interviewed:

- European Partnership for Safe and Sustainable Food Systems
- European Partnership water security for the planet (Water4All)
- European Partnership for a climate neutral, sustainable and productive Blue Economy (SBEP)
- European Partnership for rescuing biodiversity to safeguard life on Earth (Biodiversa+)
- European Partnership for Agriculture of Data
- European Partnership accelerating farming systems transition: agroecology living labs and research infrastructure

Based on the desk study it was discussed with the interviewees, how the process of stakeholder engagement is implemented in practice and which advantages and constraints they faced. The interviewees were asked to explain the process of setting up the partnership and elaborating the SRIA. Here it was important to understand which measures were applied to engage the stakeholders in the process of SRIA development. The main insights and lessons learned are described below.

For the (3) online consortium workshop with external stakeholders, FNR in cooperation with MMM developed the RoP based on the results of the desk research and the interviews. During this workshop the RoP were presented and discussed and stakeholders concluded that the RoP are appropriate for the process of stakeholder engagement and could be implemented with minor suggestions for revisions, especially related to the process of decision-making.

[7] European Commission (2023): European Partnerships in food, bioeconomy, natural resources, agriculture and environment
retrieved from: https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/european-partnerships-horizon-europe/food-bioeconomy-natural-resources-agriculture-and-environment_en, [retriebed on 7th February 2023].

2.2. Results

While analysing the documents and conducting the interviews it became very evident that there are two different dimensions of stakeholder engagement. These dimensions are closely related to the stage of the process of developing and implementing a European Partnership. It is foreseen by the European Commission that each European Partnership is based on a SRIA that needs to be developed before the partnership starts implementation. In parallel to the SRIA development process, the future partnership can start its consolidation process. This means that the aforementioned two dimensions of stakeholder engagement can be defined as follows:

(1) Development stage: SRIA development and preparation of the future partnership
(2) Implementation stage: Implementation of the consolidated partnership

The definition of these two dimensions has a significant impact on the following analysis as well as on the demand and character of the EUFORE stakeholder engagement hub. This platform aims to engage relevant stakeholders from the forest sector and forest-based value chains in order to gather their opinions and views as well as needs and expectations towards a future SRIA to be implemented in the European Partnership. The EUFORE stakeholder engagement hub clearly relates to the first stage, the development stage. Thus, it is not comparable to an stakeholder engagement institutional set-up used during the implementation of an already existing European Partnership.

As it is the aim of a European Partnership to manage funding sources and to make decisions that have financial and partly political impact, it operates on a very different level than the EUFORE stakeholder engagement hub will do. A European Partnership clearly relates to the second stage, the implementation stage. Thus, the institutions, the mechanisms of stakeholder involvement as well as the processes of decision-making within the EUFORE stakeholder engagement hub (stage one) are different from those institutions and processes within a European Partnership (stage two).

It can be anticipated that institutions and processes in stage two are much more formalised and binding than in stage one. This report and the following analysis reflects this distinction between the two stages, but focuses on stage one as the development process of the SRIA for forests and the forest-based sector is in the focus of the EUFORE project. The report will also present insights related to stage two which should provide some guidance to the process of developing such institutions for the European Partnership on Forestry.

The results of the desk study (1) and the interviews (2) will be depicted in the following. The analysis starts with findings related to stakeholder engagement institutions and depicts their characteritics, followed by a description of mechanisms of stakeholder engagement and decision-making. After that the "Rules of Procedure" as well as the EUFORE stakeholder engagement institutions are elaborated followed by a presentation of the workshop results (3).

2.2.1. Stakeholder Engagement Institutions

When analysing the institutions that have been set up to involve stakeholders in order to elaborate the SRIAs and the partnerships (stage one), it became evident, that the degree of formalisation was rather low compared to a later stage of implementing partnerships (stage two). The focus at stage one was put on the exchange with already existing institutions and platforms and to assemble knowledge, opinions and expectations. The analysed documents show that in many cases already existing institutions, working groups or networks, such as ERA-NETs or SCARs (Standing Committee on Agricultural Research) were used for these purposes[8]. The analysed documents describe the processes of SRIA elaboration and partnership set up in a rather general way without elaborating precisely on institutions with clearly defined roles and functions. E.g. it is stated that a SRIA will be "…jointly developed with input from stakeholder representatives and funding agencies. […] The first steps towards development of a SRIA was taken in a process guided by the SCAR SWG Food Systems and involving national representatives and a representation of trans-European umbrella organisations and stakeholder groups. […] The development of an actual Strategic

[8] Draft proposal for a European Partnership under Horizon Europe Rescuing Biodiversity for Safgeuard Life on Earth, p. 51,
retrieved from: https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2020-05/european_partnership_for_rescuing_biodiversity_to_safeguard_life_on_earth.pdf [retreived on 22nd February 2022]

Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) will be undertaken in processes engaging stakeholders and citizens in MS during second half of 2022."[9]

The analysed documents and follow-up as well as the interviews showed that the types of institutions set up in stage two were very similar to each other in each partnership even if called differently. This seems to underline the observation that the governance of a partnership is highly formalised. So, in all the documents that have been analysed, precise institutions were described as well as which roles and functions they have to fullfill in order to govern the partnership. It was elaborated as well how such institutions should be composed[10]. This observation is supported by the statements of the interviewees, who described the degree of formalisation of institutions as significantly higher at stage two than at stage one.

In one case, no institutions or working groups were set up to develop the SRIA. In the other cases, working groups at the European level were established to discuss and elaborate the content and alignment of the SRIA. But these working groups were described as rather lose associations of interested stakeholders. The working groups seemed to have a very low degree of institutionalisation, had no permanent members and met barely on a regular basis.

However, those potential partnerships that had established working groups for developing their SRIAs, perceived them as helpful. According to them it assisted the process coordination and supported the organisation of stakeholder engagement.

2.2.2. Mechanisms of Stakeholder engagement

The terms "stakeholder" and "stakeholder engagement" are used in particular meanings in the analysed documents. When the documents referred to the process of elaborating a SRIA and setting up a partnership (stage one), the term stakeholder was used in a very holistic way, e.g. when stating that "the Sustainable Food Systems Partnership will engage and involve an extended stakeholder's community including researchers and academia, policymakers, industry (small, medium and large companies), NGO, educators, knowledge brokers, consumers

[9] Draft proposal for European Partnership under Horizon Europe Sustainable Food Systems for People, Plante & Climate, p. 15
retrieved from: https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-04/ec_rtd_he-partnership-sustainable-food-systems-april_2022.pdf [retreived on 22nd February 2023)

[10] Draft proposal for a European Partnership under Horizon Europe Rescuing Biodiversity to Safeguard Life on Earth, pp. 37
retrieved from: https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2020-05/european_partnership_for_rescuing_biodiversity_to_safeguard_life_on_earth.pdf [retrieved on 22nd February 2023]

and civil society including youth and young professionals working together"[11]. But when describing the governance structures of a partnership (stage two), the term stakeholder is used to describe a limited number of experts in order to receive their opinions and consideration regarding strategic decisions of the partnership.

For the engagement of stakeholders during the stage one, several activities/mechanisms for stakeholder involvement such as workshops, (web-based) consultations and surveys are described in the analysed documents[12]. This seems to be congruent with the statements of the interviewees who reported that the needs and expectations of the stakeholders towards the SRIA were assessed with the help of different methods such as public consultations, stakeholder workshops and surveys, whereby the latter two formats were implemented online as well. Further the interviewees said that the engaged stakeholders changed over time. Only in some cases, the same stakeholders were engaged over a longer period of time and were asked to participate in working groups and to provide their input to the documents that were elaborated therein.

During the interviews, the processes applied to develop the SRIAs in the different partnerships were described as iterative as it took place in several steps and consultation rounds with changing stakeholders in which the SRIAs have been shaped and elaborated step by step with the relevant stakeholders.

Finally, it can be concluded that (online) workshops, meetings, (online) surveys) and consultations have been applied as methodologies of choice during stage one, SRIA development process. Overall these processes turned out to be less formalised. With regard to Lovric et. al.[13] and the IAP Spectrum of Public Participation[14], the level of participation can be considered as low to medium. Especially the definitions of "consultation" and "involvement" seem to be applicable at this stage of stakeholder engagement. They describe pointedly the stakeholder engagement as an activity "to obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions"[15] (consult) and as an activity to "work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered"[16] (involve). According to this terminology, it can be concluded that stakeholders have been consulted and involved during the process of SRIA development. An engagement that went

[11] ibid, p. 20
[12] ibid, p. 32
[13] Lovric et al. 2018: A Grounded Theory approach for deconstructing the role of participation in spatial planning: In sights from Nature Park Medednica, Croatia. Forest policy and economicx, 87, pp. 20-34
[14] Internnational Associaon of Public Participation (IAP2), 2007, IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation retrieved from Spectrum_8.5x11_Print (iap2.org.au) [retrieved on 14th March 2023]
[15] ibid
[16] ibid

beyond these formats and would imply a higher level of participation such as "collaboration" in the way that would "incorporate […] advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible"[17] could not be recognised, neither through the interview nor by the study of documents.

2.2.3. Decision-making procedures

The processes of decision-making during the set up of a partnership as well as for the phase of its active implementation were not elaborated in detail in the analysed documents. Especially for the phase of setting up a partnership and elaborating a SRIA, no specific information could be derived from the analysed documents.

For the phase of implementing and governing a partnership, only rather general explanations of decision-making processes were given. So it is stated that "in order to ensure that the Partnership delivers on the planned objectives, processes will be needed to allow […] (ii) a transparent and efficient decision-making process throughout the duration of the Partnership, in particular regarding the prioritization of activities"[18]

The interviewees reported as well that there was no formalised decision-making pathway during the development of a SRIA. Decisions were discussed in several steps among the stakeholders involved and revised or adjusted if necessary. The decision-making process was described as informal and consensual to the greatest extent possible, e.g. formalised voting did not take place. Even though the interviewees were satisfied with the decision-making processes in the context of the SRIA development, they were aware that the less formalised decision-making processes are prone to friction and conflict.

The results of the desk study and interviews are incorporated into the draft RoP, which are described in the next chapter..

[17] ibid
[18] Biodiversa P. 36

3. The EUFORE stakeholder engagement hub

In the following chapter the EUFore stakeholder engagement hub is elaborated. As it consists of the EUFORE stakeholder engagement institutions at the one hand, it can be considered a platform that assembles the relevant stakeholders in certain working entities. At the other hand it provides a number of stakeholder engagement activities and formats. Thus, the institutions are explained in a separate sub-chapter (3.1) and the stakeholder engagement mechanisms or activities are explainned in a different sub-chapter as well (3.2).

In the Figure below the institutions of the stakeholder engagement hub and some of its mechanisms are depicted. This set-up was designed for the purpose of the SIRA development. We do not make suggestions for a schematic set-up of institutions during the partnership, which will be designed by the partnership consortium.

The figure includes stakeholder engagement institutions as well as stakeholder engagement mechanisms, especially the Regional and European stakeholder workshops. These particular stakeholder engagement mechanisms were included in the figure to better hightlight their importance in the process of co-creating the SRIA and they are to some extent the core element of stakeholder engagement activities.

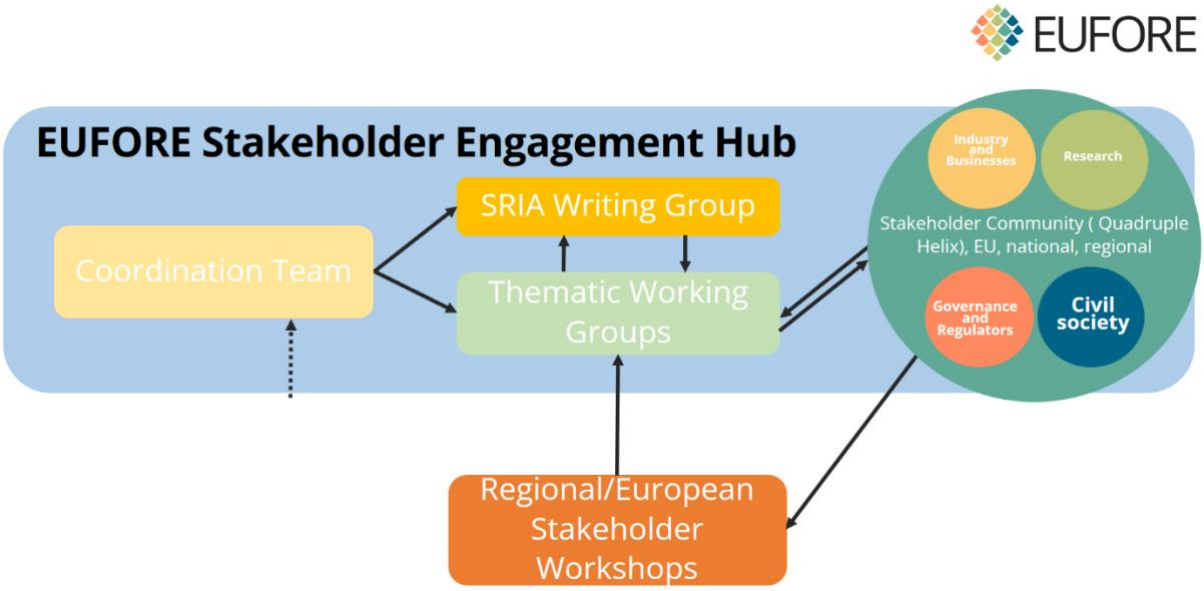

Figure 1 Institutions and mechanisms of the EUFORE stakeholder engagement hub (the institutions are depicted in the blue rectangle)

3.1. EUFORE Stakeholder engagement institutions

3.1.1. Stakeholder Community

The stakeholder community forms the basis for the whole process of co-creating[19] the SRIA. It is not an institution but a pool of people identified and to be engaged within the institutions. The stakeholders from the forest sector and forest-based sector provide their needs, opinions and expectations towards the SRIA. Stakeholders are ordered along the 4 dimensions of the quadrupal helix. The aim is to achieve a good representation of all four stakeholder categories within the forest based sector. The co-creation process gives them the possibility the shape the future SRIA and consequently the strategic orientation of the European Partnership on Forests and Forestry for a sustainable Future.

The stakeholder community is identified based on the results of a stakeholder survey which is implemented by EFI (PP01). This survey is sent out to all contacts in the CORDIS data base that have been beneficiaries in R&I projects related to forests and the forest-based sector financed by EU framework programmes between. Further, the survey is sent out to all potential stakeholders that have been identified by the project partners. EFI is informed about these potential stakeholders by the project partners and sends out the surveys. This process is continued in order to extent the basis of engaged stakeholders. The contacted representatives of the institutions are asked to indicate the level of participation and kind of activities they would like to be involved in the EUFORE project. Only after the contacted institutions/persons have declared their consent in being involved in EUFORE stakeholder activities, they are approached further. Each institution or person that declares its consent in being involved in EUFORE stakeholder activities is considered to be an active part of the EUFORE stakeholder community.

3.1.2. Thematic Working Groups

The Thematic Working Groups (TWGs) are the institutions that will do the main writing work to co-create the SRIA document. Stakeholders within a TWG jointly discuss and draft chapters of the SRIA in a process of co-creation. The TWGs will be arranged topic-wise according to the already formulated scopes of the SRIA. This means that four TWGs will exist:

1. Forest Ecology
2. Forest Management
3. Forest Products
4. Social Aspects and Forest Policy

[19] Co-creation: Co-creation is understood as “a collaborative process of creating new value with external experts and stakeholders”
retrieved from: https://fronteer.com [retrieved on 14th March 2023]

However, TWGs will be able to create sub-groups to discuss specific issues in smaller settings, if needed and agreed by TWG members.

Each TWG is led by one of the EUFORE consortium members. Further, all interested stakeholders of the stakeholder community can participate in the activities of the TWG. Each participating stakeholder should be able to provide relevant content and thus should be an expert for the topics elaborated in the particular TWG.

The TWG lead is supported by the Coordination Team when arranging all organisational aspects like the planning and implementing of TWG-meetings, writing minutes and serving as contact point for stakeholders participating in the particular TWG. Further, the TWG leads are responsible for the continuous exchange with the coordination team as well as the SRIA Writing Group.

Each TWG will take up the input provided from the stakeholder workshops. The main writing work is done in the TWGs. Here, the results/feedback of the regional and European stakeholder workshops will be discussed among the members of the TWG and will be detailed, adapted and compiled in a way that draft texts can be transferred to the SRIA Writing Group. Thematic Working Group will be provided with additional information from WP1-2 which will further inform their work in order to be able to use the state-of-the-art knowledge to prepare the SRIA content. TWG members are free to consult additional sources of information as well as to consult experts during their work.

3.1.3. SRIA Writing Group

The SRIA Writing Group (SRIA WG) is responsible to compile the input provided from the TWGs into one document. This document serves as the draft SRIA. The draft chapters of the SRIA will be discussed with the SCAR FOREST WG and the European Commission to ensure consistency with the requirements of the preparation for the proposal of the European Partnership on Forests and Forestry. MMM leads and facilitates the SRIA Writing Group. The group consists of EUFORE project partners only, including the leads of the TWGs.

3.1.4. Secretariat

The secretariat/ coordination team is responsible for the overall coordination of the stakeholder engagement hub. It will ensure a smooth flow of information between the different institutions of the hub and will be in regular exchange with the EUFORE project lead EFI, the regional partners and the TWGs chairs. The secretariat is managed by the FNR team. Activities will be reported to the ExCo on regular basis.

3.1.5. Further institutions

Some of the institutions in Figure 1 are depicted outside the stakeholder engagement hub. The reasons for that regarding the stakeholder community have been explained in Chapter 3.1.

SCAR FOREST and the European Commission are not a part of the stakeholder engagement hub but they need to be integrated in the SRIA development process. The European Commission will provide co-funding for the future European Partnership and SCAR FOREST will elaborate the partnership proposal and includes the potential national co-funding institutions. Their involvement is reflected in the EUFORE work plan under Task 4.4.

3.2. EUFORE Stakeholder Engagement Mechanisms

The EUFORE consortium implements several mechanisms of stakeholder engagement to facilitate the process of co-creating the SRIA and to involve the stakeholders appropriately. For the applicable stakeholder engagement mechanisms it is important that they are understood and implemented as "a `two-way´ so that both sides have the opportunity to exchange views and information, to listen and to have their issues addressed"[20]. In order to achieve this, two particular formats are in the core of the EUFORE stakeholder engagement process. These are the stakeholder workshops that are implemented on a regional and an European level. The first round of regional stakeholder workshops can be considered the initial stakeholder engagement activity as it assembles the most relevant stakeholders at the reginal level in several European regions. In that way, stakeholders are engaged from the very beginning and their continuous commitment during the process of SRIA development is strengthened. Content-wise, the regional workshops provide the initial impact for the process of co-creating the SRIA.

[20] Neil 2019, p. 15

Besides these stakeholder workshops other mechanisms of stakeholder engagement will be implemented in parallel such as surveys, written consultations, (online) workshops and ad-hoc meetings.

3.2.1. Stakeholder Workshops

3.2.1.1. Regional Stakeholder Workshops

The majority of the stakeholders participate in the process of co-creating the SRIA via the regional and European stakeholder workshops. Two rounds of stakeholder workshops will be implemented at the regional level. The term "regional level" refers to six Pan-European macro-regions whereas each of the region consists of several EU and non-EU countries. The six regions and the corresponding countries are displayed in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Six European regions in which regional stakeholder workshops are conducted.

Nordic	West-Atlantic	Eastern-Central	Mediterranean	West-Central	South-Eastern
Finland	France	Slovakia	Italy	Germany	Croatia
Sweden	Ireland	Czech Republic	Spain	Austria	Bulgaria
Denmark	Portugal	Hungary	Cyprus	Belgium	Romania
Estonia	United Kingdom	Poland	Greece	Luxembourg	Slovenia
Latvia			Malta	Netherlands	Albania
Lithuania			Israel	Switzerland	Armenia
Faroe Islands			Tunisia		Bosnia and Herzegovina
Iceland			Turkey		Georgia
Norway			Morocco		Kosovo
					Moldova
					Montenegro
					North Macedonia
					Serbia
					Ukraine

Cells in yellow: EUFORE project partner countries
Countries in red font: Third countries associated to Horizon Europe
Countries in blue font: Third countries associated to Horizon Europe by transnational arrangements

The categorisation of the six Pan-Europan regions was taken and adapted from a publication by Rametsteiner et al. who proposed the classification of the European forest-based industry based on several indicators[21].

The regional workshops are planned to take place in a hybrid format. If needed, the format can be switched to pure online or pure personal events. The participating stakeholders of each workshop are identified and invited in close consultation with task 3.1 and from summer 2023 based on the stakeholder engagement protocol (deliverable 3.1). In order to ensure a manageable and lively discussion, the number of participating stakeholders is limited to 40. Stakeholders invited from each country should represent the four dimensions of the quadruple helix. In terms of representation of countries, the EUFORE projects strives to have participants from all countries listed in the table above. However, for practical reasons focus will be on a full representation of all EU Member States (black fonts).

Each of the regional workshops will follow a harmonised methodology which was elaborated by FNR and introduced to the responsible regional leads in order to ensure a methodological comparability. Within the workshops the stakeholders elaborate their needs, opinions and expectations towards the R&I topics addressed by the future SRIA. Therefore the co-creation format of a World Café[22] is used. The format is implemented in a way that each stakeholder has the chance to announce relevant R&I topics for each of the four predefined EUFORE scopes and to exchange with other stakeholders.

The organisation of the regional workshops is within the responsibility of the regional leads, which are the project partners representing the European region as presented in table 1.

The regional leads will prepare the workshops in form and content, and have to follow a harmonized methodology, used to facilitate stakeholder exchange and discussion. They will wrap up the workshops and jointly compile results to be provided to the Thematic Working Groups.

After the first round of regional stakeholder workshops has been implemented until end of September 2023, a second round of workshops is planned for 2024. Within this second round of regional stakeholder workshops, the participants will discuss the conditions under which the European Partnership will be implemented.

[21] Rametsteiner, E., Nilsson, S., Böttcher, H., Havlik, P., Kraxner, F., Leduc, S., Obersteiner, M., Rydzak, F., Schneider, U., Schwab, D. and Willmore, L., 2007. Study of the Effects of Globalization on the Economic Viability of EU Forestry. Final Report of the AGRI Tender Project: AGRI-G4-2006-06, EC Contract, 97579.
[22] Brown, J., Isaacs, D., 2005. The World Café. Shaping Our Futures Through Conversations That Matter, McGraw-Hill Professional.

3.2.1.2. European Stakeholder Workshops

It will assemble stakeholders from the EU-level, namely representatives of the European Commission and of the European associations relevant for the sector as well as representatives of SCAR Forest. Further, selected stakeholders from the national sub-national level will be invited to participate. The quadruple helix approach will be realised here as well and representatives of all four branches will participate in the workshop.

Four rounds of workshops will be implemented at the European level. The results from the first round of regional stakeholder meetings will be presented at the first European Stakeholder Workshop. The stakeholders at the European level discuss their needs, opinions and expectations towards the future SRIA. The results of the European workshops are integrated with the results from the regional workshops and will be used to inform and steer the work of the Thematic Working Groups. Three more stakeholder workshops are planned at the European level in order to accompany the iterative process of SRIA development.

Regional Workshops and European Stakeholder Workshops will be held in a sequence of a 1-year period. They will discuss progress of the SRIA development in an iterative manner and will provide feedback to the Thematic Workshops during the different stages of the SRIA development.

3.2.2. Further mechanisms of stakeholder engagement

Besides the regional and European Stakeholder Workshops, some other mechanisms of stakeholder engagement will applied. These mechanisms may include the following formats.

3.2.2.1. Online surveys

Such online surveys will be implemented after the first round of the regional stakeholder workshops. The results of all six stakeholder workshops of the first round will be compiled in one document. In a first round, this document will be sent out together with an online survey to stakeholders that participated in the workshops as well as those who have registered for the workshops but could not participate. Stakeholders are asked here to prioritise the listed topics and themes. Further, stakeholders will have the opportunity to comment on the paper. However, substantial changes of the collection of relevant R&I topics are not encouraged. This first online survey will be distributed in Octoer 2023

In a second stage, an online survey will be sent out to a much broader group of stakeholders such as EC services, SCAR and Member States. This survey will contain a condensed list of R&I topics according to the draft SRIA that is already

in place at that time. Here again, stakeholders are asked for their comments and prioritisations of topics. This second survey will be sent out in 2024.

3.2.2.2. Consultations

Relevant stakeholders can be contacted in writing, in person or via online tools in order to consult with them on specific questions and results along the SRIA development process.

3.2.2.3. Public consultation

A public consultation is planned to be implemented as well. It will be realised via the EU Consultation Portal.

3.2.2.4. Interviews

Interviews will be conducted with single stakeholders in order to receive an expert opinion on particular topics and issues. It seems evident that interviews are not appropriate to engage a larger number of stakeholders but rather to reveal expert knowledge.

3.2.2.5. Further workshops and meetings within the TWGs

Further workshops and meetings can be organised and held by the leaders of the TWGs and SRIA Writing Group in order to elaborate and discuss the content of the (draft) chapters of the SRIA.

Any of the further mechanisms of stakeholder engagement mentioned under a. to d. can be applied by the responsible TWG leaders as well as by the SRIA Writing Group as needed. Responsible project partners are free to choose the stakeholder engement format that fits best to their current needs and work flows. The coordination team of FNR should be informed about any of the applied and implemented stakeholder engagement activities in order to support the TWG and SRIA Writing Group leaders and to ensure a methodological comparability.

3.3. Level of participation

In order to classify the described stakeholder engagement mechanisms regarding the level of participation they represent, the following participation framework which is based on Lovric et. al. and the IAP Spectrum of Public Participation can be applied.

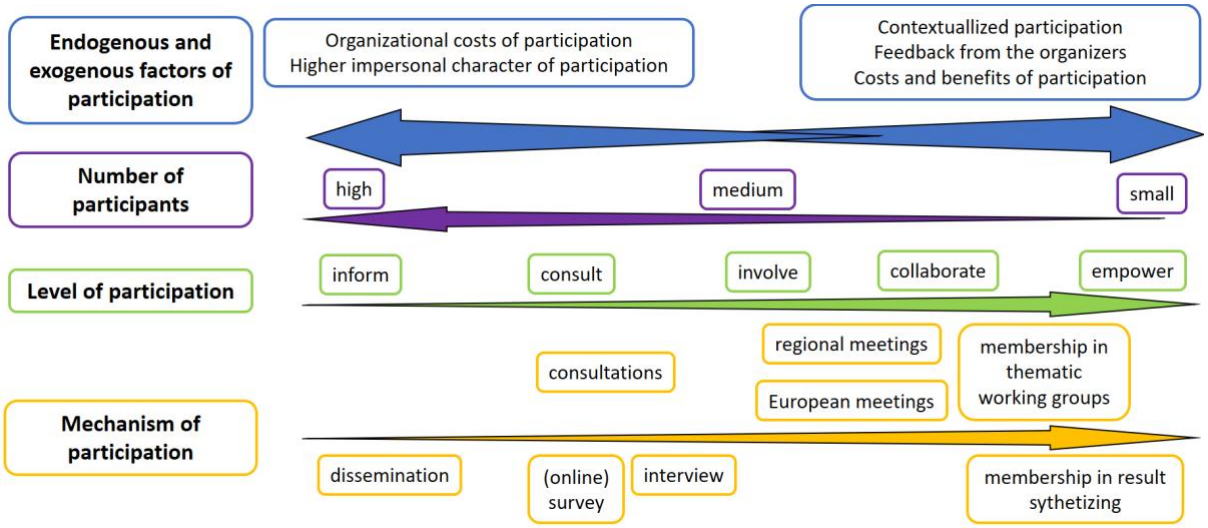

Figure 2 Participation Frameork (based on Lovric et. al. 2018, IAP 2007)

3.3.1. Regional and European Stakeholder Workshops

The level of participation of these particular stakeholder engagement mechanisms is oscillating between "involve" and "collaborate". This means that throught working with the stakeholders directly, their "concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered" [23] (involve) and their "advice and recommendations are incorporated [into the future SRIA] to the maximum extent possible"[24] (collaborate). The needs and expectations expressed will be collected and compiled in a way that it can be provided as input to the Thematic Working Group. Results will guide the work of the Thematic Working Groups.

3.3.2. Online-surveys, interviews, consultations

The level of participation of these further mechanisms of stakeholder engagement can be described as medium to low. The online surveys, interviews and consultations aim to consult with the stakeholders regarding the process and the status of the future SRIA and its content. Further they aim to consult with the stakeholders in order to obtain their feedback to understand and consider their concerns and aspirations consistently[25].

3.3.3. Further workshops and meetings within the TWGs and the SRIA Writing Group

The workshops, consultations and meetings implemented within the framework of the TWGs and the SRIA Writing Group are located at a level of participation that is medium to higher as the activites and achieved results (draft SRIA chapters) are having a stonger collaborative character. Within the TWG the engaged stakeholders will be asked "for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and

[23] IIAP2, 2007
[24] ibid
[25] ibid

incorporate [their] advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible"[26].

3.3.4. Level of participation and practicalities of developing the SRIA

It is implied by the theoretical framework that the number of engaged stakeholders is decreasing while the level of participation is increasing.

That means that the final decisions regarding the shape and content of the SRIA will be made by a relatively small number stakeholders. These smaller group consists of the EUFORE project partners forming the SRIA Writing Group, representatives of the SCAR Forest WG and the European Commission.

One could argue that the final or most important decisions are made by a rather exclusive and small circle of experts and project partners and that the majority of stakeholders is not participating in the final decision-making. This assumption is correct with regard to the pure number of stakeholders that make the final decisions regarding the SRIA and its contents. But it is put into perspective as soon as it is taken into consideration that any decision that is made regarding the SRIA and its content is based on a process of stakeholder engagement that involves a large number of stakeholders, especially within the regional and European Stakeholder Workshops and the TWGs.

[26] IAP, 2007

4. Deliberation and decision-making

Deliberation and decision-making are understood as two of one and the same process as deliberation precedes the decision-making and the latter is based on what was discussed and concluded during the deliberation process among the engaged stakeholders.

Both aspects, deliberation and decision-making have to be implemented within a transparent and inclusive process to ensure that the results of this process, the decisions finally made, are comprehended, accepted and implemented by all engaged stakeholders.

It was already elaborated in chapter 2.2 of this report that stakeholder engagement institutions and mechanisms have to be differentiated according to the role they are going to have during the European Partnership implemention. Institutions and mechanisms in the context of the EUFORE project and related to the SRIA development process (stage one) are certainly to be looked at under different conditions than decisions in the context of the implementation of the later European Partnership (stage two). In the following it is referred only to stage one, the development process of the SRIA as this what the EUFORE project aims for.

During the interviews mentioned in chapter 2.2 as well, some very important points have been made by interviewees with regard to the process of deliberation a decision-making. The interviewees pointed out that decisions in the development process of the SRIA were hardly formalised and were mostly made by consensus. Such an approach also corresponds to the iterative process for developing the SRIA. In repeated consultations and discussions with stakeholders, the respective SRIAs were elaborated step by step. Different positions and opinions were weighed against each other and discussed until a consensus was reached that was acceptable to all stakeholders involved.

A similar approach will be applied within the EUFORE project for deliberation and decision-making to be applied within the process of co-creating the SRIA. In the following the process of deliberation is elaborated shortly.

1. Relevant stakeholders are assembled in the six regional Stakeholder Workshops. In each Stakeholder Workshop stakeholders define their needs, expectations and opinions regarding the possible R&I topics of the

future SRIA. The workshops are facilitated but not moderated in the sense that the finding of topics is guided in a certain direction. The workshops can be considered a collection of ideas, whereas all ideas are taken up and no ideas are rejected.

2. The results of the regional Stakeholder Workshops are clustered and sorted by the Coordination Team by means of thematic similarities. No topics or ideas are excluded or sorted out at this stage.
3. All results are aggregated in a survey and presented to stakeholders for additional comments and in order to ask for their prioritisation.
4. The prioritation will lead to a situation that specific input by stakeholders will be deemed to be less important in general or less urgent to be implemented.
5. The Thematic Working Group will assess this final stakeholder input and develop a common understanding about it. TWG will then work out details for the specific R&I needs. They may also use to merge ideas and recluster them in order to develop a concise document.
6. A similar process will be applied by the Writing Group, when it comes to putting the input from the TWGs in a single document.

The decision-making between stakeholders in these different steps will be based on discussions among the stakeholders and a development of joint understanding, which leads to final results based on consensus. This means that any decision taken by the stakeholders is the result of an iterative interaction between the stakeholders to the most possible extent. They discuss and agree on a certain topic step by step. Ideally, at the end of such a process, the stakeholders agree unanimously on the topic in question. In practice, consensus among all stakeholders can´t be achieved in all cases. But at least a minimum consensus is aimed in the sense that the decision made will not block the further process of elaborating the SRIA. Another approach would be to reach a consensus among those stakeholders that are highly influential on or will be highly influenced by the decision. This approach will discriminate those stakeholders that are not considered as highly influential on or highly influenced by the decision to be made. The decisions which stakeholders are to be considered as highly influenced by or highly influential on a decision will be based on the stakeholder analysis from deliverable 3.1.

However, in situations where consensus might not be reached due to insurmountable deviations of opinions, stakeholders can opt for using one option before another or to leave both options next to each other, while making it transparent that different opinions exist among stakeholders. These different opinions will be thoroughly documented and published. How this is done, highly depends on the context and will not be prescribed or formalised.

The process is rather following the idea of the so-called piecemeal-engineering as defined by Karl R. Popper[27] or the "science of muddling through" as elaborated by Charles Lindblom[28].

[27] Popper, Karl (1957): The Poverty of Historicism, Routledge

[28] Lindblom, Charles E. (1959): The Science of "Muddling Through", Public Administrative Review, Vol. 19, No. 2 (Spring, 1959), pp. 79 – 88, Blackwell Publishing,
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5. Stakeholder Workshop in March 2023

A workshop with the EUFORE project partners and external experts was implemented on 13 March 2023. At this workshop the results of the research activities that were undergone to learn about the stakeholder engagement activities within existing European partnerships and partnership candidates, were presented. The mechanisms and institutions of stakeholder engagement that will be applied within the EUFORE project in order to implement the process of co-creating the SRIA were presented to the partners and external experts. The following discussion showed that there were some minor comments on the structure of the stakeholder engagement hub but no major concerns or objections. It was remarked that the mechanisms of stakeholder engagement are focused very much on the workshop formats, especially the regional and European Stakeholder Workshops. Other engagement formats like surveys, interviews or consultations should be considered as well. It was emphasised by the responsible project partner FNR that the regional and European Stakeholder Workshops are considered the main engagement mechanisms that have to be implemented, but that each project partner is free to implement further engagement formats as needed. E.g. in some of the six European regions in which the regional Stakeholder Workshops will be implemented, stakeholder consultations are planned on a national level. Such national mirror group consultations are held as an additional engagement format in order to activate and sensitise the relevant stakeholders on national level[29].

Further, it was concluded that especially the project partners leading the Thematic Working Groups will implement several stakeholder engagement formats in order to elaborate the draft chapters of the SRIA. Next to online workshops and online consultations, which are the most likely formats, the TWG leaders are free to choose and implement additional stakeholder engagement formats.

The structure of the stakeholder engagement hub as well as the proposed mechanisms of stakeholder engagement were subsummised under the term “Rules of Procedure” (RoP) which are laid out in this report. During the workshop, the project partners and stakeholders concluded that the RoP would be appropriate for the goal of stakeholder engagement and could be implemented accordingly.

[29] National Mirror Groups present a stakeholder engagement format that assembles relevant stakeholders from the national and regional level of a particular country. It could help to identify relevant stakeholders and to engage them in the process of SRIA co-creation at an early stage. As this format is not elaborated within the DoA of the EUFORE project and thus not obligatory, the decision whether to implement such National Mirror Group consultations is within the responsibility of the affected project partners and the implementation is voluntarily

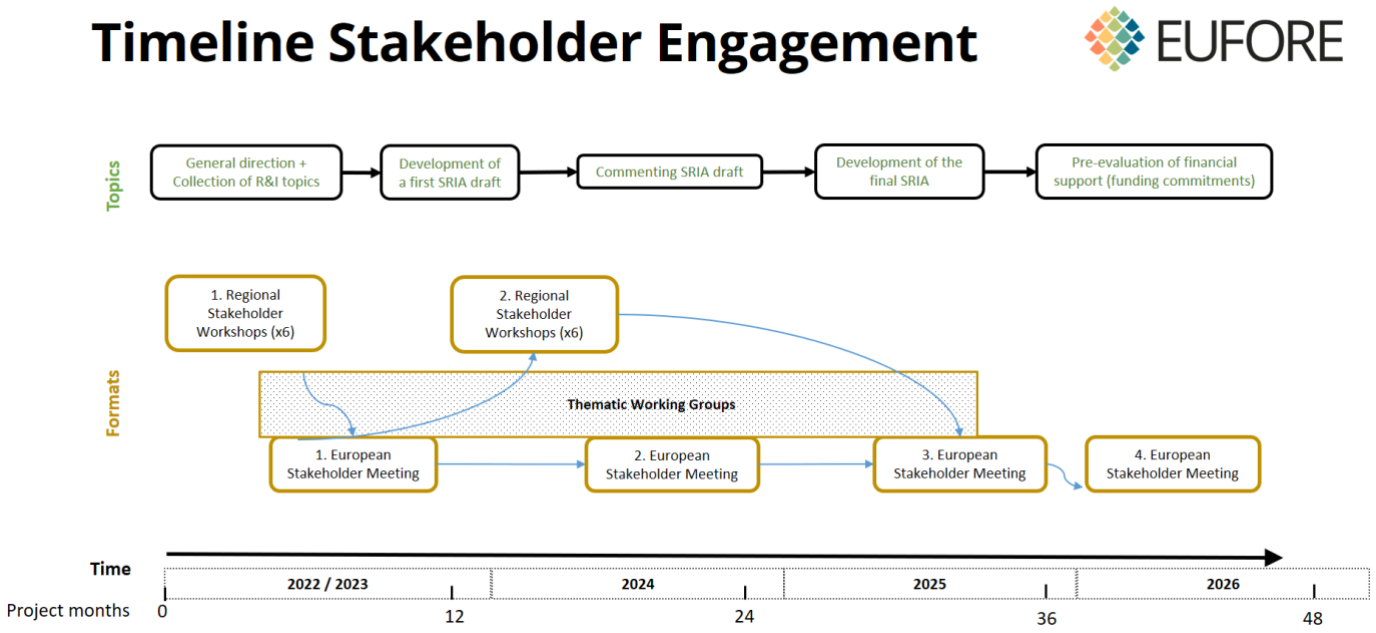
6. Exchange with existing institutions, platforms and partnerships

In the same spirit as other partnerships/ partnership candidates were consulted when drafting this report, close cooperation with partnerships, related platforms and institutions is foreseen during the work of the stakeholder hub. Representatives will be contacted to provide practical input relevant for the development of the SRIA and can be invited to participate in meetings, i.e. TWGs or European Stakeholder Meetings.

The experiences of partnerships and partnership candidates that have already implemented the process of SRIA development could already be capitalised during the elaboration of the RoP. It turned out that the exchange regarding partnership governance and SRIA development with existing partnerships and partnership candidates has been valuable and provided relevant information when developing the RoP. Another recommendation of the existing partnerships and partnership candidates was to establish close contact already during the SRIA development process with policymakers and institutions that provide funding.

This approach is reflected in the EUFORE work plan as Task 4.4 facilitates liaison between policymakers and funding agencies to support the preparation of the future European Partnership on Forests and Forestry. The interaction with SCAR FOREST is crucial, as the Working Group will be responsible for developing the European Partnership proposal and includes some of the potential future national funding institutions. The exchange with policymakers, such as the European Commission, and the participating funding agencies will ensure that the SRIA development process reflects the expectations and necessities brought up by these bodies.

7. Timeline for Stakeholder Engagement



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