EU forests: Future Supply, Demand, and Knowledge Gaps

Scale	Regional
Countries	Europe with focus on 27 EU countries
Anticipated end users of Practice Abstract	National and EU Policy Makers, Practitioners and Industries
More info	EUFORE Project Resources

European forests face growing pressure from climate change, biodiversity goals, and rising demand for wood products. They supply raw materials for wood-based industry and energy while providing essential ecosystem services. Yet climate change, market shifts, and policy ambitions are reshaping supply and demand. Understanding these dynamics and related knowledge gaps is crucial for policymakers and industry to plan for the future.

This analysis draws on FAOSTAT, Eurostat, and Forest Europe data, complemented by expert surveys (146 respondents), stakeholder workshops, and a structured foresight process – together forming a robust evidence base for future-oriented decisions.

Main Findings

- Forest growth has increased over past decades, but future supply may decline due to climate-related changes in growing conditions and disturbances, and protection.
- Demand for sawn softwood and wood-based panels is expected to rise, especially for construction and packaging, creating possible mismatches between supply and demand.
- Experts identified major research needs: adaptive forest management, better biodiversity metrics, and ways to balance timber harvesting with ecosystem health.

Practical Recommendations

- Prepare for lower conifer supply and explore alternative raw materials, including hardwoods and recycled wood.
- Support innovation in wood products and update standards to enable new uses.
- Invest in research and policy coordination to improve resilience, integrate biodiversity goals, and strengthen circular bioeconomy practices.

Contact Information

Further information or support from the project can be found here.

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