

PRESS RELEASE

The European Forest Institute opens new UK office to strengthen forest governance collaboration

Edinburgh, 3 September 2026 – The European Forest Institute (EFI) and the United Kingdom today marked the opening of EFI's office in Edinburgh.

EFI's Edinburgh office will strengthen engagement with partners across the UK and connect UK expertise with European and international forest networks. It will support collaboration on shared challenges, including climate resilience, sustainable forest management, forest restoration and forest governance.

An event was held today to mark the inauguration of the office, bringing together around 60 participants from national, regional and local government, academia, civil society organisations (CSOs) and international organisations and partners engaged in forest governance and related work.

Maggie Charnley, Head of the International Forests Unit at the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), said: *“Strong forest governance is about ensuring forests are managed sustainably, transparently and in ways that support local communities, biodiversity and climate goals. As pressures on forests grow around the world, the UK office will help connect expertise, evidence and practical experience to support solutions that benefit people, nature and the climate.”*

Dr. Robert Mavsar, Director of the European Forest Institute highlighted: *“EFI has enjoyed strong collaboration with UK institutions and partners for many years. The opening of our UK office marks a new chapter in that relationship, creating new opportunities to connect UK expertise with EFI's European and global networks. By bringing together research, policy and practice, we can strengthen cooperation, promote knowledge exchange, and support forest governance and sustainable forest management in Europe and beyond.”*

The new EFI office hosts the International Forest Governance Hub – a new collaborative platform established to advance inclusive, evidence-based forest governance through policy engagement, applied research, shared learning and strategic partnerships.

With a focus on forest countries, the Hub supports and strengthens country-led efforts to engage more effectively in global policy, trade, finance and market processes. It also promotes learning and exchanges between countries and regions facing increasingly interconnected forest governance challenges.

Mr Charles Karangwa, Head of the International Forest Governance Hub said: *“Linking national forest governance needs with international expertise, the Hub serves as a trusted space where countries and partners can collaborate to identify priorities, exchange experiences and develop solutions tailored to their unique contexts.”*

During the inauguration event, participants explored forest governance issues from UK, European and global perspectives. Discussions considered how stronger governance, better evidence and international cooperation can help forests respond to growing pressures from climate change, biodiversity loss and land-use change.

Edinburgh was chosen to host EFI's UK office for its world-class forestry research, academic and policy communities, internationally engaged institutions, and growing expertise in climate, nature and sustainable development. The office will strengthen links between Scottish, UK, European and international partners, creating new opportunities for collaboration, innovation and evidence-based policymaking.

The office joins EFI's headquarters in Joensuu, Finland, and offices in Barcelona, Bonn, Rome and Kuala Lumpur, and is the first new EFI location since 2022.

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