







15.03.2018

To the Members and member organisations of EFI

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Dear colleagues,

First of all, let me warmly welcome Estonia, who are about to become our new EFI Member Country. Last year three new Member Countries joined EFI (Belgium, Lithuania and Serbia) and this year we started with a very good rhythm.

As our Chair of the Board mentioned on his last letter in January, this year we are celebrating our 25th anniversary and in that respect I would like to share with all of you a video that the European Commissioner for Environment, Mr Karmenu Vella has sent to congratulate of all us: **[please click here to watch it](#)** . During our Annual Conference in Sardinia (26–28 September) I hope to meet many of you to celebrate together our 25-year-old and successful organization.

The first call of our new EFI Network Fund has been a great success. Seventeen proposals were received from our member organizations. The Evaluation Panel, consisting of Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) members and the Heads of EFI programmes, evaluated the scientific quality of the proposals and the Board made the decision to fund five proposals. These cover important topics within our EFI Strategy like climate change adaptation and mitigation, the engagement of forest owners, the perception of the forest-based sector in the bioeconomy and the future of the forest bioeconomy in Eastern Europe. More information can be found on the **[EFI website](#)**.

Finally, I would like to use this opportunity to wish you a happy International Day of Forests on 21 March. This year the focus is on the role of forests for sustainable cities – I recommend you to look out for what EFI has produced for the occasion.

With my best wishes for a creative spring!

Marc Palahí

Director