





Connecting knowledge to action

15 November 2019

To the Members and member organisations of EFI

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Dear Colleagues,

I am delighted to announce that EFI has signed an agreement with the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) for a start-up project to support the establishment of our new Governance Programme, which will be coordinated from our Office in Bonn. The new Head of Programme is **Dr Georg Winkel**, who as you know is currently leading our EFI's Resilience Programme and heading EFI's Bonn Office.

The new Programme is highly strategic for several reasons beyond its own intrinsic scientific relevance. The Programme will be instrumental to increase the internal cohesion of EFI, bringing together expertise from our EU FLEGT and REDD Facilities, our governance scientists and our Network. It will also provide a platform to collaborate with other global international organisations like CIFOR and ICRAF and global networks like IUFRO.

On the topic of global collaboration, I would also like to mention that this week I am in Beijing, China. On 14 November we will host a seminar in Beijing together with the Finnish Embassy, focusing on the topic of China-Europe forest bioeconomy. We aim to bring together representatives from industry, science and policymakers to discuss current China-Europe forest bioeconomy issues and future prospects. This is an important topic because Chinese investments in Europe's bioeconomy are foreseen to continue to surge in the next decade, and circular bioeconomy is a priority in China's national ecological civilization reform masterplan and national commitments on implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. The seminar will also help the preparation of EFI's forthcoming high-level science-policy event in Beijing towards the end of 2020.

Whilst here in China, I have also had the pleasure of signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the National Forestry and Grassland Administration to bring to a new level Europe-China collaboration on forest governance, sustainable forest management, and the development of the bioeconomy. Actions to support a fluent science-policy dialogue on forests will be an important focus of the collaboration. During my visit, I also had a chance to meet the President of China's Academy of Forestry to discuss further cooperation on young forest scientists' capacity building, urban forestry and the future forest bioeconomy.

A Chinese proverb says that "when the winds of change blow, some people build walls, others build windmills". Wishing you an autumn of windmill building!

Marc Palahí