



THINKFOREST

Facilitated by European Forest Institute

European Forest Policy Post-2020: a new EFI report

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The study: why now?

- Emerging trends (*economic, social, environmental, technological etc.*)
- **Many policy instruments** targeted for 2020
- **New paradigms and challenges** => e.g climate movement; bark beetle invasion, Covid19
- **Sectoral targets affect forests**, but difficult to connect

New era of forest policy making after 2020

=> how will this look like across *horizontal* (coordination of topics & objectives) and *vertical* levels (EU and Member States)?



European forest governance

European forest governance post-2020

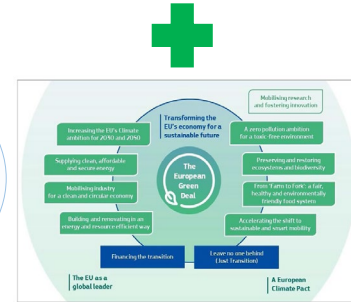
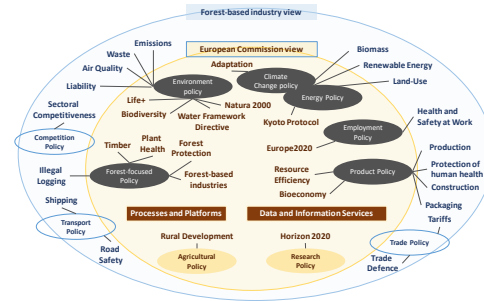


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1. What have we learned including from *other sectors*?
2. What are the *policy integration needs* in the forest-based sector?
3. How could *pathways for forest governance* look like?



What have we learnt? EU forest governance



- **Absence of explicit EU forest competence => multiple policies with little coherence**
- **Priorities in forest governance reflect sectoral priorities => need for policy integration and/or a process through which priorities can be managed**
- **Priority setting on EU and global levels mostly uncoordinated => need to find a shared framework to accommodate interests & solve trade-offs**
- **EU Green Deal can be a game changer => but still unclear whether it will be more inclusive in forest policy**

What have we learnt from other sectors

(EU agriculture, energy, and water policies)

- **No radical changes: incremental adjustments** more likely
- **Small changes:** only in case of major events (which we currently have)
- **Strengthening cross-sectoral policy integration** often does not get beyond symbolic politics
- **Sustained political commitments and leadership needed to advance policy integration** or the adoption of new instruments and practices (likely not from one sector alone)

New Pathways for the Future?

More policy
integration across
sectors?

Better coordination
between EU and
MS?

New modes of
public and private
initiatives?



More integration between EU and Member States

- **A strong EU forest policy based on multilevel integration**
 - + a stronger political role of forests in the EU context
 - + more strategic, coordinated, and proactive forest policy-making (e.g. in a strong Forest Strategy)
 - + dedicated funding instruments for forest development
 - MS would be hesitant to give up power, if goals are contradicting
 - uneven view on the future role of forests across EU
 - legally Binding Agreement not likely to happen

More integration across policy sectors

- **A cross-sectoral forest policy framework e.g. in a circular bioeconomy that deliberates all forest goods and services**
 - + political clarification on contradicting visions on forest resources
 - + comprehensive approach on diversification of the sector
 - + different coalitions possible for multi-sectoral goals
 - might lead to optimisation approaches in EU forest use
 - this in turn, might invoke overregulation of forests
 - forest expertise small to equally contribute

More cooperation between actors (public and private)

- **Mechanisms to involve governmental, business and societal actors in political decision-making**
 - + new inputs to cooperation may ‘fast track’ policy innovation
 - + close connection to societal trends and public perceptions
 - + public-private partnerships attractive for investors
 - replacing democratically elected governance systems
 - attracts cherry-picking of partnerships
 - might favour high-capacity companies or fail to connect to deliberate non-compliers

Policy implications

- Forest policy post 2020 will be a **combination of different pathways**
- Challenges for EU forest policymaking linked to several policy domains
-> require new modes of cooperative cross-sectoral governance
- **Defining joint topics** on forests key to fostering forest policy integration
- Green Deal might be a strong trigger for forest policy integration, but has to find **synergies and minimize trade-offs**

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