

THE STATEMENT OF THE SOCIOECONOMIC ORGANIZATIONS GROUP
for the 7th FOREST EUROPE Ministerial Conference
Madrid, 20 October 2015

The FOREST EUROPE observer organizations included in the Socioeconomic Organizations Group are:

- Association Internationale Forêts Méditerranéennes (AIFM)
- Council of European Foresters (CEF)
- Union of European Foresters (UEF)
- Forest Management Board, Kosovo (FMB)

The 7th Ministerial Conference is a very important event for the European forestry sector to demonstrate that forests are the centre of the green economy in each European country, to analyze the possibilities of protecting the forests in a changing environment and to present global challenges for forestry sector at European level and in each European country.

The future of European forests, their preservation and sustainable development, represent the future of the next generations and the future of Europe.

To find solutions to current and future challenges of European forests in a changing environment, it is required the cooperation of European institutions, of the governments of European countries, of the national forest authorities with the environmental organizations, forest owners' organizations, foresters' organizations, forestry investment banks, forestry student associations and with the scientific forestry community and more generally with relevant representatives of the civil society and stakeholders.

In this regard, the Socioeconomic Organizations Group proposes to the 7th Ministerial Conference of Forest Europe:

- *The role, activity and the expertise of the foresters, stakeholders, representatives of the civil society, of the regional, national or international foresters' organizations in forestry sector must be taken into account when developing forest strategies and forest policies at national and international level to ensure sustainable forest management of all forests.*

- *The European foresters' proposals to the national and international institutions and authorities are to ensure sustainable forest management to all the forests and to consider equally the ecological, social and economic functions of forests.*

- *Forestry sector, through sustainable forest management, can provide jobs for all socio-economic categories who work in this sector, helping to eradicate the poverty of the population in this area.*

- *Education and forestry research should be strengthened through forest strategy at national and international level, given their contribution to the future of forests and the life.*

The Socioeconomic Organizations Group appreciates the achievements of the FOREST EUROPE process and considers the FOREST EUROPE process an assurance of the future of the European forests.

The 25 years of FOREST EUROPE activity is an acknowledgment of the role and importance of forests in Europe and this process should continue.