



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL
ENVIRONMENT
Directorate D - Natural Capital
ENV.D.1 - Land Use & Management

Ares
Brussels,

Janos Halmagy, President, Council
of European Foresters (CEF)

Marian Stoicescu, President,
European Forestry Academic
Society (EFAS)
conf.consilva@gmail.com

Dear Mr. Halmagy, Dear Mr. Stoicescu,

Thank you very much for your message of 6 March 2020 addressed to the Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries Virginijus Sinkevicius, who asked me to reply on his behalf.

The Commission is fully aware of the importance of forests and the forest-based sector for reaching climate neutrality by 2050 and for achieving the objectives and priorities of the European Green Deal¹. In particular, as recently announced in the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030², the Commission recognises that, in addition to the need to define, map, monitor and strictly protect all the EU's remaining primary and old-growth forests, EU forests must improve, both in quality and in quantity, for the EU to reach climate neutrality and a healthy and biodiverse environment.

Concerning your proposal for setting up a Directorate General for forests within the Commission, the Commission works in a collegial manner. Forests are dealt with in a coordinated manner by the concerned services.

I take note of your interest in participating to the elaboration of European forestry strategies and policies. The adoption of the new EU Forest Strategy by the Commission is planned for March 2021. A public consultation will be open in the coming months. I invite you to submit your proposals during the public consultation period. I take this opportunity to invite you to participate to the currently on-going public consultation on

¹ *COM (2019) 640 final*

² *COM (2020) 380 final*

the future European Adaptation Strategy³, which is also very relevant for the forest domain.

The active involvement of all stakeholders is essential. I therefore thank you and encourage you and your members to continue engaging in the implementation of the recently adopted Biodiversity strategy, which includes a number of relevant actions for forests.

Yours sincerely

Claudia OLAZÁBAL
Head of Unit

• ³ <https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12381-EU-Strategy-on-Adaptation-to-Climate-Change/public-consultation>