



Update on EU legislation and policies pertinent to Integrative Forest Management

*11th Annual Meeting of the European Integrate Network
08th-10 October 2025 Dublin, Ireland*

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IFM EU policy building blocks: Agenda Setting

Biodiversity Strategy

The EU must strictly protect all remaining primary and old-growth forests and increase the quantity, quality and resilience of its forests. To retain their function for both biodiversity and climate, all forests need to be preserved in good health. More resilient forests can support a more resilient economy.

Forest Strategy

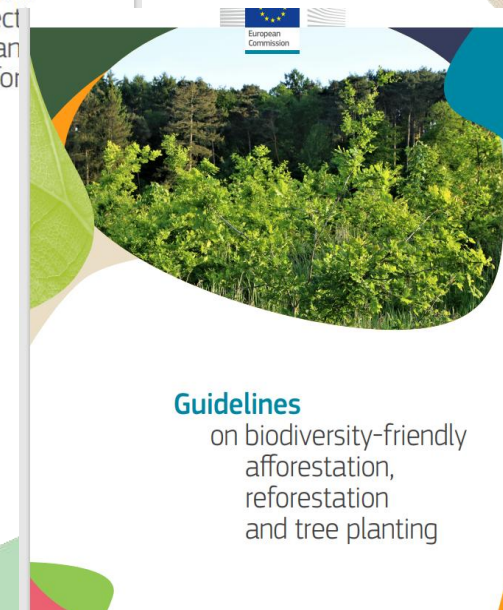
To improve forest resilience and adaptation, it is necessary to increasingly protect and restore forest biodiversity and adopt biodiversity-friendly forest management practices. This is also a great economic opportunity, provided forest owners and managers are properly supported in the transition.

- **Review in prep. regarding the need for further action**



IFM EU policy building blocks: Framing

- Voluntary guidelines to strengthen biodiversity positive forest management
 - Continuous promotion
- Nature Restoration Regulation including dedicated forest targets and action
 - National restoration plans in preparation
- Taxonomy review including DNSH criteria for forest activities in the Climate Delegated Act (DA)
 - Public consultation in Q1 2026
 - Revised DA in Q2 2026



IFM EU policy building blocks: Incentives

- Promotion of Payment Schemes for Forest Ecosystem Services (PFES)
 - Guidance on development of public and private PFES schemes in 2023
 - Good practice & lessons learned report in 2025
 - State Aid Rules with 20% top-up of eligible costs for biodiversity, climate, water or soil-related services provided
- Carbon Removal and Carbon Farming Regulation (CRCF)
 - Mandatory biodiversity and ecosystem co-benefits for carbon farming
 - Forest methodologies (Afforestation and Management) in prep.
- Closer to Nature Forestry (CNF) Certification
- Nature Credits



Brussels, 27.7.2023
SWD(2023) 285 final

COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT

Guidance on the Development of Public and Private Payment Schemes for Forest Ecosystem Services



Voluntary certification for CNF Management

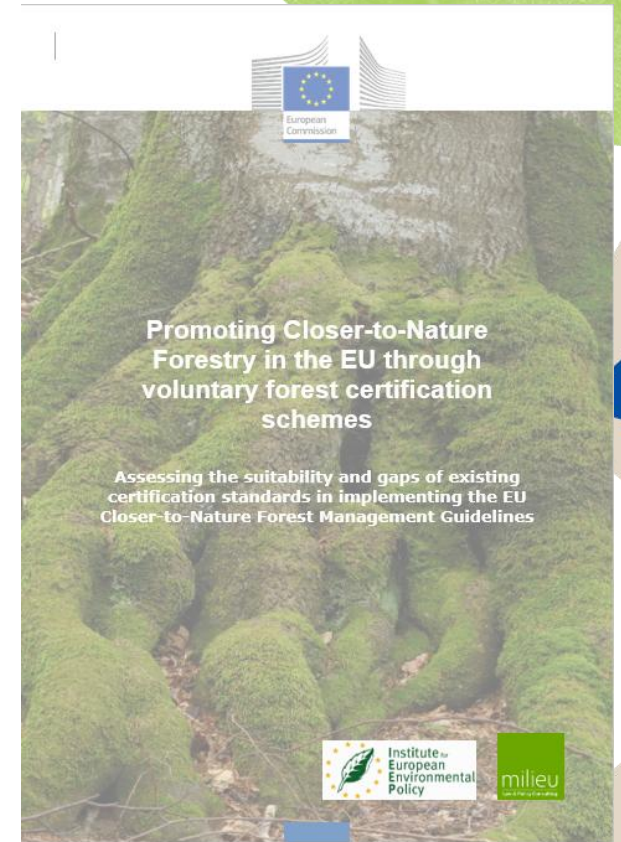
EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030:

*“To **increase the quantity** of forests and **improve their health and resilience**” [....] **“biodiversity-friendly forestry practices** such as closer to nature forestry should be further developed.”*

New EU Forest Strategy for 2030:

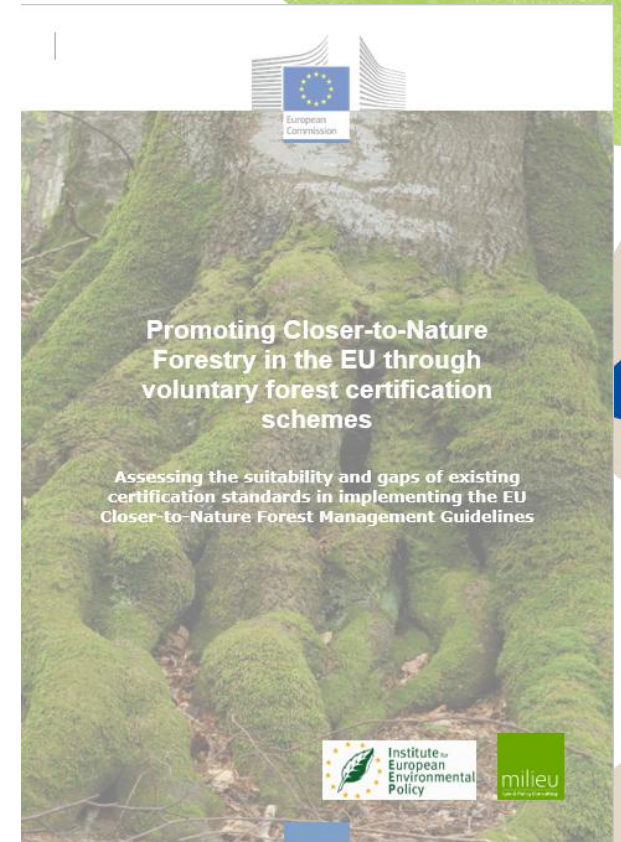
*“The **Commission** will **develop a definition and adopt guidelines** for closer-to-nature-forestry practices **and develop a voluntary** closer-to-nature **certification scheme.**”*

- Study on certification landscape and options
- Dedicated webinar, 14 March 2025
- Exchanges with stakeholders
- Monitoring of private sector developments



Study key results & main messages

- Existing certification “partly” aligned with CNF
- Emerging CCF schemes closest aligned with CNF
- A graded approach could drive stepwise improvements:
 - indicator-based system (management intensity or naturalness)
 - multiple indicator-based system (several indicators converting into a final grade)
- 3 Pathways for the Commission to consider:
 - Collaboration with existing certification schemes to integrate CNF objectives and intervention tools
 - Stand-alone voluntary EU-level certification scheme for CNF
 - Voluntary EU standard for certifying existing certification schemes



Next steps

Second study: To assist in developing rules and standards for biodiversity-focused voluntary forest certification schemes and nature credits

Four distinct sub-tasks:

1. What does CNF management look like in measurable terms?
2. How can we measure meaningful improvement from a given baseline?
3. Which certification model best supports this system in practice?
4. How can existing instruments support a robust and credible certification system?



Roadmap towards Nature Credits

Introduction

1. The economic and business case for nature-positive action

2. Nature credits

3. Learning from and building on experience with carbon markets

4. Developing nature credits

Conclusion

2025: Set up an expert group to gather expertise and share best practices.

2025–2026: Conduct EU-wide assessment of nature credit supply and demand.

2025–2026: Involve expert group to advise on fostering nature credit markets.

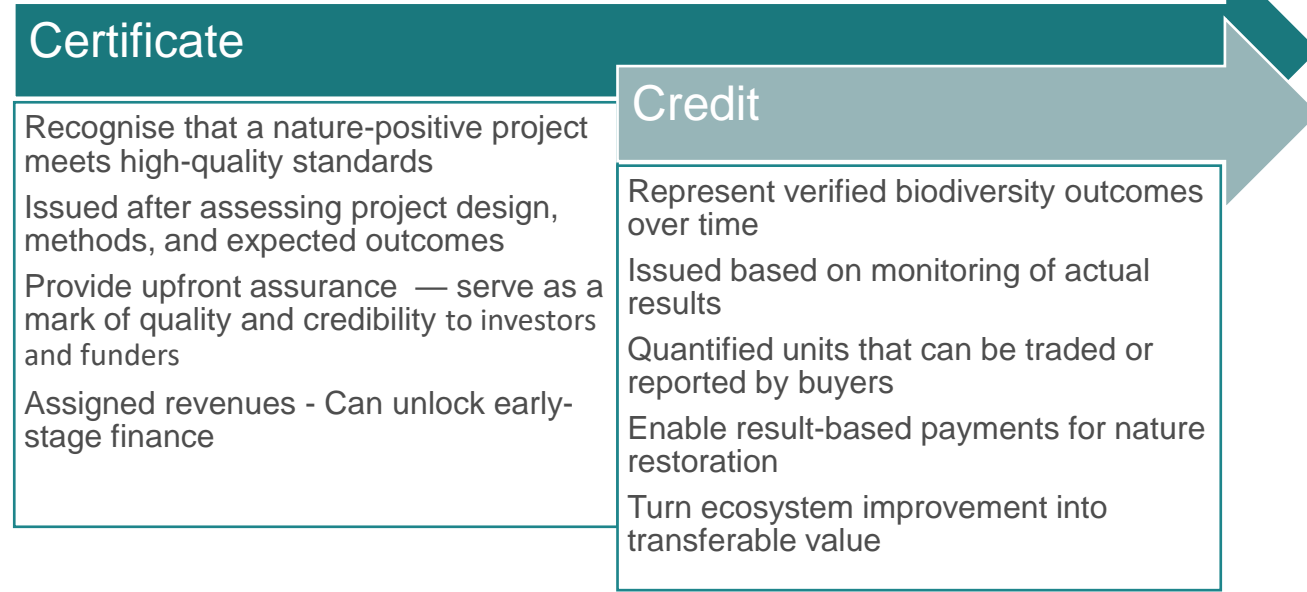
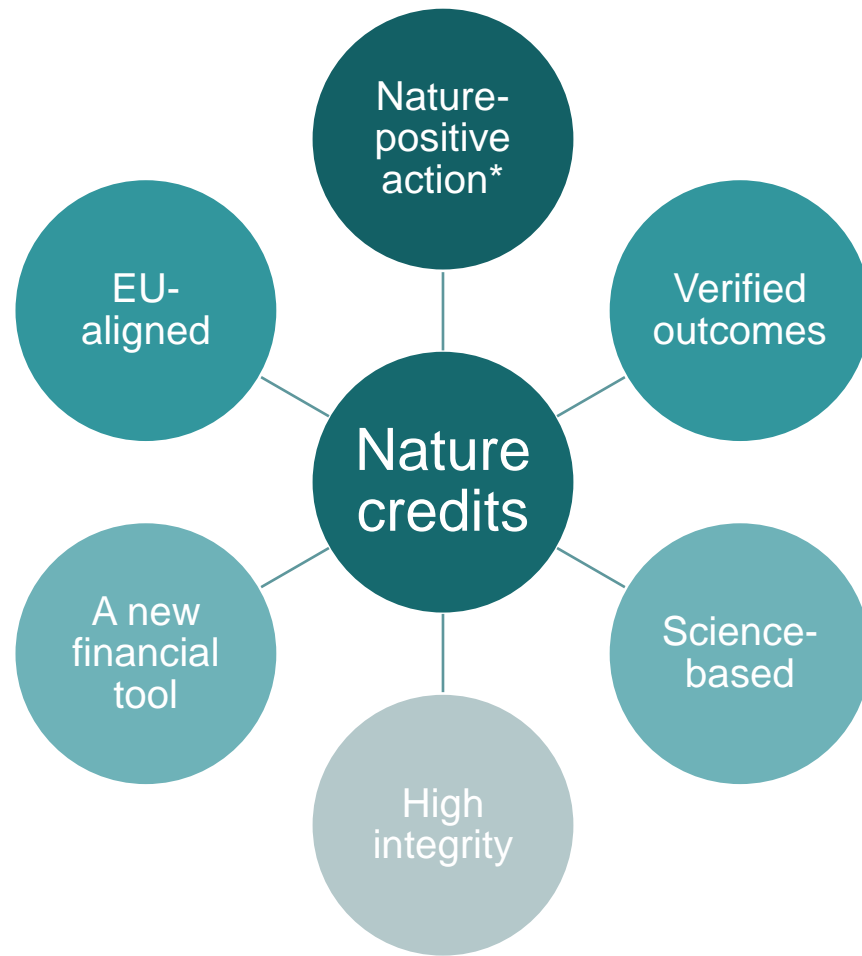
2025–2026: Engage internationally, including preparations for CBD COP 17.

2025–2027: Launch a pilot funding program, linked to innovation and competitiveness.

2026: Adopt first CRCF carbon farming methods with biodiversity co-benefits.

Mid-2026: Consult expert group on criteria and methodologies for nature credits.

What are nature credits?



Nature credits represent an investment into nature-positive actions by a company, a financial institution, a public entity or a citizen, which in return can benefit from cleaner ecosystems, risk reduction, improved reputation and higher social acceptability for its projects. Those nature-positive actions can be valued and certified by an independent organisation, thus providing credibility to investors sponsoring the action through nature credits. The actions supported by nature credits can take different forms; some examples in the EU include restoring wetlands or extending forest areas.

[Questions and answers on Nature Credits Roadmap](#)

* Beyond mitigation hierarchy and individual legal obligations

Business cases identified

Nature-positive models build long-term value

- Create differentiation and competitive advantage

Risk management is a key driver

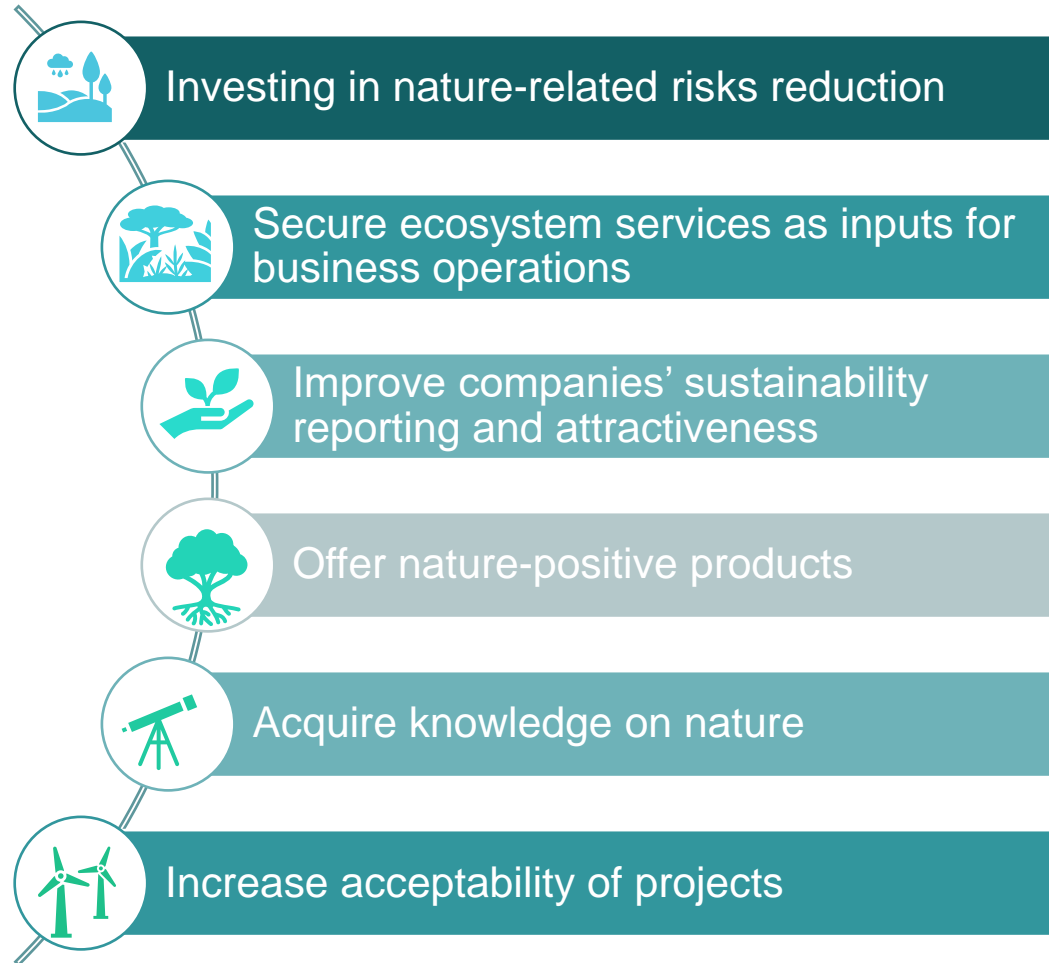
- Financial institutions are adapting their models
- Nature loss is now seen as a systemic financial risk
- Climate-nature integration is gaining ground

Reporting frameworks reinforce demand

- CSRD requires biodiversity materiality assessments
- SFDR asks funds to disclose nature-related risks
- Taxonomy includes biodiversity criteria and activities

Companies explore new revenue models

- Regenerative agriculture and agroecology
- Insurance-linked nature investments
- Nature-positive investments to increase acceptability



Carbon credits and nature credits

The EU Carbon Removals Certification Framework (CRCF)

- Quality criteria and certification rules
- Mandates biodiversity and ecosystem co-benefits for carbon farming
- Introduces a two-step approach
- A precedent for other credit schemes

Not eligible



~~Monoculture plantation~~

Conducive to carbon credits



Conversion to mixed planted forests



Biodiversity-friendly afforestation/
Closer to nature forestry

Conducive to nature credits



Continuation of old-growth forest protection



Conservation and restoration of dry ecosystems

Pilot and exploratory projects

Pilots to test on ground from onset

- Wetlands in France: public-sector led with basin-level approach
- Forests in Estonia: private-led, multistakeholder governance
- Restore/Peru: international partnership, including to test how EU companies can achieve bilateral disclosures



[French wetlands](#)



[Estonian forests](#)



[Restore/Peru](#)



[Peatland Finance Ireland](#)



[CDC Biodiversité](#)



[Merlin](#)



[Restcoast](#)



[Superb](#)



[Waterlands](#)



[Biofin](#)

Green Assist, LIFE, Horizon Europe, Interreg, EIC, EIB

- Provide technical and financial guidance
- Reduce entry barriers for early actors
- Lessons inform broader EU practice



[LEON](#)



[Artemis](#)



[BiodivCrew](#)



[Metamorphosis](#)



[Olivares Vivo](#)

Monitoring, reporting and verification

- Geospatial and remote sensing tools
- Data integration with EU monitoring systems



[Biorgest](#)



[B4B](#)



[Pollinaction](#)



[Adaptablues](#)



[3Bee](#)



IFM EU policy building blocks: Monitoring

Proposal for a Regulation on a monitoring framework for resilient European forests

- **Complete and timely** sharing of **harmonised** ground level data, including plot level data, based on National Forest Inventories
 - Stand structure, species diversity, growing stock, etc.
- Standardised Copernicus maps based on remote sensing of key forest indicators (tree cover density, forest type, forest fires, forest disturbances)
- **An enhanced cooperation** with MS to produce new and improved Copernicus datasets by **combining ground-based data with satellite data**
 - Opportunity especially for mapping of forest disturbances

IFM EU policy building blocks: Monitoring

FML current status

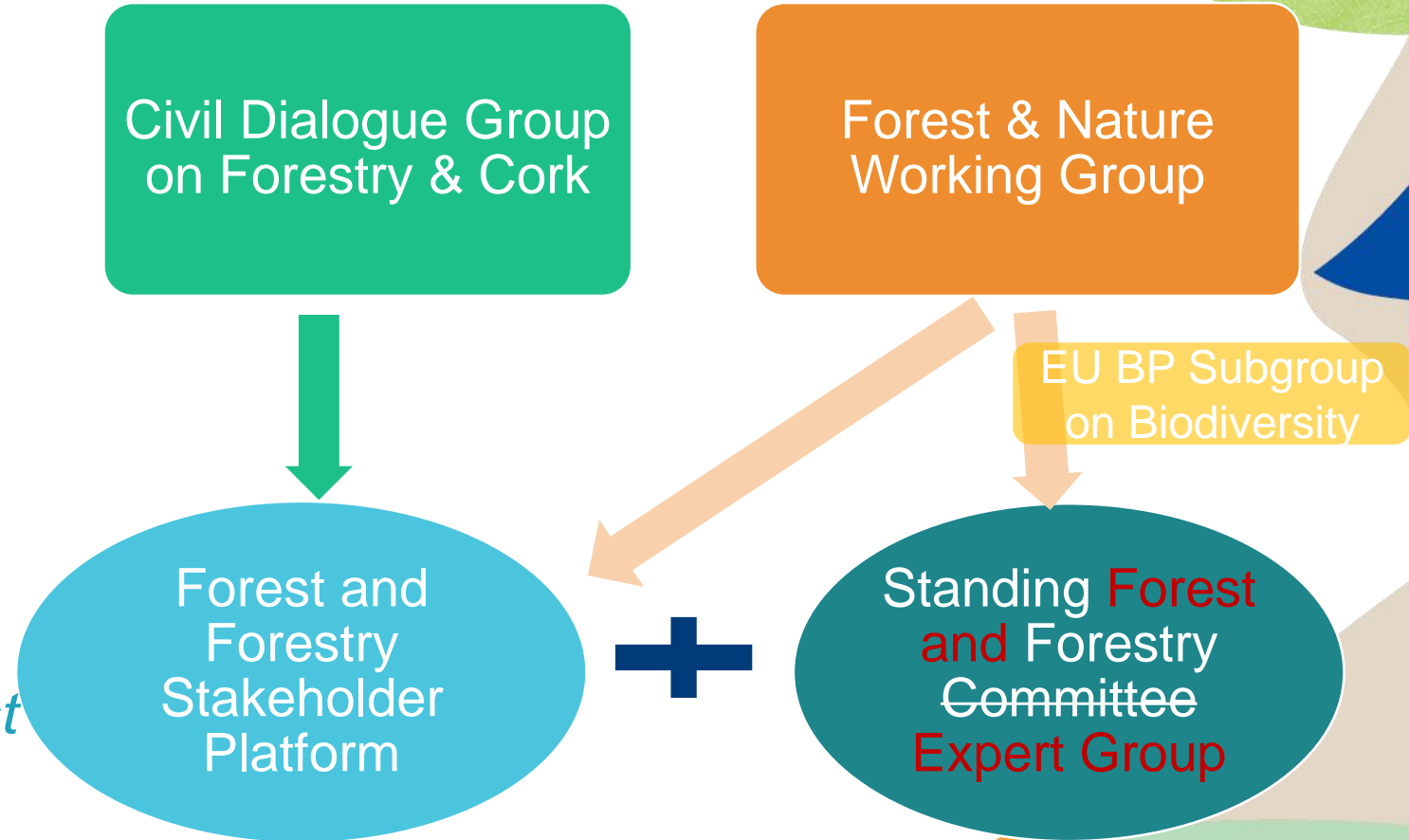
- **Council's General Approach** (=position of Member States) **deleted all satellite-based monitoring** as well as proposal to develop jointly new approaches to monitoring of natural disturbances other than fire
- The Commission announced that it **might withdraw the proposal** if the position is confirmed by the Parliament
- **Parliament** has **not yet adopted a position** (expected October 2025). ENVI/AGRI committee **rejected the proposal** on 23 September 2025



IFM EU policy building blocks: Governance

“An EU Forest Governance System, that promotes policy coherence and synergies, reflecting all objectives of the Forest Strategy and their interlinkages.”

“An inclusive space for Member States, forest owners and managers, industry, academia and civil society to discuss forest policy matters, while avoiding overlapping structures.”



IFM EU policy building blocks: Governance

State of Play

- Forest & Forestry Stakeholder Platform
 - Established in 2024
 - Next meeting 13 November 2025
- Amendment of the Standing Forestry Committee
 - In co-decision -1st reading
 - General Approach by the Council adopted at June Council 2024
 - The Commission announced that it might withdraw the proposal if the position is confirmed by the Parliament
 - Parliament has not yet adopted a position (expected October 2025) ENVI/AGRI committee report adopted on 23 September 2025
- EUBP Sub-group on Forest Biodiversity
 - Established October 2025
 - 1st meeting November 2025 (tbc)





Thank you for your attention

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