



Frans Timmermans
Executive Vice-President
of the European Commission

Janusz Wojciechowski
Member of the European Commission

Virginijus Sinkevičius
Member of the European Commission

Brussels, 13. 09. 2021

Dear Minister,

Thank you for your letter outlining the position of Poland with respect to the EU forest strategy post-2020.

The Commission shares your views on the importance of forests for Europe's transition to a modern, climate neutral economy that halts and reverses biodiversity loss. For the achievement of the European Green Deal objectives, a holistic approach to forests is necessary.

The new EU forest strategy was adopted on 14 July and will foster the multi-functional character of forests, in particular their importance for biodiversity and climate, for the bioeconomy and their role for the communities that depend on them. As part of this, the strategy recognises the importance of enhancing sustainable forest management and highlights practices that increase forests' resilience and promote an efficient management of forest resources.

The Commission is committed to supporting livelihoods and income for forest owners, managers and rural communities, in particular through a sustainable wood and non-wood forest-based bioeconomy, as well as through developing and promoting sources of revenues related to the provision of ecosystem services such as climate mitigation, biodiversity preservation and water regulation.

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Mr Michał Kurtyka
Minister of Climate and Environment
Poland

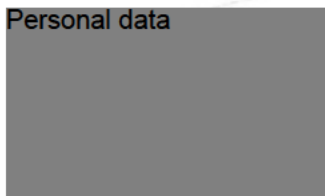
The Commission also acknowledges the importance of considering the characteristics of different forests and country-specific features and challenges when addressing topics such as sustainable forest management, close to nature forestry or the strict protection of certain forests. As stated in the EU biodiversity strategy for 2030, all remaining EU primary and old-growth forests should be strictly protected. Recent studies¹ have further strengthened the evidence base for the urgent need to map and strictly protect these forests.

The Commission also proposes to strengthen the forest planning, monitoring and governance system, to better reflect the multiple functions and policies relevant to forests and to enhance collaborative, cross-border and cross-sectoral research, policy-making and knowledge sharing.

We look forward to our cooperation on the implementation of the new EU forest strategy post-2020, and we thank you, again, for your interest and most useful views and input.

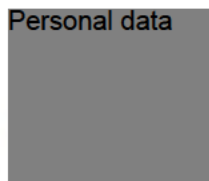
Yours faithfully,

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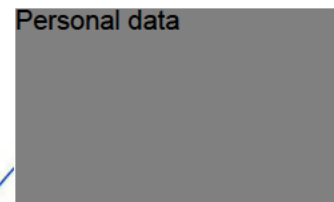
Frans Timmermans

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¹ <https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC124671>; and https://efi.int/sites/default/files/images/resilience/OLD-GROWTH%20FORESTS_28.06.21.pdf

