
OWN INITIATIVE OPINION
of the Committee of the Regions
on
FOREST POLICY:
THE 20/20/20 TARGETS

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Committee of The Regions – Commission for Natural Resources (NAT)

Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe

President of Commision for Enviroment Protection Water Management and Energy

Saving of the Kujawsko-Pomorskie Regional Assembly

The Committee of the Regions

The Committee of the Regions (established in 1994) is the political assembly that enables the authorities chosen the closest to the European citizens to have their say on EU legislation and policy development.

The Treaties oblige the Commission, the Parliament and the Council to consult the regional and local representatives assembled in the CoR whenever new proposals are made in areas that affect the regional or local level.

The CoR's work is organised in six permanent Comissions. Their main task is to examine and discuss proposals made by the European Commission and prepare official opinions on key issues.

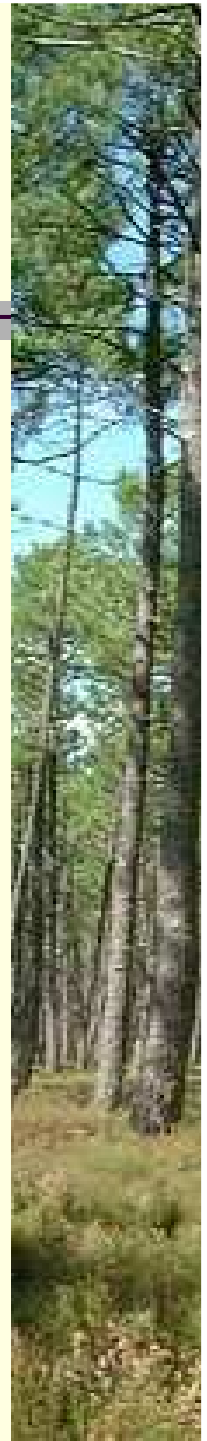


The own initiative opinion of the CoR

- **Title:** Towards an EU forest policy with a particular focus on the 20-20-20 targets
- **Rapporteur:** Adam Banaszak (PL/UEN-EA)
- **Expert:** Roman Dobrzyński
- **Adopted by Commission for Sustainable Development (DEVE):** 19 October 2009
- **Adopted in plenary session CoR:** 4 December 2009

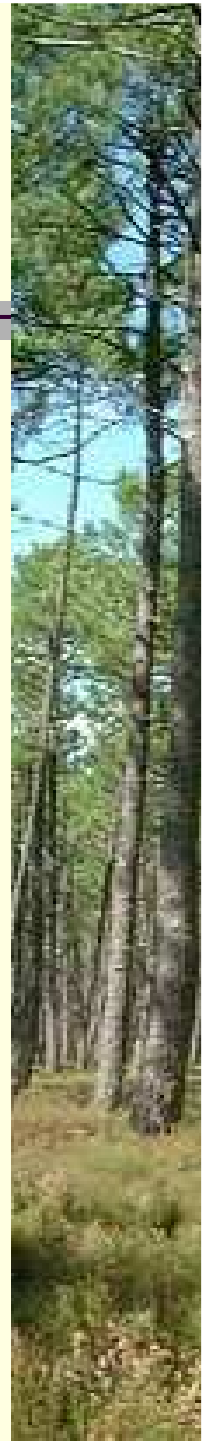
Key recommendations of the CoR

- INCREASE of forest biomass share used in the energy production and as a raw material, including plantations of fast growing trees.
- INCREASE in the amount of energy woods.
- PROVIDING of information and training courses for forest owners on the opportunities offered by forestry which is run in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.
- SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH and INITIATIVES aimed at developing modern timber harvesting and production technologies which have a smaller environmental impact than traditional methods.
- PROMOTING multifunctional forestry.
- PARTICIPATION of local and regional authorities in decision – making on the EU’s forestry policy.



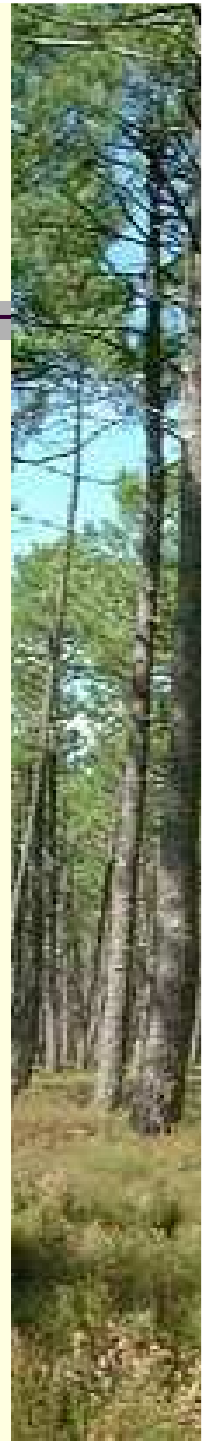
The most effective methods of harnessing biomass for energy purposes

- EU-level support for the planting of fast-growing trees cultivated in accordance with environmentally sustainable methods for energy purposes;
- the further promotion of the use of forest biomass for energy generation and for such action to be supported by the Standing Forestry Committee;
- limit the proportion of harvested biomass represented by brushwood and foliage;
- CoR requests the Member States to ensure that their tax policy does not treat biofuels unfavourably in relation to fossil fuels.



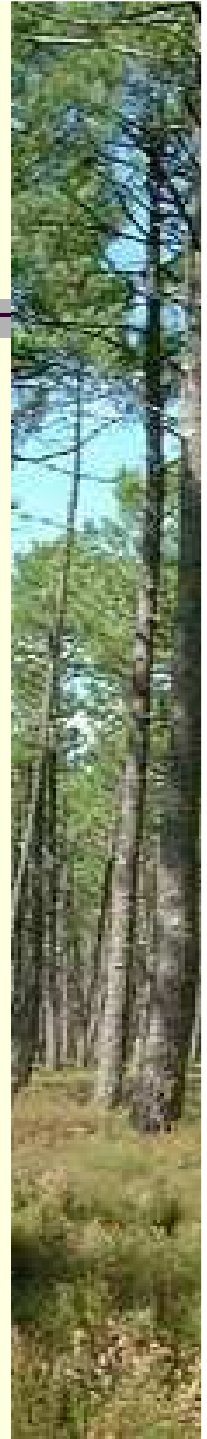
Recommended areas of action for the 2007-2011 Action Plan

- SERIES of EU activities and political initiatives obliging the Member States to bring their national forestry policies into line with EU objectives.
- SUPPORTING Member States and regions which introduce sustainable forestry policies which mitigate climate change.
- THE WIDESPREAD PROMOTION of wood produce.
- SETTING UP a body responsible for the EU's forestry policy, equipped with the necessary financial instruments.



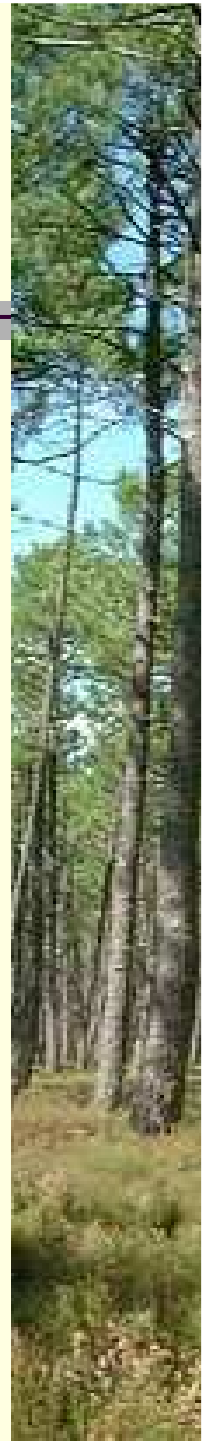
Achieving the objectives set through education

- CoR is in favour of supporting educational and information campaigns on environmental protection but notes that not enough has been done to raise public awareness of the advantages of sustainable forestry
- CoR recommends stepping up support for educational and information programmes – particularly those targeting both forest owners and forest managers.



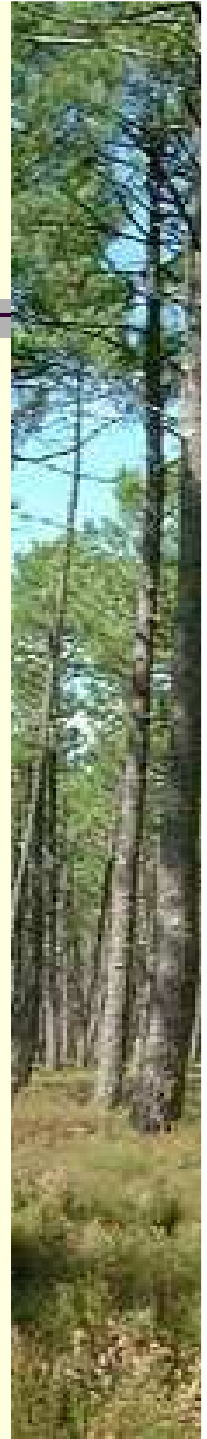
Scientific support as a basic condition for achieving the objectives set

- MODIFICATION of practices directly linked to forest cultivation, through the selection of tree species appropriate for a given locality, and restoring types of forests that provide greater flexibility in the face of climate change.
- SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH INITIATIVES exploring the energy potential of various tree species and their methods of cultivation, their adaptability to different climatic and geographical conditions and genetic improvement.



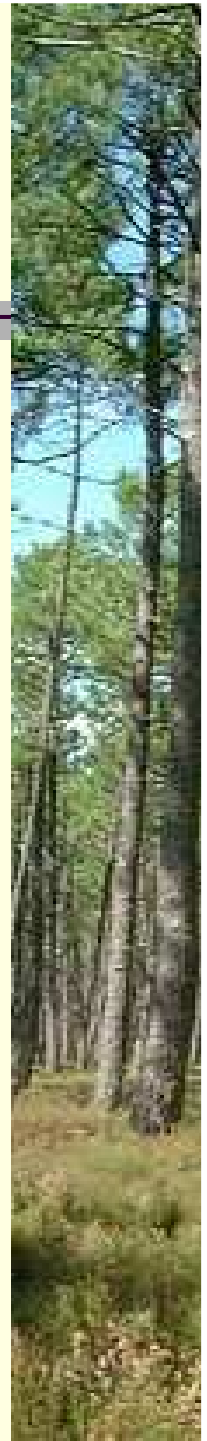
Certification as part of sustainable forestry

CoR supports certification to ensure the proper management of forest areas and prevent the introduction onto the market of timber of unknown origin, but also stresses the management role that local and regional authorities can play



Economic activity related to forest biodiversity and multifunctionality

Bearing in mind that greater biodiversity strengthens the resistance of forests, which makes it possible to harness much more of the potential of such habitats, notes the importance of giving priority to such courses of action (broadening biodiversity), taking due account of the multifunctionality of forests and their sustainable development and to this end suggests that new plantations are managed in accordance with environmental sustainability principles to protect soils, plants and animal life.



The Committee of the Regions

calls on the Member States, and the European Union as a whole, to make use of the opportunity which the International Year of Forests in 2011 provides to take a quantum leap forward in the forestry and timber sector.



A photograph of a forest with tall trees and green grass. The trees are mostly deciduous with some evergreens. The ground is covered in green grass and some fallen branches. The sky is blue with some light clouds.

Thank you for your attention