



# Newsletter ERA-NET Sumforest

Tackling the Challenges in the Implementation of Sustainable and Multifunctional Forestry through enhanced Research Coordination for Policy Decisions

## Sumforest has started

*The significance of forests in Europe is increasing: The growing bioeconomy sector demands more sustainable bio-based raw materials from forests and the increasing acceptance and insights of forests as important CO<sub>2</sub> absorbers, and thus a regulating factor in the climate change challenge are the driving forces.*

The ERA-NET Sumforest takes its place in this important picture, realizing the strong need for a research based forest management, supporting a common European forest policy. The research coordination through this ERA-NET is a strategic grip to contribute to a knowledge-based regional and national forest management and assist in the development of well coordinated and coherent forest-related policies at EU, international and national levels. The ERA-NET will promote the

sustainable management and use of forests and their multiple goods and services.

With its kick off meeting With its kick off meeting held at the Austrian Research and Training Centre for Forests (BFW) in Vienna on 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> February 2014, Sumforest has officially started.

Sumforest will play a crucial role in harmonising existing and future research programmes and supporting policy decisions relevant to the topic of sustainable forest management and multifunctional forestry.

Its overall aim is it to build a European forest research area which promotes European-scale research as basis for sound forest management and policy-making. Cooperation with Russia and other eastern partnership countries will be established, with the aim of identifying common research priorities and initiatives.

See more details on [page 2](#)



## Upcoming events

### Nov 19, 2014 – Kazan, Russia

**Sustainable forest management – research capacities and priorities EU-Russia workshop organized in the frame of the EU-Russia Year of Science**

The objective is to discuss and share views on potentials to increase cooperation and setting joint priorities in research needs in the field of sustainable forest management in EU and Russia and the Eastern partnership countries. Participation will be based on invitations.

Further information:

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Vladimir Vorfolomeev ([vorfolomeevv@mail.ru](mailto:vorfolomeevv@mail.ru))



### Dec 2nd, 2014 – Brussel, Belgium

**Interaction with and identification of information needs from and for forest policy makers**

A foresight workshop is organised with European forest policy makers, scientists and key stakeholders from the Stakeholder Advisory Group. The aim is to carry out a wide-angle foresight exercise on the future impacts of the existing and emerging forest related policy framework as regards sustainable forest management and multifunctional forestry.

Further information:

Marc Palahi ([marc.palahi@efi.int](mailto:marc.palahi@efi.int))

Note that this foresight workshop is held in conjunction with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sumforest steering committee meeting and the 3<sup>rd</sup> management committee meeting.



From the kick-off meeting in Vienna in February. Sumforest brings together 23 key actors from 15 EU member states (AT, DE, ES, FI, FR, GR, IE, IT, LT, LV, PL, SE, SI, SK, UK), 3 associated states (NO, CH, FYROM), and 2 international institutions (EFI, SNS)

## Context

The important climatic, environmental, socio-economic and land-use changes taking place at global, regional and local levels, pose new challenges for meeting the multifunctional demands on European forest resources, and for their sustainable management. In the European Union the formulation of forest policies is in the competence of the Member States and although the Treaties of the EU make no provision for a common forest policy there are a high number of EU policies and directives affecting European forests and the forest-based sector. Thus the current forest policy environment is fragmented, complex and sometimes contradictory. Furthermore, European forests consist of a wide diversity of forest ecosystems and tree species which provide different goods and services that are affected differently by climate and land-use changes.

In this complex context, research-based information and knowledge should be the basis for developing adaptive management tools and models, new innovation frameworks and coherent policies to ensure implementation of sustainable forest management and thus the multifunctional role of European forests.

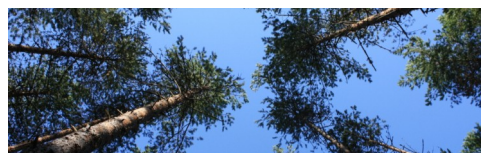
European collaboration and coordination in forest research has been increasing since the late 1990s through the EU Research Framework Programmes. However, European forest research is still rather fragmented and enhanced cooperation and coordination of research activities is urgently needed.

## Objectives and expected impacts of Sumforest

The ERA-NET Sumforest aims to reduce existing fragmentation and maximise the impact of research activities on sustainable forest management and multifunctional forestry in Europe.

### Main objectives and expected impacts:

1. Improve coordination of national as well as EU relevant research: The mapping of existing research, the promotion of information exchange activities and the joint development of a vision and a strategic research agenda among Sumforest partners and stakeholders.
2. Critical mass and better use of limited resources: The building of a critical mass of



## ERA-NET Sumforest partners and observers



The Sumforest partners represent 18 countries in Europe and 23 funding organisations. In addition there are 9 European observers of which four Russian Universities and a Russian State Forest Technical Academy. *For partners and observers lists, see [page 4](#).*

research capacity and research knowledge within the selected areas will be addressed through clustering of national research programmes as well as joint strategic activities involving the leading forest research organizations in Europe.

3. New knowledge generation and innovation: Sumforest will be instrumental in creating a mutual understanding on sustainable forest management and multifunctional forestry, providing a solid basis for policy decisions in the framework of the Europe 2020 Strategy and of the new EU Forestry Strategy. The ERA-NET will establish innovative and integrated joint research efforts to efficiently address forestry challenges in an interdisciplinary and inter-sectorial way. Private and public forest owners associations (CEPF and EUSTAFOR) as well as the Forest based Sector Technology Platform (FTP) and Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) will participate in Sumforest activities. This will ensure that Sumforest research activities take innovation aspects into account.

4. Long term contribution to structuring the European Research Area: In order to jointly develop strategic activities on areas of common relevance Sumforest will put special emphasis in maximising synergies with other ERA-NETs, Joint Programming Initiatives, as well as FP7 projects, COST Actions, European Innovation Partnerships and IUFRO.

5. A more coherent forest-related policy framework: Sumforest will (i) build a better understanding of what and how existing EU policies, in areas such as agriculture and rural

development, environment, industry, trade, energy, climate change, water and transport, have an impact in sustainable forest management and multifunctional forestry; (ii) generate new scientific knowledge to better understand possible trade-offs and consequences of existing policies affecting European forests as well as (iii) generate the appropriate interdisciplinary research knowledge to support the implementation of the new EU Forestry Strategy and Europe 2020 targets with special emphasis on their challenges and opportunities for sustainable forest management and multifunctional forestry.

6. Internationalising European forest research: Sumforest will be instrumental in implementing the existing EU Neighbourhood policies and partnerships by facilitating the opening up of the European Research Area, the Eastern Partnership and Russia as well as to Mediterranean partner countries (via cooperation with FORESTERRA) and the Balkan countries. A main strategic focus of Sumforest will be in strengthening scientific cooperation with Russia.

Sumforest is coordinated by the Austrian Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management. The total project budget accounts for 2, 17 Million €, thereof 2 Million € funded by the European Commission by means of FP 7. The project period comprises 48 month (2014-2017).

The Sumforest website:

<https://www.Sumforest.org/>



## Interview with Liisa Saarenmaa from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MMM) by Inga Böderker from Nordic Forest Research (SNS)



***Sustainable Forest Management has been a long lasting issue in forestry and in forest research in Finland. We want to learn from other countries' experiences and participate in future common research calls. These are our main reasons for joining Sumforest says Liisa Saarenmaa (LS) from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in Finland in this interview with Inga Böderker (IB) from Nordic Forest Research.***

*IB: What are the main reasons for Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in Finland for joining Sumforest?*

LS: Finland was one of the countries that participated when the ERA-NET instrument was established. WoodWisdom ERA-NET was the first ERA-NET, in which the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry was a partner. WoodWisdom has been very successful and for Finland it gave a fruitful opportunity to deepen research collaboration in forest sector issues with other European countries. When the idea of Sumforest came out, it was pretty clear that it is an ERA-NET where Finland likes to be a partner.

*IB: What are the main objectives for the Ministry concerning research?*

LS: Networking with other research financiers is important for the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. The Forest Research Institute Metla under the

Ministry is one of the largest forest research institutes in Europe. As a small country Finland wants to share views and ideas of future research needs with partners outside the country. The ERA-NET instrument offers a unique platform to meet the important parties conducting forest research. Our objective is to work hard to find mutually interesting research themes and participate as financier in the coming calls.

*IB: What is the Finnish view on the EU Forest Policy?*

LS: Finland is not so enthusiastic on the idea of having common forest policy in



the EU, but we clearly recognize the need for more intensive collaboration between the Member States in order to have a stronger impact on the policies outside forest policy, which have an impact on the forest sector.

*IB: What is your view on the new EU Forest Strategy? (according to [http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/forest/strategy/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/forest/strategy/index_en.htm))*

LS: We see the Forest Strategy as an instrument through which the Member States can influence on European Forest Policy, without creating a common forest policy. Finland sees that the role of the

Standing Forest Committee should be strengthened to enhance its ability to react early to new initiatives, even on other sectors having an impact on the forest sector.

The energy sector has been keen on demanding new sustainability criteria for forestry. We have heard arguments about the negative impact of producing wood based biofuels on climate change. The Forest Strategy provides us with a platform, where those arguments can be thoroughly studied. Problems, if they really exist, can be solved and misunderstanding of the impact of forest use can be corrected.

*IB: Can you indicate what are the highest priority research themes within sustainable forest management in Finland today?*

LS: Finland is heading to be a bioeconomy society. We have a high biocapacity per capita. To ensure acceptability, availability and sustainable use of biomass is of greatest importance to us.

We also want to develop high value added bio-products out of forest biomass. Research themes focused on the value chain from the forests to the market place are important for us.

We see that at the same time when we are developing the bioeconomy sector in our country to boost green growth, we need to take good care of nature values and ensure the functioning of ecosystem services.

In our national bioeconomy strategy, immaterial values including brand management, intellectual property rights and design as well as nature tourism and ecosystem services are regarded as potential on which new jobs can be created.

## List of Sumforest partners and observers

### Partners

Country	Institution	Contact information	Website
Austria	BMLFUW (The Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management)	Martin Greimel <a href="mailto:Martin.Greimel@bmlfuw.gv.at">Martin.Greimel@bmlfuw.gv.at</a>	<a href="http://www.bmlfuw.gv.at/en.html">http://www.bmlfuw.gv.at/en.html</a>
Europe	EFI (European Forest Institute)	Risto Paivinen <a href="mailto:risto.paivinen@efi.int">risto.paivinen@efi.int</a>	<a href="http://www.efi.int/portal/">http://www.efi.int/portal/</a>
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Germany	BLE (Federal Office for Agriculture and Food)	Johannes Bender <a href="mailto:Johannes.Bender@ble.de">Johannes.Bender@ble.de</a>	<a href="http://www.ble.de/EN/00_Home/homepage_node.html">http://www.ble.de/EN/00_Home/homepage_node.html</a>
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### Observers

Institutions	Website	Country
University of Sarajevo, Faculty of Forestry Bosnia Herzegovina	<a href="http://unsa.ba/s/index.php?o">http://unsa.ba/s/index.php?o</a>	Bosnia Herzegovina
Wageningen University, Forest Ecology and Forest Management group	<a href="http://www.wageningenur.nl/">http://www.wageningenur.nl/</a>	The Netherlands
Johann Heinrich von Thünen Institute; Federal Research Institute for Rural Areas, Forestry and Fisheries	<a href="http://www.ti.bund.de/no_cac">http://www.ti.bund.de/no_cac</a>	Germany
Swiss Federal Institute for Forest, Snow and Landscape Research	<a href="http://www.wsl.ch/index_EN">http://www.wsl.ch/index_EN</a>	Switzerland
<i>international observers</i>		
St. Petersburg State Forest Technical University	<a href="http://www.uef.fi/en/cbu-">http://www.uef.fi/en/cbu-</a>	Russia
Volga State University of Technology	<a href="http://eng.marstu.net/">http://eng.marstu.net/</a>	Russia
Moscow State Forest University	<a href="http://www.mgul.ac.ru/eng/">http://www.mgul.ac.ru/eng/</a>	Russia
Voronezh State Forest Technical Academy	<a href="http://www.vglta.vrn.ru/?lang">http://www.vglta.vrn.ru/?lang</a>	Russia
Northern Research Institute of Forestry (Arkhangelsk)	<a href="http://www.sevniilh.ru/">http://www.sevniilh.ru/</a>	Russia
Research Foundation Flanders	<a href="http://www.fwo.be/">http://www.fwo.be/</a>	Belgium