



Position Paper

Brussels, 14 October 2024

Europe needs to achieve resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability through an innovative forest bioeconomy

The forest-based sector's perspective on the next EU R&I framework programme FP10

The forest-based sector plays a key role in strengthening Europe's strategic resilience, competitiveness, and sustainability. Its renewable raw material is mainly European in origin, and its products are developed, manufactured, and recycled in Europe, which also secures jobs and livelihoods for millions of EU citizens. Wood-based products replace fossil-based materials and products, thereby further enabling the green transition.

All EU's decision-making and funding programmes, including the framework programme for research and innovation, should therefore **recognise the importance of forest bioeconomy and wood-based products as building blocks of European competitiveness and a sustainable future.**

As a world-leading technology developer, the sector relies on excellent research and innovation in the EU and beyond. To unlock the full sustainability and growth potential of the European forest-based sector, the strengths in the Research, Development and Innovation activities should be further promoted.

Thus, from the perspective of the forest-based sector, the next EU framework programme for research and innovation (FP10) should take the following into account:

1. Facilitating business participation by simplifying and clarifying the framework programme

- From companies' point of view, applying for and administering the EU projects is often perceived as too complex and bureaucratic, which takes up a lot of resources.
- The complexity and fragmentation of financial instruments and programmes also make it difficult to identify funding opportunities that are appropriate to the needs of companies.
- The structure of the programme should be simplified, and the governance reduced, whilst ensuring transparency and good governance.

2. Bringing the key themes of forest-based bioeconomy to the forefront

- When planning funding programmes, the Commission should consider the development of the European forest-based sector as a strategic investment in strengthened EU resilience, competitiveness and sustainability. The [Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda \(SIRA 2030\)](#) of the European Forest-based Sector Technology Platform (FTP) and its [prioritised list of research topics](#) in the forest-based sector broadly cover the current research needs of stakeholders in the sector.



3. Channelling research and innovation funding to well-functioning partnership models

- The forest-based sector considers **public-private partnerships (PPPs)** to be great platforms and practices for making academic research findings widely available to companies and other actors in society to achieve sustainability goals, competitiveness, and growth.
- In particular, the **Circular Bio-Based Europe (CBE)** partnership has proven to be successful and should continue to operate in the next framework programme.
- To ensure growth and competitiveness, sufficient funding must be allocated to scaling, i.e. to applied research as well as to pilot and demonstration projects.

4. “Building the future with nature: Boosting Biotechnology and Biomanufacturing in the EU”

The sector welcomes the European Commission communication “Building the future with nature: Boosting Biotechnology and Biomanufacturing in the EU” and we would like to emphasise that the term “biomanufacturing” should be defined broadly to cover manufacturing of bio-based materials and products using any technology (e.g. several types of biotechnological, chemical, or mechanical approaches).

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About FTP

The Forest-based Sector Technology Platform (FTP) is a [European Technology Platform \(ETP\)](http://www.forestplatform.org) dedicated to the forest-based sector. It is the meeting place for industry, forest owners and public authorities, to discuss and build up a critical mass of knowledge on common research and innovation needs for the sector, and to decide on the best ways to cooperate. FTP’s mission is to advance the competitiveness and sustainability of the sector through innovation.

More information: www.forestplatform.org  