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PRESS RELEASE: Wood Industry looking forward to a greener future

The European Confederation of the Woodworking Industry held its winter 2020 General Assembly Meeting on the 9 of December 2020 in an online format.

During its meeting CEI-Bois presented its [Advocacy Report](#), a comprehensive overview of its main advocacy activities, carried out in 2020. In the report the outgoing Chair of CEI-Bois Anders Ek addressed the COVID-19 crisis impact, underlining that *“without any doubt, the European Wood Industries are the backbone of the green recovery. Timber is a fantastic building material and, if sustainably sourced, a vital tool in combating the climate crisis. Building in wood from sustainably managed forests contributes to reducing CO2 levels in the atmosphere in three ways: by carbon capture in the growing forest carbon sink; by carbon capture in the increasing carbon store of wood products, and by substitution for other more CO2-intensive materials such as steel and concrete”*. The report also contains an updates economic synopsis of the Woodworking Industry.

On the occasion of this end of the year meeting the CEI-Bois General Assembly voted and approved the new Board of Directors and elected their new Chair Mr Sampsa Auvinen. Since 2015 Mr. Sampsa J. Auvinen is the President of the European Organization of the Sawmill Industry (EOS). In 2019, Mr Auvinen was re-elected as EOS President for his third and last mandate.

The new CEI-Bois Board of Directors is now composed of:

New Members:

- Ana Dijan - Croatian wood cluster (Croatia)
- Juha Mäntylä - FFIF and FWIF (Finland)
- Anders Ek - SFIF and TMF (Sweden)
- Denny Ohnesorge - HDH (Germany)

Continuing Board Members:

- Erich Wiesner vice chairman - Fachverbandes der Holzindustrie (Austria)
- Filip De Jaeger – FEDUSTRIA (Belgium)
- Keith Fryer – TTF (United Kingdom)
- Rob Van Hoesel – FEFPEB – (European wooden pallets and packaging manufacturers)

Thankful for the confidence expressed by the CEI-Bois Members, the newly elected Chairman Sampsa Auvinen stated: *“Very important field of challenges lies in front of us: digitalisation sustainable & green recovery, economic growth, forests resilience, are just some of the most important of them. Our organisation has been already working on these issues, but now, more than ever, it is essential that this Confederation, united with its Members and in strong collaboration with other Brussels based organisations raises a more valuable, and more efficient voice when dealing with the European institutions. My role will be to support the CEI-Bois Members and Team in doing so”*.

CEI-Bois' Members recognised the size of the potential market for sustainable wood-based products in helping deliver the Renovation Wave for Europe as proposed by the European Commission during the meeting.

Commenting on this rapidly emerging market the General Assembly highlighted: *“The EU Commission have the laudable objective of renovating 35 million European homes to a much higher energy efficiency level by 2030. Wood based products such as wooden window frames and wood fibre insulation are ideal products to be used in this endeavour as they can be made from home grown sustainable timber, creating jobs and environmentally friendly products. Creating homes that are more energy efficient will reduce household fuel bills and reduce carbon emissions. What the Commission may not have fully appreciated is the possibility presented by the Renovation Wave of increasing the European carbon sink within the existing European housing stock. The more we renovate with sustainable wood-based products the more carbon we store. But this benefit is often overlooked in both building assessments and national policy. The public realise trees store carbon, but lofts, floors, walls and window frames could also store significant amounts of carbon which is a powerful mechanism in the battle against climate change”.*

For any additional information please contact: info@cei-bois.org

CEI-Bois represents 21 European and National organisations from 15 countries and is the body backing the interests of the whole industrial European wood sector: more than 180.000 companies generating an annual turnover of 142 billion euros and employing 1 million workers in the EU.