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*Press release*

## **Catholic Church and EU Commission President back using more wood in the built environment**

The significant role for sustainable wood was discussed within both the New European Bauhaus and the wider strategy to tackle climate change at a high-level meeting held 9 June 2022 in the Vatican. Hosted by the Pontifical Academy of Science and Bauhaus Earth, the event also featured the Wood4Bauhaus Alliance.

### **President of the European Commission quotes the Pope in reminding that building with wood is good for the planet and good for its people**

*“Sustainably harvested timber can reduce a building’s carbon emissions by up to 60%. Pope Francis is so right when he says that ‘humans are not meant to be inundated by cement and steel’. Building more with natural elements, like wood, is both good for the planet, and good for the wellbeing of people.”*

Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission

### **World-leading climate scientist calls for 2 billion new homes mainly from wood**

*“To restore the climate, we need to, first, add and support 500 billion trees, and second, build 2 billion homes from harvested biomass. This is the nature-based solution.”*

Prof John Schellnhuber, Founder of Potsdam Institute of Climate Impact Research

### **Wood4Bauhaus co-founder promotes wood as a natural solution, further enhanced by cascade use**

*“Why wood? Because we can achieve true circularity: with renewable materials and proper management of the forests, we are not taking anything from nature.”*

Prof Andreja Kutnar, InnoRenew CoE and Wood4Bauhaus

The Pontifical Academy of Science Conference announcement can be found here:

[https://www.pas.va/en/events/2022/reconstructing\\_the\\_future.html](https://www.pas.va/en/events/2022/reconstructing_the_future.html)

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## Background information

The [European Commission's New European Bauhaus](#) calls for a creative, interdisciplinary, novel movement embedded in society to imagine a **sustainable** future together and to engage on a transformative path towards **affordable** and **beautiful** living spaces in urban and rural environments. A key step is the transformation of the building sector into a circular model that can also counteract the escalating climate crisis. This transformation requires prioritised research in the use of organic materials in buildings.

**The Wood4Bauhaus Alliance's** main objective is to shape a better and sustainable future with beautiful, healthy and inclusive living, working, and learning spaces as part of a sustainable, low carbon-built environment. Our platform shall foster an open, long-term dialogue with all interested stakeholders and help share good practices related to the Circular Economy and Green Buildings. Our goal is to inspire as many actors as possible to co-create and develop contributions to the New European Bauhaus from European to regional and local level, all in the common interest to advance and exploit as much as possible nature-based materials, innovative building systems and smart solutions to mitigate climate harm and benefit European citizens. The Alliance will therefore:

- Encourage research and innovation for novel, innovative uses of wood in the built environment,
- Foster new collaborations and co-creation between different stakeholders across disciplines, sectors, and society, and
- Facilitate knowledge sharing and skills development towards future generations.

The Alliance confirming these policy recommendations comprises the following partners:

[InnovaWood](#) is the European network for wood science, research, innovation and education with 60+ member organisations in 28 countries, including RTOs, universities, VET centres and cluster organisations. The [European Confederation of Woodworking Industries \(CEI-Bois\)](#) is an umbrella organisation of 21 European and national organisations from 15 countries backing the interests of the whole wood sector. The [European Panel Federation \(EPF\)](#) represents 100,000 direct jobs in wood-based panel manufacturing and furniture in 32 countries. The [European Organisation of the Sawmill Industry \(EOS\)](#) represents 35,000 sawmills in 12 countries. The [European Federation of Building and Woodworkers \(EFBWW\)](#) is the European Trade Union Federation grouping 76 national free trade unions from 34 countries with members in the building, building materials, woodworking, forestry and allied industries and trades. [InnoRenew CoE](#) is a new research centre in Slovenia focused on sustainable construction with renewable materials. [Bauhaus der Erde gGmbH](#) is a non-profit think-tank with the objective to transform the built environment so that humans may live in harmony with the Earth's natural systems by reinventing the original Bauhaus concept to meet this pivotal historic challenge.

[BASAJAUN](#) project fosters sustainable wood construction chains from forest harvesting to final buildings and Circular Economy solutions in the sector. It has received funding from the EU Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement no. 862942. InnoRenew was founded with support from H2020 Widespread-2-Teaming grant no. 739574.

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