

PRESS RELEASE

16<sup>th</sup> June 2023

**CEI-Bois**

**The European Confederation of Woodworking Industries**

**Annual General Assembly**

**London**

13 – 14 June 2023

The annual General Assembly of CEI-Bois, the European Confederation of Woodworking Industries, took place in London 12-13<sup>th</sup> June 2023 hosted by CEI-Bois member Timber Development UK.

The delegates were drawn from across CEI-Bois' membership which spans 15 countries and 21 European and national organisations who collectively represent more than 180,000 companies.

Delegates were pleased with the increasingly important role played by CEI-Bois in successfully promoting to the European institutions the greater use of sustainable wood in both construction and new build as one of the most effective and quick ways of decarbonising the built environment.

The Assembly reviewed and discussed CEI-Bois' work over the past year including the following areas of work much of which is related to seeking to influence EU legislation:

The work of the **Social Affairs Working Group** involving a wide range of activities including formal engagement with the Commission's Social Dialogue Committee in conjunction with colleagues in the furniture sector and the woodworking trade unions as well as the implementation of the ongoing woodworking social partners [RESILIENTWOOD](#) an EU co-funded project.

The work of the **Sustainability Working Group** including advocacy work with regards the Deforestation-free Products Regulation, the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive, the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive, the Taxonomy Environmental Delegated Act and the Green Claims Directive. This Group also oversees the advocacy work around the Carbon Removal Certification Framework where we have the positive possibility that carbon stored in long-term products in the built environment, such as wood, will be recognised but also the negative concern that concrete could claim in future to be storing carbon and, if made from energy generated from burning wood, it could also claim to be low carbon.

The **Trade Working Group** continues to provide a useful forum in which members can discuss and stay abreast of emerging trade issues including the impact on the timber industry of the war in Ukraine including on trade flows. It was noted that the Group's chair Keith Fryer will be standing down and will be replaced by Stephen King.

The **Construction Working Group** has followed the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive recast and the Construction Products Revision. The Group has also worked to improve standardisation across the timber industry and helped to facilitate the increased use of Cross Laminated Timber via further work to address issues concerning fire performance and access to the Chinese market. The subgroup on fire has covered several issues including a European test method for fire spread over external walls.

The **Task Force on Life Cycle Assessment** has worked on LCAs and Environmental Product Declarations. It has also considered which methods of evaluating carbon storage work best for promoting wood use. The **TIMBIM** initiative led by companies from Finland, Sweden, Austria and Switzerland has worked to further [The Digital Transformation of the European Timber Industry](#)

The **Research, Design and Innovation Working Group** has continued to help stakeholders exploit funding opportunities and it has established the R&I lobbying priorities for the woodworking industries in Horizon Europe 2025-27.

Additional areas of work in which CEI-Bois is actively involved were also discussed by the General Assembly including:

**Circular Choices** – a coalition of members of the forest value chain working to prepare a list of common advocacy asks to be placed before the new Commission and the new European Parliament in the summer of 2024, see: [Circular Choices for a competitive EU bioeconomy – Growing a circular future](#)

**Wood4Bauhaus** – a coalition of organisations from the wood based sector working to maximise the opportunities afforded by the New European Bauhaus (NEB) to increase the use of wood based products in the built environment, see: [New European Bauhaus: beautiful, sustainable, together. \(europa.eu\)](#) W4B has established an excellent working relationship with the NEB and in a recent speech in May in Venice the President of the Commission Ursula von der Leyen stated, “And the principles of the European Bauhaus have inspired some independent initiatives. For instance, several organisations in the wood industry have launched Wood for Bauhaus.”

**WoodPop** – an initiative of the Austrian and Finnish governments involving governments, scientists and business aimed at scaling up circular and sustainable wood use, see: [WOODPOP CALL on upscaling wood policy cooperation in Europe\\_final.pdf \(bml.gv.at\)](#)

**Woodrise Alliance** – a global open innovation platform aimed at boosting medium and high-rise timber building will hold a conference in France 17-20<sup>th</sup> October 2023 in Bordeaux at which CEI-Bois will speak alongside a senior member of Commission staff representing the New European Bauhaus, see [Woodrise congress from 17 to 20 october 2023 in Bordeaux, Palais de l'Atlantique \(woodrise-congress.com\)](#)

The meeting concluded with the approval of the 2022 finances.

Prior to the formal business of the General Assembly the delegates visited the ABBA venue in east London. As explained by the architect Sam Phillips, who joined the tour, this temporary structure has been built using engineered timbers, namely CLT and glulam, and it has been built for disassembly and re-erection at alternative venues across Europe.

The winter CEI-Bois General Assembly will take place on the 22 November 2023, online.

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CEI-Bois, the [European Confederation of Woodworking Industries](#), represents 21 European and National organisations from 15 countries and is the body backing the interests of the whole industrial European wood sector with more than 180.000 companies generating an annual turnover of 152 billion euros and employing 1 million workers in the EU.