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**EUROPEAN WOODWORKING INDUSTRIES  
MANIFESTO  
EU TERM 2019-2024**

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## 1. Wood availability and sustainability

Forests have been growing in the EU<sup>1</sup>, and the woodworking industries have committed to sustainable management of forests that ensures the development of forest resources also in the future.

In order to contribute to the transition to a low-carbon EU economy, woodworking industries need to rely on an adequate availability of raw material. **EU common policies should support continuous mobilization of wood raw material from sustainable sources.** By allowing forest regeneration after harvesting and active and timely management of forests, including climate change adaptation measures, the production of wood and other ecosystem services is ensured, and the environmental integrity of the system is preserved.

**Ensuring the legality of timber** and timber products produced in the EU and imported from third countries is also a key aspect of sustainability at global scale. For this reason, environmental loopholes in the EU Timber Regulation should be avoided by extending its scope to all wood products and ensuring a consistent implementation among Member States.

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<sup>1</sup> Between 1990 and 2015 the forest area increased by 9% - FOREST EUROPE 2015

## 2. Circular Bioeconomy

The wood value chain is a key bioeconomy player: it begins with sustainably sourced raw materials, followed by highly resource-efficient processing providing wood products for numerous applications. Additionally, by-products such as wood dust and chips can be further used for manufacturing an increasing number of products or as a renewable energy source. Virtually all wood products can be reused and recycled.

The **EU should further promote the development of the circular bioeconomy** and make sure that the other policies are consistent with this objective.

**EU policies should also take into account the carbon storage and material substitution effects of harvested wood products** in the framework of the EU 2050 Long-term Strategy. Every cubic meter of wood used in buildings, has captured almost one ton of CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere. Moreover, every cubic meter of wood used as a substitute for other building materials reduces CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by an average of one ton. Finally, the stored energy in wood biomass can be recovered when used as renewable energy.

### 3. Competitiveness of Wood in Construction

Timber construction has the potential to **offer sustainable solutions to the housing challenges in the EU**. Thanks to major innovations, modern building systems using engineered timber stand for **quick, lean and easy construction**. Off-site prefabrication results in almost no waste at the construction site, far less dust development, minimal noise and - thanks to the relatively light weight of timber elements – substantially reduced hindrance caused by site-related traffic. Building with the renewable material wood is particularly well fit for new construction and renovation in dense urban areas, answering the requirements and dynamics of **climate change resilience and environmental performance of 21<sup>st</sup> century city development**.

It is not enough to focus on building zero energy buildings. The payback time of carbon emissions from the production of building materials should be considered. **Certified wood products keep the carbon sink in the forests active and atmospheric carbon stored in buildings** for up to centuries. Green building schemes and reporting formats such as Level(s) must duly consider and recognise the low impact of wood construction sites on the urban environment, carbon stored in buildings constructed with wood and the substitution effect.

## 4. Free but Fair Trade policies

The success of the woodworking industry requires **free and fair trade**, while maintaining or improving standards and lowering operating costs. As part of bilateral and multilateral trade negotiations, the EU must ensure that wood products are able to compete effectively, enter other markets, enjoy those benefits and not be discriminated against. **Access to raw materials** is important for this industry to operate; therefore any kind of market/technical barriers must be lifted in cooperation with our trading partners.

## 5. Research and Innovation

Knowledge and investment, which leads to a sustainable increase in wood production, is the basis for the entire forest-based industry. Together with the other stakeholders of the Forest-Based Sector Technology Platform, the woodworking industry has developed a **Vision to 2040**, that includes 10 ambitious targets. The role of the WI within the circular bioeconomy shall be enhanced for achieving the ambitious SDGs.

Cross-laminated timber (CLT) is an example of an innovative wood product displaying market growth, especially in new modular building systems for multi-storey housing. Building information modelling (BIM), virtual engineering of wood and advanced material models for computer-aided engineering are also important **innovation areas that deserve more support from EU funds** to keep them thriving and contributing to the European economy. Development of new construction, life-style and furniture materials including eco-design concepts are essential to valorise and add value to wood and forest-based materials.

**EU research funding opportunities** are therefore essential to accomplish the Vision 2040 Targets of European forest-based sector and to lead the way towards a knowledge-based, integrative and sustainable future.

## 6. Social Affairs and Industrial Relations

Since 1998, CEI-Bois is the only official European **Sector Social Dialogue partner** representing the European Woodworking Industry employers. Recently, a joint wood and furniture Social Dialogue was established and in that context too, CEI-Bois plays the same official role.

Through the active and proactive involvement of its **Social Affairs Working Group**, the Confederation contributes dynamically, including through agreements and projects management & implementation, to the designing of the **European social and employment policy**.

CEI-Bois believes in the development of strong Industrial Relations and in the consolidation of the Sector Social Dialogue as the fundamental platform for **reinforcing the social partners relationships and improving the European governance**.

The EU Woodworking sector sits at the heart of the European circular bioeconomy and is a key driver for jobs and growth. In 2017 the sector contributed **€133 billions** to the European economy, generating around **1 million jobs**, many of which in rural areas.

The Woodworking industry actively contributes to the attainment of the EU key political priorities, such as the reduction of GHG emissions in line with the Paris Agreement and the deployment of an EU circular bioeconomy, while ensuring jobs creation and employment stability. At the same time, it is faced with a complex policy landscape at EU, national and international level, encompassing environment, energy, climate, agriculture, industrial competitiveness and research policies.

Such a complex picture calls for **maximum consistency between the different policy areas** and a **predictable regulatory framework** in order to ensure favourable operating conditions for the industry to deliver jobs and growth. To this aim, a stronger joint effort to **tackle data gaps** and ensure better market trends assessment is also key.

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**CEI-Bois, the European Confederation of Woodworking Industries, represents 23 European and National organizations from 15 countries and is the Organization backing the interests of the whole industrial European wood sector.**

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