

## PRESS RELEASE

### THE EUROPEAN WOOD INDUSTRY CALLS FOR A COMPETITIVE, MARKET-DRIVEN AND CIRCULAR BIOECONOMY AT COLI EVENT

***VIENNA 23 February 2026 - The European woodworking industry reaffirmed its strong commitment to scaling up sustainable, carbon-neutral products rooted in responsible forest management. This message was delivered at the COLI high-level international bioeconomy event, which brought together ministers and senior policymakers from across the globe to discuss the future of the forest-based bioeconomy and its role in climate neutrality and sustainable growth.***

The European woodworking industry is already delivering climate mitigation and adaptation solutions by substituting fossil-based and non-renewable materials in construction, manufacturing, and everyday products.

However, to unlock the full potential of the bioeconomy, the growing demand of sustainable resources requires a pragmatic, market-oriented and coherent policy framework grounded in industrial reality. In particular, the development of the bioeconomy cannot disregard the adequate supply of raw materials. Europe must enhance wood mobilization while respecting national sustainable forest management frameworks. The sector calls for a non-discriminatory approach that combines primary and secondary wood resources.

Strategies to incentivise investments and demand solutions of the Bioeconomy must go beyond research support and shall explicitly promote the scaling-up and diversification in the application of already existing bio-based products. Coordinated demand-side instruments, such as Green Public Procurement and whole Life Cycle Assessments in construction should create reliable competitive markets, without generating disproportionate administrative burdens, particularly for SMEs. Competitiveness must remain central.

A coherent approach is also needed between the Bioeconomy Strategy and housing policies. Bio-based materials must be recognised accordingly. Standards must allow a fair comparison between bio-based and non-bio-based materials, ensuring that renewable and carbon neutral solutions can compete on equal footing. Renewability must be recognised alongside recyclability and reusability in EU circular economy legislation.

The European woodworking industry stands ready to contribute to a bioeconomy that delivers climate neutrality, economic growth, rural livelihoods and decent employment. To succeed, EU policies must be coherent, proportionate and grounded in industrial reality.



*Silvia Melegari, Secretary General of CEI-Bois and EOS: “If Europe is serious about building a competitive and climate-neutral bioeconomy, it must first secure a stable raw material base. Increasing wood mobilisation and ensuring reliable long-term access to wood resources must be the top-priority number one if we want to scale up bio-based solutions and effectively replace fossil-intensive materials.”*

**For further information, download the [CEI-Bois Recommendation Paper to the Council on the EU Bioeconomy Strategy](#)**



#### **About CEI-Bois**

The European Confederation of Woodworking Industries (CEI-Bois) represents 22 European and National organisations from 16 countries and is the body backing the interests of the whole industrial European wood sector: more than 160,000 companies generating an annual turnover of 194 billion euros and employing 930,000 workers in the EU.

#### **About EOS**

The European Organisation of the Sawmill Industry (EOS) represents the interests of the European sawmilling sector on European and International level. Through its member federations and associated members, EOS represents some 35,000 sawmills in 11 countries across Europe, manufacturing sawn boards, timber frames, glulam, decking, flooring, joinery, fencing and several other wood products. Together they represent around 77% of the total European sawn wood output in a sector that has a turnover of around 35 billion EUR and employs about 250,000 people in the EU.

#### **About COLI**

COLI (Country and Organization-Led Initiative) is an international platform on sustainable forest-based bioeconomy approaches, convening leaders from government, industry and civil society to advance dialogue on sustainable forest management and bioeconomy policy. Outcomes contribute to the UN Forum on Forests and FAO forestry discussions.

<https://www.bmluk.gv.at/en/coli/coli--coli.html>

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