

# IGLO Open: Science-Led Forest Transitions

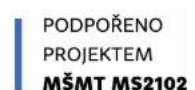
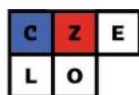
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## The Slovenian Forestry Institute's work on the climate-resilient forest sector

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*Dr. Nike Kranjc, Director, Slovenian Forestry Institute*

- Context in Slovenia: Forests and climate change
  - Looking back to better understand and today plan the future
    - After the Second World War
      - Largest harvesting area, forests cover less than 40 %, low-growing stock
      - 1947 prohibition of clear cuts (a practice that has been in place for decades to ensure sustainable and close-to-nature forest management), with early legislation aimed at protecting forest health following post-war recovery
      - Establishment of Slovenian Forestry Institute (SFI)
    - Today
      - 44,6% of forests are under [Natura 2000](#), forests cover nearly 60% of Slovenia (every fifth Slovenian is a forest owner), 75% of forests are privately owned
  - Most of the forests in Slovenia are owned by the public
  - Biodiversity – over 200 forest vegetation units (43 animal species, 5 plant species and 11 forest habitat types, 1000 bears, 100 wolves and 10 lynxes)
  - Close-to-nature forest management – more than 50 years
    - Forest management takes into account natural processes in forest ecosystems
    - Forest structure and tree species composition are adapted to the site conditions, respecting also climate changes
    - 3 main principles of forest management: sustainable, close-to-nature and multipurpose
    - All three must be respected in all forests, irrespectively of ownership
  - Climate projections – Slovenia
    - Already +2,3°C in 2020 and heading to +4,9°C in 2100
    - Disasters in the last 10 years: Ice break (2014), Wind break (2017), Forest fire (2022), Floodings (2023)
  - Potential and limits of European forests in climate change mitigation
    - The LULUCF (Land Use, Land-Use Change, and Forestry) sector has been a sink for greenhouse gases since the beginning of the emission reporting in 1990
    - During recent decades, the effect of drought on the growth of spruce in Slovenia and on the growth of European beech has been shown
- Slovenian Forestry Institute ([Gozdarski inštitut Slovenije](#))
  - SFI is a public research institute of national importance, conducting basic and applied research on forests and forest landscapes, forest ecosystems, wildlife ecology, hunting, forest management, and other uses of the resources
  - Established 1947
    - Area of our activities: Department of – forest ecology, forest physiology and genetics, forest protection, forest technique and economics, forest and landscape planning and monitoring, forest yield and silviculture
  - Research programme and infrastructure
    - 13 different laboratories, permanent research infrastructure in forests, data basis, forest genetic reserves, experimental plantations and live archives

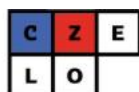


- New centre for forest restoration and protection built in September 2024, financed partly from [the Recovery and Resilience Plan](#) and [NextGenerationEU](#)
- Pyramids of different levels of monitoring the condition of Slovenian forests, at different levels, intensities, and for different purposes, as part of the Slovenian forestry information system
- Uncertainties in forest management as research challenges: Data gaps, uncertainties in models and scenarios, the importance of interdisciplinary/international expert assessment, cooperation among researchers, professionals and coordination of interests of different stakeholders influencing forest management
- How to manage forests for resilience under climate stress
  - Principles of Climate-Resilient Management
  - Enhancing Diversity for Resilience
  - Soil Health and Adaptation
  - Timely Disturbance Response
- Portal for forest owners: [WoodChainManager](#)
- Women FEM4FOREST + FEM2FORESTS projects
  - [FEM4FOREST](#) – forests in women’s hands
  - [FEM2FOREST](#) – innovative pathways for efficient involvement of girls and young women in the forestry sector – women in forest’s hands
  - Report “Collected needs of women and wider gender perspectives in the forestry sector”
    - Inspiring female forestry pioneer (Mentors, role models, ambassadors)
    - Good practice examples of career orientation in forestry (Awareness-raising efforts)
    - Women’s cooperative meetings (National/regional associations)
  - Forestry still struggles with workforce shortages and an ageing structure
  - “If we want to bring more young people into forestry, we have to change the image of forestry. Women are bringing a new perspective to the ecosystem”
- Future challenges in the forestry sector in Slovenia:
  - How to balance economic, social and environmental functions of forests
  - Digitalisation of all processes
  - How to ensure long-term stability in wood supply
  - How to support forest owners and ensure payment for ecosystem services
  - Conservation of nature vs wood productions
  - Future strategies for resilience
  - Wood X Needs of Society
  - Building networks of knowledge

## The EU Policy Framework for Nature Conservation

*Andrea Vettori, Head of Unit, European Commission, DG ENV*

- Commission is supporting member states to manage forests and achieve the balance
- Europe’s forests play a key role in our society and economy
- Reducing the risk of floods, stress from drought, storms, and biodiversity issues, and trying to get a better understanding of Europe’s forests
- New strategy aims to strengthen sustainable forest management (closer collaboration with member states)
- [EU Forest Strategy for 2030](#)
- EU objectives: climate-neutrality adaptation, biodiversity protection and restoration, disaster risk destruction, water security and capacity, circular economy and competitiveness, ...
- Economy strategy: forest-based economy, a new strategy is going to set a new innovation and value chain, supply and demand, and ecological and sustainable
- [Nature restoration regulation](#)

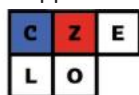


- The Commission is acknowledging the problem
- Integration of climate change into the plan
- Policy coherence – funding, protection
- Member states to submit their draft for National Restoration Plans to the Commission by September 2026, showing how they will deliver on the targets
- Active engagement of all stakeholders needed, flexibility for member states to tailor their plans, integration of climate change
- [Natura 2000](#) – March 2026 climate change guidance launched, designed measures
  - Sites and technologies
- Need to integrate the approach and innovative strategies, ecosystem-based management
- Core message:
  - Europe needs forests that are biodiverse, healthy and resilient
  - The framework will provide that, and monitoring is necessary
  - Smart incentives and practical collaboration are needed to ensure that the policies are not working in contradiction

### From science to implementation: EU instruments for Climate-Resilient forestry

*Gregorio Dávila Díaz, Deputy Head of Unit, European Commission, DG AGRI*

- Forestry in the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP)
- The EU is providing the funding, so it should be up to member states to decide how to approach their problems
- Forestry in the CAP
  - Forestry actions have been supported with different instruments since the 60s of the last century
  - Forestry actions have always been supported by the CAP-related instruments, but since 2000 forestry has been considered an integral part of Rural Development within the CAP
  - The CAP supports different forestry measures and interventions, including investments, management commitments, compensations, cooperation, R&I and covering both the primary production and the whole supply chain
  - Agroforestry is considered part of forestry interventions
  - Forestry interventions are generally supported with a support rate of up to 100%
  - The reason is that any interventions made to improve forests, whether they are productive or non-productive, lead to improvement of all ecosystem services, including environmental and climate services
  - Sustainable forest management is a prerequisite for CAP support on forestry
  - Depending on the type of intervention, priority is given to one or two of the three pillars of sustainability, but it always has positive reflections on the others
- Afforestation
  - Different kinds of forestry: traditional forestry, short rotation forestry and creation of natural-like forests
  - Those activities are supported both in agricultural and non-agricultural lands, and the beneficiaries are both private and public entities
  - Not a one-off investment, support normally continues for 5 to 12+ years after the plantation
  - CAP support can cover up to 100% of the establishment costs
  - Combination of investment and management commitments
- Agroforestry
  - The CAP supports the establishment and regeneration of agroforestry systems
  - Establishment costs including soil examination and preparation, propagation material, plantation operations, protection (individual or fencing) and their maintenance
  - The CAP supports investment for the prevention of forests from natural disasters, adverse climatic events, and catastrophic events
  - Support rate is up to 100 % of the eligible costs



- Combination of investment and management commitments
- Prevention
  - CAP supports investment for the prevention of forests from natural disasters, adverse climatic events and catastrophic events
    - Support may include protective infrastructures (such as forest paths, tracks, access roads, water supply points), preventive forestry practices (such as repetitive vegetation control, cleaning, thinning, pruning, and diversification of vegetation structure) and purchase and use of grazing animals
- Restoration
  - The CAP supports investments for the restoration of forests after natural disasters, adverse climatic events and catastrophic events
- Non-productive investments
- Productive investments
  - Whose first objectives are economic return and competitiveness of the forestry sector
  - Support may include investments in machinery and/or equipment related to ...
  - Support rate is up to 65 % of the eligible costs (80 % in specific cases)
- Forestry infrastructure
  - E.g.: Access to forest land: construction of roads and bridges within the forest or leading to the forest
  - Support rate is up to 100 %
- Forestry environment-climate management commitments
  - Support is in the form of an annual payment for 5-7 years
- Natura 2000 compensations
  - The CAP compensates forest holders who manage forests within the Natura 2000
  - Compensation payments are granted annually
- Other horizontal interventions
  - Forest holders can have access to a broad range of other supports, which are not forestry-specific, such as support for:
    - Start-up of rural business linked to forestry
    - Cooperation, including EIP operations groups and LEADER
    - Knowledge exchange and dissemination of information
    - Forest Advisory Service
    - EU and National CAP networks

### Questions and answers

- [Nature restoration law](#)
  - Recently adopted, presented as a highly relevant and still very new policy framework
  - Its implementation needs to take regional and geographical specificities into account and should build on the achievements of Natura 2000
  - Isolated areas of biodiversity cannot function effectively without ecological connections between them
- Next MFF, forestry and ECF policy windows
  - The next MFF and possible opportunities for forestry-related activities
  - The circular economy window under the future European Competitiveness Fund was mentioned as one potential policy opening

