

Reply to consultation concerning the Commissions green book on Forest Protection and Information in the EU: Preparing forests for climate change – KOM (2010)66

Dear Connie Hedegaard,

We hearby send you the reply from the Danish Parliaments (Folketinget's) Environment- and Planning committee and from the Danish European Committee concerning the Commissions green book on Forest Protection and Information in the EU.

The Committee for the Environment and Planning has examined the green book and they have composed the below reply to the consultation. The Danish European Committee joined the reply during its meeting of 11 June 2010.

Opinion from the Committee for the Environment and Planning and the Danish European Committee:

The Committees welcomes the European Commissions Green book. The Green book is a good starting point to examine how future actions on planning can be taken within forestry and the possibility for new EU-actions in this area.

The Committees encourage that a new plan of restructure plan will be finalised for the forestry in EU, to replace EU's action plan on forestry, which expires in 2011. A new action plan for forestry must be updated, in order to match the actual essential challenges on the forestry area. This means the forestry's (silviculture's) contribution to the challenges concerning the climate and in relation to the adaptation to the climate, and how a solid and equal level for common knowledge about the conditions of the forests in EU can be secured.

The Committees find it important, that in the reflexions about a future common EU-action is included the development of more united and science based common criteria concerning the reporting about the forests structure and functioning when it comes to conservation status for protected species and natural habitats within the Natura 2000 area. More over a special focus on invasive species could be of added value when coordinated at European level.

EU and the Member States have engaged them selves to stop and turn the decline of species and natural habitats. The Committees therefore encourage that in the action plans and in exploring future actions on the forestry area and other sectors, that have an effect on forests, one should insist on securing biodiversity and to stop the decline of biodiversity in the forests. Forests play an essential role for the biodiversity, it is therefore important at EU-level and within the national forestry programmes that this challenge is being taken care of.

A minority in the Committees (political parties S, SF, RV, and EL) find there is a need for a reinforced action at community level in order to strengthen protection of the forests. The Commission should take the initiative to make a proposition that commits the Member States to develop national forestry programmes that contains a number of minimum standards to monitor, to set objectives and goals etc. The forestry programmes must contain all forests, also those outside Natura 2000 sites. The national forest programmes and the reporting of the condition of the forests should furthermore promote structural biodiversity, hereunder more dead wood, which is a condition for achieving the biodiversity targets and commitment within the Natura 2000 Directives. Therefore the minority cannot recommend an eventual proposal for EU to recommend an increasing withdrawal of more wood from the forests.

Furthermore, the minority encourage that a common sustainability criteria for biomass is elaborated. In this context it would be useful to have an inventory of what each Member State is planning to use of biomass in their national plan of energy until 2020. Both to see "how many times the same East European Forests are being planned to be used in the Western Europe" and also to focus on to which extend the use of biomass of the European Energy plans are sustainable.

The minority finds furthermore, that the focus on the Forests biology and diversity should be supplemented also to focus on the possibilities of employment the social values within forestry, herein especially the health aspects.

Yours sincerely

Ida Auken
President for the Environment- and planning committee

Anne-Marie Meldgaard,
President for the Committee of Europe