

The EU Forest Action Plan

- The EU Forest Action Plan was adopted on 15 June 2006. It builds on the report on implementation of the EU Forestry Strategy and consequent conclusions by the Council.
 - The Action Plan focuses on four main objectives:
 - (1) to improve long-term competitiveness;
 - (2) to improve and protect the environment;
 - (3) to contribute to the quality of life; and
 - (4) to foster coordination and communication.
- Eighteen key actions are proposed by the Commission to be implemented jointly with the Member States during the period of five years (2007–2011).

Coordination

The Standing Forestry Committee is proposed to be the coordinating body between the Commission and the Member States for implementation of the Action Plan.

Collaboration with stakeholders on implementation of the Action Plan at Community level is foreseen to be channelled mainly through the Advisory Group on Forestry and Cork.

A mid-term evaluation of the Action Plan is proposed to take place in 2009 and a final evaluation will be carried out in 2012.

A report on implementation of the Action Plan is expected to be presented to the Council and the European Parliament in 2012.

Resources to implement the EU Forest Action Plan

- The support for implementation of specific actions will be available largely from the existing Community instruments (e.g. Rural Development Regulation, the new LIFE+ financial instrument for the environment and other).
- Some of the actions, in particular training and education may also be supported in the framework of the European Social Fund or the educational programmes.
- Forest-related research projects will be supported in the context of the 7th Framework programme for Research, as well as under the private sector led Forest-based Sector Technology Platform.
- Other instruments, such as European Regional Development Fund and Intelligent Energy-Europe programme, will underpin the implementation of some individual actions.

Rural Development Regulation (CR No 1698/2005)

- ***Article 49 Non-productive investments***
- *Support provided in Article 36(b)(vii), shall be granted for investments in forests:*
 - *(a) linked to the achievement of commitments undertaken pursuant to the measure provided for in Article 36(b)(v), or other environmental objectives;*
 - *(b) which enhance the public amenity value of forest and wooded land of the area concerned.*
- ***Commission Regulation No 1974/2006 for the implementation of RD Regulation***
- *Article 29 For the purposes of Articles 41 and 49 of Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005, ‘non-productive investments’ shall mean investments that do not lead to any significant increase in the value or profitability of the agricultural or forestry holding.*

- *(CR 1698/2005) Article 55 Encouragement of tourism activities*
- *The support referred to in Article 52(a)(iii) shall cover the following:*
 - *(a) small-scale infrastructure such as information centres and the signposting of tourist sites;*
 - *(b) recreational infrastructure such as that offering access to natural areas, and small-capacity accommodation;*
 - *(c) the development and/or marketing of tourism services relating to rural tourism.*

Other sources, possibilities

(http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/grants/capinfo/index_en.htm)

- Information measures relating to the common agricultural policy
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- Council Regulation (EC) No 814/2000 of 17 April 2000 on information measures relating to the common agricultural policy, defines the type and content of the measures which can be financed under budget heading 05 08 06.

- The Council Conclusions on the EU Forest Action Plan invite the Commission and the Member States “to ensure jointly the effective and balanced implementation of key actions set out in the EU Forest Action Plan”.
- In early 2007, a work programme for implementation of the EU Forest Action Plan (2007-2011) was developed. The purpose of this work programme is to ensure the implementation of the key actions listed in the Forest Action Plan. In line with the request formulated in the Council Conclusions, the work programme details concrete activities under each key action, specifying leading actors, timeframe, working method/instrument, output/result.

Key action 18: Improve information exchange and communication

	Activity	Leading actor	Timeframe	Working method/instrument	Output
18.1	Develop a communication strategy on forestry and exchange experience between MS on forest communication	COM, SFC	2007-2009	Building on the work of the UNECE/ FAO Team of Specialists "Forest Communicators Network"; call for projects under FP7 [1] .	– A communication strategy will outline the main steps to be taken to improve forest sector communication in the Community. The feasibility of individual communication measures in the context of future international events on forests explored.
18.2	Develop a “forestry” site on the Europa website and ensure that forest-related information in the relevant websites of the MS is available and can be linked with the Europa forestry site	COM, MS	2007-2008	COM resources, national resources.	– Development and regular update of the website.
18.3	Work on the development of a European Forest Information and Communication Platform	COM	2006-2008	Preparatory action by Commission.	– Interim results will be presented to SFC in early 2007. Final results to be discussed in the SFC in 2008.
18.4	Organise visibility events, such as a “Forest Week” or “Forest Day” to raise awareness of the benefits of sustainable forest management	COM, MS	2008 / 2009	"Green week". Several topical conferences.	– Forests could be the main theme at a "Green week" event in Brussels.

