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Post Paris: the role of Research

Geneva, 24 March. Round table

Partly based on the EFI study ‘role of EU forests in post 2020 climate targets’
What is in Paris Agreement w.r.t. forests

‘so as to achieve a balance between anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks ‘

‘conserve and enhance as appropriate sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases...incl forests’

‘..positive incentives related to reducing emissions from forest degradation and deforestation, and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests...’

*Paris agreement leaves a lot of freedom to parties how to implement, and how to use the role of forests.*

...this in contrast to Kyoto
Current role of European forests

- Sink of 450 Mt CO2, or **10%** of total EU emissions
- Harvested wood products: sink of 44 Mt CO2
- Biomass for bioenergy producing 3% of total EU energy need
- Some signs of possible saturation
What can be achieved: Correlation of GDP and CO$_2$ sink

Synergies between sinks and contribution of forest sector to GDP in Member States (nabuurs et al. 2015)
Variety amongst Member States offers opportunities

- Harvesting intensity as % of increment (*Levers et al. 2014*)
No single sector can solve the whole problem, and no single sector can provide quick fixes

Climate smart forestry and forest sector takes into account local circumstances and creates win-win

Example of possible measures:

- Storm prone areas: bring down stock
- Drained peat areas: reduce drainage
- High stocked area: bring down stock and combine with innovation in products
- Remote areas: strict reserves
- Outgrown coppice: regenerate, stimulate local biomass innovation and plant adapted species
Role of research: Why has nothing happened in the forest sector?

- Believed monitoring uncertain
- Perceived permanence risk
- Perceived that not much can be achieved
- Overly positive messages right after Kyoto
- Sink is already there and large. Taking up forest sink was perceived as just reducing targets.

Research has not always helped in this
Role of Research  ... without it, Parties sail in the dark

- Independent ; Pointing way forward
- Regional potentials forest sector: further develop Climate Smart Forestry
- Member states support: tools for national assessments and carbon mitigation potential
- Independent Monitoring and verification; reliable data

Willem Barentsz
Role of Research

- Pitfalls; synergies and trade offs
- Mitigation under climate change and w.r.t. Bio-economy
- Sustainability of bio energy options.
- Role and costs of biomass criteria
- Socio-Economics and effects of policies
- New role of carbon price/ subsidies
- Effectiveness of public spending

Enough to do
There are....only opportunities!

Thank you!

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