



FOREST WEEK

2 - 6 November 2020

Online panel session: Building back better with forests

Item 3: The global and regional policy context

Documentation: [ECE/TIM/2020/4](https://www.ece.org/finance/tim/2020/4)

4 November 2020, 15:45-17:00 CET

While the Covid-19 pandemic is spreading human suffering, weakening the global economy and upending people's lives, its impact on the forest sector should not be overlooked. Forestry businesses, small and large, are disrupted along diverse value chains; workers are losing their jobs and their incomes; and our reliance on essential supplies for public health derived from forest products, such as disposable hygiene and sanitary supplies, ethanol for sanitizers, tissues, and toilet paper is likely going to increase.

In the face of these challenges, it is becoming increasingly clear that the path ahead offers a unique opportunity to shift the global development paradigm towards greater resilience, sustainability and a more inclusive economy. Forests and the forest sector play a key role in this transformation, as they provide essential services and products to support human health and livelihoods. Investing in sustainable forest management and forestry can change the course of the future by lifting millions out of poverty, building resilient economies and societies that can withstand pandemics, and contribute towards mitigating climate change.

In this Decade of Action, with ten years left to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, governments, the United Nations system, and international and national actors will need to take swift decisive action in order to ensure forests are at the hearth of a green recovery.

This panel session aims to assess the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on forests and the forest sector and discuss policy measures in place or planned for a green recovery. It will provide an opportunity to exchange policy responses that support sustainable forest management, allowing representatives from the woodworking industries and forest owners' organizations to share their perspective on the right incentives that ensure the forest sector continues to provide essential services and products to support health and livelihoods during times of crisis.



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Programme and tentative timetable

- 15:45 Introduction by the Chair
- 15:45- 16:00 **Ms. Carina Hakansson**, Director-General, Swedish Forest Industries Association and Chair of the FAO Advisory Committee on Sustainable Forest-based Industries: *the role of the forest sector in the post-COVID-19 recovery process*
- 16:15-16:30 **Ms. Silvia Melegari**, Joint Secretary General, European Organisation of the Sawmill Industry and CEI-Bois (European Confederation of the Woodworking Industries): *Impacts of COVID-19 on the woodworking industries and policy responses that would help address them*
- 16:30-16:45 **Mr. Brett Butler**, Research Forester, U.S. Forest Service: *Impacts of COVID-19 on forest owners and why it is important to include them in the post-COVID-19 recovery process*
- 16:45-17:00 Q&A