

11/10/2018

## Press Release

### Farmers and forest owners could be major players of Bio-economy with more dedicated actions and tools

Today's Communication on the Bio-economy strategy should bring more coherence and synergy to policies, such as the CAP and research and innovation. However, to unleash the full potential of farmers, forest owners and their cooperatives more actions and tools should have been considered by the Commission.

The agriculture and forestry sectors will need all the tools available to invest, innovate and benefit from business opportunities. Investments in infrastructure, logistics, and new technologies are among the most important areas. These concrete dimensions, including the importance of advisory services and innovation systems, have yet to be properly addressed.

*"For the bio-economy strategy to be successful, farmers and forest owners should be considered as strategic partners rather than simply feedstock providers along the bio-based value chain,"* explained Pekka Pesonen, Copa and Cogeca Secretary General.

The Communication does also outline some positive actions on education, training and skills, which are truly important for attracting the younger generation.

The Bio-economy primarily encompasses the sustainable production of renewable resources by farmers, forest owners and their cooperatives. Their role is therefore crucial to the successful implementation of any bio-economy policy in the EU and at national level. This role should not be underestimated. The further development of a bio-economy will not only help reduce the dependence on non-renewable resources and tackle climate change but presents a great opportunity to keep jobs and growth in rural areas.

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