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Statement

Forest Monitoring Framework – Final straw for Europe's foresters!

Against the backdrop of a busy agricultural policy agenda in Brussels, the presentation of the forestry monitoring law will hardly make the headlines. Pity because this new proposal from the Commission is once again being unanimously questioned in its approach by all forestry professionals and is felt as the final straw for many. Yet another text in which the consultations and opinions of those primarily concerned have not been taken into account!

Once again, the ambitions are laudable. The stakes are real, and rightly exposed when it comes to increasing the resilience of European forests. European foresters are working on this issue daily. However, once again, a proposal from the Directorate-General for the Environment presents an approach that have little to do with the realities on the ground, showing a roadmap decided with a top-down approach, without any consideration for the questions raised by the primarily concerned, foresters and their cooperatives.

To increase forest resilience, the Commission intends to collect forest data itself via satellites and will ask Member States to collect several indicators related to biodiversity, the forest sector in general and the localisation of forest types.

Forest data is already reported to several different international processes. The Commission should make use of existing legislation and tools and not propose overlapping and burdensome regulation. Was it considered? No.

Numerous data that the Commission intends to collect may include rather sensitive information of private property and ownership that both questioned data sharing and the way that data will be used. Professionals proposed to limit data-sharing of all collected forest data to national or regional level to contribute to data protection and to avoid any misinterpretation or misuse. Was it considered? No.

We count on the Agriculture Council to take the lead on this file and on MEPs to listen to forest owners and their cooperatives concerns, which wasn’t the case with the European Commission due to the lack of a constructive dialogue.

**-END-**

Translations will be available in DE, ES, FR, IT, PL and RO on the Copa-Cogeca website soon.

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