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**JOINT FAO/ECE/ILO COMMITTEE ON FOREST TECHNOLOGY, MANAGEMENT AND TRAINING**

Seminar on  
**AFFORESTATION IN THE CONTEXT OF SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT**

in conjunction with the 24<sup>th</sup> session of the Joint FAO/ECE/ILO Committee on  
Forest Technology, Management and Training

Ennis, Co. Clare, Ireland, 15-19 September 2002

**Afforestation in Europe: The Need for Better Communication and New Partners**

Basic paper by Mr. Josef Herkendell

## **Summary**

The importance of the multifunctional role of forests and sustainable forest management – based on their social, economic and environmental functions and properties – for the development of societies and, in particular, rural areas, has been generally recognized by almost all European countries and European institutions. In this context, afforestation measures play a very important role in the frame of sustainable forest management in Europe.

Successful afforestation measures are not only based on well-prepared and technically improved methods and experiences in the field, but also need to be accompanied by a broad and in-depth communication process that includes all of the major interests involved. In addition, these new communication processes need to be based on convincing public relations activities and integrated concepts for broad education in society. Furthermore, these communication processes should be open for all parts of the so-called civil society.

It is obvious that afforestation measures are based on long-term considerations and therefore need a broad and long-lasting acceptance in society. One of the preconditions that contribute to successful afforestation is the effect of the ongoing changes in societies, especially urbanisation and the alienation of a growing number of people in Europe from nature and forests.

The whole forestry sector in Europe is influenced by ongoing structural change.

The permanent loss of economic importance of the forestry sector in our nationaleconomies has led to an ongoing discussion on the targets of afforestation and its underlying values and benefits. It is quite obvious that this situation is driven by changes in society and economy and therefore cannot be influenced by the forestry sector itself. New creative ideas with new partners in our societies, industry, administration and NGOs have to be developed and integrated into the whole process.

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