



4 November 2019
Room XII,
Palais des Nations, Geneva

Forests and the circular economy

Scope and objective of the session

Forests are essential for regulating climate and water resources, and conserving biodiversity. In addition, forests have cultural significance and provides economic development, which is particularly important in rural regions. Forests are a source of bio-based and renewable products, which can be used as a substitute for non-renewable materials, are easily recycled and easily go back to nature. Thus forest-based industries are strategic to the implementation of the circular economy.

The circular economy is about linking value chains to keep products and materials in use, designing out waste and pollution while regenerating natural systems. The key role of the forest sector in a circular economy lies in the fact that it provides biodegradable raw material that can be converted to advanced, reusable and recyclable bio-materials. These materials can prompt transformation in a number of strategic sectors of the economy such as construction and manufacturing (e.g. homes, automotive, IT appliances, textiles, packaging etc.).

Looking through the lens of the circular economy, each harvested tree can supply a wide range of materials and products, all based on a renewable resource. Most can be reused, recycled and at end of life, biodegrade. Natural forests do not compete with food production from agricultural land thus are perfect for the production of bio-based products when mindful of maintaining ecosystems and the role of the forest for regulating climate.

sustainably. This is a key condition of a successful contribution of the forest sector to a circular economy.



Two panel discussions on Forests and the Circular Economy will highlight ways to help achieve enhanced forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, including those related to the UNFF Global Forest Goal 2. The session will also consider working towards a shared vision of the circular forest sector.



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Programme and tentative timetable

Keynote speech	
10:45 – 10:50	Intro by the co- Chair
10:50 - 11:15	Keynote speech (Vasileios Rizos, Research Fellow & Head of Sustainable Resources and Circular Economy, Centre for European Policy Studies)
Circular economy value chains	
11:15: - 11:40	How wood-based materials and cellulose could be used as a substitute for harmful chemicals (Carlos Martin Novella, Deputy Executive Secretary, Basel, Rotterdam, Stockholm Conventions)
11:40 – 12:05	World Bank's Green Growth Principle and the role of forests (Paola Agostini, Lead Natural Resources Management Specialist, World Bank)
12:05 – 12:30	Forest Solutions - Private Sector's view (Luis Rochartre, Director, Forest Solutions Group, World Business Council for Sustainable Development)
12:30 – 12:55	Low impact harvesting in Turkey (Ismail Belen, Member, Chamber of Forest Engineers of Turkey)
13:00 – 15: 00 Lunch break	
15:00 -15:25	Addressing resources scarcity in the circular economy (Hanna Kalliomäki, Chair, Uusi puu - New Wood, Finland)
15:25 – 16:25	Panel discussion about regulations and other tools needed to advance the transition to the circular economy and what it means for the forest sector
Discussion on the direction of work on Forest and the circular economy	
16:25 – 16:35	Presentation of the “Geneva vision for the circular economy in the forest sector” and possible direction of work (by the secretariat)
16:35 - 17:55	Discussion on the presented “Geneva Vision” and the possible direction of work



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