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Developed by the ECE/FAO Forest Communicators Network



Greater Public Awareness

There is an overall lack of awareness by the public of the benefits of forest products (and not just trees) to a better environment. Similarly, there is a low awareness of significant innovations in the industry as shown by novel products like smart paper, lignin-based composite materials and cellulose-based biofuels. We need a public that values the full contribution of forests, forest products and forest services to the planet.



A Level Playing Field

Another factor that holds back forest products is the frequent lack of full life cycle analysis when comparing forest products with alternatives. For example, this situation exists in some green building and carbon accounting schemes, resulting in a failure to take into account the full environmental impact of other alternatives. A level playing field is also needed in the regulatory arena where wood is often subjected to more rigorous environmental requirements than its competitors.



Political Will

To promote the role of forests in the transition to a green economy:

Following on from both of the above, if politicians were more aware of the environmental and economic benefits of the forest sector, it would help to strengthen the political will to promote the role of forest products and forest-related jobs in the green economy. In addition, if political decision-making process were to take into account the value of ecosystem services it would result in environmentally (and often economically) better decisions.



Sustainable Consumption and Production

- Encourage active involvement by investors to promote sustainable production
- Promote innovation in forest products to support sustainability, etc.
- Create a level playing field for forest products versus competing products such as steel, concrete and petrochemicals
- ‘Sell’ the sustainability of forest products.



Low Carbon Forest Sector

- Promote the carbon benefits of forests by optimizing sequestration (living trees), storage (wood products) and substitution (the 3 S's)
- Include lifecycle analysis in carbon accounting for all products
- Integrate the value of ecosystem services into political decision making
- Improve public awareness of the status and use of forests in the ECE region



Green Jobs

- Increase awareness of forestry as a career opportunity, and the potential of the forest sector for creating new jobs
- Promote good working conditions and training for green jobs
- Develop further the concept of green jobs (i.e. work content and requirements)



Biodiversity/Green Economy

- Clarify the models and evidence supporting payment for ecosystem services (PES) including its impact on markets and less advantaged populations
- Ensure that for individual projects the (long term) provider and user can be clearly identified
- Create the political will for national governments to support PES, grants, and other forest-related green economy initiatives, etc.

