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Report

drawn up on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture

on the Communication from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council (Doc. 542/78) concerning forestry policy in the European Community

Rapporteur: Mr F. ALBERTINI

By letter of 19 December 1978 the President of the Council of the European Communities requested the European Parliament, pursuant to Article 43 of the EEC Treaty, to deliver an opinion on the Communication from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council concerning forestry policy in the European Community.

The President of the European Parliament referred this Communication to the Committee on Agriculture as the committee responsible and to the Committee on Regional Policy, Regional Planning and Transport and the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection for their opinions.

On 17 January 1979 the Committee on Agriculture appointed Mr Francesco ALBERTINI rapporteur.

It considered the Communication at its meeting of 1/2 February 1979 and, at its meeting of 4/5 April 1979, adopted the motion for a resolution and the explanatory statement by 15 votes to 1 with 1 abstention.

Present: Mr Liogier, vice-chairman and acting chairman; Mr Albertini, rapporteur; Mr Andersen, Mr Corrie, Mrs Dunwoody, Mr Herbert, Mr Hoffmann, Mr Klinker, Mr L'Estrange, Mr Willi Müller, Mr Ney, Mr Nielsen, Mr Pisoni, Mr Pistillo, Mr Pucci, Mr Tolman and Mr Vitale.

The opinions of the Committee on Regional Policy, Regional Planning and Transport and the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection are attached.

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The Committee on Agriculture hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution, together with explanatory statement:

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

on the Communication from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council concerning forestry policy in the European Community

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the proposal from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council (COM(78) 621 final),
 - having been consulted by the Council pursuant to Article 43 of the EEC Treaty (Doc. 542/78),
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Agriculture and the opinions of the Committee on Regional Policy, Regional Planning and Transport and the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection (Doc. 92/79),
 - having regard to the proposals for forestry measures¹ submitted by the Commission in 1974 and the recently adopted regulation establishing a common measure for forestry in certain Mediterranean zones of the Community²,
1. Stresses the serious and urgent nature of the problems in the forestry sector having regard to the Community's growing timber requirements and its dependence on non-member countries for supplies, environmental conservation, the use of woodland for recreational purposes and employment in undertakings connected in various ways with forestry;
 2. Is of the opinion, therefore, that the Community should draw up an effective common forestry policy which would enable it to replace the piecemeal, conflicting national policies by common solutions, negotiate as a single entity with the non-member countries which supply timber and avoid the waste of effort and financial resources involved in uncoordinated measures;
 3. Stresses that although the Treaty does not specifically mention forestry products in connection with the CAP, this should not be used as a pretext for preventing the implementation of a forestry policy;

¹ Doc. 6/74 and COM(75) 88 Final - LIGIOS report, Doc. 169/74

² Reg. 269/79 of 6 February 1979 - OJ L 38, 14.2.1979

4. Considers that the Commission has the possibility of taking various statutory measures, as is shown by the fact that certain Community forestry measures have already been implemented or are in the process of being implemented; in particular, Article 235 and other articles of the Treaty may be invoked in connection with the various implications (for environmental, phytosanitary, structural policies, etc.) of the forestry measures under consideration;
5. Welcomes the Commission's work on forestry policy which has resulted in detailed studies of the national policies and the problems in the sector, and the preparation of the present proposals;
6. Considers, however, that the proposal for a Council resolution concerning the objectives and principles of forestry policy, whose content it fully approves, may only serve as a basis for discussion within the Council and is a first limited step which should be followed by other, far more wide-ranging measures;
7. Questions, in fact, the value and legal scope of a Council resolution which is not sufficiently binding on the individual national policies;
8. Urges the Commission, therefore, to draw up more detailed proposals which would also provide Community financial aid for specific forestry measures;
9. Requests it to resubmit its 1974 proposals, possibly amended and updated;
10. Urges the Council not to delay any further in taking a positive decision on these proposals;
11. Stresses that, as a priority, the Commission's new proposals should approach the serious problem posed by the Community's growing timber deficit and the difficulty of increasing Community production which costs more than imports from non-member countries;
12. Is of the opinion that it is essential to improve the level of Community self-sufficiency in order to reduce the growing danger of sharp price rises, depletion or blocking of traditional sources of supply and changes in the trade policy of non-member countries;
13. Urges the Commission, therefore, to submit constructive proposals to ensure that timber produced in the Community remains competitive with timber of comparable quality imported from third countries;

14. Stresses that the drawing up of a common forestry policy is seriously hampered by the differences in national legislation which make it extremely difficult to implement Community structural measures;
15. Requests the Commission, therefore, to provide, with due regard to the social implications, appropriate financial incentives for public and private owners who implement the requisite national and Community measures;
16. Points out the serious problems posed by certain plant diseases, e.g. in elms, cypresses and oak trees; forest fires, particularly in the Mediterranean regions; the need to find Community substitutes for pulp; and finally, the elaboration of more efficient systems of management and exploitation of woodland resources;
17. Emphasizes the major role of scientific research in the abovementioned spheres and, in particular, the need for such research to be aimed at preventing, through recycling, unnecessary damage to the environment and at developing new techniques for converting new varieties into pulp and for improving the use made of branches and brushwood;
18. Considers that one of the Commission's priority tasks must be to co-ordinate, and possibly integrate, the various national measures, thus avoiding the risk of waste or shortages;
19. Approves, therefore, the Commission's proposals but nevertheless requests it to proceed with the preparation of a genuine Community common forestry policy.

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT(a) The Commission's Communication

1. The Commission's document consists of three parts:
 - a Communication from the Commission to the Council concerning forestry policy in the European Community;
 - a proposal for a Council resolution concerning the objectives and principles of forestry policy on which the European Parliament has also been asked for its opinion;
 - a proposal for a Council decision to set up a Forestry Committee on which the European Parliament has not been asked for an opinion.
2. The main purpose of the Communication is to define the necessary objectives in the forestry sector and to suggest how they might be achieved.

After an account of the forestry situation in the Community, the three main functions of the forest are outlined:

- production of timber,
- conservation of the environment,
- provision of recreational facilities.

3. With regard to timber production, attention is drawn to the Community's serious timber trade deficit. It has to import 60% of its requirements which amount to 200 million m³ of timber per year: this means that 120 million m³ have to be imported at a cost of some 8,000 million EUA.

It is therefore essential to increase the production of wood from indigenous sources through more efficient use of felled trees, a reduction in consumption by, for example, recycling waste paper, and the extension and more efficient management of forest areas.

4. With regard to nature conservation and protection of the human environment, the Commission stresses the essential role of forests in protecting the soil from erosion, wind, drought and floods, contributing to the beauty of the landscape and providing habitats for fauna, etc. It then outlines the measures required to safeguard these essential functions, with particular reference to the prevention of fires, excessive exploitation (felling, grazing), and the choice of the most suitable plant species.

5. With regard to the recreational function of forests, particularly near large cities, the Commission points out the desirability of extending free access on foot to as many forests as possible, taking into account the necessary legal (rights and obligations of private owners, safety) and protection guarantees (risk of fires, protection of flora and fauna, etc.).

6. The Communication thus contains a general outline of the different aspects of forestry policy. The Commission concludes that it is essential to define measures in a European perspective to replace national measures. With a view to achieving the main objectives of forestry policy, namely an increase in timber production, the conservation and improvement of the environment and public access for recreational purposes, the Commission lists a series of guidelines and suggestions to be followed by the Member States at national level in the proposal for a Council resolution which is included in the document. The instruments of forestry policy are also outlined, namely organization by an appropriate national authority, national legislation, a system of taxation and incentives, research and development (where coordination at national and European level is of vital importance), education and training, and finally, statistical data.

7. The new Standing Forestry Committee should be responsible for studying the forestry policies of the Member States and the measures and programmes relating thereto, taking into account any Community provisions affecting the forestry sector and the relationship between that sector and other Community policies. On the basis of the information it receives from the Member States, the Committee shall be consulted by the Commission on the forestry aspects of measures which it proposes to take in other sectors (agriculture, environment, etc.).

(b) Community measures already in force

8. Before commenting on the various proposals contained in the Commission's document, it is desirable to give a brief account of Community measures already in force in this sector.

Up to the present time, the Directors-General of forestry authorities in the Member States have held 32 meetings mainly with a view to coordinating their respective policies and research. These meetings should become institutionalized with the establishment of the abovementioned Forestry Committee. Community regulations covering some aspects of the forestry sector are already in force: the marketing of forest reproduction material, phytosanitary measures, the classification of wood in the rough and the right of establishment and provision of services by self-employed persons engaged in forestry activities.

9. The European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF), Guidance Section, has financed various forestry measures in the context of measures to improve agricultural structures in compliance with Regulation 17/64 (the 'individual projects' which can no longer be financed since they have now been replaced by 'common measures'). The following are the data available on the number of projects and the amounts contributed by the EAGGF, Guidance Section, to the forestry sector:

Year	No. of projects	Amount (1000 u.a.)	% Guidance Section
1977	31	8,458	3.4
1973/76	122	33,287	3.8
1973/77	153	41,745	3.7
1964/72	64	12,787	1.5

10. Furthermore, in 1974, as a complement to structural directives 159, 160 and 161 of 1972, the Commission submitted a proposal to the Council for a directive concerning forestry measures designed principally to encourage the afforestation of marginal agricultural land, the conversion of unproductive woodlands into productive woodlands and the construction and improvement of forest roads. The European Parliament delivered a favourable opinion on this proposal in a report by Mr LIGIOS (Doc. 169/74) which was approved during the September 1974 part-session. In March 1975 the Commission submitted an amended proposal which, however, was shelved at Council level. The Council's Special Committee of Agriculture has not yet concluded its study of this proposal.

11. Another important forestry measure was recently adopted by the Council. This regulation which establishes a common measure for forestry in certain Mediterranean zones of the Community¹, provides for a Community contribution of 50% (with limits for the various kinds of activity) for afforestation, the improvement of deteriorated forests and other supplementary measures such as the construction of forest roads, terracing and fire protection. In Italy the measure applies to the entire Mezzogiorno, the regions of Latium, Tuscany, Liguria, Umbria, Marche, Emilia-Romagna and the provinces of Cuneo, Alessandria and Pavia. In France it applies to the regions of Languedoc-Roussillon, Provence-Côte d'Azur and Corsica, and the departments of Ardèche and Drôme. The estimated cost of the measure is 184 m EUA whereas the Commission referred to 230 m EUA in its proposal.

12. The Commission has also financed various studies on forestry subjects. These include afforestation of marginal land, forestry problems relating to the environment, the function of the small forestry estate and the criteria to be laid down for the use of forests for recreational purposes, and for the recording of statistics.

13. Finally, the Economic and Social Committee drew up an own-initiative report in July 1978 and subsequently adopted an opinion on 'The Future of Forestry in the Community'.

¹ See Regulation 269/79 of 6 February 1979 - OJ L 38 of 14.2.1979

14. In addition to the abovementioned opinions, the European Parliament has dealt with forestry problems on several occasions in connection with documents on environmental problems, notably the multiannual programmes for paper and board recycling (FUCHS report, Doc. 464/77), and the Commission's reports and proposals on the state of the environment in the Community (see JAHN and BAAS reports - Docs. 215/76 and 468/77).

(c) Comments

15. The Commission's document clearly illustrates the urgent need for a Community forestry policy to deal with the many serious problems in the forestry sector: the growing timber requirements and dependence on non-member countries for supplies, conservation of the environment, the use of woodland for recreational purposes and, in particular, the employment in industries connected in various ways with forestry activities.

On the other hand, national policies already exist in this sector and are implemented with varying degrees of severity and commitment by the individual States as is shown in the Commission's study of June 1978 entitled 'Forests and forestry in the Member States of the European Community'.

16. The basic problem revolves around the question of the desirability and the scope of a Community forestry policy. In other words, what should be the Community's role and responsibility in a sector which is of vital importance for the economy and the quality of life?

First of all, it must be emphasized that the Community cannot afford to remain indifferent or inactive and indeed the various measures already mentioned which have either been adopted or proposed in the past, show that the Community has always been aware of the need for action in this sector. Community forestry measures are justified by the following needs in particular:

- to replace piecemeal, conflicting national policies by common solutions;
- to enable the Community to negotiate as a single entity with non-member exporting countries instead of on a national basis as at present;
- to avoid the waste of effort and financial resources involved in uncoordinated measures.

While the desirability of Community action cannot be disputed, opinions vary considerably as to the definition of the limits and scope of such action.

The field of action is extremely wide, ranging from simple coordination of national measures in limited areas such as study and scientific research, to strict control of the sector similar to the common organization of agricultural markets which applies to practically all agricultural products.

17. It should be pointed out immediately that, contrary to the view of those who maintain that it is an insurmountable obstacle to any Community action in the forestry sector, the fact that cork and not timber in general is mentioned in Annex II of the Treaty which lists the agricultural products included in the agricultural policy, should not present a serious difficulty.

In fact, it should be noted that:

- as mentioned above, the Community has already implemented and is still implementing various forestry measures: the financing of structural projects, aid for infrastructures and afforestation in certain Mediterranean regions, etc., leaving aside the 1974 proposals which are still being considered by the Council; all these measures have been taken on the basis of Articles 42 and 43 of the Treaty;
- if necessary, the Community could invoke Article 235 of the Treaty which provides for the possibility of a unanimous decision by the Council in cases where action proves necessary to attain one of the objectives of the Community and the Treaty has not provided the necessary powers;
- furthermore, the Commission may propose a series of forestry measures based on various legal provisions depending on the sector affected by the proposed measure: the environment, phytosanitation, structures, free movement of goods and so on.

18. It should therefore be possible to draw up a common forestry policy despite the fact that the forestry and timber sector is not specifically mentioned in the Treaty. This would certainly not involve rigid regulations governing prices, subsidies and levies such as those for cereals and milk, but rather the fixing of common objectives and the provision of Community funds to achieve them.

19. In the light of this, it should be noted that the Commission's proposal includes - in addition to the establishment of a Forestry Committee which basically amounts to institutionalizing a body already in operation - a proposal for a Council resolution concerning the objectives and principles of forestry policy.

One might well wonder why the only practical outcome of such a thorough and precise analysis as that provided by the Commission in the document under consideration and in all its previous studies, should be the adoption by the Council of a resolution which, for all its worth in listing objectives and principles, does not, however, define the financial and legal instruments needed to achieve them.

20. It is only reasonable to entertain some scepticism as to the practical effect of a Council resolution (an instrument which in any case is not mentioned in the Treaties where reference is made to binding decisions by the institution and not general resolutions). Past experience has shown that resolutions are ignored as soon as there is a conflict with national interests. This does not mean that it is pointless for the Council to give detailed consideration to the various forestry problems before adopting the resolution; however, this is only a first limited step which should be followed by other, far more wide-ranging measures.

21. Your rapporteur is of the opinion that the Commission should act on at least two projects:

- (a) resubmit the 1974 structural directive which has been shelved by the Council, with updated standards and amounts;
- (b) draw up detailed proposals providing Community financial aid for specific forestry measures, to be mentioned later in this document, along the lines of the regulation recently adopted in favour of certain Mediterranean regions.

(d) The main problems

22. Before outlining some practical suggestions for the Commission, it will be necessary to consider briefly a few of the main problems in the forestry sector.

In your rapporteur's opinion, the main problem is the massive imports of timber from non-member countries. The following points should be noted in this connection:

- the Community's growing timber deficit;
- the low price of timber imported from non-member countries;
- the high production costs of Community timber, mainly involving wages, which discourage the formulation of a serious production policy.

23. It will be clear from these three points that the Community has to make a serious choice between:

- pursuing its present policy of importing timber at a low price, with all the attendant risks, namely: price fluctuations, inevitable price rises, depletion of traditional sources of supply, the tendency of non-member countries to increase their exports of semi-manufactured products, etc.,
- or, using all the means available to increase the level of Community self-sufficiency and overcome the initial difficulties caused by higher production costs.

24. Your rapporteur is convinced that the second path is the one to be followed. Not only is timber one of the Community's few raw materials but it is one which can be renewed. It is therefore ridiculous that the Community should not use every means available to reduce its dependence on foreign timber production - particularly in the light of the present developments concerning other essential raw materials such as oil.

The time is ripe for Community action which should include measures such as the following:

- a series of financial incentives for Community production; a review of the customs regulations governing imports from non-member countries; outline directives on taxation to encourage the Member States to adopt taxation systems more in line with the proposed objective,
- structural measures, partly financed by the Guidance Section, to develop and improve the Community's production structures.

This brief list illustrates how much scope there is for Community action once recognition has been given to the need to develop Community production.

25. The second serious problem concerns, in your rapporteur's opinion, the difficulties arising from the fact that over 61% of the Community's forests is private rather than State property and that a further 21.9% is owned by public bodies which are not necessarily obliged to comply unconditionally with State measures. A suitable system therefore has to be found to encourage private owners to implement the various national and Community directives on, for example, increasing production, improving forestry management and structures, free access for recreational purposes and so on.

It is obvious that neither the Community nor the Member States can force private owners to take action against their will. The only solution therefore is to provide incentives, or in certain cases, compensation, while ensuring equality of treatment for public and private owners.

26. Again, Community action should involve not only the provision of detailed information on the measures to be taken, for example in an outline directive, but also of at least some of the necessary financial resources. The Commission clearly has an enormous task before it which should be faced with courage and determination.

27. A third set of problems concerns the various aspects of scientific research in the forestry sector. The Committee on Agriculture has expressed concern at four aspects in particular: the phytosanitary problems connected with the serious diseases which are afflicting two common trees throughout Europe, namely the elm and the cypress, and threatening to wipe them out

completely; the serious damage caused by forest fires particularly in the Mediterranean regions; the need to find Community substitutes for the huge and increasing imports of pulp from non-member countries; and finally, the need to create more efficient systems of management and exploitation of woodland resources.

28. While these are not the only problems requiring Community scientific research, they are the most important ones. This document has deliberately set aside the various environmental aspects which are being studied by the committee competent to return an opinion.

The field of scientific research therefore offers special scope for Community action. This should involve not merely the introduction of new measures but the coordination of already existing national measures which should be strengthened or replaced where necessary.

The new Forestry Committee which is to be responsible for coordination, will have a valuable contribution to make in this respect.

Some of the abovementioned problems, such as phytosanitation, are extremely serious and require urgent attention. It is therefore essential to avoid the waste of effort and money involved in uncoordinated measures.

S T A T I S T I C S¹

ANNEX I

(1) <u>Forest area</u> (in 1000 ha)	EUR 9	EUR 6	D	F	I	NL	B	L	UK	IR	DK
	32,146	29,285	7,207	14,765	6,306	308	616	83	2,020	342	499
(2) <u>As % of EUR 9 = 100</u>	100	91.1	22.4	45.9	19.6	1	1.9	0.3	6.2	1.1	1.6
(3) <u>State and private forests</u> (in 1000 ha)											
(a) <u>State forests</u>	5,467	4,183	2,239	1,425	353	85	75	6	875	260	149
(b) <u>Forests belonging to other public bodies</u>	7,052	6,995	1,811	2,730	2,156	49	218	31	- ²	2	55
(c) <u>Private forests</u>	19,627	18,107	3,157	10,610	3,797	174	323	46	1,145 ³	80	295
<u>Total</u>	32,146	29,285	7,207	14,765	6,306	308	616	83	2,020	342	499
(4) <u>State and private forests</u> (in %)											
(a) <u>State forests</u>	17.0	14.3	31.1	9.7	5.6	27.6	12.2	7.3	43.3	76.0	29.9
(b) <u>Forests belonging to other public bodies</u>	21.9	23.9	25.1	18.5	34.2	15.9	35.4	37.3	- ²	0.6	11.0
(c) <u>Private forests</u>	61.1	61.8	43.8	71.8	60.2	56.5	52.4	55.4	56.7 ³	23.4	59.1
<u>Total</u>	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

¹ Source, unless otherwise indicated: EUROSTAT - Forestry Statistics 1970-75

² Included in private forests

³ Including forests belonging to public bodies other than the State

(5) Total amount of timber cut (in 1000 m³ of wood in the rough, without bark)

	EUR 9	EUR 6	D	F	I	NL	B	L	UK	IR	DK
1970	82,615	76,828	28,196	30,432	14,564	850	2,564	222	3,421	306	2,060
1971	82,128	76,477	28,261	29,525	15,076	815	2,581	219	3,437	316	1,898
1972	76,122	70,485	23,762	29,692	13,120	1,080	2,671	160	3,298	422	1,917
1973	82,949	77,552	30,680	30,752	11,776 ¹	1,306	2,812	226	3,351	321 ¹	1,725
1974	79,148	73,974	32,022	31,255	6,809	1,092	2,584	212	3,300	243 ²	1,631
1975	69,263	64,139	26,103	27,824	6,652	907	2,431	222	3,200	304	1,620
1976	72,331	66,817	28,603	27,462	7,063	963	2,526	200	3,420	479	1,615

(6) Balance of supplies of wood in the rough (in 1000 m³ of wood in the rough, without bark)

Country	Year	Imports			Exports			Total amount available (Cols. 3+6-9)	
		Production	from EEC countries	from non-member countries	Total	to EEC countries	to non-member countries		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
EUR 9	1975	69,263	4,615	8,753	13,398	4,243	3,080	7,323	75,338
	1976	70,610	4,826	10,417	15,243	4,499	2,803	7,302	78,551
EUR 6	1975	64,139	4,470	8,141	12,611	4,191	2,609	6,800	69,950
	1976	66,817	4,656	9,952	14,608	4,422	2,204	6,626	74,799
D	1975	26,103	595	1,845	2,440	1,354	2,237	3,591	24,352
	1976	28,603	623	2,326	2,949	1,311	1,915	3,226	28,326
F	1975	27,824	349	1,937	2,286	2,006	318	2,324	27,786
	1976	27,462	316	2,212	2,528	2,166	241	2,407	27,583
I	1975	6,652	860	3,847	4,707	4	5	9	11,350
	1976	7,063	868	4,903	5,771	2	1	3	12,831
NL	1975	907	549	315	864	343	16	359	1,412
	1976	963	551	271	822	464	22	486	1,299
BLEU	1975	2,653	2,117	197	2,314	484	33	517	4,450
	1976	2,726	2,298	240	2,538	479	25	504	4,760
UK	1975	3,200	90	526	616	9	36	45	3,771
	1976	3,420	94	381	475	27	75	102	3,793
IR	1975	304	5	39	44	27	-	27	321
	1976	479	4	33	37	41	0	41	475
DK	1975	1,620	80	47	127	16	435	451	1,296
	1976	1,615	72	51	123	9	524	533	1,205

¹ Break in comparability

² For the period 1.4.1974-31.12.1974

Forest fires (number and area in ha)

	<u>1972</u>		<u>1976</u>	
	number	area	number	area
EUR 9	10,390	98,496	-	-
D	1,959	3,380	5,433	4,750
F	2,321	16,090	-	-
I	4,772	77,376	5,227	38,660
NL	102	125	443	1,029
B	128	272	652	2,674
L	3	5	36	23
UK	908	588	1,655	2,174
IR	97	510	98	521
DK	100	150	200	2,000

Imports of forest products¹ in 1000 dollars²

	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>
Belgium-Luxembourg	628,104	935,915	720,278
Denmark	486,617	584,638	511,156
France	1,343,482	2,086,171	1,657,699
Fed. Rep. of Germany	2,323,378	2,705,711	2,613,317
Ireland	126,986	215,774	151,168 ⁺
Italy	1,319,259	1,841,615	1,359,734
Netherlands	927,292	1,531,758	1,064,649
United Kingdom	2,921,103	4,160,330	3,157,161

Exports of forest products¹ in 100 dollars²

Principal exporting countries

	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>
<u>World</u>	22,448,441	29,116,680	26,136,681
<u>Africa</u>	827,982	839,337	802,716
Gabon	104,584	133,494	198,494
Ivory Coast	284,129	272,550	201,172
<u>North America</u>	7,093,991	9,026,366	8,454,590
Canada	4,353,480	5,406,704	4,881,095
United States	2,667,668	3,543,138	3,495,375
<u>South America</u>	329,646	455,540	381,309
Brazil	227,725	236,016	176,211
Chile	36,496	122,581	120,057
<u>Asia</u>	3,051,876	3,242,957	2,653,371
China	285,438	224,236	187,502
Indonesia	578,190	727,823	472,517
Japan	305,566	612,688	620,601
Rep. of Korea	335,363	266,445	288,092
Malay Peninsula	294,262	291,039	241,413
Malay Sabah	335,634	376,914	247,870
Philippines	426,726	296,829	226,050
Singapore	209,456	187,141	148,468
<u>Europe</u>	9,507,998	13,332,370	11,607,579
Austria	637,808	872,147	683,507
Belgium-Luxembourg	375,903	431,970	428,000
Czechoslovakia	132,665	178,560	182,260
Finland	1,854,997	2,421,981	2,269,890
France	612,683	899,906	753,353
Fed. Germany	808,657	1,267,401	959,170
Italy	245,341	400,008	341,574
Netherlands	267,202	446,844	315,742
Norway	448,913	719,769	586,996
Poland	99,224	121,397	107,189
Portugal	127,254	197,996	172,963
Romania	188,700	266,915	295,570

¹ Source: FAO - Yearbook of forest products 1964-1975

² Exchange rate of European currencies in dollars:

		<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>
Belgium-Luxembourg	1,000 francs	24.20	25.67	27.19
Denmark	1 krone	0.16	0.16	0.17
France	1 franc	0.21	0.21	0.23
Fed. Germany	1 DM	0.37	0.39	0.41
Ireland	1 pound sterling	2.32	2.34	2.22
Italy	1,000 lire	1.64	1.54	1.54
Netherlands	1 guilder	0.35	0.37	0.40
United Kingdom	1 pound sterling	2.32	2.34	2.22

⁺ FAO estimate

	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>
Spain	70,752	121,808	112,513
Sweden	2,833,180	3,855,568	3,428,554
United Kingdom	232,567	365,343	319,176
Yugoslavia	246,232	299,212	218,144
Oceania	237,706	311,049	302,050
Australia	96,256	128,585	129,679
New Zealand	119,243	144,533	136,899
USSR	1,399,242	1,909,061	1,935,066

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL POLICY, REGIONAL PLANNING AND TRANSPORT

Draftsman: Mr John CORRIE

On 22 September 1978 the Committee on Regional Policy, Regional Planning and Transport appointed Mr John CORRIE draftsman.

At its meeting of 27 March 1979, the committee considered the draft opinion and adopted it unanimously.

Present: Lord Bruce of Donington, chairman; Mr Nyborg, vice-chairman; Mr Corrie, rapporteur; Mr Brugger, Mr Fuchs, Mr Jung, Mr Ligios, Mr Osborn and Mr Tolman.

1. As it stands, the main interest of the Commission's Communication to the Council concerning forestry policy in the European Community (Doc. 542/78) lies more perhaps in the excellently lucid and informative description it provides of the present state of forestry in the Community and of its economic importance to the Community than in the concrete proposals it puts forward for a Council Resolution defining the objectives and principles of forestry policy, and for a Council Decision to set up a Forestry Committee.

2. This is perhaps inevitable, since forestry, as such, is not specifically mentioned in the Treaty of Rome, though the Commission consider that Article 43 of the Treaty does in fact provide a legal basis for the development of such a policy. It should, however, be pointed out that the present document is not intended to serve as the basis for introducing a common forestry policy, but rather to identify areas where common policies and appropriate common measures could benefit forestry in the Community as a whole.

3. Why this should be desirable is immediately apparent from the factual material contained in the Communication. Currently, the Member States as a whole are dependent on imports of over 60% for their wood and wood products consumption, demand for which has doubled in the last twenty-five years, and which is rising by 2% a year, while production (currently about 80 million m³ of wood annually) is rising by only about 1%. This deficit totals some 8,000 million EUA per annum, a negative trade balance which is exceeded only by the Community's oil deficit, and which affects to a greater or lesser extent all Member States, since each is a net importer.

4. As the Communication points out at paragraph 1.5, the Community "already accounts for more than one-third of world trade in wood and wood products"; and it follows from this that too great a dependance on imports has potential dangers, the risk of which could be lessened if the Community could increase its own production. It would not be appropriate in this Opinion to go into the technical aspects of the ways in which this could be done, but as the Communication states, the European yield works out at 2.4 m³ per Ha for the total forest area, and at 3.5 m³ per Ha for the productive high forest area; these figures should be compared with yields of between 5 and 8 m³ per Ha in systematically managed forests. The

Commission concludes that if the appropriate measures are taken, including the afforestation of new areas, it would be possible in the short term, that is to say over a period of about 10-15 years, to increase the total of wood raw equivalent material from the present 108 m³ per annum (existing harvest 80 million m³ per year - sawmilling residues 8 million m³ per year - recovery of waste paper 20 million m³ per year) by about 30 million m³ per year. In the longer term, that is to say at a period some time in the first half of the next century, it should be possible to increase production by about 125 million m³ per year.

5. These are encouraging and, the present draftsman believes, realistic figures and they are based on an assessment of the potential production capacity within the Member States rather than on a Community development programme with specific Community aids and assistance. This is not to say that the Community has not, and does not, take measures to assist forestry,¹ and these are summarised in paragraphs 1.8 to 1.14 of the Communication.

6. From the point of view of the Committee on Regional Policy, Regional Planning and Transport, forestry is of particular interest because of the importance it has, or is capable of assuming, in the more remote and underprivileged areas of the Community which may well not support other types of agriculture. The Committee believe that the systematic development of forestry in such regions could, where it is practicable, be of great benefit provided:-

- (a) that the forestry policy remains consistent over a long period of time, bearing in mind the long-term nature of virtually all forestry operations, and that it is not upset by arbitrary or ill-thought out changes in taxation laws which may discourage the private investor who ought to make a significant contribution to forestry development;
- (b) that the private owner is given worthwhile incentives to afforest, again bearing in mind the long-term nature of forestry operations and the low annual investment yield;
- (c) that afforestation or the development of forestry in a region or area should form part of long-term planning for the development of that region, in that the processing of the raw material and

¹ See for example the regulation on a common measure for forestry in certain dry Mediterranean zones of the Community which has already been reported on favourably by this Committee and enacted by the Council of Ministers (OJ No. C 117 of 20.5.1978)

the manufacture of processed wood products should as far as possible be carried out on the spot, thus maximising the employment potential in a particular area, and even creating new industries and sources of employment.

The Committee would point out that assistance from the Regional Development Fund is available for projects concerned with the exploitation of wood, including necessary road construction, and that there is no reason why cooperatives or small groups engaged in forestry or afforestation should not avail themselves of loans from the E.I.B.

7. In addition to providing these direct benefits, the amenity and recreational facilities afforded by forestry should provide a useful 'spin-off', particularly for regions seeking to develop their tourist potential as a valuable source of additional employment and income. The draftsman is aware that the interests of forestry and tourism are not always compatible, but experience has shown over the years that, with reasonable precautions and constraints, the two can go together successfully and provide a valuable source of 'recreation', in every sense of that word, for town dwellers. In view of the costs involved in ensuring that public access to forests does not cause damage, whether by fire or to the ecological balance, the Committee do not believe that there should be any obligation on the private forest owner or owners either to admit the public or to provide necessary facilities beyond those which already exist, such as rights of way. On the other hand, as far as state-owned forests are concerned, or forests owned by national agencies, the Committee believes that public access should be as free as is possible and is compatible with special circumstances such as growths of young trees or areas devoted to research.

8. Research, incidentally, is an area where the Committee would welcome as much cooperation as possible; considerable progress has been made in developing fast growing varieties of trees, and it would also be highly desirable to examine the range of trees which can be profitably forested in various types of soil, thus perhaps opening up areas to types of agricultural exploitation which had not been envisaged previously.¹

¹ Useful work has been done in this respect in the West of Ireland, where the possibility of growing bamboo is receiving serious consideration. The rôle of forestry not as a commercial end in itself but environmentally, and as a means of protecting agriculture from soil erosion is, of course, also very important, and is fully acknowledged by the Commission. Further research, coordinated at Community level, into various tree diseases would also be welcome.

9. Forestry then is important to the regions of the Community and the Communities' regional policy as expressed through the Regional Development Fund can provide direct assistance to forestry, and the Committee not only welcome the fact that this is fully accepted by the Commission, but they would hope that the Member States in pursuing their own forestry policies will recognise this as well, and in particular that they will take into account the importance that integrated forestry development as outlined in paragraph 6(c) above can have in many of the poorer regions.

10. As far as the proposed Council Resolution on objectives and principles is concerned, the Committee on Regional Policy, Regional Planning and Transport have no hesitation in endorsing them. They particularly welcome the General Principle, paragraph 3, which states that "Forestry policy measures should be formulated and implemented with due regard to other national and Community policies, especially those concerned with: . . .
- regional development, including employment and standards of living, especially in economically less favoured regions". They also welcome the passages in the section on Instruments of Forestry Policy which emphasise the long-term nature of forestry operations which should not be over-dependent on short-term fluctuation in economic and other circumstances.

11. The proposed decision to set up a Forestry Committee represents a useful first step in bringing about the coordination (rather than harmonisation) of the forestry policies of the Member States. The Committee on Regional Policy, Regional Planning and Transport consider, however, that formal recognition should be given to the importance of the link between forestry and Regional Policy, and that the proposed Article 2 should therefore be amended as follows:-

" Article 2

1. The Committee shall be responsible for studying the forestry policies of the Member States and the measures and programmes relating thereto, and shall take into account any Community provision affecting the forestry sector and the relationship between that sector and Community policy, and in particular regional policy."

Article 4 should be amended by the insertion of a new requirement in the two yearly report to be made by the Commission on forestry policy as follows:-

" - an assessment of the impact which forestry measures have had or are expected or designed to have on regional development, including employment and standards of living, especially in economically less-favoured regions".

12. Subject to these observations, the Committee on Regional Policy, Regional Planning and Transport give their favourable opinion on the Commission's Communication.

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT, PUBLIC HEALTH AND

CONSUMER PROTECTION

Draftsman: Mrs Vera SQUARCIALUPI

On 24 January 1979 the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection appointed Mrs Vera Squarcialupi draftsman.

It considered the draft opinion at its meeting of 22 March 1979 and adopted it unanimously with one abstention.

Present: Mrs Krouwel-Vlam, chairman; Mr Jahn, vice-chairman; Mrs Squarcialupi, draftsman; Mr Ajello, Mr Andersen, Mr Edwards, Mr Ellis, Mr Granet, Mr Lamberts, Mr Noè, Lord St. Oswald, Mr Verhaegen, Mr Veronesi and Mr Wawrzik.

I. EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Although the introductory part of the Commission's communication to the Council deals in an extensive and satisfactory manner with the problem of protecting land from hydrogeological imbalance, in the proposal for a Council resolution the way in which this aspect is treated lacks substance. One has the impression that the problem of afforestation has been approached mainly from the point of view of North European countries, where it can be placed in an industrial context, given that in those areas woodlands are located on plains so that a timber industry can develop and forests can be useful as a place for people to spend their leisure-time.

In the Mediterranean countries, and in Italy in particular, the problem of afforestation on the other hand is a question of urgent action to cope with hydrogeological damage due to the nature of the soil, to the presence of extensive mountainous areas and to the fact that for centuries forests have been exploited as the only source of fuel.

It should therefore be pointed out that the estimated 3% return on forestry investment will not, in fact, apply to Mediterranean mountain and hill areas, where it will be lower as far as exploitation of wood is concerned but higher in terms of the prevention of environmental damage (landslides, flooding etc.) which results in the loss of human life as well as considerable material damage.

For this reason, in respect of many privately owned unforested areas which are now totally unproductive but represent a constant risk of further damage, the Community's forestry policy programme should provide for their transfer to public ownership so as to permit their reafforestation, which can never be profitable for private owners since no cutting down of trees, apart from that necessary for maintenance purposes, would be allowed.

Special provision for these privately owned areas should be included in the overall afforestation plans, possibly in the farm development plans envisaged in implementation of Directive 159/72 on the modernization of farms. In some cases the relevant land reallocation could be used for the purpose of global public intervention under the forestry policy, provided, of course, the interests of the original owners were protected.

The special nature of Alpine, sub-Alpine and Appenine soil means that afforestation must, in effect, remain unproductive in terms of wood production, although this could be improved by the provision of infrastructures which would make possible the recovery of fallen tree trunks and the systematic thinning of young and adult woods. In these mountain areas, where it is precisely on the steepest slopes that the presence of woodland for environmental protection is essential, provision should be made for the

construction of roads and tracks that would be closed to normal traffic, so as to avoid damage by the practitioners of motocross and cross-country motoring.

The provision of infrastructures would also permit the thinning of woodland to allow the growth of sturdier trees, giving better protection to the soil, and at the same time would make possible the harvesting of forest litter, whereas at present, because of transport difficulties, even branches of a diameter exceeding 10 centimetres, as well as tree trunks brought down by wind or snow, are not utilized.

In addition to these infrastructures, which should make the exploitation of the forest heritage more profitable, the programme should provide for other infrastructures such as terracing, the lack of which in certain areas vitiates every effort at afforestation or environmental protection.

To improve productivity, consideration should also be given, especially as regards the more disadvantaged mountain areas which are also suffering from the phenomenon of depopulation, to the possibility of animal farming compatible with the preservation and harmonious development of woodland. To this end, research is needed to determine suitable animal distribution in relation to the characteristics and extent of the land. Suitable species for husbandry in these conditions might include cattle, sheep and pigs, including wild boar.

In forestry research, special attention should be paid to the development of the Mediterranean flora, more particularly in view of the expected enlargement of the Community to include Greece, Portugal and Spain, and notably to the development of a more coherent policy in respect of the interface between forestry and tree cultures (olives, nuts, chestnuts). The Community's research effort should therefore not be one-sided, but should include the Mediterranean flora, and more particularly its productivity and its ecological and environmental aspects.

It should, indeed, be remembered that the type of silviculture which can be practised is inextricably linked with the quality of the soil. A policy of indiscriminate afforestation which took no account of this interdependence and of the specific nature of the soil, is likely to prove a failure.

As regards research, whereas it would not be true to say that all parallel efforts are useless, they could easily become so when there is duplication so that the principle that the Community should protect regional characteristics is neglected.

The management of the flora, and especially of the fauna, should be based on the scientific principles of nature conservancy to ensure that animal and plant species do not become extinct or rare, and at the same time that they do not threaten the survival of other species.

A final suggestion concerns the policy on public relations, which should be developed to the fullest extent, beginning with the schools, so that the public at large is made aware of all the problems relating to forestry management.

II. CONCLUSIONS

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection

1. Welcomes the communication from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council concerning forestry policy in the European Community, but regrets to find that a Community policy for the forestry sector is still lacking since the forestry action programme submitted as long ago as 1974 is yet to be approved by the Council;
2. Asks that the powers granted to the Commission by the Treaty of Rome to pursue a forestry policy be defined, since the mere coordination by the Community of national measures and of action by the Social Fund and the Regional Fund, which have so far provided finance for only a very few projects, is not sufficient;
3. Considers that in the proposal for a Council resolution concerning the objectives and principles of forestry policy insufficient consideration has been given to the main aspects of the policy as they affect the Mediterranean areas (particularly Italy), where the nature of the soil means that forestry resources can be exploited little or not at all, and to the specific infrastructures necessary not only for environmental protection but for the regeneration of endangered or threatened ecosystems;
4. Believes that every effort to make woodlands into places of recreation for the population should be welcomed, but insists that, particularly in the disadvantaged areas, attention should be paid to the productive possibilities of suitably located animal farming and commercial silvicultures;
5. Hopes for greater coordination of the research which is carried out by the various forestry institutes, and is of the opinion that this is essential to achieve a unified decision-making system embracing the various local conditions and measures, i.e. a system of planning that would protect regional characteristics while taking account of the ecological conditions existing in the various countries and the instruments available to them;
6. Believes it essential for the proposed Permanent Forestry Committee to have greater powers which would enable it to lay down guidelines for the formulation of common programmes and to have a status commensurate

with the importance that forestry policy should have in the economic and environmental policies of the states and with its implications in the areas of tourism and of leisure and health activities, as well as of the general economic welfare of the population;

7. Requests the Committee on Agriculture to make the following amendments to the proposal for a Council resolution.

PROPOSAL for a Council resolution concerning the objectives and
principles of forestry policy

Preamble unchanged

OBJECTIVES AND PRINCIPLES OF FORESTRY
POLICY

1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. Forests should be protected and managed as a renewable resource to supply products and services which are essential to the quality of life in the European Community now and in the future. The main objectives should be:

- a sustainable increase in the economic production of timber,
- the conservation and improvement of the environment,
- public access to forests for recreation.

Where practicable, these objectives should be pursued in conjunction with one another by multiple-use management, the weight to be attached to each being varied according to ownership and the particular needs at a given place and time.

2. Forestry policy should

- recognize the long-term nature of forestry which renders sudden major changes in policy undesirable,
- take account of the distinctive characteristics and complementary roles of
 - . private forests
 - . state forests
 - . other publicly owned forests
- seek to create conditions in which efficiently managed woodlands are economically viable.

3. Forestry policy measures should be formulated and implemented with due regard to other national and Community policies, especially those concerned with:

OBJECTIVES AND PRINCIPLES OF FORESTRY
POLICY

1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. Forests should be protected and managed as a renewable resource to supply products and services which are essential to the quality of life in the European Community now and in the future. The main objectives should be:

- a sustainable increase in the economic production of timber,
- soil restructuring,
- the conservation and improvement of the environment,
- public access to forests for recreation.

Where practicable, these objectives should be pursued in conjunction with one another by multiple-use management, the weight to be attached to each being varied according to ownership and the particular needs at a given place and time.

2. Forestry policy should

- unchanged

- unchanged

- seek to create conditions in which efficiently managed woodlands are economically viable not only in terms of timber production but also of livestock farming, particularly in the disadvantaged regions and with the aim of preventing hydrogeological disasters.

3. Forestry policy measures should be formulated and implemented with due regard to other national and Community policies, especially those concerned with:

¹ For complete text see Doc. 542/78

- land use,
- agriculture*,
- wood-using industries,
- regional development, including employment and standards of living, especially in economically less-favoured regions,
- urban and rural development.

- land use,
- agriculture,
- wood-using industries,
- hydrogeological protection,
- regional development, including employment and standards of living, especially in economically less-favoured regions,
- urban and rural development.

4. unchanged

5. unchanged

6. Forestry policy measures should be coordinated at Community level to the extent necessary to achieve common objectives.

6. Forestry policy measures should be coordinated at Community level to the extent necessary to achieve common objectives, going as far as formal planning for this sector.

2. THE FOREST ESTATE

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1, 2 and 3 unchanged

3. WOOD PRODUCTION

3. WOOD PRODUCTION

1. unchanged

2. The aim should be to raise the production and promote the better use of wood by measures appropriate to the particular circumstances of each country or region.

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Among the measures to be considered are:

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(a) and (b) unchanged

(c) Organizations, infrastructural and institutional measures to promote efficient management, harvesting and marketing in order to reduce costs and increase revenues from wood production; such measures could include

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- encouragement of associations of woodland owners,
- encouragement of consolidation of scattered small parcels of woodland which are in a single ownership,
- provision of roads and tracks to improve access to forests,

- encouragement of associations of woodland owners,
- encouragement of consolidation of scattered small parcels of woodland which are in a single ownership,
- provision of roads and tracks to improve access to forests,

* Line omitted in Italian version of the Commission's document (Transl.)

- market promotion and the monitoring of markets,
- the creation and development of appropriate wood processing industries within reasonable distance of the forests,
- the promotion of relevant research and development,
- the improvement of training and educational facilities.

especially those which are the most difficult to access, provided that this does not result in haphazard disturbance of the ecological balance of mountain and hill areas,

- market promotion and the monitoring of markets,
- the creation and development of appropriate wood processing industries within reasonable distance of the forests,
- the promotion and coordination of relevant research and development,
- the improvement of training and educational facilities.

3. unchanged

4. CONSERVATION OF NATURE AND PROTECTION OF THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

4. CONSERVATION OF NATURE AND PROTECTION OF THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

1. unchanged

2. Appropriate authorities should be authorized by legislation to initiate, after consultation with the forest owner, additional conservation measures where they are deemed necessary for specific purposes and especially for

2. unchanged

- the protection against
 - . erosion by water and wind
 - . desiccation and flooding
 - . avalanches
- the conservation of habitats of species of animals and plants which are in danger of extinction and whose survival is considered important.

Where privately owned lands are totally unproductive and represent a hydrogeological risk, public authorities should have the duty to purchase these lands for the purpose of reafforestation, which, given the specific nature of the soil, will never be productive.

3. unchanged

5. PUBLIC ACCESS AND RECREATION

5. PUBLIC ACCESS AND RECREATION

1, 2 and 3 unchanged

6. WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

Subject to any Community measures which provide for more specific obligations, wildlife should be managed and controlled with the following aims in view:

6. WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

Subject to any Community measures which provide for more specific obligations, wildlife should be managed and controlled scientifically on the principles of nature conservation with the following aims in view:

- maintaining a healthy but not excessive population of as many species as are appropriate to a region and in harmony with local traditions,
- avoiding as far as possible interference with other aspects of forest management and agriculture, especially through game damage.

- maintaining a population of local species commensurate with the region's productive capacity as determined according to scientific criteria,
- avoiding the extinction or dangerous reduction of animal or plant species,
- avoiding increases in species population which might threaten the survival of the same or other species,
- avoiding, as far as possible interference with other aspects of forest management and agriculture, especially as regards damage by wild animals.

7. INSTRUMENTS OF FORESTRY POLICY

7. INSTRUMENTS OF FORESTRY POLICY

1, 2 and 3 unchanged

4. Research and development

4. Research and development

The major research and development effort should be directed to solve as cost-effectively as possible the most urgent problems confronting forest management by

The major research and development effort should be directed to solve as cost-effectively* as possible the most urgent problems confronting forest management, including soil protection, protection against landslides, protection of continental and Mediterranean sylvan ecosystems and the Mediterranean scrub as well as productivity of the forest, by

- careful choice of research priorities,
- cooperation and coordination at both national and Community levels, where this is likely to result in a worthwhile economy of effort,
- the promotion at Community level of selected research projects of particular importance and beyond the capacity of individual national effort.

- unchanged
- unchanged
- unchanged

5. unchanged

6. Information^{**}

6. Information

Les Etats membres devraient exploiter et développer les statistiques nécessaires relatives à la forêt sur la base de critères et de définitions communs à tous les Etats membres afin

On the basis of jointly established criteria and definitions all the Member States should carry out and develop forestry statistics, in order to

- d'assurer la comparabilité des statistiques nationales et
- de permettre le regroupement des statistiques utiles sur le plan communautaire.

- ensure that national statistics are comparable and
- to permit the aggregation of useful statistics at Community level.

L'échange de données non statistiques sur la forêt dans la Communauté devrait également être intensifié.

The exchange of other information concerning forestry should also be intensified, in order to achieve joint planning.

* No change in English text (Transl.)

** This part of the Commission's communication available in French only (Transl.)

7. unchanged

8. Relations publiques*

Des mesures devraient être prises pour permettre au grand public, et spécialement aux jeunes générations, de mieux comprendre la forêt sous tous ses aspects.

8. Public relations

Measures should be taken to enable the public at large and especially young people to gain a better understanding of the forest, embracing the whole wide range of forestry aspects and of their economic and social role in the present-day world.

* This part of the Commission's communication available in French only (Transl.)