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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Permanent Representatives Committee/Council
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Subject:	Proposal for a Regulation on a Monitoring Framework for Resilient European Forests - Presentation by the Commission - Policy debate

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1. On 22 November 2023, the Commission adopted a proposal for a Regulation on a Monitoring Framework for Resilient European Forests. The proposal aims to set up an EU-wide forest observation framework which will provide information on the condition and management of EU forests, and on the many products and ecosystem services that forests provide.
2. The Commission presented its legislative proposal and the accompanying impact assessment to the Working Party on the Environment on 1 December 2023, and to the Working Party on Forestry on 5 December 2023.
3. In order to guide the discussion on the abovementioned legislative proposal at the forthcoming meeting of the Council (Environment) on 18 December 2023, the Presidency has prepared a background note and three questions, as set out in the Annex to this note.

4. The Permanent Representatives Committee is invited to take note of the Presidency's questions and to forward them to the Council for the abovementioned policy debate.
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## **Proposal for a Regulation on a Monitoring Framework for Resilient European Forests**

### **- Presidency Note -**

On 22 November 2023, the European Commission published a Proposal for a Regulation on a Monitoring Framework for Resilient European Forests ('Proposal'). This Proposal constitutes the main legislative initiative of the "New EU Forest Strategy for 2030", published in 2021.

The main objective of the Proposal is to improve the information available on European forests, ensuring timeliness, accuracy, consistency, transparency, comparability and completeness of forest data within the EU, and their public accessibility.

By collecting and making accessible forest information, the Proposal aims to support the implementation of EU legislation and policies pertaining to the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of forest ecosystems and their services.

To this end, the Proposal establishes a system of forest data collection managed by the European Commission, which would comprise 8 basic forest indicators. These data are to be obtained using remote sensing, notably through the Copernicus programme.

Additionally, Member States would have to contribute to this process by providing updated data on 14 forest indicators. These complementary data are to be obtained by a combination of ground surveys, Earth observation and other sources of information.

According to the Proposal, Member States and the European Commission are expected to cooperate and coordinate their efforts to improve the quality, timeliness and coverage of forest data. To this end, existing regional institutional cooperation structures may be used.

In response to the announcement of this Proposal in the new EU Forest Strategy for 2030, the Council Conclusions adopted in November 2021 encouraged the use of existing international monitoring and reporting processes, along with the use of existing definitions and indicators developed in international and regional processes such as Forest Europe. Additionally, Member States recalled that data collection, processing, reporting and interpretation should make use of existing national forest inventories and related international cooperation under, among others, the ENFIN network.

### Questions for the Policy debate

Considering the content of the Proposal and to guide the first negotiations within the Council, Ministers are invited to exchange views on the following questions:

- *Do you consider that the proposal covers all the necessary aspects for the establishment of an effective forest monitoring system to ensure the resilience of forests against current and future risks?*
- *In your opinion, which aspects of the proposed forest monitoring framework will be more beneficial to address current forest data gaps?*
- *How can we enhance the cost-effectiveness of this proposal, in order to facilitate its implementation at national level?*

Speaking time: 3 minutes per Member State.