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Subject:	Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on a monitoring framework for resilient European forests - <i>General approach</i>

I. INTRODUCTION

1. On 22 November 2023, the European Commission submitted to the Council a proposal for a Regulation on a Monitoring Framework for Resilient European Forests. This proposal constitutes the main legislative initiative announced in the “New EU Forest Strategy for 2030” published in 2021.

2. The proposal aims to establish a high-quality forest monitoring system, managed by the European Commission in cooperation with the Member States, that would be based on standardised or harmonised data to track progress on achieving EU targets and policy objectives concerning forests (including on biodiversity, climate and crisis response), to improve risk assessment and preparedness, and to support evidence-based decision-making.
3. The Commission proposed to base the Regulation on Article 192(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (Ordinary Legislative Procedure).
4. The European Economic and Social Committee was consulted and delivered its opinion on 20 March 2024¹. The Committee of the Regions has decided not to issue an opinion.
5. In the European Parliament, the file is handled by the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) and the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development (AGRI) under the joint committee procedure. The rapporteurs designated for the file are Emma Wiesner (Renew, SE) from the ENVI Committee and Eric Sar Giacomo (S&D, FR) from the AGRI Committee. On 4 December 2024, the ENVI and AGRI committee members had an exchange of views with the Commission on the proposal. On 13 January 2025, the ENVI and AGRI committees held a joint public hearing on forest monitoring. On 18 February 2025, the two committees discussed the co-rapporteurs' draft report. On 20 March 2025, ENVI and AGRI jointly assessed the amendments tabled on the text. The vote in the EP plenary is foreseen for September 2025.

II. WORK WITHIN THE COUNCIL

6. The Spanish Presidency organised an exchange of views on the proposal in the 'Environment' Council on 18 December 2023. The Belgian Presidency provided for a similar exchange of views in the 'Agriculture and Fisheries' Council on 23 January 2024 and subsequently informed both Council configurations respectively on 25 March 2024 and on 24 June 2024 on the progress made in the examination of the proposal.

¹ 8498/24

7. In order to allow the Council to effectively address the cross-sectoral issues covered by this legislative proposal, the Permanent Representatives Committee established an ad hoc working party on forest monitoring (AHWP FM) on 17 January 2024. The AHWP FM reports to the ‘Agriculture and Fisheries’ configuration of the Council and, on a regular basis, to the ‘Environment’ configuration of the Council.
8. Building on the comprehensive work carried out under the Belgian Presidency, the Hungarian Presidency continued the technical discussions in the AHWP FM. A first Presidency compromise text was issued in October 2024². However, a large majority of delegations asked for a strategic discussion in the Permanent Representatives Committee before engaging in detailed discussions of the proposed Presidency compromise text.
9. The Permanent Representatives Committee, at its meeting on 27 November 2024, discussed the objectives and scope of the proposal, its added value and the type of instrument that would be most appropriate to achieve those objectives, with the aim to provide guidance on the way forward on this file.
10. In that Committee meeting, the Commission explained that the proposal builds on the existing forest monitoring of the Member States without introducing duplications. Furthermore, the Commission pointed out that the added value of the proposal would be in the accuracy and comparability of forest data at EU level, which would facilitate the monitoring of trends over time and help to ensure that climate targets and the nationally determined contributions to halt deforestation are met collectively. Quality and comparable forest data would also help to inform policy-making - including in economic areas related to forests such as the bioeconomy - and provide a better understanding of the needs for collective action in response to forest-related challenges, especially those triggered by climate change.

² 13702/24 and 13119/24 ADD 1

11. In response to the Commission's explanations, the large majority of delegations agreed that there is value in the harmonisation and standardisation of forest data at EU level. However, most delegations stressed that the proposal should be simplified, its scope should be narrowed down in line with the principle of subsidiarity and thus focus on a smaller number of key indicators for forest data collection with clear added value. The majority of delegations also stated that they would favour a bottom-up approach, building on the harmonisation of data already collected by the national forest inventories (NFIs) and a better alignment with the already existing forest data reporting obligations. Furthermore, the majority of delegations confirmed that a regulation could be an appropriate instrument to reach the proposed objectives.
12. The technical work then continued at working party level and the Hungarian Presidency presented a progress report on the proposal to the AGRIFISH Council on 9 December 2024³.
13. The technical work continued during the Polish Presidency with 6 meetings of the AHWP FM which were the basis for the Polish Presidency to elaborate several draft compromise texts. The fourth revision of the Presidency draft compromise text was discussed in the AHWP FM on 4 June 2025.

³ 16255/24

14. The Commission has expressed concerns about this Presidency revised draft compromise text, which, in its views, jeopardises the achievements of the objectives of the proposal and its added value. The Commission considers that the integration of remote sensing data with ground data is essential and therefore the deletion of the indicators to be monitored by the Commission via Earth Observation (or by Member States if they chose so), of any mapping and of sharing of ground data by the Member States would deprive the proposal of its major added values, namely to improve the overall quality of forest data and to produce accurate forest maps at EU level. The Commission has also underlined that, through the deletion of all indicators related to resilience, the Presidency compromise text would fail to advance real-time monitoring of climate impacts on EU forests. The Commission has also pointed out that the deletion of the standardised frequency of monitoring would affect the reliability of the collected forest data.
15. Two delegations have supported the Commission proposal from the start and would have preferred that the Presidency draft compromise text reflects much more from the provisions proposed by the Commission. However, a wide majority of delegations have expressed continuous support for the changes suggested by the Presidency.
16. At its meeting on 13 June 2025, the Permanent Representatives Committee examined the Presidency draft compromise text and agreed to delete the empowerment to the Commission to adopt a delegated act in Article 7(5) as requested by several delegations during the meeting. The Permanent Representatives Committee endorsed the latest Presidency compromise text as amended and agreed to transmit it to the Council and to invite the latter to reach a general approach on this text at its meeting on 23-24 June 2025.

III. MAIN ELEMENTS OF THE COMPROMISE TEXT

Simplification and bottom-up approach

17. From the beginning of the examination of the proposal, a major concern for the large majority of delegations has been the exact purpose of collecting various forest data on the basis of the indicators contained in Annexes I to III. A large number of delegations consider that some indicators have not been sufficiently developed (in terms of methodology, precision, accuracy, frequency and especially the expected additional costs), even if further refinement by means of delegated or implementing acts is proposed to take place later on. They also consider that some indicators seem to be more research-oriented and should thus not be made mandatory at this stage.
18. In response, the Commission representatives have pointed to Table 21 of the Impact Assessment, which provides an overview of the indicators and parameters included in the proposal, linked with the foreseen policy objectives. Additionally, in the AHWP FM on 5 March 2025, the Commission representatives presented three tables containing further detailed explanations⁴ on the links with other existing legislative acts and on the added value of the indicators contained in the proposal.
19. However, the majority of delegations have not been convinced by the explanations provided by the Commission representatives and have continued to ask for simplification and to stress that a “bottom-up approach” would be more appropriate, namely that monitoring trends at national level should be the starting point for policy-making at EU level.
20. In response to the above concerns, the Presidency introduced a new paragraph in Article 7 and a new Annex IIIa which includes forest indicators already reported by Member States under other EU legislative acts and other international reporting systems. In addition, it is proposed that the Commission will collect and make the forest information collected under the new Annex IIIa publicly accessible through the Forest Information System of Europe (FISE).

⁴ WK 2138/2025 + ADD 1-2

Remote sensing and mapping

21. Throughout the examination of the proposal, many delegations have raised concerns regarding the accuracy and reliability of data obtained by remote sensing. These delegations have also questioned the requirements proposed for mapping, whose purposes are not always clear in their views and whose fulfilment entail a significant workload and high costs not entirely reflected in the Impact Assessment accompanying the proposal. They indicate that even if remote sensing is used as the default first solution, the mapping resulting from remote sensing still needs to be checked and corrected by means of ground surveys. These delegations consider that, in line with the principle of subsidiarity, mapping should remain the responsibility of Member States, that would be better placed to develop cost-effective solutions best suited to their own specificities. To take care of the above concerns, the Presidency compromise text removes Annex I and Article 6 and shifts the focus of forest data collection towards national sources and the indicators included in Annex II.

Extended Annex II – data gathered by the Member States

22. The majority of Member States have emphasized that the EU forest monitoring system should be based on existing national data obtained from various sources. Therefore, in its compromise text, the Presidency proposes to extend Annex II to include indicators collected by the Member States that could support monitoring forests in line with the objectives of the proposal and provide forest information to be publicly available at EU level.

Deletion of the additional indicators in Annex III

23. A large number of delegations have asked for the deletion of the additional indicators contained in Annex III, on the argument that their added value has not been sufficiently demonstrated. In response to this request, the Presidency, in its compromise text, proposes the deletion of Article 8 and Annex III.

Basis for forest data collection; the concept of “forest unit”

24. The Commission proposal foresees to identify and localise forest units as the basis for achieving coherence for the forest data collected, such that changes in forest cover and characteristics could be tracked over time. However, many Member States have expressed concerns regarding the forest unit identification system, namely the unclear added value of the concept, the challenges in interpreting forest units, data protection issues, and uncertainties about how forest units may evolve over time. Additionally, not all Member States have a national forest unit system, so such system could not be used in a EU wide bottom-up approach. In response to these concerns, the Presidency, in its compromise text, has removed the forest unit identification system.

Data harmonisation and role of ENFIN

25. Many delegations have indicated that data harmonisation should be conducted by Member States themselves, with the support of the European National Forest Inventory Network (ENFIN). However, some delegations would prefer this process to be managed by the Commission. To address these diverging views, the Presidency has introduced a new article (Article 5a) clarifying the responsibility for data harmonisation. The predefined data exchange format and data-sharing process will be established by means of a new implementing act.
26. Considering ENFIN's current status and the role of Member States in its development, the Presidency further proposes including a reference to the cooperation with ENFIN in the preamble. Additionally, provisions in Article 5a(2) would allow ENFIN to assist Member States in the harmonisation process.

Integrated long-term national forest plans

27. The large majority of delegations do not agree with the proposed integrated long-term national forest plans, even on a voluntary basis. They consider that the objectives of such national plans are not clear and that, in application of the principle of subsidiarity, national forest plans and/or strategies should remain under the competence of the Member States. In response to these concerns, the Presidency has deleted these provisions (Article 13 and Annex IV) in its compromise text.

IV. CONCLUSION

28. The Council (Agriculture and Fisheries) is invited to reach a general approach on the Presidency compromise text set out in the Annex to this note at its meeting on 23-24 June 2025.
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2023/0413 (COD)

Proposal for a

REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL

on a monitoring framework for resilient European forests

(Text with EEA relevance)

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 192(1) thereof,

Having regard to the proposal from the European Commission,

After transmission of the draft legislative act to the national parliaments,

Having regard to the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee¹,

Having regard to the opinion of the Committee of the Regions²,

Acting in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure,

¹ OJ C , , p. .

² OJ C , , p. .

Whereas:

- (1) Forests and other wooded land cover close to half of the Union's land surface and play a key role in mitigating and adapting to climate change, preserving, and restoring biodiversity, ensuring a strong forest-based bioeconomy and prosperous rural areas, preserving cultural heritage, as well as providing recreational and educational opportunities for the wellbeing of Union citizens. Forests provide vital ecosystem services such as climate regulation, air purification, water supply and regulation, flood and erosion control, habitat for biodiversity, genetic resources. Healthy and sustainably managed forest ecosystems support a significant part of the bioeconomy in the Union, providing the raw material (wood and non-wood such as food and medical plants) for a variety of sectors, with the extended forest-based value chains currently supporting 4.5 million jobs in the Union.

- (1a) In addition, forested land is one of the main contributors to the Union carbon sink and should play an essential role in the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change goals, while meeting the commitments of Regulation (EU) 2021/1119 of the European Parliament and of the Council ('European Climate Law')³, including the Union's objective to reach climate neutrality by 2050, and of the Fit for 55 legislative package, in particular the new monitoring obligations introduced by the revised Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council⁴ with regard to Regulation (EU) 2018/841 of the European Parliament and of the Council ('LULUCF Regulation')⁵. Forested land is also subject to other obligations such as those relating to species and habitat protection under the Council Directive 92/43/EEC⁶, to deforestation under Regulation (EU) 2023/1115 of the European Parliament and of the Council ('Deforestation Regulation')⁷, [nature restoration in Regulation (EU) 2024/1991 of the European Parliament and of the Council⁸] and to renewable energy under the Directive (EU) 2018/2001 of the European Parliament

³ Regulation (EU) 2021/1119 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 June 2021 establishing the framework for achieving climate neutrality and amending Regulations (EC) No 401/2009 and (EU) 2018/1999 ('European Climate Law') (OJ L 243, 9.7.2021, p. 1), ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/1119/oj>.

⁴ Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 on the Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action, amending Regulations (EC) No 663/2009 and (EC) No 715/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Directives 94/22/EC, 98/70/EC, 2009/31/EC, 2009/73/EC, 2010/31/EU, 2012/27/EU and 2013/30/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, Council Directives 2009/119/EC and (EU) 2015/652 and repealing Regulation (EU) No 525/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council (OJ L 328 21.12.2018, p. 1) ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2018/1999/oj>

⁵ Regulation (EU) 2018/841 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2018 on the inclusion of greenhouse gas emissions and removals from land use, land use change and forestry in the 2030 climate and energy framework and amending Regulation (EU) No 525/2013 and Decision No 529/2013/EU (OJ L 156, 19.6.2018, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2018/841/oj>).

⁶ Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (OJ L 206, 22.7.1992, p. 7, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/1992/43/oj>).

⁷ Regulation (EU) 2023/1115 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 31 May 2023 on the making available on the Union market and the export from the Union of certain commodities and products associated with deforestation and forest degradation and repealing Regulation (EU) No 995/2010 (OJ L 150, 9.6.2023, p. 2, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/1115/oj>).

⁸ Regulation (EU) 2024/1991 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2024 on nature restoration and amending Regulation (EU) 2022/869 (OJ L, 2024/1991, 29.7.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1991/oj>).

and of the Council ('Renewable Energy Directive')⁹. Forests and forestry are also key for the achievement of key priorities such as the New European Bauhaus¹⁰ or the EU Bioeconomy Strategy¹¹.

- (2) However, unprecedented droughts, bark beetle outbreaks and wildfires driven by climate change have already caused significant tree dieback and temporary forest loss in many Member States in recent years. The frequency and severity of climate and weather extremes is projected to further increase. A large share of Union forests is vulnerable to their effects, with adverse consequences for forest owners, forest-based industries and value chains, for rural livelihoods and for forest biodiversity, negatively affecting the capacity of forests to provide vital ecosystem services that the wellbeing of Union citizens and bioeconomy in the Union depend on. Risks like wildfires and pest outbreaks are transboundary in nature and are increasing with climate change. That leads to higher costs for their suppression and contributes to wood market volatility. European forests are already suffering economic impacts from forest fires of around 1.5 billion euros annually, while increasing temperatures are predicted to reduce the value of forest land by several hundred billion euros by the end of the century due to changes in species composition.

⁹ Directive (EU) 2018/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2018 on the promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources (recast) (OJ L 328, 21.12.2018, p. 82, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2018/2001/oj>).

¹⁰ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions New European Bauhaus Beautiful, Sustainable, Together (COM(2021) 573 final).

¹¹ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions Innovating for Sustainable Growth: A Bioeconomy for Europe (COM/2012/060 final).

- (3) Addressing those negative trends and threats, ensuring that forests in the Union can continue delivering on their multiple functions under a changing climate, and preserving forest ecosystems as natural heritage requires an enhanced forest disaster prevention, preparedness, response and post-disaster recovery, biodiversity enhancement to improve forest resilience to climate-induced impacts, a stronger capacity to manage risks and adaptive forest management approaches.
- (4) Member States, forest owners and the Union can take the appropriate actions only if they have coherent, reliable, timely, comparable and high quality forest data and information. To that end, a European-wide forest monitoring system should be set up to collect and share harmonised forest information. Full advantage should be taken of existing national monitoring systems to avoid duplication and additional administrative burden. Such a system could contribute to a better understanding of specific trends affecting forests and support efforts to address forest-related challenges, including identifying and responding to potential risks and damages in a timely manner.
- (5) [...]
- (6) [...]
- (7) Most of the data on forests on the national level has been collected through national forest inventories. Historically, the main focus has been on forest condition and sustainable use of timber resources, but in recent decades other forest functions have been increasingly included. The ENFIN network can contribute to the availability of comparable quality data across all relevant policy areas. Overall, the current forest monitoring in the Union should further develop towards a more harmonised system, based on a stepwise bottom-up approach through the National Forest Inventories (NFIs) and their relevant network, to ensure systematic data collection and data sharing in line with common descriptions and long and comparable time-series.

- (7a) NFIs have been conducted for decades across many Member States and constitute a well-established, scientifically robust and field-verified source of data on the state and development of forests. As such, NFI data should serve as a key reference and foundation for forest monitoring at Union level, ensuring consistency, reliability and comparability of information over time.
- (8) [...]
- (9) [...]
- (10) [...]
- (11) Against that background a forest monitoring system should be established by the Commission in cooperation with Member States, based on two elements that should be gradually made operational: a forest data collection framework and a forest information sharing framework. The forest monitoring system should allow the collection of data by the Member States to provide information for the Commission, based, where available, on their already existing systems, including the NFIs, Earth Observation and other relevant sources. Member States retain flexibility in selecting forest data sources for the purposes of other EU legislation and in designing and managing their national forest monitoring systems. The forest monitoring system should respect the principles laid down by the latest European Interoperability Framework¹².
- (12) [...]
- (13) [...]
- (14) [...]

¹² Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions of 23.3.2017 - European Interoperability Framework – Implementation Strategy (COM(2017)134 final).

- (15) With a view to reducing costs and facilitating access to forest information, the forest ~~data~~ information sharing framework should ensure for such information to be made publicly accessible by the Member States and the Commission, including in the Forest Information System for Europe. Member States should be able to continue using their existing data collection systems and to carry out the harmonisation of the forest information.
- (15a) In order to build a flexible forest monitoring system and reduce the administrative burden, the Member States may chose the Commission to carry out the harmonisation process ensuring all the necessary strict confidentiality safeguards for the provided data. Member States will be able to give the Commission the mandate to follow their development on their behalf.
- (15b) It is appropriate to take into account the specific situation of the Union's outermost regions, as listed in Article 349 TFEU. This Regulation should not apply to the outermost regions because of the specific features of these territories, such as their remoteness, insularity, difficult topography and climate. However, Member States may decide to voluntarily comply with some or all of the data collection and forest information provision obligations of this Regulation with regard to the outermost regions referred to in Article 349 TFEU.

- (15c) To ensure consistency with other forest-related Union legislative acts the forest monitoring system should include available forest information reported by Member States in accordance to Regulation (EU) 2024/1991 on nature restoration and amending Regulation (EU) 2022/869, Regulation (EU) No 691/2011 on European environmental economic accounts, Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 on the governance of the energy union and climate action, Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, and Commission Regulation (EC) No 1737/2006 concerning monitoring of forests and environmental interactions in the Community. It is important to ensure efficiency of forest monitoring system by inclusion of publicly available in FISE of all relevant forest information.
- (15d) This Regulation should not apply to military sites and forest data which is protected for reasons of national security or defence.
- (16) [...]
- (17) This Regulation contributes to the implementation of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters, adopted in Aarhus on 25 June 1998, to which the Union is a party, by enhancing the availability, transparency and accessibility of forest-related environmental information.
- (18) In order to ensure the compatibility of data storage and exchange systems for the collection and sharing of forest data under the forest monitoring system, the Commission and the Member States should cooperate, also involving specialised bodies. Such cooperation may be held within the Standing Forestry Committee established by Decision [X/X] of the European Parliament and of the Council¹³.

¹³ Decision (EU) X/X of the European Parliament and of the Council of ... amending Council Decision 89/367/EEC setting up a Standing Forestry Committee (OJ...)

- (19) The forest monitoring system should ensure that the information shared is reliable and verifiable. The Member States should therefore ensure the quality and completeness of the forest data collected and information shared under the forest monitoring system.
- (20) In order to support Member States in forest monitoring, this Regulation should establish a framework for coordination and cooperation between the Commission and the Member States and among Member States, in order to improve the quality, timeliness and coverage of forest data harmonisation and information sharing. The cooperation framework should be inclusive and science-based and should aim at further improving the reliability of scientific advice and the quality and coverage of information, thereby facilitating knowledge and good practice exchange. That framework should ensure the participation of the competent authorities responsible for the different policy objectives reflecting the multifunctionality of forests as well as independent experts in line with Decision [X/X] of the European Parliament and of the Council¹⁴. For the implementation of this cooperation framework, each Member State should designate national correspondents and inform the Commission; the national correspondents should be the main focal points for any activity relating to the forest monitoring system. The Member States and the Commission should also make use of existing regional institutional cooperation structures, including those under regional Conventions and other forest relevant fora and processes.
- (21) [...]

¹⁴ Decision (EU) X/X of the European Parliament and of the Council of ... amending Council Decision 89/367/EEC setting up a Standing Forestry Committee (OJ...).

- (22) [...]
- (23) In order to ensure uniform conditions for the implementation of this Regulation, implementing powers should be conferred on the Commission with respect to technical rules and procedures for the sharing of information and the data exchange format for harmonisation purposes. Those powers should be exercised in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council¹⁵.
- (24) The Commission should keep this Regulation under review, taking into account the relevant developments concerning Union legislation, international frameworks and technological and scientific progress and additional monitoring needs. The review should also assess the quality of data harmonisation. Five years after the entry into force of this Regulation, the Commission should report on its implementation.
- (24a) In the context of the review, particular attention should be given to the evolving potential of Earth Observation technologies and in-situ data related to climate change adaptation and mitigation, as well as forest resilience such as tree species composition and mixtures, stand structures, forest disturbances and carbon sequestration. The needs for amendments of technical specifications of information already included in the Regulation should also be evaluated. Any future developments should be cost-effective, scientifically robust and complementary to existing national systems, taking into account necessary harmonisation or standardisation needs.

¹⁵ Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011 laying down the rules and general principles concerning mechanisms for control by Member States of the Commission's exercise of implementing powers (OJ L 55, 28.2.2011, p. 13 ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2011/182/oj>).

- (24b) The Commission should carry out appropriate consultations during the preparation of the review, including at expert level. The Commission may establish an expert group for this purpose. The invitation to the expert group may be extended to ENFIN, regional institutional cooperation structures and international bodies and whenever relevant, to ICP Forests. In order to ensure transparency of the review process, the European Parliament and the Council should be regularly informed about it.
- (24c) The Copernicus Programme, established by Regulation (EU) 2021/696¹⁶, provides open and free access to Earth Observation data, including satellite data, which plays a key role in supporting forest monitoring and risk management, such as with regard to wildfires, droughts, or pest outbreaks. The remote sensing data made available through Copernicus contribute to more timely and informed decision-making in forest policy across the Union. In that context, Member States may choose to cooperate with the Commission by providing in-situ forest data to calibrate remote sensing information, which will boost the development of the Copernicus Programme.
- (25) Forests within the European Union and sustainable forest management are crucial for the European Green Deal and its objectives. The Union has a range of competences that may also relate to forests, such as climate, environment, rural development, and disaster prevention. The objectives of this Regulation, namely to ensure high quality and comparability of forest information shared in the Union and to promote Member States' efforts for safeguarding and maintaining multifunctionality and resilience of the forests within the European Union cannot be sufficiently achieved individually by the Member States alone, and by reason of the scale and effects of the proposed action, those objectives can be better achieved at Union level. Therefore, the Union may adopt measures, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity as set out in Article 5 of the Treaty on European Union. In accordance with the principle of proportionality, as set out in that Article, this Regulation does not go beyond what is necessary to achieve those objectives,

¹⁶ Regulation (EU) 2021/696 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 establishing the Union Space Programme and the European Union Agency for the Space Programme and repealing Regulations (EU) No 912/2010, (EU) No 1285/2013 and (EU) No 377/2014 (OJ L 170, 12.5.2021, p. 69).

HAVE ADOPTED THIS REGULATION:

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1

Subject matter

1. This Regulation lays down a forest monitoring framework for the Union by providing for rules:
 - (a) contributing to the timeliness, accuracy, consistency, transparency, comparability and completeness of forest information, within the Union and their public accessibility;
 - (b) [...]
 - (c) setting up a strengthened cooperation between the Commission and the Member States regarding the sharing of forest information.
 - (c new) taking into account the specific situation of outermost regions.
2. This Regulation lays down rules for collecting and making accessible harmonised information to support:
 - (d) the implementation of Union legislation and policies related to the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of forests and their services, safeguarding and developing multifunctional and resilient forests, including in relation to:

- (a) climate change adaptation and mitigation;
 - (b) biodiversity;
 - (c) disaster risk prevention and management;
 - (d) forest health;
 - (e) forest biomass use for different socio-economic purposes;
 - (f) [...]
- (e) increasing forest resilience against wildfires, pests, droughts and other disturbances.
- 2a. This Regulation does not apply to military sites and forest data which are protected for reasons of national security or defence.
- 2b. This Regulation does not apply to the outermost regions.

Article 2

Definitions

For the purposes of this Regulation, the following definitions apply:

- (1) [...]
- (2) [...]
- (3) [...]
- (4) ‘forest data’ means primary, unprocessed raw data, such as in situ data or remote sensing images;

- (5) ‘Earth Observation’ means the collection of data about the physical, chemical, and biological systems of the Earth through remote sensing technologies such as satellites or airborne platforms carrying imaging or other sensors;
- (6) ‘forest’ means forest within the meaning of the definition of the Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) of the Food and Agriculture Organisation definition in its most up-to-date version and its explanatory notes, excluding explanatory note 9¹⁷;
- (7) ‘other wooded land’ means land other than forest, within the meaning of the definition of the Global Forest Resources Assessment (FRA) of the Food and Agriculture Organisation in its most up-to-date version and its explanatory notes;
- (8) ‘harmonisation’ means a process utilising available data collected through different monitoring systems to derive comparable forest information at Union level in accordance with an agreed reference description;
- (9) [...]
- (10) ‘in situ data’ means data collected in the field through a network of monitoring sites, such as those used for forest inventories, following nationally standardised protocols.
- (10a) ‘forest information’ means processed, structured, and aggregated forest data relating to the state of forests and their use.

¹⁷ FAO, 2025. Global Forest Resources Assessment 2025. Terms and Definitions FRA 2025. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). Forest Resources Assessment Working Paper No. 194.

CHAPTER 2

FOREST MONITORING

Article 3

Forest monitoring system

1. The Commission shall, in cooperation with the Member States in accordance with Article 11, set up and operate a forest monitoring system comprising the following elements:
 - (a) [...]
 - (b) a forest data collection framework, as set out in Articles 5;
 - (c) a forest information sharing framework, as set out in Article 7.
2. The forest monitoring system shall consist of electronic databases and shall enable the Commission to facilitate the exchange and integration of forest information with other electronic databases.

The forest monitoring system shall ensure the regular and systematic collection of the forest data set out in this Regulation through one or more of the following sources:

- (a) Earth observation forest data on the basis of airborne or space-borne orthoimagery, by Copernicus satellites or other equivalent systems;
- (b) in situ data through a network of monitoring sites;
- (c new) other relevant sources.

3. The Commission may seek the assistance of existing regional institutional cooperation structures, including those under regional Conventions and other forest relevant fora and processes, to facilitate the setting up and operation of the forest monitoring system and to provide the competent authorities of the Member States with technical advice on forest monitoring.
4. The European Environment Agency shall assist the Commission and the Member States in the implementation of the forest monitoring system, including in the development and operation of the Forest Information System for Europe (FISE).
5. The Commission shall share the Earth Observation data it produces free of charge with the Member States' authorities competent for the forest monitoring system or with suppliers of services authorised by those authorities to represent them.

Article 4

Geographically explicit identification system for forest units

[...]

Article 5

Forest data collection framework

1. The forest data collection framework shall be operational by [*PO: please insert the date = 24 months after the entry into force of this Regulation*], with regard to the collection of forest data referred to in paragraph 3 in accordance with the technical specifications set out in Annex II.
2. [...]
3. Member States shall provide the following forest information:
 - (a) forest area;
 - (aa) forest type;
 - (ab) other wooded land;
 - (ac) aboveground biomass;
 - (b) growing stock volume;
 - (c) net annual increment;
 - (d) [...]
 - (e) tree species composition and richness;
 - (f) [...]
 - (g) [...]
 - (h) deadwood;

- (i) [...]
 - (j) [...]
 - (k) area of primary and old-growth forests;
 - (l) area of protected forest;
 - (m) [...]
 - (n) [...]
4. For the purposes of paragraph 3, Member States shall collect *in situ* data on the basis of ground surveys in combination with, where appropriate, data from Earth Observation, and data from other relevant information sources. The ground surveys shall be based on a network of monitoring sites, including but not limited to those used for National Forest Inventories. Monitoring sites shall be representative of, and consistent with, the Member State's forest area referred to in paragraph 3 point (a).
5. When sharing the forest information listed in paragraph 5(3) in accordance with the frequency set out in Annex II, Member States may use:
- (a) the latest available data;
 - (b) estimates, including predictions and moving averages, based on national forest inventory cycles;
 - (c) annual data updates.

Article 5a

Harmonisation process

1. Member States shall carry out the harmonization of the forest data to provide the forest information listed in Article 5(3) in accordance with the technical specifications set out in Annex II.
2. Member States may seek assistance from the Commission or existing institutional cooperation structures and associations, including those under regional Conventions and other forest relevant fora and processes to carry out harmonization.
3. Member States may choose to have the Commission carry out the harmonization of the information listed in Article 5(3) in accordance with the technical specifications set out in Annex II. Member States choosing this option shall provide the Commission the forest data necessary for the estimation of the information listed in Article 5(3), at least one year before reporting on the forest information concerned.
4. Where a Member State chooses the option provided for in paragraph 3, the Commission shall share limited, secured and harmonized information referred to in Article 5(3) in accordance with Article 7(3).
5. [...]

Article 6

Opt-out

[...]

Article 7

Forest information sharing framework

1. By *[PO: please insert the date = 36 months after the date of entry into force of this Regulation]*, the Member States shall share the latest available forest information referred to in Article 5(3) in accordance with the technical specifications set out in Annex II.
2. [...]
3. The Commission shall make the following information publicly accessible in FISE:
 - (a) [...]
 - (b) the information shared in accordance with paragraph 1 of this Article;
 - (c) [...]
 - (d) [...]
- 3a. The Commission shall make publicly accessible in FISE the available forest information, also listed in Annex III(a) and reported by Member States in accordance with the requirements of other forest-related Union legislative acts and other relevant reporting systems:
 - (a) area of forest habitats in Natura 2000 sites;
 - (b) common forest birds index;
 - (c) forest biomass for bioenergy;
 - (d) forest connectivity;
 - (e) removals;

- (f) area of forest available for wood supply and forest not available for wood supply;
- (fa) production and trade of wood products;
- (fb) forest fires;
- (fc) share of forests with uneven-aged structure.

4. [...]

5. [...]

5a. The Commission is empowered to adopt implementing acts specifying the data exchange format foreseen by Article 5a(3) and rules and procedures for sharing the forest information under this Regulation. Those implementing acts shall be adopted in accordance with the examination procedure referred to in Article 15(2).

Article 8

Forest data sharing

[...]

Article 9

Compatible forest information storage and exchange systems

1. The Commission and the Member States shall cooperate to develop compatible information storage and exchange systems for the collection and sharing of forest information under the forest monitoring system, with the assistance of the existing regional institutional cooperation structures, including those under regional Conventions and other forest relevant fora and processes, referred to in Article 3(3).
2. [...]

Article 10

Forest information quality control

1. The Member States shall be responsible for the quality and completeness of the forest information that they collect and share under the forest monitoring system.
2. Member States, with the frequency of information sharing referred to in the Annexes, shall assess the quality of the forest information they respectively share in accordance with this Regulation.
3. [...]
4. [...]

CHAPTER 3

INTEGRATED COOPERATION

Article 11

Coordination and cooperation

1. The Member States and the Commission shall coordinate their efforts and cooperate to improve the quality, timeliness and coverage of forest information.
2. [...]
3. Member States shall cooperate among each other and coordinate their actions to improve the quality, timeliness and coverage of forest data and information.
4. Member States and the Commission may seek the assistance of and use existing regional institutional cooperation structures and international bodies, including those under regional Conventions and other European forest fora and relevant processes for forest inventories and monitoring.

Article 12
National correspondents

1. Each Member State shall designate one or more national correspondents and shall inform the Commission thereof.
2. The national correspondents shall, in particular, carry out the following tasks:
 - (a) coordinate the preparation of the forest information to be shared under this Regulation, taking into consideration all competent authorities;
 - (b) coordinate attendance of relevant experts on forest information and forest monitoring in expert group meetings organised by the Commission and other relevant bodies to facilitate the implementation this Regulation.
3. [...]

Article 13
Voluntary integrated long-term plans

[...]

CHAPTER 4

FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 14

Exercise of the delegation

[...]

Article 15

Committee procedure

1. The Commission shall be assisted by a committee. That committee shall be a committee within the meaning of Regulation (EU) No 182/2011.
2. Where reference is made to this Article, Article 5 of Regulation (EU) No 182/2011 shall apply.

Article 16

Review

1. This Regulation shall be kept under review in all aspects, taking into account the relevant developments concerning Union legislation, international frameworks, technological and scientific progress, additional monitoring needs and the quality of information shared under this Regulation. No later than *[5 years after date of entry into force of the Regulation]*, the Commission shall present an impact assessment accompanied, if appropriate, by a legislative proposal to extend the scope of this Regulation to include the outermost regions and to adapt the list of forest information accordingly.

2. By [*OP please insert the date = five years after the entry into force of this Regulation*], the Commission shall report to the European Parliament and to the Council on the implementation of this Regulation.

Article 17

Entry into force

This Regulation shall enter into force on the twentieth day following that of its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

This Regulation shall be binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all Member States.

Done at Brussels,

For the European Parliament

For the Council

The President

The President

ANNEX I

LIST OF FOREST DATA REFERRED TO ARTICLE 5(2) AND THEIR
TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

[...]

ANNEX II

LIST OF FOREST DATA REFERRED TO ARTICLE 5(3) AND THEIR TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

(a) Forest area

Description: area of forests.

Spatial resolution: national and NUTS2.

Unit: ha.

Accuracy: confidence interval or standard error, as applicable.

Frequency of information sharing: annual.

(aa) Forest type

Description: area of forests by a dominant leaf type (broadleaf, or coniferous, or mixed). Mixed forest means that neither coniferous, nor broadleaf exceeds 75 % of tree cover.

Spatial resolution: national and NUTS 2.

Unit: ha.

Accuracy: confidence interval or standard error, as applicable.

Frequency of information sharing: annual.

(ab) Other wooded land

Description: area of other wooded land, to be provided only if the total other wooded land area represents more than 5% of the total area composed by forests and other wooded lands.

Spatial resolution: national and NUTS 2.

Unit: ha.

Accuracy: confidence interval or standard error, as applicable.

Frequency of information sharing: annual.

(ac) **Aboveground biomass**

Description: All dry biomass of living trees above the soil including stems, stumps, branches, bark, seeds and foliage.

Spatial resolution: national and NUTS 2.

Unit: t/ha.

Accuracy: confidence interval or standard error, as applicable.

Frequency of information sharing: annual.

(b) **Growing stock volume (per hectare)**

Description: The aggregated above-ground volume of all living and standing stems over a forest area, shared per tree species. Included are over-bark stem volumes—from the stump height to and including the stem top—of living stems with a diameter at breast height of more than 7 cm (height of more than 1.30 m). For broadleaves, the volume also includes large branches with a minimum diameter of 7 cm.

Spatial resolution: national and NUTS 2.

Unit: m³ ha⁻¹.

Accuracy: confidence interval or standard error, as applicable.

Frequency of information sharing: annual.

(c) **Net Annual Increment (per hectare)**

Description: gross annual increment minus the average annual natural losses, i.e. trees that die during the period between two ground monitoring site surveys and remain unharvested in the forest, shared per tree species.

Gross annual increment is defined as the average annual increment of living standing trees over the forest area during the period between two ground monitoring site surveys. It is expressed in terms of volume increment and includes the growth components of trees with a diameter at breast height \geq 7 cm. Volume increment includes the over-bark increment of the stem from stump height to the top diameter of 7 cm, and for broadleaves additionally includes large branches with a minimum diameter of 7 cm.

Net annual increment corresponds to gross annual increment by referring to the same specified forest area, to the same period between two ground monitoring site surveys, using the same thresholds and including the same tree parts.

Spatial resolution: national and NUTS 2.

Unit: m³ ha⁻¹ year⁻¹.

Accuracy: confidence interval or standard error, as applicable.

Frequency of information sharing: 5 years.

(d) [...]

(e) **Tree species composition and richness**

Description: share of forest area occupied by tree species (or lower taxonomic ranks, where relevant).

Spatial resolution: national and NUTS 2.

Unit: share of area.

Accuracy: confidence interval or standard error, as applicable.

Frequency of information sharing: 5 years.

(f) **European Forest Type**

[...]

(g) **Removals**

[...]

(h) Deadwood

Description: volume of standing and lying dead trees and dead lying woody debris, larger than or equal to 10cm in diameter, in a forest area. The volume of dead standing and lying wood includes stumps.

Spatial resolution: national and NUTS2.

Unit: m³ ha⁻¹.

Accuracy: confidence interval or standard error, as applicable.

Frequency of information sharing: annual.

(i) Location of forest habitats in Natura 2000 sites

[...]

(j) Abundance of common forest birds

[...]

(k) Area of primary and old-growth forests

Description: area of primary and old-growth forests, in accordance with national definition.

Spatial resolution: national and NUTS 2.

Unit: ha.

Timeline: Area shared by 1 January 2030.

Accuracy: confidence interval or standard error, as applicable.

(l) Area of protected forest

Description: area of forests within protected areas, consistent with reporting on Nationally designated areas to the European Environment Agency, supplemented by information on their levels of protection, including strict protection, and the associated management regimes as specified in national legislation or other relevant documents.

Spatial resolution: national and NUTS 2.

Unit: ha.

Timeline: [...]

Accuracy: confidence interval or standard error, as applicable.

Frequency of information sharing: annual.

(m) Production and trade of wood products

[...]

(n) Forest biomass for bioenergy

[...]

ANNEX III

DESCRIPTIONS FOR FOREST DATA REFERRED TO IN ARTICLE 8

[...]

ANNEX IIIa (new)

DESCRIPTIONS FOR THE FOREST INFORMATION REFERRED TO IN ARTICLE 7(3A)

(a) Area of forest habitats in Natura 2000 sites

Description: area of forest habitats as listed in point 9 of Annex I to Directive 92/43/EEC within sites of Community importance and special areas of conservation designated in accordance with Article 4 of that Directive.

(b) Common forest birds index

Description: information compliant with the description provided in Regulation (EU) 2024/1991, Annex VI.

(c) Forest biomass for bioenergy

Description: information on the use of forest biomass for energy production consistent with reporting in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 Annex IX, Part I, point (m)(1).

(d) Forest connectivity

Description: information compliant with the description provided in Regulation (EU) 2024/1991 Annex VI.

(e) Removals

Description: information compliant with the description provided in Regulation (EU) 691/2011, Annex VII, Section 3.

(f) Area of forest available for wood supply and forest not available for wood supply

Description: information compliant with the description provided in Regulation (EU) 691/2011, Annex VII, Section 3, paragraph 1.

(g) Production and trade of wood products

Description: information on production and trade of wood products as specified in the Joint Forest Sector Questionnaire and the relevant use manuals.

(h) Forest fires

Description: [...]

- (1) Information provided on the basis of the European Forest Fire Information System (EFFIS) products:
 - i. Fire events; and
 - ii. Burnt forest area.
- (2) Information compliant with the data provided by the Member States in the framework of the Expert Group on Forest Fires.

(i) Share of forests with uneven-aged structure

Description: information compliant with the description provided in Regulation (EU) 2024/1991, Annex VI.

ANNEX IV

RECOMMENDED ASPECTS FOR VOLUNTARY INTEGRATED LONG-TERM PLANS REFERRED TO IN ARTICLE 13

[...]
