




**WILDFOOD project:
MID-TERM CONFERENCE AND POLICY FORUM**

**Wild Food supply: policy forum on present status of the most ancient
human activity**

**Villa Bolasco, Castelfranco Veneto
26th - 27th May 2022**

Wild Food on the forest policy in Europe



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e Sistemi Agro-Forestali




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1


General policy framework

NWFP are not agricultural products and not subject to the CAP → **no explicit forest policy on NWFP** but:

- The EU **Bioeconomy Strategy** is including NWFP
- An EU **Forest Strategy** is approved and implemented
- **Other sectorial policies** are conditioning the NWFP value chain



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2

Contents

1. The EU Bioeconomy Strategy
2. The EU Forest Strategy
3. Other sectorial policies
4. Take home messages



Slides are available on the web (search «pettenella»)

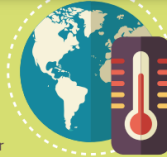
Contents

- 1. The EU Bioeconomy Strategy**
2. The EU Forest Strategy
3. Other sectorial policies
4. Take home messages

Bioeconomy Action Plan 2018

SUSTAINABLE AND CIRCULAR, THE EU BIOECONOMY CAN:

- **Preserve nature**, and restore **healthy ecosystems**
- Create **1 million new green jobs** by 2030, in particular in rural and coastal areas
- **Turn waste** from farming, cities, food & forests **into new added values products**
- Provide **additional income for farmers, foresters and fishermen**
- **Replace fossil** material with **renewable alternatives**
- **Increase the carbon sink capacity** of soil, forest and ocean
- Develop substitutes to fossil based materials that are **bio-based, recyclable and marine biodegradable**



<https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/775a2dc7-2a8b-11e9-8d04-01aa75ed71a1>

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5

Bioeconomy Action Plan 2018

14 key actions of the Bioeconomy Strategy Action Plan



1. Ensuring food and nutrition security

Today's food and farming systems are a fundamental part of the bioeconomy. However, Europe needs to be more innovative due to the changing consumer demands for sustainable food production and consumption practices, the growing world population, the need to diversify biomass demand and sourcing, as well as climate change threats.

There is a need to step up efforts to support the transformation towards sustainable, healthy, resource-efficient, resilient, circular and inclusive food and farming systems. Significant opportunities for bio-based product and process innovation in agriculture, forestry, marine and food can be further realised, with equitable benefits for primary producers. These include small-scale biorefineries that could be established by primary producers alone or in cooperative business models.

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6

Contents

1. The EU Bioeconomy Strategy
- 2. The EU Forest Strategy**
3. Other sectorial policies
4. Take home messages



Brussels, 16.7.2021
COM(2021) 572 final

COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN
PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

New EU Forest Strategy for 2030

{SWD(2021) 651 final} - {SWD(2021) 652 final}

Approved by the EC in July 2021

New EU Forest Strategy for 2030

2. Supporting the socio-economic functions of forests for thriving rural areas and boosting forest-based bio-economy within sustainability boundaries

- Sustainable raw wood and **non-wood materials and products are key in the EU's transition to a sustainable climate-neutral economy.**
- ...
- In addition to the wood-based economy, forests offer a variety of equally important additional products and services, from food to ecotourism, which support the economies and the social fabric in rural areas. The estimated **value of all harvested non-wood products in Europe is EUR 19.5 billion per year. This amounts to EUR 77,80 per hectares per year.** 86% of the harvested non-wood forest products are for personal consumption.
- The EU Forest Strategy acknowledges and aims to boost the entire sustainable forest bioeconomy that works in synergy with the EU's increased climate and biodiversity ambition.

New EU Forest Strategy for 2030

2.3. Promoting non-wood forest-based bioeconomy, including ecotourism

- EU forests provide highly valuable non-wood products, such as **cork (80% of the worldwide production), resin, tannins, fodder, medicinal and aromatic plants, fruits, berries, nuts, roots, mushrooms, seeds, honey, ornamentals and wild game**, which often benefit the local communities. They contribute about 20% of the market. **A focus on non-food raw materials** their potential for generating additional revenues to the owning communities can be further promoted and supported in cooperation with the national and local authorities and actors.

New EU Forest Strategy for 2030

- To seize benefits from non-wood products to rural communities in forested landscapes and supporting producers' organisations, **the Commission will promote the elaboration of coordinated and integrated regional, national and subnational programmes on the sustainable production of non-wood forest products.**

A relevant statement: an «institutionalization» of the Incredible white paper?



<https://www.fao.org/publications/card/en/c/CB5799EN/>

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11

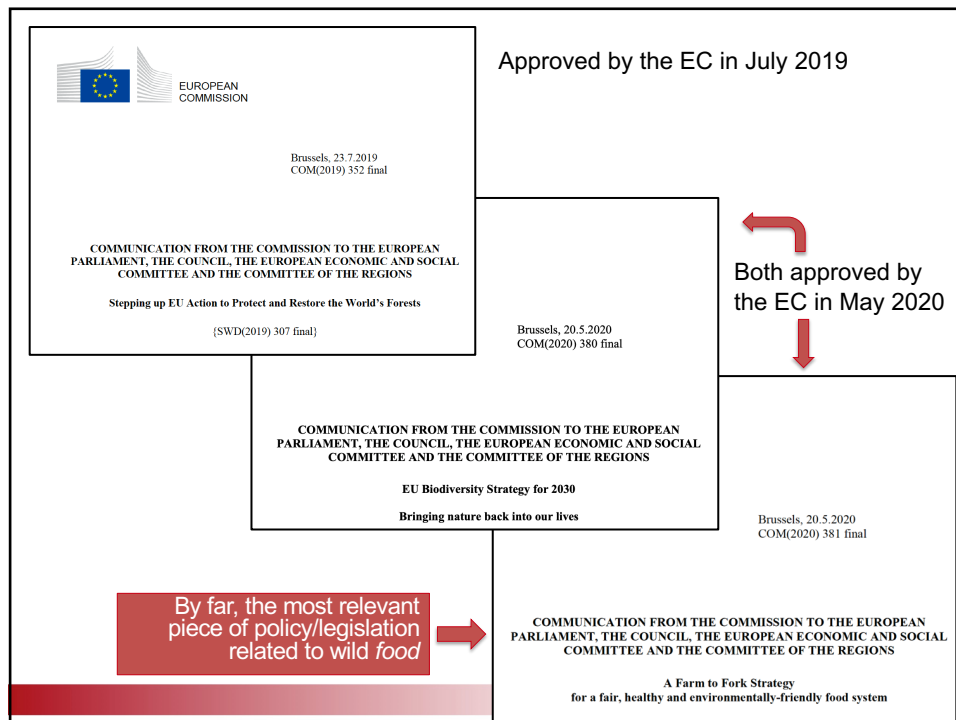
Contents

1. The EU Bioeconomy Strategy
2. The EU Forest Strategy
- 3. Other sectorial policies**
4. Take home messages

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12



13

Food regulation policies

«Wild» and «natural products»

- No legal definition of «Wild food product»
- ... but a legal definition of **Naturally/Natural** as attribute of food products to be used in claims:

*Where a food naturally meets the condition(s) laid down in this Annex for the use of a nutritional claim (only for **natural mineral water** and **natural sugar**), the term 'naturally/natural' may be used as a prefix to the claim* (Annex to Reg. 1924/2006 on nutrition and health claims made on foods)

14

Food regulation policies

In this context, “Wild food product” are considered as normal “food products”

→ Implementation of general regulations on safety, traceability, packaging, claims and labelling, ...



Farm to Fork strategy

Legislative framework for sustainable food systems
 International dimension
 Sustainable food consumption
 Food loss and waste prevention
 Sustainable food processing, wholesale, retail, hospitality and food services
 Sustainable food production

https://ec.europa.eu/food/horizontal-topics_en

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15

Claims, standards development, certification & labelling policies

Attributes with main attention by operators:

- **Quality** and **safety** (private and public initiatives)
- Territorial traditional **origin** (mainly public initiatives)
- **Organic system** of production (public initiatives)
- Packaging (mainly public initiatives)
- **Sustainability** of forest management (private initiatives, till now)
- **Wild** products (private initiatives)
- **Negative nutritional criteria**: cholesterol, sugar, (saturated) fat, sodium, ... free (private and public initiatives)

→ Giulia Corradini's presentation

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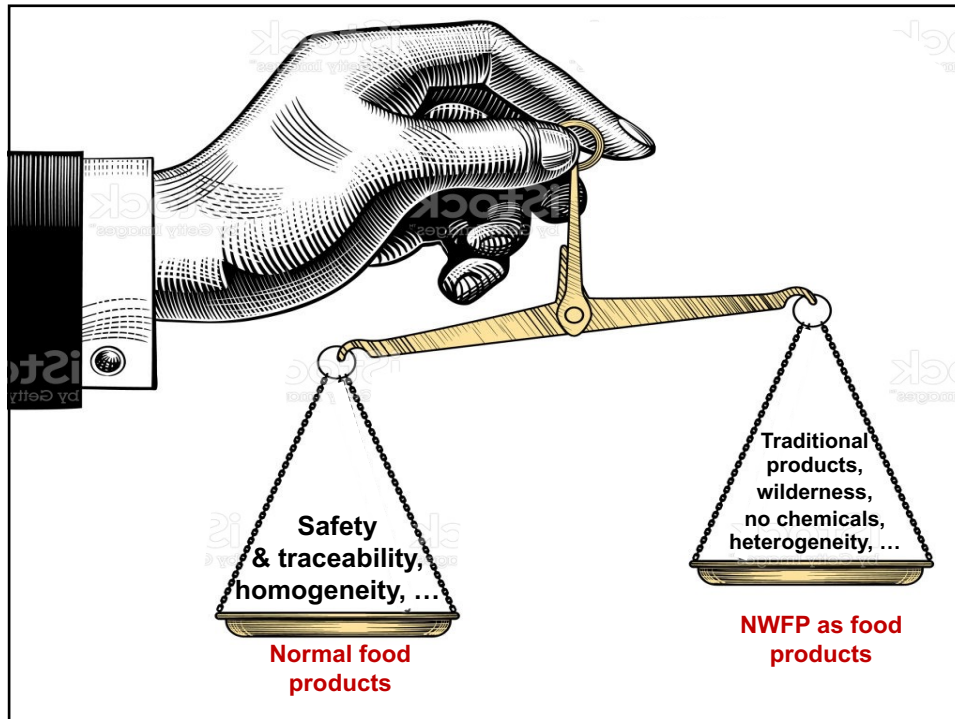
16

Common Agricultural Policy (2023-27)

- **First pillar:** direct payments to farmers and measures to manage agricultural markets; no role played by NWFP (EAGF)
- **Second pillar: Rural Development Policy** (EAFRD): funding for investments, knowledge-building, innovation and co-operation targeted at environment- and climate-related needs: plantations, forest management, mechanization, creation of associations, marketing investments, training, innovative experiences, ...
Implementations of the measures in the NWFP sector will depend on the national Plans

Points of consideration from the analysis of these policy documents

- An issue of terminology: «NWFP» or «NTFP» are, outside the forest world, unknown
- The **Rural Development Policy** is the main (potential) source of funding for the sector
- In relation to the **F2F policy development** (where health and safety criteria are prevailing) wild (or semi-wild) forest products have **more competitive dis-advantages** than competitive ones



19

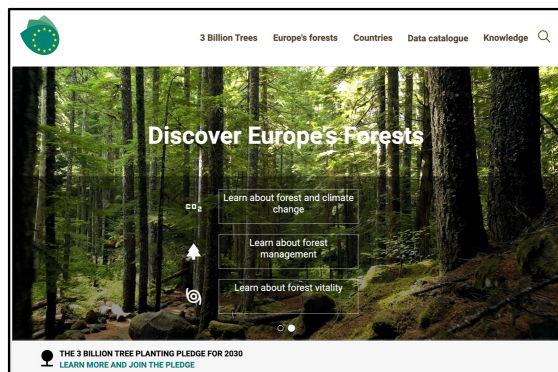
Fiscal policies

No common fiscal policy (VAT rate): a missed opportunity for creating fair conditions of competition, while a well-regulated fiscal organization, as demonstrated by the Italian experience in the reform of the truffle fiscal regulations, could support the **emergence of the informal market** and enhance the **monitoring capability of the transactions and operators** of the sector

20

Monitoring policy

Forest Information System for Europe (FISE)



No information and data on the sector; only the results of the StarTree project (Lovric et al., 2020). Not even trade data

<https://forest.eea.europa.eu/>

Other pieces of policy/regulations under discussion

- New proposal on **Zero deforestation and forest degradation**: no mention of the topic
- New Technical norms of the **Taxonomy** related to forest and agriculture investments/activities: no mention of the topic (focus on biodiversity conservation and limitations to wood harvesting)
- New proposal for an EU **Standard of Sustainable Forest Management**: ?
- New EU proposed **Regulation on Nature Restoration**

New EU proposed Regulation on nature restoration

According to Art. 10 (1) Member States shall put in place without delay the restoration measures necessary to enhance biodiversity of forest ecosystems beyond the areas that are restored pursuant to Article 4 (1). These 'additional' areas are not to be 'restored' but the proposed regulation presents an obligation to achieve a continuously improving trend at national level of each of the following seven indicators:

(a) deadwood;

(b) age structure;

(c) forest connectivity;

(d) tree cover density;

(e) abundance of common forest birds; and

(f) stock of soil organic carbon in forest land (annex V). Improvement is necessary in each indicator until 'satisfactory levels' are achieved. What these levels are remains undefined.

No specific mention of wild plants

Source: Simula and Tomppo, 2022

Contents

1. The EU Bioeconomy Strategy
2. The EU Forest Strategy
3. Other sectorial policies
- 4. Take home messages**

- NWFP are **implicitly included** in many pieces of policy documents
- There is a **formal commitment by the EU** to develop a sectoral policy
 - **Monitoring** and **advocacy** are needed!
 - **Positive attitude by citizens** towards wilderness and wild products → room for improving the image of the forest sector (and specifically of the MENA forestry)
- In a context of lack of specific norms to support NWFP, **the generic ones are those more relevant** (health & safety, fiscal and trade regulations, land property rights regulations, certification and labelling, ...)

There is a substantial **contradiction** between the **general values of the Green Deal** (bioproducts, sustainability, rural development, nature-based solutions...) and the **practical policy tools** for regulating the food sector that are favouring standard and homogenous products, with advanced system of safety and quality control, without recognising (semi) wild, minor products.

