



PRESS RELEASE

The association Forests and Climate Change Forum demands recognition of the role of forests and the forestry sector in the Spanish Integrated National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP).

"NECP is the opportunity Spain needs to set in motion a positive spiral of valuing our forests and consolidating our forest heritage"

Thursday, September 21, 2023 - On September 4, the public consultation process of the Spanish Ministry for Ecological Transition and Demographic Challenge for the update of the National Integrated Energy and Climate Plan (NECP) for 2023-2030 ended.

In response to this process, which aims to enrich and improve the national plan, the Forests and Climate Change Forum association has prepared the attached document reflecting the contributions and proposals of the 15 members making up the Forum. The aim of this document is to raise awareness about the importance of forests and the forestry sector in the fight against climate change. Additionally, it seeks to rebalance the territory, promote rural development, enhance the quality of life for all citizens, and benefit future generations.

The Forum claims that the national contribution of forests and the forestry sector can be significantly higher than currently projected in the updated National Integrated Energy and Climate Strategy and the Long-Term National Decarbonisation Strategy 2050 (ELP), approved in November 2020. These contributions aim to ensure sustainable management of forest resources and their essential role in climate change mitigation and adaptation.

The document highlights eight issues considered essential to improve the strategy and ensure sustainable forest management in Spain:

1. **Territorial Dimension:** The Forum requests the establishment of a joint territorial plan within two years for deploying renewable energies and the electric energy transport network, with the participation of various entities and autonomous communities.
2. **Rural Development and the Bioeconomy:** It is emphasized the lack of explicit support for rural development and the bioeconomy in the NECP draft, the creation of a new Circular Bioeconomy Strategy, and requests a new PERTE (Strategic Economic Recovery and Transformation Plan) for industrialization and mechanization of forestry, with a budget of €1,000 million, is proposed.
3. **Absorption Objectives:** Our document highlighted the importance of establishing absorption objectives in natural sinks as a priority for Spain to meet international commitments. An increase of 15% is proposed, from 38,326 to 44,075 MtCO₂eq.
4. **Take advantage of the potential of Forests and the Forestry Sector:** There is an urging to harness the potential of forests and the forestry sector in decarbonising the economy, along with a request for a Roadmap for natural sinks and the forestry sector.

5. **Clear Objectives for Forest Biomass:** It demands the inclusion of clear objectives for forest biomass, focusing on electricity and thermal generation, to contribute to rural employment and decarbonisation. It requests the installation of an additional 500 heat networks, with an installed capacity of 500 MW, and an increase in the electricity generation share (from 1.4 to 1.9 GW), modifying the allocation system for not prioritising size. It proposes power plants with capacities of 10 to 15 MW, better distributed throughout the territory and for cogeneration, with a minimum primary energy use rate of 75%.
6. **Key Actions to Boost the Forestry Sector:** It proposes four transformative actions for the forestry sector:
 - Revision and updating land registry in forested areas, and implementation of a more agile and cost-effective property rights registration system.
 - Review of forestry taxation.
 - Digitization of the sector and continuous forest inventory.
 - Revitalization of the Carbon Footprint Registry and improvement of the forest carbon credit calculator.
7. **Key Objectives for Forest Sinks:** It proposes six key objectives to revitalize national forestry activity:
 - Replanting forests at a rate of 50,000 ha/year.
 - Regenerating dehesas (wooded pastures) at a rate of 100,000 ha/year.
 - Certifying sustainable forest management at a rate of 500,000 ha/year.
 - Gradually increasing wood production to reach 25 Mm³ in 2030 and a 66% extraction rate by 2050.
 - Restoring pastoral use of forests to reach 15 Mha by 2040 and clearing 100,000 ha/year.
 - Inventory and improvement of forest tracks, with annual work on 50,000 km/year.
8. **Adequate Financing and the Role of the National Energy Efficiency Fund:** It underscores the need for suitable financing for forestry actions and the potential use of the National Energy Efficiency Fund as a useful instrument.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE FORUM TO THE DRAFT OF THE INTEGRATED NATIONAL ENERGY AND CLIMATE PLAN 2023-2030 (NECP)

https://www.fbycc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Aportaciones-del-FByCC-al-borrador-del-PNIEC_2023_0904.pdf

About the Forests and Climate Change Forum

The "Forests and Climate Change Forum" is a non-profit association composed of key stakeholders in the forestry sector and related entities. They unanimously support the role of forests in the fight against climate change.