



## PRESS RELEASE

# A New Era for Europe's Bioeconomy: Coalition Advocates for Circular Solutions Ahead of COP30

*Brussels, 7 April 2025 - As Europe gears up for COP30 in Belém, Brazil, a coalition of 20 EU trade associations organised last month in Brussels a significant preparatory discussion. [Circular Choices](#) is the largest coalition in Europe's forest-based bioeconomy sector to date. Over the past two and a half years, it has successfully advocated for a more prominent role for the circular bioeconomy, which harbours one in five EU manufacturing companies, within the EU Institutions' agenda.*

The coalition's efforts have culminated in the recent **acknowledgment of the bioeconomy as one of the five strategic sectors for Europe's industrial base in the recently proposed EU Clean Industrial Deal**. The anticipated Bioeconomy Strategy is set to address the sector's challenges later this year with specific support measures.

The Strategy, together with the new EU 2040 emissions target and the EU Circular Economy Act due in 2026, could harness the formidable power of the circular bioeconomy to help position the European Union as a global climate leader. A position the EU will showcase at the next meeting of **the COP in Brazil, which is expected to put under the spotlight the connection between climate action and bioeconomy**.

It is broadly agreed that reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions should be the primary focus of climate policy. **Through the substitution of fossil products by forest-based ones, 410 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are already avoided annually** in Europe (Peter Holmgren, 2019). Scaling up this substitution effect is a major opportunity both for the EU and the climate. But the potential of wood-based products in climate mitigation is overlooked, as are the sector's 'negative emissions' through bio-CCUS – Carbon Capture Utilisation and Storage. As demand for products embedding carbon increases, so will opportunities for the forest-based sector to drive innovation and growth.

**In Europe, forests play a crucial role in carbon capture, with 292 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> absorbed annually** (EEA, 2024 data EU27), notably thanks to sustainable forestry practices. In total, European forests are estimated to store around 9.8 billion tons of carbon (ForestEurope, 2020 data EU27+UK).

After being harvested, this carbon then remains stored in wood-based products, for example in construction, but also in other forest-derived products, such as clothing or packaging materials. While these products may not last decades, they can be recycled multiple times, and are **already contributing to carbon storage equivalent to 320 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> annually** (AFRY, 2024). This is why the recyclability of products and the renewability of materials used to make them should be acknowledged when considering their carbon footprint.





**Christian Holzleitner, Head of Unit for Land Economy and Carbon Removals at the European Commission Directorate General for Climate**

"We must not only reduce emissions but also remove CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere. The bioeconomy offers a unique value chain by capturing carbon, storing it for centuries, and repurposing it as feedstock for sustainable materials. We need to create the right incentives for sustainable biomass use and integrating carbon removal certification to measure every step of the process."

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**About the Circular Choices Coalition:**

The Circular Choices Coalition comprises 14 EU trade associations supported by a further six trade associations that represent EU forest owners and managers. The Circular Choices members collectively represent experts in the EU forestry sector, the wood, fibre-based paper, and board products industry, and in renewable energy provision. The coalition represents 4 million direct employees, turns over €520 billion and sequesters, and helps store and substitute 806 Mt CO<sub>2</sub> eq annually, equivalent to 20% of EU total fossil emissions. We offer circular and affordable solutions to deliver a net-zero economy by optimising the use of sustainable and renewable wood and wood fibre-based products and energy in a responsible and resource-efficient manner. Caring for the EU's forests means caring for people's needs. Sustainable forest management has been a success thanks to the commitment and efforts of forest owners and managers. Their decisions today will echo far into the future. Find out more [here](#).

**Contacts:**

**Ana Díaz Cordero**, Cepi EU Public Affairs Manager

Email: [a.diaz-cordero@cepi.org](mailto:a.diaz-cordero@cepi.org)

**Piotr Pogorzelski**, Cepi Media Relations Manager

Email: [p.pogorzelski@cepi.org](mailto:p.pogorzelski@cepi.org)