



PRESS RELEASE

Forest Sector Pushes Fossil-Free Future Ahead of EU Bioeconomy Strategy Launch

Brussels, 17 September 2025 - EU Commission pledges to support forest-based sector by providing a level-playing field as key legislation setting the path for the bioeconomy is about to be released.

Some 200 people gathered in Brussels to discuss the upcoming Bioeconomy Strategy, which will be officially proposed by the European Commission in November. Back in February, when the EU Commission released its Clean Industrial Deal communication, setting a policy agenda bridging industrial competitiveness and climate objectives, **the bioeconomy was introduced as one of five strategic sectors** along with automotive, steel and metals, chemistry and transport, with the Bioeconomy Strategy being the vessel for this renewed support.

Hopes are now high for bioeconomy actors, a part of Europe's economy which size places it on par with the largest industries, but which does not often top the EU Institution's priority list. A recent EU Joint Research Centre (JRC) report shows **the bioeconomy represents 8% of all EU jobs**.

Within the wider bioeconomy, the forest-based sector came together two years ago ahead of the EU elections. It created the **Circular Choices coalition**, the largest such alliance to date, to advocate for a stronger industrial policy framework in support of it, with the support of forest owners, researchers and sectoral labour unions. **The forest-based sector, accounting for one in five factories in Europe, has the particularity of providing materials competing directly with many fossil-based alternatives**, which are incentivised as part of the wider fossil industry.

Now aiming for a level playing field with their fossil counterparts, **forest-based industries are advocating for an EU policy environment that provides long-term investment certainty and rewards bio-based products through market incentives, while valorising this 'substitution potential' across EU policies**. An objective that was also mentioned in the recent State of The European Union speech of EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen.

Joining the event, Environment Commissioner **Jessika Roswall stated the Commission's intention to create, through the Bioeconomy Strategy, a level-playing field for bio-based products and materials coming from the forestry-based industry**.

The Clean Industrial Deal already referred to the significant growth potential of bio-based materials substituting fossil-based materials, and related industries. **The global market for the bioeconomy is estimated to grow by €7 trillion globally by 2030**. Examples of this growth are seen **[throughout the entire continent](#)**.

The event organised by Ceper heavily featured non-industry voices, from forest owners (CEPF) to researchers on the topic of bioeconomy, from the Finnish research institute VTT to German nova Institute, Deloitte and the JRC, which is the EU's scientific arm. Forest-based industries were represented by Sappi Europe and Hygiene paper producer WEPA. All agreed on **the necessity for growth in the bioeconomy sector not to come at the expense of the environment**.

Quote by Jessika Roswall, Commissioner for Environment, Water Resilience and a Competitive Circular Economy

"I believe there is a real opportunity to scale up the circular bioeconomy for employment, growth, and resilience. Ceper and the Circular Choices coalition are important players in this transition. You are a cornerstone of Europe's forest-based bioeconomy and you have shown how innovation can transform traditional industries into champions of circularity and clean growth. It's clear that the bioeconomy offers untapped market potential and Europe has to take a leading role to boost its growth."



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 CO₂ 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

Piotr Pogorzelski, Cepi Media Relations Manager
Email: p.pogorzelski@cepi.org