Forest policy: implementation of the European Union's forestry strategy

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The Council adopted conclusions on an EU Forest Action Plan. Acknowledging the economic, ecological and social relevance of the forest sector in the EU, the Council invites the Commission , in close cooperation with the Member States and in consultation with stakeholders, to elaborate a proposal for this Action Plan and to present it to the Council by mid 2006.

The Council also recommends that :

- the Action Plan should provide a coherent set of actions, in line with the Lisbon and the Göteborg strategies, based on clear objectives which should interact with and provide guidance to the objectives of other Community policies, as well as to the implementation of forest-related international commitments;

- the Commission, in close cooperation with the Member States, should present the existing instruments at EU level which could be used to realise the proposed actions;

- the Action Plan should encompass both Community forest-related actions and forest-related actions in Member States, including national forest programmes.

Lastly, the Commission is invited to enhance the existing Community means and practices to facilitate coordination, communication and cooperation between different policy sectors that have an influence on forestry, and the role of the relevant committees at Community level, in particular the role envisaged for the Standing Forestry Committee.