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

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The Council took note of the presentation by Commissioner Fischer-Boel of a Communication on an EU Forest Action Plan, and held a first exchange of views on the subject. Commissioner Fischer-Boel noted in particular that there were at present 15 million forests owners and that 3.4 million jobs were directly or indirectly related to forestry management. The Finnish delegation stated its intention of tabling conclusions on this issue under its forthcoming Presidency.

In general, a large majority of delegations could support the objectives and the key actions proposed in the Communication. Some delegations insisted on the need to support a larger use of wood as a source of renewable energy, and stressed the multifunctional role of forests.

The Communication was adopted following the Council's request that the Commission present an EU Forest Action Plan in 2006, and on the basis of a Council Resolution of 1998 on forestry strategy in the EU.