

Global Summit on “Advancing Sustainable Forest-based Bioeconomy Approaches”

23–25 February 2026, Vienna, Austria

Guidance Note – Opening Session

Item 1-4

1. Date & Time

Monday, 23 February 2026, 09:30 – 13:30, Room 10 (“Orangerie”).

2. Context

The Global Summit aims to convene key stakeholders from the forest-based bioeconomy across diverse regions and professional backgrounds. By fostering dialogue within a framework that integrates policy, scientific, and practical perspectives, the Summit ensures a comprehensive exploration of relevant approaches, experiences, and solutions.

Item 1 High-Level Session will bring together policy leaders and High-Level representatives, who will present their national and regional perspectives on the forest-based bioeconomy. They will outline their ambitions for advancing the bioeconomy, providing a foundation for understanding the diverse approaches being pursued worldwide. A **keynote** will highlight an inspiring model for implementing the bioeconomy, with particular emphasis on achieving a balanced approach between the protection and sustainable use of natural resources.

Item 2 Business Talk introduces the private sector perspective. Industry leaders will present best practices, highlight current investments, and explore market opportunities in bio-based products—including wood construction and non-wood innovations. They will also share insights into the barriers they face and the opportunities they see for scaling up the forest-based bioeconomy.

Item 3 Science Talk further enriches the discussion by integrating the scientific perspective as a foundation for the thematic exchange. By presenting the latest research findings and offering cutting-edge insights into the multifaceted contributions of forests—including carbon neutrality, material substitution, biodiversity conservation, and socio-economic benefits—this session establishes a robust evidence base to inform and guide the subsequent discussions.

Item 4. Scope and vision of COLi will provide an organizational overview of the Global Summit, including its structure, objectives, and expected outcomes. In addition, participants will receive guidance on the format and approach of the interactive thematic discussions, ensuring a focused, inclusive, and results-oriented exchange.

Complementing the Summit’s discussions, a **Project Gallery** will provide insights into innovative research initiatives within the forest-based bioeconomy. It will be located in Room D, “Foyer Spitzhof,” and will be open on Monday and Tuesday. During lunchtime, project coordinators will be present and available for discussion and exchange.



3. Programme

Item 1 High-Level Session	
Time	09:30-11:00 CET
Location	Room 10 "Orangerie"
Co-Chairs	<i>H.E. Minister Norbert Totschnig (AT)</i> <i>Pumeza Nodada (ZA)</i>
Moderator	<i>Tiina Ryttilä-Broere (FIN)</i>
High-Level Statements	<p>Federal Minister Norbert Totschnig Minister for Agriculture and Forestry, Climate and Environmental Protection, Regions and Water Management, Austria</p> <p>Pumeza Nodada Deputy Director-General: Forestry Management Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, South Africa</p> <p>Commissioner Jessika Roswall Commissioner for Environment, Water Resilience and a Competitive Circular Economy</p> <p>Minister Sari Essayah (video) Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, Finland</p> <p>Eiji Tanimura (video) Deputy Director-General, Forestry Agency, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Japan</p> <p>Bekir Karacabey (video) Director General of Forestry, General Directorate of Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Republic of Türkiye</p> <p>Joseph Morrall Director of International Policy – Forests and Agvet Chemicals, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Forestry, Australia</p> <p>Juliette Biao Koudenoukpo Director of Secretariat United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFFS)</p> <p>İsmail Belen Chair of the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF)</p> <p>Zhimin Wu Assistant Director-General and Director of the Forestry Division of Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)</p> <p>Pierre Taty Chairperson of the 28th Session of the Committee on Forestry (COFO)</p>
Keynote: One vision – many approaches	Emmanuel de Merode (online) Director of Virunga National Park, Democratic Republic of Congo



Item 2 Business Talk	
Time	11:30-12:30 CET
Location	Room 10 "Orangerie"
Moderator	<i>Derek Nighbor</i> President and CEO Forest Products, Association of Canada (FPAC)
Private sector panel From vision to value: how the forest-based private sector can scale up a sustainable bioeconomy	Nicolas Cock Duque Executive Chair and Co-Founder Eco Flora Cares, Colombia
	Christoph Kulterer CEO Hasslacher Group, Austria
	Yuuko Iizuka Executive Officer, Sumitomo Forestry, Japan
Interactive discussion	Malik Ashish Business Head and Senior Vice President, Olam Agri, Switzerland
	Meltem Kurtzan CEO HerbaFarm Academy, Türkiye
Wrap up + Closing	Moderator

Item 3 Science Talk	
Time	12:30-13:15 CET
Location	Room 10 "Orangerie"
Moderator	<i>Peter Mayer</i> Austrian Research Centre for Forests
Science panel Scientific insights	Hans Joachim Schellnhuber International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA)
	Daniela Kleinschmit International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO)
Interactive discussion	Eliane Ubalijoro Center for International Forestry Research and World Agroforestry (CIFOR-ICRAF)
	Moderator

Item 4 Scope and vision of COLI	
Time	13:15-13:30 CET
Vision and Scope of COLI	Lisa Lehner Ministry for Agriculture and Forestry, Climate and Environmental Protection, Regions and Water Management, Austria

