

Guidance Note

Topic 8.1 — Advancing forest-based value chains

1. Date & Time

Tuesday, 24 February 2026, from 14:50 to 18:15 CET.

2. Context

Global demand for forest products and non-wood forest products (NWFPs) is projected to increase substantially by 2050, creating significant strategic challenges for sustainable forest supply chains. To meet future demand while ensuring that production does not contribute to deforestation or forest degradation, additional sustainable wood supply will be needed for a range of products, such as industrial roundwood, bioplastics and bioenergy, requiring increased innovation and efficiency.

In the forest sector, five types of innovation – technological, social, policy, institutional and financial – can improve the ability of forest-based value chains to address global challenges (FAO, 2024b). They range from cutting-edge technologies and innovative financing mechanisms to new policy approaches and institutional reforms. Taking into account the outcomes of COLI webinars no. 3 “[From forest to market – Advancing forest-based bioeconomy solutions to ensure resource supply meets growing demand](#)”, the session will explore pathways from forest resources to markets, focusing on advancing bioeconomy solutions to meet rising demand while ensuring sustainable supply.

3. Objectives

This thematic session aims to identify:

- i. Priority areas for strategic investment in sustainable supply, manufacturing efficiency and product development, and the role of the private sector in driving technological advancement, including processing technologies, such as artificial intelligence, circularity, by-product valorization, and approaches that safeguard climate and communities.
- ii. Opportunities to scale up sustainable production across the entire lifecycle (from design to disposal), emphasizing the transformative role of young professionals in developing innovative wood products and sustainable business models, in close partnership with the private sector as a driver of the forest-based bioeconomy.

4. Guiding questions

- i. Which **key developments** have strengthened the sustainable forest-based value chain? e.g. **sustainable supply of forest-based raw materials**
- ii. What **challenges and trade-offs** are currently preventing sustainable forest value chains from meeting the growing global demand for goods and services resulting from the development of the bioeconomy?
- iii. Which **measures** hold the **greatest potential** to accelerate sustainable forest biomass production across bioeconomy development while upholding biodiversity, climate goals and inclusive engagement? e.g. technological, policy, social, or financial innovation
- iv. Which **actions and partnerships** offer the greatest potential to **accelerate forest-based bioeconomy growth across the value chains**?

5. Format and modalities

The thematic session will be hosted by the session lead. The session comprises a keynote presentation, followed by stakeholder views and facilitated discussions in breakout groups on site and online. During the facilitated discussion, participants will have the opportunity to contribute to the above-mentioned four guiding questions. Time allows for approximately 15 minutes of discussion per guiding question within the breakout groups.

The key points from the parallel sessions will be presented in the plenary followed by an exchange of views giving participants the opportunity to contribute to the discussion of all topics.

6. Draft programme

Location: Room 1 ("Maria Theresia")		Speaker
Moderator: <i>UNFFS</i>		
14:50	Opening by session lead	Joseph Morrall Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Australia
14:55	Keynote	Andreja Kutnar University of Primorska, Slovenia
15:10	Stakeholder views	Florian Kraxner (tbc) International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) Ross Hampton (tbc) International Sustainable Forestry Coalition (ISFC) Labode Popoola (tbc) African Forest Forum
15:25	World café	<i>Breakout group discussion on guiding questions</i>

	<i>Facilitated by: Sven Walter (FAO), Damiano Cilio (BOKU), Janice Burns (IUFRO), Visnja Koscak (Holzcluster Styria)</i>	
16:25	Summary by facilitators	
16:40	Closing by moderator	
16:45	Coffee break	<i>Reconvene in plenary</i>

Location: Room 10 (“Orangerie”)	
Moderator: Tiina Ryttilä-Broere <i>Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Finland</i>	
17:20	<i>Pitch of key points from Item 8.1 and 8.2</i>
17:40	<i>Exchange of views</i>
18:00	<i>Conclusion by Co-Chairs</i>

7. References

- i. **Boscolo, M., Lehtonen, P., Di Girolami, E. & Duong, G.** 2025. *Enhancing the sustainability and financing of forest-based value chains*. Rome, FAO. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cd5197en>
- ii. **FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations).** 2025. *Summary report of Webinar 3. From forest to market: Advancing forest-based bioeconomy solutions to ensure that resource supply meets growing demand*. Rome, FAO. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/e77b71d1-0300-478b-9ba5-b206f9061311>
- iii. **FAO.** 2025. *Background paper of Webinar 3. From forest to market: Advancing forest-based bioeconomy solutions to ensure that resource supply meets growing demand*. Rome, FAO. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/30d86018-1196-43ed-bfd6-bd549cf2c3f7/content>
- iv. **FAO. 2024a.** Enhancing the contribution of forestry to the bioeconomy – Opportunities and challenges. Twenty-seventh Session of the FAO Committee on Forestry, 22–26 July 2024. Rome. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/f47e3de6-7d1d-4ef3-bc3c-e5e1c37cdae9>
- v. **FAO. 2024b.** The State of the World's Forests 2024: Forest-sector innovations towards a more sustainable future. Rome. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/ec487897-97b5-43ec-bc2e-5ddfc76c8e85>
- vi. **IUFRO (International Union of Forest Research Organizations).** 2026. Policy Brief [link will be provided upon availability]

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