

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

23–25 February 2026, Vienna, Austria

Guidance Note

Topic 8.1 — Advancing forest-based value chains

1. Date & Time

Tuesday, 24 February 2026, from 15:00 to 18:30 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. Considering 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 a session lead and will begin with a keynote presentation, followed by stakeholder perspectives and facilitated discussions in breakout groups (World café), both on site and online. During these discussions, participants will have the opportunity to reflect on and respond to the four guiding questions outlined above. The key messages emerging from the parallel discussions will then be presented in plenary, followed by an open exchange of views, allowing all participants to engage with and contribute to the full range of topics.

6. Programme

Topic 8.1 Advancing forest-based value chains	
Time	15:00-17:00 CET
Thematic Session	Advancing forest-based value chains
Location	Room 8 "Sophie"
Session Lead	Joseph Morrall (AUS)
Moderator	<i>Hossein Moeini-Meybodi (UNFFS)</i>
Opening by session lead	Joseph Morrall Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Australia
Keynote	Andreja Kutnar University of Primorska, Slovenia
Stakeholder views	Florian Kraxner International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA)
	Chetan Kumar International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
	Labode Popoola African Forest Forum



World café	Breakout group discussion on guiding questions <i>Facilitated on-site: Sven Walter (FAO), Damiano Cilio (BOKU University), Janice Burns (IUFRO), Visnja Koscak (Holzcluster Styria)</i> <i>Facilitated online: Thomas Timmel (Bioeconomy Austria)</i>
	Summary by facilitators & Closing by session lead
Coffee break (17:00-17:30) Reconvene in Room 10 “Orangerie”	
Time	17:30-18:30 CET
Plenary	Advancing forest-based value chains & Growing forest-based innovations
Location	Room 10 “Orangerie”
Co-Chairs	Georg Rappold (AT) & Pumeza Nodada (ZA)
Moderator	<i>Tiina Ryttilä (FIN)</i>
Discussion & Exchange	<i>Pitch of key points from Item 8.1 and 8.2 by session leads</i>
	<i>Exchange of views</i>
	<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. https://www.bmluk.gv.at/dam/jcr:ef6e44aa-adf4-4476-9059-817cbf76a131/COLI_05_Advancing_Forest-Based_Value_Chains_FINAL.pdf

