

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

23–25 February 2026, Vienna, Austria

Guidance Note

Item 7.2 — Forest potentials beyond wood

1. Date & Time

Tuesday, 24 February 2026, from 10:10 to 13:30 CET

2. Context

Agrifood systems face growing pressure to deliver food and biomaterials in ways that are inclusive, sustainable and resource efficient. Forests are biologically rich systems, and they provide a wide array of renewable forest products¹ that support the livelihoods of billions of people, sustain agrifood systems, and contribute to a sustainable bioeconomy. Forest goods beyond wood provide food, feed, fuel, medicines, cosmetics, biochemicals, and more, that are central to many value chains and value-added products. They help drive innovation in diverse areas, including food security, nutrition, healthcare, packaging, bioplastics and construction. Today, the use of these goods is contributing to the growth of emerging multi-billion-dollar industries and catalysing new social arrangements. In parallel, forest services such as carbon sequestration, water regulation, biodiversity protection and ecotourism are also offering economic opportunities while conserving natural capital; therefore, they are important components of a sustainable bioeconomy.²

Taking into account the COLI Webinar 4 “Accelerating inclusive agrifood systems: the sustainable use of forest products beyond wood”, this session is highlighting how forest-based bioeconomy approaches can transform agrifood systems by emphasizing social sustainability, equitable benefit-sharing and improved livelihoods. Local communities, Indigenous Peoples, women and youth must be at the heart of the transition through fair benefit-sharing to ensure the long-term social and ecological resilience of forest-based bioeconomy.

3. Objectives

This thematic session aims to identify:

- i. Success factors, gaps, opportunities, and priority actions to advance the development and upscaling of forest products beyond wood.
- ii. Options for multi-stakeholder dialogues to strengthen and scale up the role of forest products beyond wood within the framework of a sustainable forest-based bioeconomy at all levels.

¹ This wide array encompasses goods (wood and non-wood); regulating services that affect climate, floods, disease, waste and water quality; cultural services that provide recreational, aesthetic and spiritual benefits; and supporting services such as soil formation, photosynthesis and nutrient cycling.

² In line with FAO’s working definition of bioeconomy. <https://www.fao.org/in-action/sustainable-and-circular-bioeconomy/en>



4. Guiding questions

- i. What has **worked best** when scaling the sustainable use of forest products beyond wood? e.g. technical, policy-related, or finance and market-based level.
- ii. What **critical barriers** prevent scaling up the use of forest products beyond wood (e.g. technically, policy-related, or finance and market-based)?
- iii. What should be **targeted** in the short term to accelerate scaling-up the use of forest products beyond wood?
- iv. Which **priority actions and partnerships** should be supported for upscaling the sustainable use of forest products beyond wood?

5. Format and modalities

The thematic session will be hosted by the session lead. The session will comprise an expert panel on the guiding questions, a poll, and an open discussion. Should you have any questions or comments, please feel free to raise them during the open discussion.

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. Programme

| Item 7.2 Forest potentials beyond wood | |
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| Time | 10:10-12:10 CET |
| Thematic Session | Forest potentials beyond wood |
| Location | Room 8 “Sophie” |
| Session Lead | H.E. Aurélie Flore Koumba Pambo (Gabon) |
| Moderator | <i>Hossein Moeini-Meybodi (UNFFS)</i> |
| Opening by session lead | H.E. Aurélie Flore Koumba Pambo Ambassador-at-Large for Climate, Environment, and Sustainable Development for the Gov. of Gabon, Co-Facilitator of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP) |
| Keynote | Carsten Smith-Hall University of Copenhagen, Denmark |
| Country views | Qinjiao Hou National Forestry and Grassland Administration, China |



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| | <p>Rata Muda Ministry of Primary Industries, New Zealand</p> <p>Ana Gabriela Saavedra López Ministry of Environment and Energy, Ecuador</p> |
| Panel discussion | <p>Bryony Morgan Traffic, UK</p> |
| | <p>Aaron Adu Global Shea Alliance, Ghana</p> |
| | <p>Sheam Satkuru International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO)</p> |
| | <p>Tim Payn Bioeconomy Science Institute, New Zealand</p> |
| | <p>Summary by facilitators & Closing by session lead</p> |
| <p>Coffee break (12:10-12:40) Reconvene in Room 10 “Orangerie”</p> | |
| Time | 12:40-13:30 |
| Plenary | Building the future with wood & Forest potentials beyond wood |
| 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 7.1 and 7.2 by session leads</i> |
| | <i>Exchange of views</i> |
| | <i>Conclusion by Co-Chairs</i> |



7. References

- i. **FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations)**. 2025. *Summary report of Webinar 4. Accelerating inclusive agrifood systems: the sustainable use of forest products beyond wood*. Rome, FAO. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/handle/20.500.14283/cd7241en>
- ii. **FAO**. 2025. *Background paper of Webinar 4. Accelerating inclusive agrifood systems: the sustainable use of forest products beyond wood*. Rome, FAO. <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/54f049de-f14f-45f5-b3bc-e7ec84fb27b1>
- iii. **Laird, S., Muir, G., Shanley, P., Pierce, A., López Binnquist, C., de Beer, J., Vinceti, B. & Walter, S.** 2024. *Forests, trees and wild species in agrifood systems: Optimizing benefits for biodiversity, climate and health*. Rome, FAO. <https://doi.org/10.4060/cd2883en>
- iv. **IUFRO (International Union of Forest Research Organizations)**. 2026. Policy Brief. https://www.bmluk.gv.at/dam/jcr:43af0fd6-444b-4ddb-9b9c-ab309bfdb08d/COLI_04_Forest_Potential_Beyond_Wood_FINAL.pdf

