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EUROPEAN SAWMILLS UNITE IN OSLO: CALLING FOR SMARTER CLIMATE TARGETS AND WORKABLE FOREST RULES

At its General Assembly in Oslo, the European Organisation of the Sawmill Industry (EOS) calls to “stop the clock” on the EU Deforestation Regulation for all companies, greater flexibility in LULUCF targets, and an investment-driven bioeconomy strategy.

Oslo, 24 October 2025 – On the occasion of its General Assembly in Oslo, the **European Organisation of the Sawmill Industry (EOS)** warmly welcomed a new member: the **Estonian Forest and Wood Industries Association**. Representing Estonia’s dynamic and innovation-driven wood sector, **Mr Margus Kohava (Combiwood Grupp)** was elected to the EOS Board, marking a strong step towards an even more united European voice for the sawmill industries.

The discussions in Oslo focused on how Europe can truly unlock the power of wood to meet its climate and bioeconomy goals. Science has long confirmed that wood is one of the most climate-friendly materials available: it stores carbon throughout its service life, and when used instead of energy-intensive materials, it significantly reduces emissions.

EOS members highlighted that **Europe needs a more flexible approach to achieving its LULUCF targets**, one that recognises the **climate value of both forests and wood products**. **Sustainable forest management**, combining responsible harvesting, prompt replanting, and adaptation to climate change, should go hand in hand with the wider use of harvested wood in long-life applications such as buildings. This circular approach keeps forests healthy and resilient, stores biogenic carbon for decades, and reduces overall emissions by replacing carbon-intensive materials such as steel and concrete.

This vision should also lie at the heart of the emerging European **bioeconomy**, which ought to provide a **clear framework to attract investment across the forestry value chain**, while stimulating the **production and consumption of wood-based products** that drive both prosperity and climate neutrality.

Turning to the European Commission’s revised proposal on the EU Deforestation Regulation (**EUDR**), published on 21 October, members voiced deep concern about the structural flaws introduced barely two months before the Regulation’s entry into application. **The new proposal fails to reflect the operational reality of the market**, where large, medium, small, and micro-enterprises cooperate within tightly integrated supply chains. By setting different application dates for companies depending on size – large and medium enterprises by 30 December 2025, and small and micro-enterprises twelve months later, the proposal creates only an illusion of flexibility. **In practice**, all operators will have to comply simultaneously, **since smaller companies must align with their business partners to remain in the market**.



Moreover, as downstream operators and traders remain obliged to communicate the reference numbers of due-diligence statements or declaration identifiers for all relevant products, **the bureaucratic burden is not reduced.**

EOS therefore calls on policymakers to “stop the clock” and suspend the entry into application of the Regulation for all companies, regardless of size. This pause would allow time for policymakers to design a truly workable system: one that effectively combats deforestation where it actually occurs, without penalising countries and regions that practise sustainable forest management and maintain healthy forest resources.

The EOS Board Members will announce in December the date and location of the next General Assembly.