



2nd Policy Steering Committee Meeting April 2023

Key outputs of the project were presented to the PSC. First, the consortium aims to fill data gaps for EU-wide forest monitoring and modeling. The forest monitoring data and layers to be included in the first version of the EU forest geodatabase, should be consistent across the EU, spatially distributed and high-resolution, timely, comprehensive, and transparent. Main variables include forest area and cover status and changes, aboveground biomass status and changes, forest age and structure, forest disturbances, biodiversity and ecosystem indicators, national forest monitoring status, GHG forest estimates, annual harvest statistics, and forest management maps. The PSC provided feedback on critical datasets and needs, including mapping of peatland, tree cover consistencies, and identifying live vs dead biomass pools. As well, it confirmed the importance of new methodologies that are being developed for measuring forest disturbances, stock changes, and differing between live and dead biomass.

Second, IEEP presented the EU Policy Tracker, a database of public policies, which support to identify key EU interventions that involve management of forests for climate action, biodiversity and bioeconomy. Feedback is solicited from PSC members to identify the right policies to be included under each specific section.

Third, IIASA presented forest management storylines to inform policy scenarios to be included in ForestNavigator pathways. We discussed different strategies for managing European forests, in the context of climate change mitigation and adaptation and other sectorial policies. Preferences of forest stewardship orientation are assessed based on three axes: biodiversity, multifunctionality, and bioeconomy. The PSC members stressed that we need to get a better understanding of forests maximum capacity to absorb carbon, pathways need to capture temporal and spatial scale trade-offs. In addition, modelling exercises should address how EU policies are implemented across EU countries and the requirements of national legislation regulating the use of forests.

Finally, IIASA presented the EU Policy Modelling Forum (PMF) concept, which aims to shorten the policy cycle by bringing together forest modellers and EU policy makers to identify and discuss up to date forest policy questions, develop modelling tools, and enhance EU and national pathways consistency. The PMF is expected to create a long lasting community, including also modellers and policy makers external to the project and going beyond the project lifetime. The PSC members agreed that setting a concrete example that attempts to shorten the long policy cycle beyond the ForestNavigator project lifetime is crucial, as well as including international representatives for aligning EU pathways also to other regions. The PMF first meeting is expected to take place in September 2023.