

FOREST RECREATION AND TOURISM AND THE EU FOREST ACTION PLAN

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Abstract

The EU Forest Action Plan was adopted in 2006. The overall objective of the Action Plan is to support and enhance sustainable forest management and multifunctional role of forests. It contains 18 key actions in the following areas: improving long term competitiveness; improving and protecting the environment; contributing to the quality of life; and fostering coordination and communication. One of the key actions of the Action Plan is in particular relevant to the main theme of the conference - key action 12 calls for exploring the potential of urban and peri-urban forests. In the first part of my presentation, I will introduce the main objectives and structure of the EU Forest Action Plan and will elaborate on how it intends to address the issues related to forest recreation and tourism.

The European Agricultural Rural Development Fund (EARDF) is one of the main Community instruments for the implementation of the Action Plan. The Rural Development Regulation (Council Regulation (EC) No 1698/2005 of 20 September 2005), applicable for the financial period 2007-2013, provides a key tool in efforts to create growth and jobs in rural areas, while enhancing sustainable development and aiming to improve competitiveness, stimulate diversification, and improve environmental protection. In the second half of my presentation, I will provide an overview of forest/forestry-related measures in the Rural Development Regulation, placing an emphasis on those relevant to enhancing forest amenity values.