

Foreword



Forests provide a multitude of benefits. Sustainably managed forests will give environmental benefits, provide sustainable economic development and improve the quality of life of people across the world. Forests are considered an essential part of the solution to many global challenges. In recent years, the capability of forests to mitigate climate change, provide renewable products and energy, and contribute to developing a greener economy has received increasing attention. But at the same time, these benefits are threatened by global warming and extreme weather events.

The challenges and opportunities forests are facing need to be dealt with in an effective and balanced way - globally, regionally and locally. A holistic approach to the different functions and demands on forests is necessary to ensure lasting provision of the ecological, economic and social functions of forests. The Pan-European Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable Forest Management are helpful and beneficial tools in this endeavour.

Evidence-based information on status and trends in forests and forest management is fundamental for sound policy making and for communication and dialogue with forest-related sectors and the general public. It is my hope that this report will contribute to fruitful discussions among policy makers, the private sector and civil society within and outside the forest sector, and that this report will be used as a knowledge base for decision makers.

Let me thank all individuals, organisations and countries that have contributed to the completion of the present report on the State of Europe's Forests. This third report in a series is an excellent example of co-operation among organisations that we should strive to maintain in our future work. New challenges and opportunities are approaching forests and society. The pan-European collaboration is a useful way to strengthen co-operation also in the years to come, in order to meet the needs of people.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lars P. Brekk". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Lars Peder Brekk
Minister of Agriculture and Food, Norway
Chair of FOREST EUROPE 2008-2011