



March 2012

## **European nations come together to raise awareness of wood resource**

A major campaign to highlight the importance of the wood industry will be launched in Brussels next week (March 27).

Representatives from organisations involved in the wood processing sector across Europe will meet to launch a new 'Wood Action Day' aimed at drawing attention to how the continent's wood resources are used.

Key topics of discussion at the conference organised by the European Panel Federation and European Organisation of the Sawmill Industry will include how Europe can be made a greener place using wood, and also the ending of subsidy regimes for biomass energy that are distorting wood markets.

To coincide with the event hundreds of politicians across Europe will receive specially crafted wooden gifts to demonstrate the value of using trees to create beautiful, useful things that store carbon for decades - rather than being burned in biomass plants.

Wood and wood-based products satisfy a myriad of applications, support more than 2 million jobs and contribute almost €2 billion to European economies every year.

Planting and using just 4% more wood would sequester an additional 150 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> each year, reducing Europe's overall emissions.

However, research has shown that burning virgin trees for energy greatly increases CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, and the wood panel industries argue that the burning of wood should only occur at the end of its useful life, in order to maximise the carbon storage and economic potential of this valuable resource.

The UK will be represented at the conference by the Wood Panel Industries Federation, which represents industries that use wood to make materials such as MDF for furniture and chipboard and OSB for flooring and roofing – and whose members include some of the country's biggest employers in the wood sector.

### **Alastair Kerr of the Wood Panel Industries Federation said:**

"We are delighted to be able to play a part in the concerted action being taken by the European wood industry to protect a vital resource and economic driver.

"It's important that as many people as possible are made aware of the benefits of wood in the economy and from an environmental point of view.



“In addition to the economic arguments we have also calculated that CO2 emissions could actually increase by six million tonnes each year if the government continues to put resources into biomass power stations, effectively cancelling out any environmental benefits into the bargain.

“Carbon storage in harvested wood products extends the carbon sequestration benefits provided by forests. Their role in mitigating climate change has been now recognised in the recent European Commission Proposal of Decision on ‘accounting rules and action plans on greenhouse gas emissions and removals resulting from activities related to land use, land use change and forestry’. The European Institutions and National Governments are now requested to adopt the European Commission Proposal and to take appropriate measures in order to fully implement the Decision.”

The WPIF and its members are key supporters of the Stop Burning Our Trees campaign, launched in 2011 to focus political attention on the best economic and environmental use of this valuable resource.

**ENDS**

**Issued by [Beattie Communications](#) on behalf of [Stop Burning Our Trees](#).**

For further information please contact:

Neil McDonald / [neil.mcdonald@onlybeattie.com](mailto:neil.mcdonald@onlybeattie.com) / 01698 787855

Graeme Cleland / [graeme.cleland@onlybeattie.com](mailto:graeme.cleland@onlybeattie.com) / 01324 602564