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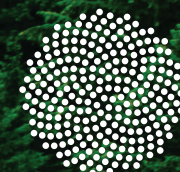
Ibec is Ireland's largest lobby group representing Irish business both domestically and internationally. Its membership is home grown, multinational, big and small, spanning every sector of the economy. Together they employ over 70% of the private sector workforce in Ireland. Ibec and its trade associations lobby government, policy makers and other key stakeholders nationally and internationally to shape business conditions and drive economic growth. It has over 230 professional services staff in seven locations including Brussels and has 42 different trade associations in the group.



Forestry for our future

Combatting climate change
 with trees and timber

Forest Industries Ireland
 manifesto for Irish forest policy



**Forest Industries
 Ireland**
 Ibec

Forestry is a critical pillar of Ireland's climate action plan.

Forest Industries Ireland supports the Climate Change Action Plan's ambition to plant 8,000 hectares of new forest each year.

Ireland's forests already contain 312 million tonnes of carbon and they absorb an additional 3.8 million tonnes of CO₂ each year. Every hectare of mature forest contains 600 tonnes of CO₂.

"It is well known that forests play a key role in our battle against climate change; storing carbon while sucking in carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and locking it into their biomass".

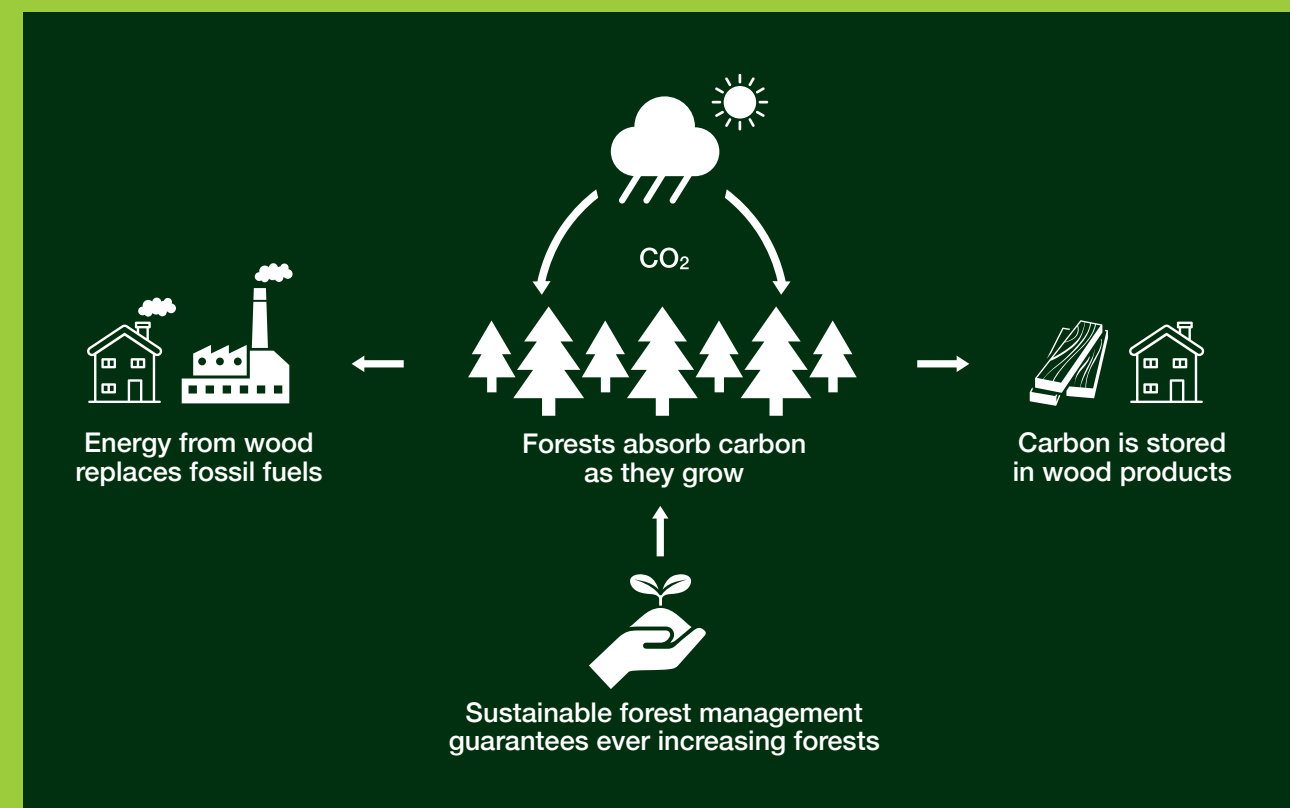
Sir David Attenborough,
UN Environment Programme

Bringing sustainable jobs and incomes to rural Ireland

The forest sector makes €2.3 billion contribution to the economy and employs 12,000 people all across the country. These are rural jobs in a sustainable industry that is an important part of Ireland's bioeconomy. We are producing the timber we need to build our houses and schools and putting millions of euro into communities across the country. We are world leaders in growing trees and producing timber products. This is a fast-growing industry focussed on technology and innovation with a bright future in rural Ireland.

The triple carbon benefit of forest biomass

1. Carbon is sequestered as forests grow.
2. Forest products displace carbon intensive building materials.
3. At end of life, forest products can be converted in carbon neutral energy and used for heating and generating electricity.



Let's get planting...



Ireland has virtually the lowest forest cover of any EU country. Only 11% of Ireland is covered by forest compared to over 30% across the EU. We have made great strides in growing new forests, but we need to redouble our efforts. Annual planting has decreased in recent years and the situation needs to be turned around. Every new hectare of forest is a new carbon sink that helps us battle climate change. There is plenty of land available, particularly poorer agricultural lands that are unprofitable and ideally suited to growing trees. Our climate and soils are ideally suited to growing trees and we have a natural competitive advantage when it come to forestry and timber.

Forest Industries Ireland is calling on the next Government to back forestry and timber to fight climate change:

PLANT MORE TREES by revitalising the national afforestation programme.

We need to get creative about planting new forests and plant the right trees in the right place. The afforestation programme should be regionally balanced and diversified. Everything must be done to create a programme that aims for 8,000 hectares of new afforestation each year.

GREEN OUR FARMS by reinvigorating farmer interest in planting forestry.

Farmers must be properly rewarded for planting trees. Forestry provides strong, steady incomes in farming communities. Our farmers must be able to embrace forestry with confidence and security. The system should support and value them. Farming families should be proud of their decision to plant and their environmental contribution be properly recognised.

GET OUR FORESTRY PROGRAMME WORKING by investing in people, processes and technology to support our forestry policy.

FII calls for the next Senior Minister for Agriculture to have direct responsibility for forestry and for the setting up of a senior level Interdepartmental Working Group for Forestry and Climate Action. We need to speed up action and decision making and reduce bureaucracy. Uncertainty and delays are undermining confidence in forestry and reducing farmer interest in the Forestry Schemes.

FACILITATE TIMBER MOBILISATION and understand the need for timber getting to market.

A strong timber market supports a healthy forest industry. Our timber uses local roads to get to market just like our other agricultural commodities. Forestry is creating value and employment throughout the country and its infrastructure needs must be supported like any other industry.

STIMULATE A VIBRANT MARKET FOR TIMBER at home by constructing public buildings with timber.

We have a great opportunity in Ireland to build more with timber. Government can take a lead by building schools and civic buildings from timber. This displaces carbon intensive building products with a material that locks away carbon for generations. Our building standards must support timber construction in all types of buildings. Every cubic metre of wood contains about one tonne of carbon dioxide.



RECREATION AND
WELL-BEING



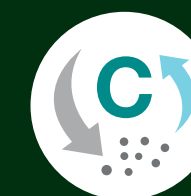
GREEN AND
RENEWABLE
ENERGY



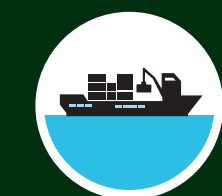
RURAL
JOBS



CLEAN AIR
AND OXYGEN



CARBON
SEQUESTRATION



VALUABLE
EXPORTS