

UNITED NATIONS FORUM ON FORESTS (UNFF 17)

Greece is fully aligning with the declaration of the European Union and its Member States.

As a Mediterranean country with various landscape types, such as forest or rangelands in close contact with agricultural and built-up areas, as well as hundreds of islands, Greece is highly vulnerable to the impact of climate change such as droughts, floods and forest fires.

Greece adopted a National Forest Strategy, for the period 2018-2038, which identifies specific objectives as well as the necessary resources and means of implementation representing a big step towards implementing sustainable forest management and strengthening the multifunctional role of forest ecosystems.

To that end we are establishing a new national forest inventory system and a national reforestation plan to plant more than 20.000.000 trees in the next decade (up to 2030), as a key priority. A pilot project is launched in 2022 on Mount Parnitha and the main project will start in 2023. The Plan is incorporated in the National Recovery and Resilience Plan and constitutes a coordinated framework with localized spatial actions and projects to strengthen the national forest balance with multiple, measurable environmental and social benefits, which will contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation and biodiversity protection.

Furthermore, after the devastating forest fires in the last years and in order to reduce wildfire risk, more than 70 million euros is invested this year only, in applying certain forest protective measures such as selective logging, thinning and pruning in forest areas as well as forest road maintenance works, cooperating closely with Hellenic Republic Asset Development Fund.

For the first time, legislation was adopted in Greece that provides the opportunity to the private sector to fund and implement the restoration projects in burnt forest ecosystems, under forest service supervision. So far, more than 14 million euros have been donated for such projects.

Moreover, forest fire prevention plans are going to be drawn for the more susceptible to fire forest ecosystems in the country.

Last but not least, by end of the summer, ratification of the publicly presented forest maps will be completed and approximately 90% of the country should have ratified forest maps.

Finally we all need to work in harmony, acting now in order to protect our planet and our common future.