THE ROOTS OF SCAR FOREST

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SCAR INSIGHT WEBINAR 16.12.2024

What is SCAR Forest?

- Operates within the Standing Committee on Agricultural Research (SCAR)

- Supports **research and innovation** for sustainable forest management, focusing on areas such as biodiversity, climate change adaptation, and promoting a circular and bio-based economy.

- Facilitates **collaboration** among member states and stakeholders (policy makers, reseachers, industry) to enhance the impact and efficiency of forest-related research and innovation efforts.

- Helps align forestry **research with EU policy frameworks**, such as the European Green Deal, the EU Forest Strategy, and the EU Biodiversity Strategy.

- Coordinates research agendas, fosters knowledge exchange, and harmonizing forest-related data across the EU.

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Why is SCAR Forest needed?

- Forests and other wooded areas cover about 44% of the EU land area

- Wide spectrum of forest ecosystems, diverse ecosystem services

- High importance and value for industry, livelihoods, self-sufficiency

Challenges:

- Fragmented forest-based sector, huge amount of forest-owners, diversity of management options

- High pressure towards forests due to competing land uses, conflicting strategies, climate change

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Why is SCAR Forest needed?

- SCAR aims at tackling these challenges by identifying common needs for research and innovation, promoting transnational coordination, and providing advice and support for EU policies.

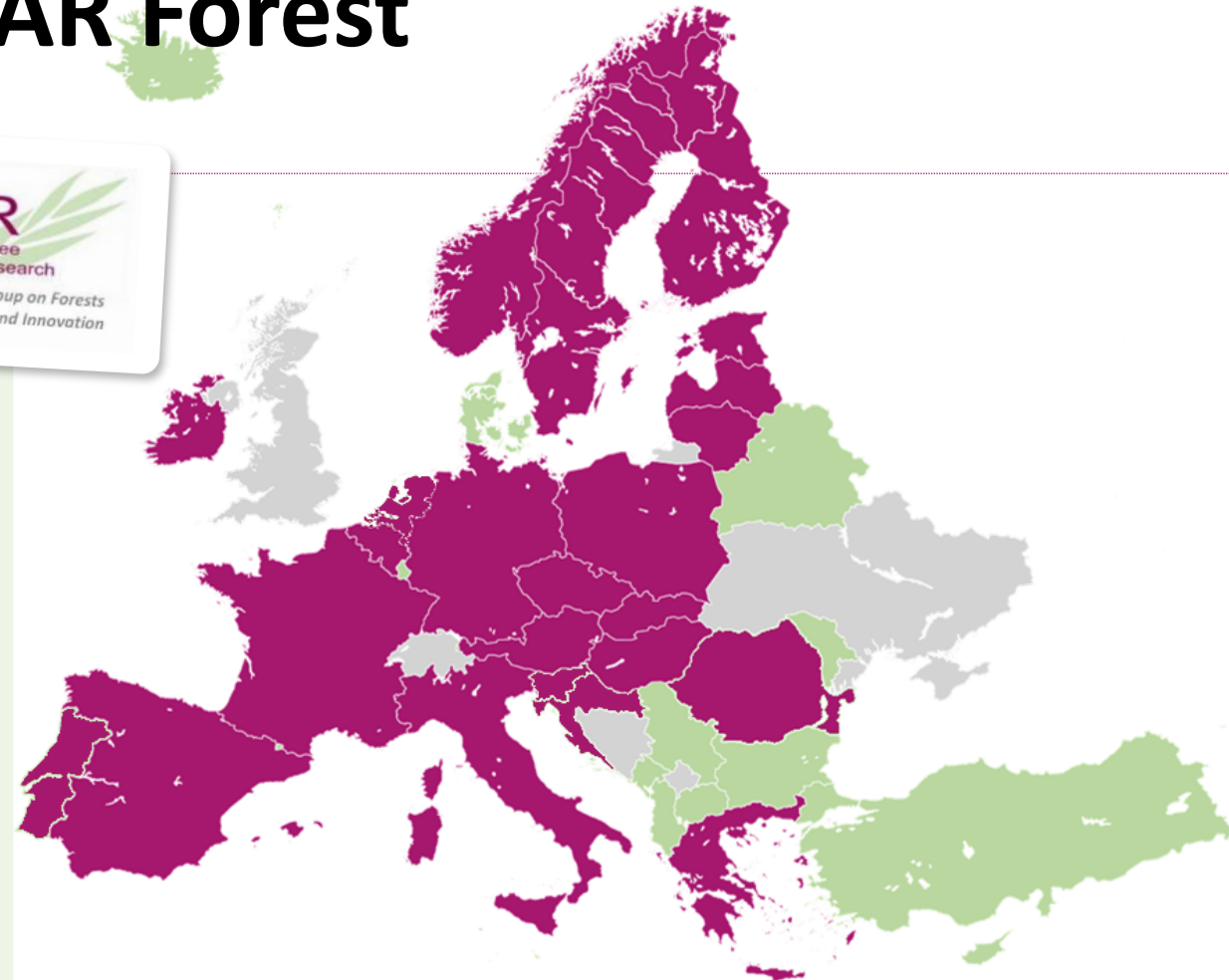- Increases the sustainability, resilience and competitiveness of EU's forest-based sector.

Present composition of SCAR Forest

Members
- 23 countries
  - Incl. 4 new members in the last 2 years: Slovenia, Croatia, Portugal, The Netherlands
- European Commission

Observers
- EFI
- FTP
- INNOVAWOOD
- IUFRO
- FORESTVALUE

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Strategic Working Group on Forests
& Forestry Research and Innovation

● SCAR Forest member   ● SCAR member   ● Not a member

History: 1st mandate

- Mandate was initiated in 2011 and established in 2013

- 1st mandate: October 2013-September 2015 (2 years)

- 15 members

- Objectives:
  - Identify **common needs for research and innovation** suitable for transnational cooperation
  - Address the **diversity of management options** depending on ownership as well as on environmental, social and economic conditions.

- Main achievement: support to the launch of the ERA-Net SUMFOREST

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History: 2nd mandate

- End-2016 to mid-2019 (ca. 2.5 yrs)
- 19 members
- Objectives:
  - Promote transnational cooperation in research and innovation in the forest-based sector
  - Reinforce the group
  - Strengthen the knowledge base
  - Provide intelligence into strategic programming
  - Feed public debates on forest-related EU policy areas
  - Facilitate collaboration between researchers, practitioners and society
- Many activities carried out with the support of the CASA project
  - CASA = coordination and support action funded through Horizon 2020 to support and facilitate SCAR missions

History: 3rd mandate

- 3rd mandate: July 2019 to June 2023 (4 years)
- From 19 to 21 members
- Objectives:
    - Promote and strengthen transnational research and cooperation in the fields of climate change and other risks, biodiversity and ecosystem services, and bioeconomy to increase sustainability and competitiveness of the EU's forest-based sector
    - Promote forest-based system and value-chain approaches with consideration of other sectors and regions of the World
    - Be a source of advice for a coherent and ambitious forest-based research and innovation area
    - Provide advice on research and innovation to the implementation of forest-related national policies and EU forest strategy and related policies
    - Go on increasing the list of participating members and observers
- Main achievements:
    - Participation to the 5th SCAR Foresight Exercise
    - Analyses of knowledge gaps on topics linked to the new EU Forest Strategy (e.g. imported deforestation, carbon farming) in relation with other working groups (ARCH, BIOECONOMY)
    - Initial development of the European research and innovation partnership on forest and forestry

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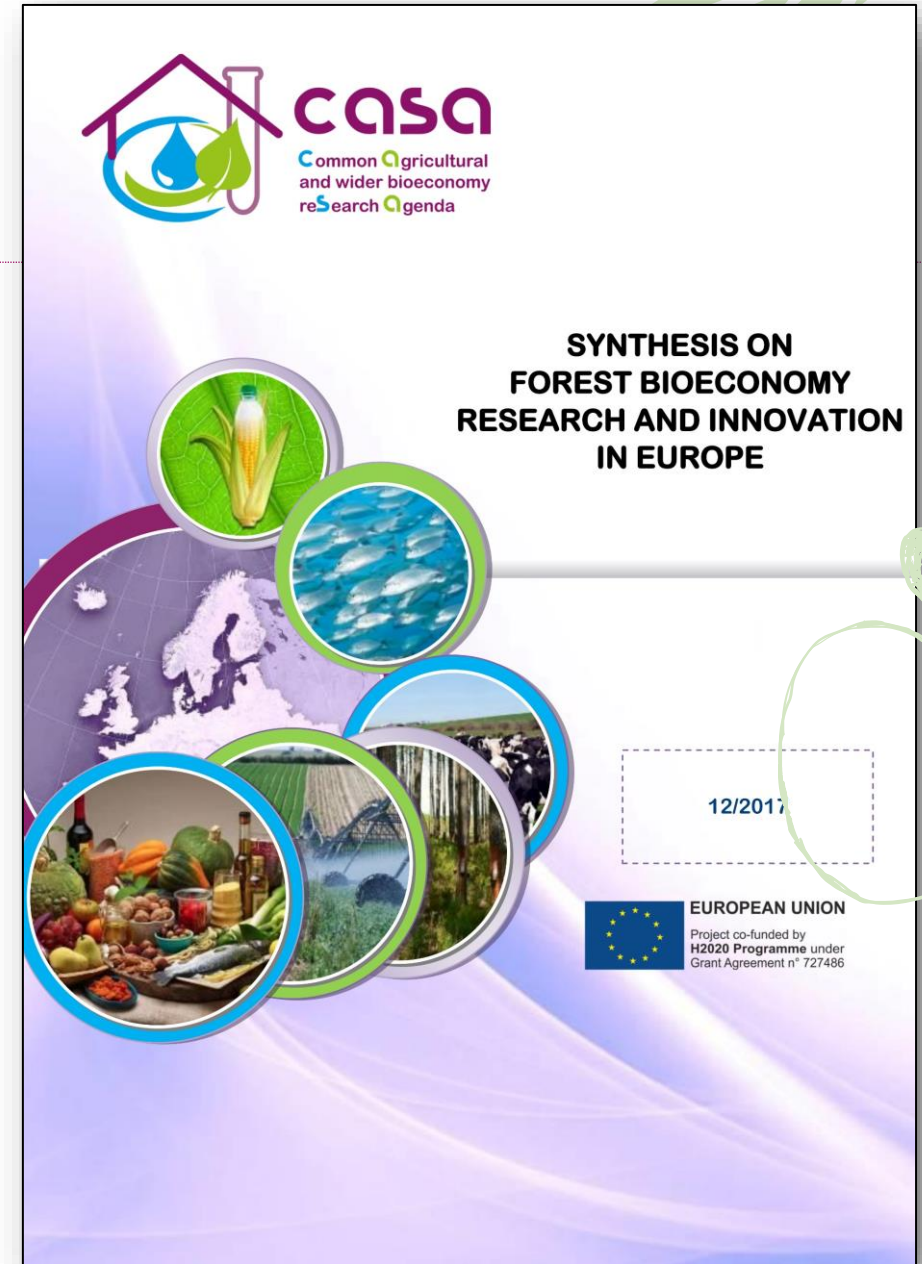on Agricultural Research

History: 4th mandate

- Current mandate: July 2023 to June 2026 (3 years)

- From 21 to 23 members

- Main objective: support the development of a European research and innovation partnership on forests and forestry

- Specific objectives:
  - Identify knowledge gaps on topics of interest for the European partnership on forests and forestry
  - Support future studies on European forests and the forest sector
  - Map information systems and research infrastructures on forests
  - Monitor trends in emergent forest-related value chains related to the transition of economies

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Some key products

2017: synthesis on forest bioeconomy research and innovation in Europe (with the support of the CASA project)
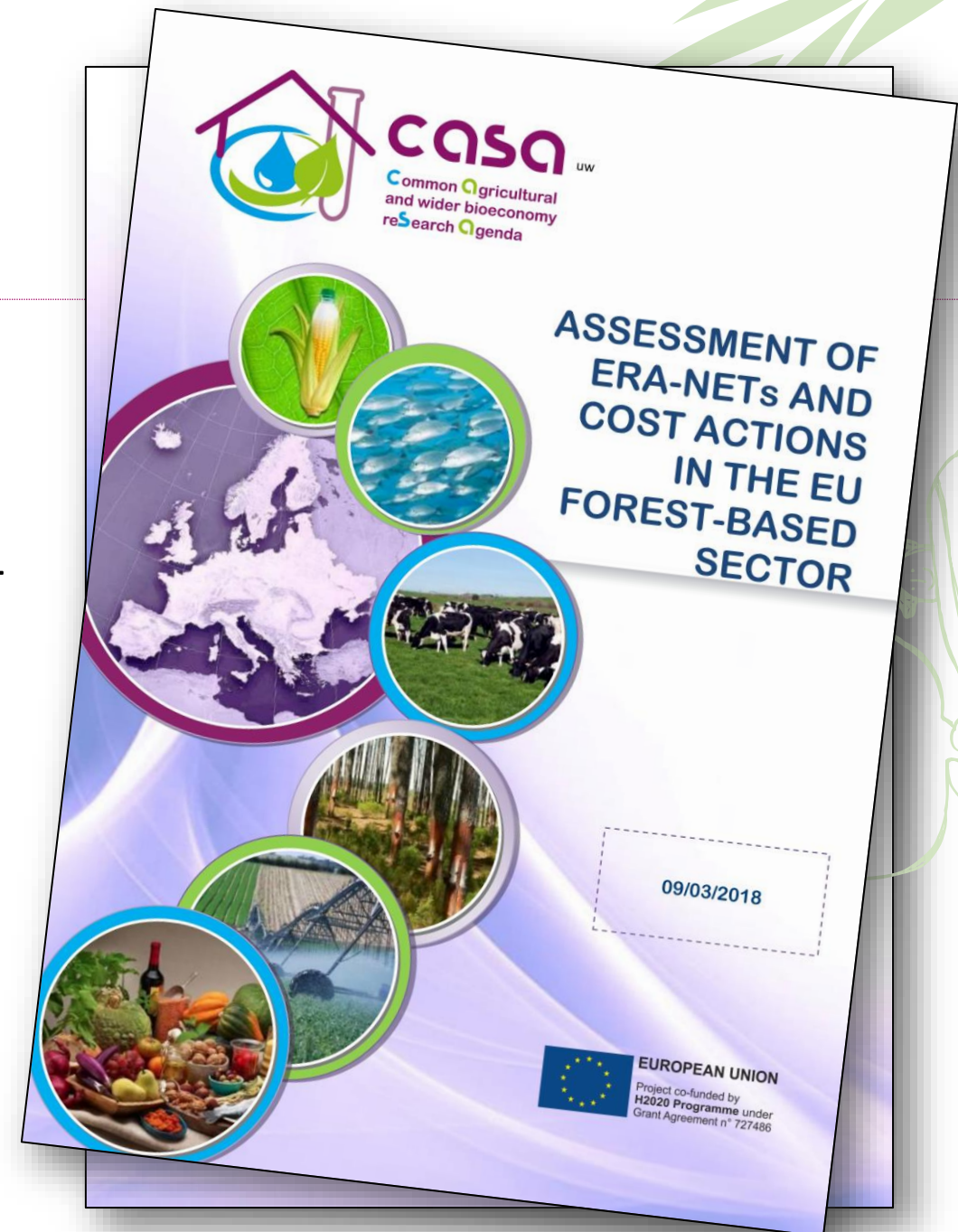
- Forest bioeconomy is a very fragmented research area, and there is low level of cooperation among different topics

- Radically new and complex innovations are more successful than routine and 'safe' innovations

- Information on innovations provided in EC projects is not enough to develop successful innovations; they need also adequate financial support, as well as input from diverse groups of actors
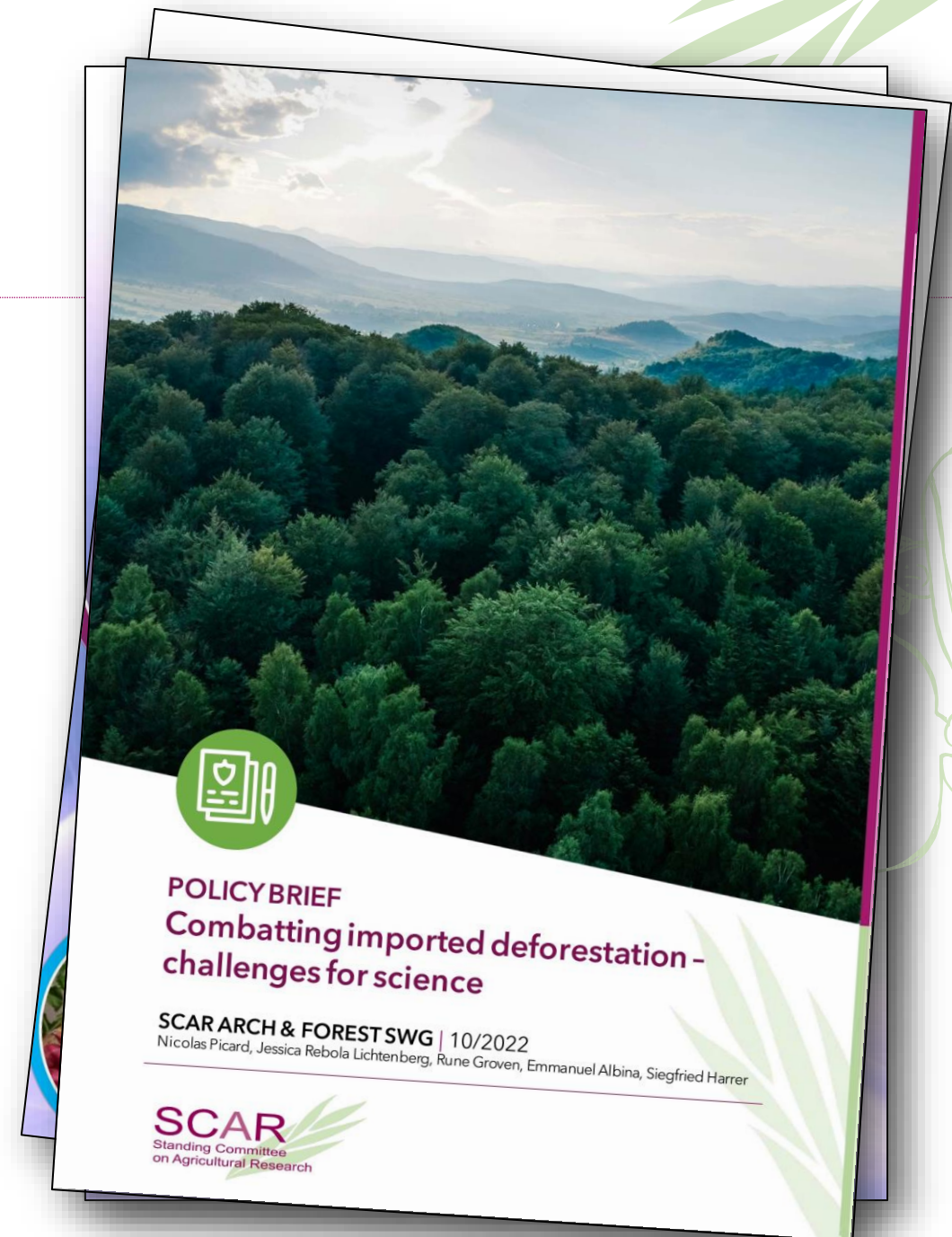
Some key products

2018: assessments of ERA-NETs and COST Actions in the EU Forest-based sector (with the support of the CASA project)

- Highlights the importance of the ERA-NET and COST funding schemes to initiate and implement future-oriented forest-related research and innovation projects through transnational networks and collaborative actions.

- Flexibility by the funding partners to select projects fitting best into their national priorities.

- Facilitate the partnership and incorporation of research and technology actors from Central and Eastern Europe

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Some key products

- 2022: Policy brief on combatting imported deforestation (together with ARCH)

- Combatting imported deforestation through research requires engagement by various stakeholders. The complexity and dynamics of the issues demand a transdisciplinary, multi-actor and multi-level approach.

- Projects should be multinational.

- Need for development of models for predicting long-term land-use, and tools and methods for monitoring forest degradation

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POLICY BRIEF
Combatting imported deforestation – challenges for science

SCAR ARCH & FOREST SWG | 10/2022
Nicolas Picard, Jessica Rebola Lichtenberg, Rune Groven, Emmanuel Albina, Siegfried Harrer

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Some key products

- 2023: Portfolio analysis on H2020 projects concerning Carbon farming and carbon removal certification
  - Helps the development of carbon certification scheme

- 18 projects, many quite recent
- Knowledge gap related statements calling for R&I needs:
  - Potential of organic component in **soils** to remove carbon is dependent on soil parameters
  - **Peatlands** are important to keep storing carbon but less effective in removing
  - **Forests** are storing a lot of carbon but the removal capacity is not always present
  - **Wood** products are long-lasting products

PORTFOLIO ANALYSIS REPORT
SWG FOREST
Joris VAN ACKER| 10.07.2023

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Future

🍃 The present mandate puts full effort to the building of the partnership.

🍃 What is the role of SCAR SWG Forest during and after the partnership?

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Thank you for your attention

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More information

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