

## INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS TO SUSTAINABLE FORESTS WELCOME TO SMURF

**SMURF** is a transformative project aimed to provide **sustainable solutions** that benefit the entire **European forest-based value chain**. This includes addressing **ecological concerns**, promoting **economic viability** through wood and non-wood products, and considering the **social and cultural aspects of forest management** with a multidisciplinary approach and inclusive stakeholder engagement.

SMURF is aligned with the **EU's Forest Strategy 2030** and will work over the next **four years** to enable **20 million forest owners across Europe** to generate economic activity and provide employment in forests, while managing forests to conserve and adapt to climate change.

SMURF is focused on Small Forest Holdings and seeks tailored solutions to promote Sustainable Forest Management. From **Closer to Nature Sylviculture practices** to **digitalization and training**, SMURF pioneers new avenues for carbon farming and biodiversity promotion.

## WE SEEK TO TRANSFORM FOREST MANAGEMENT PROJECT OBJECTIVES

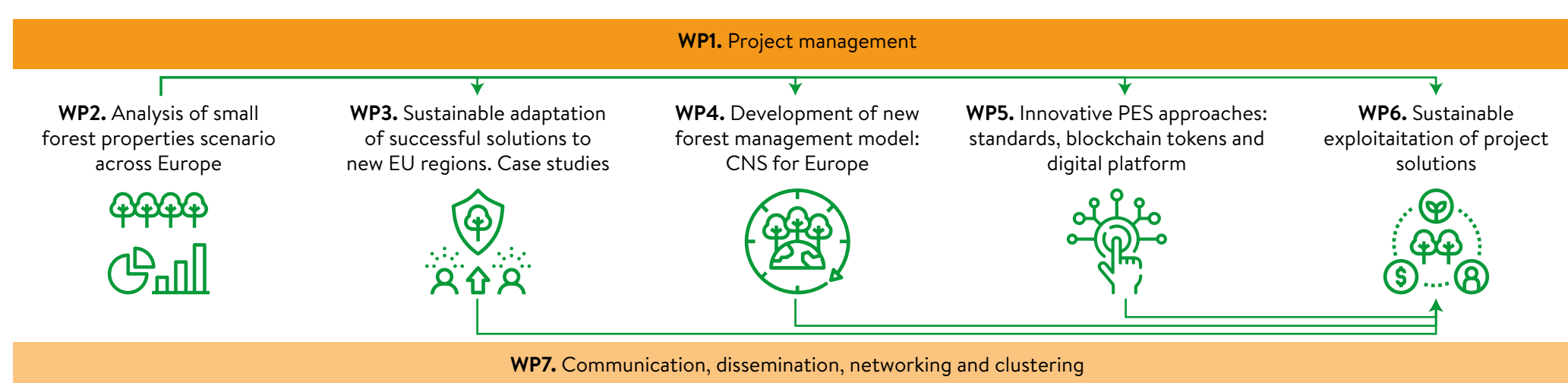
- 1 Analyze the whole forest-based value chain focussing on small-forest properties in different European regions.
- 2 Provide innovative tools to small-forest owners to valorise unexploited non-wood products and damaged/infected wood.
- 3 Establish innovative management models based on Closer to Nature Sylviculture practices (CNS).
- 4 Propose a new standardised Payment for Ecosystem Services system (PES), emphasizing carbon and biodiversity criteria.
- 5 Co-create a comprehensive framework to support small-forest owners through trainings, guidelines and recommendations.



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## SMURF'S METHODOLOGY WORK PACKAGES

SMURF success lies in engaging stakeholders already active in SFH across Europe. The Collaborators Incorporation Plan targets researchers, forest associations, innovative enterprises, consultants, and authorities. Utilize a Cascade Funding Process and MOUs to involve entities in National and Thematic Groups via the HUB.



## SMURF IN A NUTSHELL CORE DATA

- A **Horizon Europe's project** under the topic HORIZON-CL6-2023-CircBio-01-12
- With a funding of **5,4M €**
- 10 partners, 6 countries
- 4 years:** Jan. '24 - Dec. '27

## DASHBOARD OF SMALL-SCALE FOREST CHARACTERIZATION: SMALL FOREST HOLDING ACROSS EUROPE

SMURF will characterize European Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) and propose a new standardized European classification for **Forest Europe** and the EU Commission's consideration.

The focus will shift to forest holdings, similar to agriculture, considering various land access methods such as leasing. Results will be displayed in a **Dashboard of EU SFH**, covering socioeconomic characteristics, legal frameworks, and support systems, including **FORKIS**. A Digital Map of Supporting Structures will also be developed.

Additionally, **10 lighthouses** will be identified, examining aspects like vertical integration, cooperativism, public-private collaboration, and digitalization, both within the EU and internationally.

## CAP Network

### CLUSTERING

SMURF is willing to collaborate with related projects and networks sharing similar aims.

→ 4 thematic focus groups

## THE EU SMALL FOREST HOLDINGS NETWORK

### CASCADE FUNDING

## HUB

THE EU SMALL FOREST'S WEB

EU Conference on Small Forest Holdings.  
March 2025

→ 15 national working groups

### EXPLOITATION

SFH 2030 Roadmaps, 2027 National Action Plans, and Policy Recommendations will boost lighthouse implementation, refine legal frameworks, and enhance support systems.

## NEW BUSINESS MODELS: TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE & PROFITABLE FOREST-BASED SYSTEMS

A list of **new business opportunities** for SFH will be elaborated, with characterization sheets of the main types, grouped in at least the following categories: **technology models**, **non-wood forest products (NWFP)**, **dead and infected wood (D/I Wood)**, and other ecosystem services.

**Practical experiences** to develop those business opportunities locally, implemented during 18 months, will be conducted through **12 Open Labs**, with dialogue spaces among the promoter, 3-4 experts and 3-4 interested entities in each case.

The **effectiveness** of each business model and its feasibility for **reproducibility** in Europe will be assessed, through a Focus Group and the results presented in Guidelines for Implementation.

## PROJECT MANAGEMENT

## COMMUNICATION & DISSEMINATION

## INNOVATIVE PES APPROACHES FOR EUROPE: PAYMENT FOR ECOSYSTEM SERVICES BASED IN CARBON CREDITS

In the framework of the EU Carbon Removals Certification Framework (CRCF), a **new EU wide Carbon Certification Scheme** will be set up (FCO<sub>2</sub>EU). It will be based in the harmonization and simplification of the existing ones, covering **afforestation and improved forest management**.

**Blockchain technology** will be applied to guarantee traceability and a **PES Digital Market Platform** of the new tokens will be launched. **Smart Contracts** and data security methods will feed a reliable and efficient marketplace.

A new token, **FCO<sub>2</sub>EU-BIO**, will be established for **forest carbon credits incorporating biodiversity**. Implementation guides and training materials will be disseminated through webinars, seminars, and workshops to enhance stakeholder engagement with the new standard and marketplace.

## NEW FOREST MANAGEMENT MODELS: CLOSE TO NATURE SYLVICULTURE (CNS)

SMURF seeks to broaden European forest management approaches by embracing a variety of models and emphasizing diversification of products and services, promoting biodiversity. Through collaboration with organizations like **Pro Silva** and **Association Forêt Irregulière (AFI)**, SMURF will develop and implement **11 forest management models** for different European forest types, establishing **7 Pilot Study Areas** and **11 Demonstration Stands** and will try to incorporate them into the **Integrate Network**.

A **simplified accountability framework** for SFH will be used to define **Economic Models of CNS**, integrating PES and forest products. Guidelines for the 11 CNS management models, promoting **Continuous Cover Forestry**, will be tested and incorporated in training materials and seminars.