

Report for annual networks

Submit the report to sns@slu.se by 24:00 CET, 1st of March the year after the network period.

The report should not exceed 2000 words.

Please adjust the size of the boxes to the length of your answer.

1. Title of the network:	Promoting sustainable forestry in a growing bioeconomy for Europe –PROFOR
2. Network code:	N2025-01
3. Reporting year:	2025
4. Main applicant:	Mika Mustonen
Email:	mika.mustonen@luke.fi
Institution:	Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke)

Activities

5. Provide a short network summary, including:

a) The purpose of the network/main problems/background

The European Green Deal, introduced in 2019, was a new growth strategy and roadmap that aims to transform the EU into a fair and prosperous society with a greener competitive economy and with a net-zero emission of GHG by 2050. The ambition of the European Green Deal signaled a societal transformation not experienced for decades in Europe. European Commission, the Council, and the European Parliament all state that the transition should be science-based and emphasize the role of forests in achieving the goals for a wide range of policy objectives.

In the second Ursula von den Leyen's Commission (2024-2029), the climate and other environmental goals will be promoted under Clean Industrial Deal, a "Next generation Green Deal" emphasizing competitiveness of the EU and, among other things, investments for industrial decarbonization.

The PROFOR network represents a variety of researchers and research institutions in the Nordic-Baltic countries. The network's added value is the ability to synthesize current Nordic-Baltic forest research of value for the implementation of the European EU's strategic forest and forestry-related objectives, and to provide science as policy support for decision makers designing these policies in Brussels and elsewhere. The major relevance of the network will be to present Nordic-Baltic research in a way that is clearly targeted to support knowledge-based decisions in the implementation of various aspects of the EU policies both at European and member state levels.

Synthesizing and communicating forest research to a wider Brussels based audience also provides the network with the opportunity to increase awareness of knowledge needs among policymakers, and to identify research needs for the member institutions in the network based on the EU policy processes.

Even though EU has no common forest policy, the forest sector is covered by a large number of sectoral EU policies affecting the use of forests. Recently implemented or forthcoming forest-related EU initiatives driven by present Green Deal ambitions include, e.g., conservation targets in the EU Biodiversity strategy, Nature Restoration Law targets, forestry measures in the Taxonomy, LULUCF, Regulation on Deforestation-free products, Closer-to-nature guidelines for forest management, sustainability of forest biomass for energy in the REDII revision, as well as EU Framework for Forest Monitoring and Strategic Plans. Characteristic for these initiatives is that they focus on forests' role in contributing to carbon sink and biodiversity. Furthermore, there is a clear shift from voluntary actions towards detailed legal regulation with a pan-European (or global) scope.

The EU initiatives are reflected in the future EU R&I funding programs, and in the future most likely also on national and Nordic trans-boundary funding programs. Hence, it is critical for forest research that EU strategies and measures developed under them should have a broad science-based view to all dimensions of sustainability to respect the UN sustainable development goals (SDGs), and clearly indicate the opportunities of forest-based

bioeconomy to contribute to the objectives of EU forest-related policies in full respect for ecological principles favorable for biodiversity and climate.

This, as well as promoting to Nordic regional perspective in the EU, calls for a need on knowledge-based sustainability directions. Regional characteristics, e.g. specific ecological features, and long tradition in forest sciences in Nordic and Baltic countries justify the activities of the PROFOR network to emphasize the importance of evidence based sustainable forestry in the region and address issues that are needed regarding research and innovation in an EU context.

b) A description of the main activities of the network

1. In June 2025 the network organised a two days workshop in Oslo, Norway together with stakeholders from the Norwegian forest sector. Young scientists were invited as speakers to the workshop. In the workshop we elaborated on themes for the Brussels seminar, as well as the manuscript for a Policy Brief.

2. The main activity of the PROFOR network in 2025 was the forest seminar "Advancing multifunctional forests: Pathways for Northern Europe — across Management, Carbon Removal Certification, and Land-Use Change", organised 9th December in Brussels. The aim of the event was to provide science-based policy support, and the target group was EU decision makers and Brussels based stakeholders. The PROFOR PB on the topics was delivered in the event and published online prior the event.

The keynote speakers were MEP Ville Niinistö (Greens/ ITRE Committee) and MEP Pekka Toveri (EPP/AGRI Committee). The panelists were from the Central Union of Agricultural Producers and Forest Owners Brussels office, Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Latvia and Finnish Forest Industries Brussels Office, while the audience consisted of actors from the Commission, the European Parliament, Permanent Representations, as well as Brussels based interest representation organisations. The event was moderated by M Rosario García-Gil, Vice Dean, SLU.

PROFOR network members had three presentations on research results on the seminar topic and important from the North European perspective. Two of the PROFOR presentations in the seminar were held by early career researchers. *Program attached.*

Back-to-back with the seminar PROFOR delegation visited Lithuanian RDI Liaison Office LINO in Brussels to present our work and to discuss collaboration in promoting forest research in the EU.

c) Did the network develop and deliver as planned? If not, please explain why

YES

Outcomes

6. List the published outputs achieved as a consequence of the network (peer-reviewed articles, other publications)

Advancing multifunctional forests: Pathways for Northern Europe: across management, carbon removal certification, and land-use change. Profor Policy Brief 2025. <https://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-419-118-0>

7. List other practical outputs of the network (workshops, conferences, scientific meetings, policy recommendations, conferences, large-scale project applications, websites or databases etc.)

- Forest seminar "**Advancing multifunctional forests: Pathways for Northern Europe — across Management, Carbon Removal Certification, and Land-Use Change**" 9th December 2025 in Brussels, in the premises of Helsinki EU Office (36 participants). This was the main objective and output of the PROFOR network.

- Two days **PROFOR workshop**, 4-5. April Oslo, Norway (23 participants).

- Visit to Lithuanian RDI Liaison Office LINO in Brussels 9th December (11 participants)

- In addition, we had five on-line PROFOR meetings to prepare the activities (9-12 participants)

8. How and within which areas was the network beneficial for the Nordic region (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and the autonomous areas of the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Åland Islands)?

PROFOR presents Nordic forest research and highlights region-specific knowledge on forests and sustainable forestry at the EU level. The Nordic regional dimension in forests and forestry must be emphasized by the Nordic countries themselves, no one else will do it.

We support evidence-based decision-making by providing North European research results for the implementation of policies at both the EU and national levels.

Participation

9. Number of participants in the network activities

(Please adjust the table with countries to match your network)

Country	PhD students & Post-docs	Other researchers	Stakeholders	Communication officers	Gender			Total
					Women	Men	Other	
Finland	1	4			2	3		5
Norway	3	2	5		5	5		10
Sweden	2	4			1	5		6
Latvia	1	2	1		1	3		4
Lithuania	1	1			2			2
Estonia	1	2			2	1		3
EU*			21		11	10		21
Total	9	15	27		24	27		51

EU* = Brussels based seminar participants and visit hosts

Gender equality actions

In the beginning of the network period, you were introduced to the [gender equality guidelines](#) and asked to perform at least one action point from each step during your network period. Fill in the following evaluation scheme with the actions performed and the outcome. It is new for SNS to introduce these gender equality guidelines to our funded networks, so SNS would really appreciate your feedback on the guidelines and how they have worked for you.

10. Evaluation scheme	
a) Outcome of completed planning step:	Step 1: We have understood the importance and paid attention to the structure of our network's core group as well as the WS participants' gender balance
b) Outcome of completed action step (at least one action point):	Planning: We have formed the core group (applicants) to fulfil the 40/60 requirement of SNS In the activities priority has been given to the underrepresented gender to reach at least the 60/40 target: We invited stakeholders and external speakers in even gender balance
c) How did the actions/tools work for your network:	Good
d) How could SNS provide more support to your network in	We find the instructions on SNS website and information appropriate

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the work toward gender equality:	
e) General feedback to the gender equality guidelines:	We very much welcome the fact that gender equality is systematically assessed and taken into consideration. We have taken that into account as much as possible when planning the events. NB: Participation in open PROFOR events is beyond the network's control.

Economic report

11. Received grant from SNS (SEK):
200 000 SEK + surplus from 2024 43,965,79 SEK = 243965,79 SEK

12. Costs

(in SEK)	SNS funding	Co-financing	Total
Travel and accommodation	231355,22	21023,48 (Luke)	252378,71
Meeting costs	9 015,02		9015,02
Communication	3 595,55		3595,55
Other costs, salaries		262655,17	262655,17
Total SUM (SEK)	243965,79	283678,65	527644,45

13. Allocation of SNS funding		
Country	Partner/institution	% of total
Finland	Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke) – Incl. meeting & comm. costs for the whole network	16,1
Norway	NIBIO	20,5
Sweden	Skogforsk	12,0
Sweden	SLU	14,6
Latvia	Latvian State Forest Research Institute SILAVA	12,5
Lithuania	Lithuanian Research Centre for Agriculture and Forestry (LAMMC)	6,9
Estonia	Estonian University of Life Sciences	17,4
...		
Total SUM		100 %

14. Economic result (deficit or surplus)
Deficit 21023,48. This is covered by Luke's co-financing in travel and accommodation costs

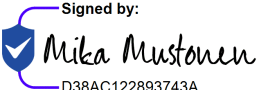
15. Optional: Comments to the economic reporting
SEK- Euro rate used 10,8956

16. Provide a popular science piece for dissemination in SNS' various channels (maximum 700 words) *with emphasis on application of results and benefits for the Nordic society.*

Please see separate document for instructions

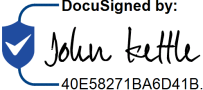
I hereby declare that the above statements are true to the best of my knowledge
(Please adjust the number of signature boxes to the number of applicants)

Signature of the main applicant

Signed by:
 D38AC122893743A... ----- Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke) -----
Signature Institution Date

Mika Mustonen, Coordinator
Printed name

Signature of the department head at the department of the main applicant

DocuSigned by:
 40E58271BA6D41B... ----- Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke) -----
Signature Institution Date

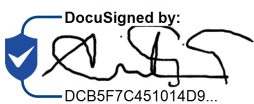
John Kettle, Director
Printed name

Second applicant's signature, place and date

Signed by:
 EBCC6F25A27045E... ----- Estonian University of Life Sciences -----
Signature Institution Date

Marek Metslaid, Director
Printed name

Third applicant's signature, place and date

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Signature

Skogforsk

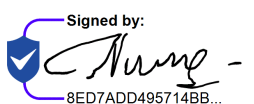
Institution

Date

Erik Ling, Program manager

Printed name

Fourth applicant's signature, place and date

Signed by:

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Signature

Lithuanian Research Centre for
 Agriculture and Forestry (LAMMC)

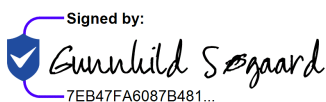
Institution

Date

Vita Tilvikienė, Deputy director for Research

Printed name

Fifth applicant's signature, place and date

Signed by:

 7EB47FA6087B481...

Signature

Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy
 Research (NIBIO)

Institution

Date

Gunnhild Sjøgaard, Head of Department

Printed name

Sixth applicant's signature, place and date

DocuSigned by:

 4A95600E592A47E...

Signature

Latvian State Forest Research
 Institute "Silava"

Institution

Date

Jurgis Jansons, Senior researcher

Printed name

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Seventh applicant's signature, place and date

Signed by:
 Johan Svensson
04F9DC2AC5B8485...

Signature

Swedish University of Agricultural
Sciences SLU
Institution

Date

Johan Svensson, Researcher

Printed name