



## OECD Expert Workshop in Latvia

# Forestry for the future: Uniting stakeholders for climate action and sustainable growth

26-28 May 2025

Jelgava, in the premises of the [JSC Latvian state forest and Riga](#) in the Ministry of Agriculture

### Workshop overview

The OECD is organising an international expert workshop on Forestry in partnership with the government of Latvia, to be held in Riga from 26-28 May 2025. The workshop will explore key issues in the central role that forests play in global climate change mitigation, all while contributing to welfare and environmental sustainability at the local level.

Forestry plays a vital role for achieving climate and sustainable development goals. Globally, forests store approximately 2400 billion tons of CO<sub>2</sub>, which is more than 50 times the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> emitted in 2023. They are also home to the majority of the Earth's species and are essential for a variety of ecosystem services. At the same time, sustainable forest management provides renewable materials for climate-friendly development. Ensuring food security and adequate housing are important considerations, as croplands, pasturelands and human settlements often encroach upon forest areas. These factors create trade-offs between environmental and socioeconomic goals that are often poorly understood and difficult to eliminate, but possible to mitigate or circumvent. Such trade-offs have not been sufficiently highlighted in public discourse, preventing policy makers from making informed decisions and hampering co-ordinated policy action.

This workshop will bring together a unique combination of perspectives from various experts on forestry, including policy makers, forest-related organisations, producer associations, international organisations and the academia. Bringing together different perspectives can help identify existing barriers and best practices from the accumulated international policy experience. The workshop will feed into future OECD work in the context of climate mitigation, aiming to pave the way for the design of innovative forest policies and to ensure forest integrity without compromising economic growth.

## Draft agenda

<b>Monday 26 May</b>	
<b>19:00</b>	Arrival of delegations
<b>19:30 - 21:00</b>	Networking dinner at the <a href="#">Gutenbergs Hotel</a>
<b>Tuesday 27 May</b>	
<b>Master of Ceremony: <a href="#">Aivars Lapins</a>, Permanent Delegation of Latvia to UNESCO and OECD</b>	
<b>9:00 - 10:15</b>	Bus trip to Jelgava  Meeting point: Parking at riverside on 11. novembra krastmala street at crossing with Polu gate street ( <a href="#">click here for the Google map link</a> )
<b>10:15 - 10:45</b>	Short introduction of the building of the <a href="#">Latvian State forest built mostly of wood</a>
<b>10:45 - 11:00</b>  (Hybrid session with online participation via Zoom)	<b>Opening remarks:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representative of the <a href="#">JSC Latvian State forest</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Āris Jansons</a>, Director of the Forestry Department of the Ministry of Agriculture, Latvia, Director of the Forestry Department of the Ministry of Agriculture, Latvia</li> <li>• <a href="#">Walid Oueslati</a>, Head of the Climate, Biodiversity and Water Division, OECD Environment Directorate</li> </ul>
<b>11:00 - 12:55</b>  (Hybrid session with online participation via Zoom)	<b>Session 1 – From a global to a local perspective on forestry</b> <b>Moderator:</b> <a href="#">Jamie Ash</a> , Trade and Agriculture Directorate, OECD  <b>Content</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Combating deforestation from a global perspective</li> <li>• Forestry policies as local, effective solutions for adaptation to global climate change</li> <li>• Managing hemi-boreal forests locally: challenges and lessons learned</li> <li>• Synergies in climate change mitigation and resilience: the role of urban forests in a planet of cities</li> </ul> <b>Keynote presentations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Arvids Ozols</a>, Senior Forest Policy Expert, former Deputy State Secretary and Forest Policy Director of the Ministry of Agriculture of Latvia, former UNFF Bureau member, former Director General of the Latvian State Forest Service, Latvia</li> <li>• <a href="#">Walid Oueslati</a>, Head of the Climate, Biodiversity and Water Division, OECD Environment Directorate</li> </ul> <b>Panel discussion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Ewald Rametsteiner</a>, Deputy Director, Forestry Division, FAO</li> <li>• Markus Lier, DG Agriculture and Rural Development, European Commission</li> <li>• <a href="#">Linde Zuidema</a>, Expert, European Environment Agency</li> <li>• <a href="#">Thorsten Arndt</a>, Head of advocacy, Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Marcus Lindner</a>, Head of Resilience Programme, European Forest Institute, Bonn</li> <li>• <a href="#">Tiina Ryttilä</a>, Senior Ministerial Advisor, Ministry of Agriculture and forestry, Finland</li> </ul> Q&A

12:55 - 13:00	Introductory presentation on the afternoon forest visit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aris Jansons, Director of Forestry Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Latvia</li> </ul>
13:00 - 14:00	<b>Lunch</b>
14:00 - 20:00	Getting to know hemi-boreal forests first-hand: a forest visit to see different situations depending on type of management, objectives, hydrological cycle, species etc.
20:00 - 21:00	Transfer to Riga (drop-off at the same location as pick-up in the morning)
<b>Wednesday 28 May</b>	<b>Master of Ceremony: <a href="#">Elisa Lanzi</a>, Senior Economist, OECD Environment Directorate</b>

**Location:** 2<sup>nd</sup> floor big hall, Ministry of Agriculture, Republikas laukums 2, Rīga

9:00 – 9:15  (Hybrid session with online participation via Zoom)	<b>Welcome and explanation of breakout groups</b>
9:15 – 11:30  (Hybrid session with online participation via Zoom)	<p><b>Session 2 - Forestry in the multiple planetary crisis of climate, water, biodiversity and land use</b></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> <a href="#">Jennie Sölving</a>, Deputy Director, Ministry for Rural Affairs and Infrastructure, Sweden</p> <p><b>Content</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forestry and water management: forest practices and their effects on the water cycle</li> <li>• Reconciling carbon sequestration and biodiversity maintenance: trade-offs and potential synergies</li> <li>• Alternative land-uses: ensuring forest integrity in an era of food security pressures</li> </ul> <p><b>Keynote speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Zuelclady M.F. Araujo Gutierrez</a>, Research Scholar, IIASA</li> <li>• <a href="#">Sampsa Auvinen</a>, Chairman of the Board of European Confederation of the Woodworking Industries (CEI-BOIS)</li> </ul> <p><b>Explanation of breakout groups (plenary)</b></p> <p><b>Breakout groups</b> <i>(Facilitated by 1 facilitator and 1 rapporteur for each)</i></p> <p><b>1. Climate-smart forestry</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Moderator:</b> <a href="#">Daiga Zute</a>, Researcher, Latvian State Forest Research Institute (Silava)</li> <li>• <b>Rapporteur:</b> <a href="#">Giovanni Santopuoli</a>, Researcher, University of Molise</li> </ul> <p><b>2. Forestry &amp; Rural development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Moderator:</b> <a href="#">Jose Enrique Garcilazo</a>, Deputy Head of Division and Head of Regional and Rural Policy Unit, OECD</li> <li>• <b>Rapporteur:</b> <a href="#">Ilze Ozola</a>, Chairman of the Board, Latvian National Peatland Society</li> </ul> <p><b>3. Forest sector and climate</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Moderator:</b> <a href="#">Peter Holmgren</a>, Founder and Senior Advisor, FutureVistas</li> <li>• <b>Rapporteur:</b> <a href="#">Jamie Ash</a>, Trade and Agriculture Directorate, OECD</li> </ul>

	<p><b>4. Land management (online participation via Zoom)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Moderator:</b> <a href="#">Barry Gardiner</a></li> <li>• <b>Rapporteur:</b> <a href="#">Thorsten Arndt</a></li> </ul> <p><b>5. Forest multifunctionality (trade-offs)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Moderator:</b> <a href="#">Ebba Henning Planck</a>, Head of Liaison Unit, Forest Europe</li> <li>• <b>Rapporteur:</b> <a href="#">Ioannis Tikoudis</a>, Economist, OECD Environment Directorate</li> </ul> <p><b>6. Forest Resilience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Moderator:</b> <a href="#">Marcus Lindner</a>, Head of Resilience Programme, European Forest Institute, Bonn</li> <li>• <b>Rapporteur:</b> <a href="#">Magnus Viklund</a>, Head of Policy Unit, Swedish Forest Agency</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Summary of breakout groups (plenary)</b></p>
11:30 – 12:00	Break
12:00 – 13:15  (Hybrid session with online participation via Zoom)	<p><b>Session 3 - Forestry policies and management</b></p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Tomass Kotovičs, Chief Communications Officer, JSC Latvia's State Forest</p> <p><b>Content</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Socially responsible forest harvesting: reconciling socioeconomic benefits from forest production with environmental goals</li> <li>• Natural succession or active conservation? Pros, cons, and optimal solutions to protect biodiversity</li> <li>• Optimal regulatory framework for forest management: prescriptive, trust-based, or a combination of both?</li> </ul> <p><b>Keynote speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Bianca Ambrose-Oji</a>, Head of Society and Environment Research Group, Forest Research</li> <li>• <a href="#">Peter Holmgren</a>, Founder and Senior Advisor, FutureVistas</li> <li>• <a href="#">Florian Steierer</a>, Economic Affairs Officer, UNECE</li> </ul> <p><b>Panel discussion</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Olga Bogdanova</a>, Deputy State Secretary, Ministry of Climate and Energy, Latvia</li> <li>• <a href="#">Kristaps Klauss</a>, Vice-President, Latvian Forest Industry Federation</li> <li>• <a href="#">Jose Enrique Garcilazo</a>, Deputy Head of Division and Head of Regional and Rural Policy Unit, OECD</li> <li>• <a href="#">Piotr Borkowski</a>, Executive Director, European State Forest Association (EUSTAFOR)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Yohei Sukegawa</a>, First Secretary, Permanent Delegation of Japan to the OECD</li> <li>• <a href="#">Oana Neagu</a>, Director, Copa Cogeca</li> </ul> <p><b>Q&amp;A</b></p>
13:15 - 13:30  (Hybrid session with online participation via Zoom)	Summary and conclusions with the participation of Minister of Agriculture, Armands Krauze
13:30 - 14:30	Buffet lunch in the restaurant of the Ministry of Agriculture

## Speakers' biographies

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**Sampsa Auvinen**



Sampsa Auvinen is a woodworking industry professional with over 30 years of experience in Europe and globally.

Currently Sampsa Auvinen is a Board Professional and is the Chairman and Board Member of several companies operating in Finland, Baltic States, Great Britain, France, Germany, Ghana, Sierra Leone and the United States.

Sampsa Auvinen is the Chairman of the Board of the European Confederation of the Woodworking Industry (CEI Bois), Honorary President of the European Organisation of the Sawmill Industries (EOS) and a Guest Lecturer at the Stockholm School of Economics, Riga.

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**Bianca Ambrose-Oji**



Bianca Ambrose-Oji is an environmental sociologist, who is currently head of the dynamic Society and Environment Research Group, at Forest Research. This is a group of 26 social scientists undertaking applied research for the forestry and land-based sectors. Her forestry career spans more than 30 years as a social forester which, before joining Forest Research, includes time as an action researcher, consultant, practitioner, professional trainer and a university lecturer. She has considerable experience working in the UK, Europe, Africa and Asia. Bianca co-leads Forest Research's Woodland Creation and Expansion research programme, with her own research interests focusing on forest and land managers behaviour change, co-design and inclusive approaches to forest governance, and public attitudes and engagement with forestry. Bianca will take on a new role as Chief Scientist for forestry in June 2025.

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**Zuelclady M.F. Araujo Gutierrez**



Zuelclady Araujo Gutierrez is a Research Scholar at the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA), working within the Integrated Biosphere Futures Research Group. With over 14 years of experience in climate policy, GHG emissions modeling, and international climate reporting under the UNFCCC framework, she has supported governments and international.

Her expertise spans technical assistance for GHG inventories, NDC, and LTS scenario development, as well as policy evaluation. Zuelclady holds a PhD in Public Policy (IPCC and Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation scholar), an MBA, and a Master's in Economics and Public Policy. She is also a member of the UNFCCC Roster of Experts, contributing to technical reviews of national climate reports and forest reference emission levels.

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### Thorsten Arndt



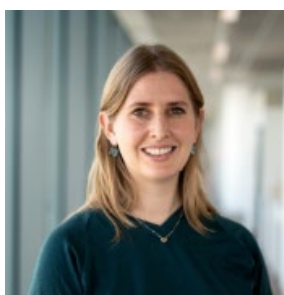
Thorsten Arndt has been working with PEFC International for the past 15 years, seeing it grow from smallholder-initiated forest certification system to the world's leading organization promoting sustainable forest management.

PEFC certifies more than 300 million hectares of forests globally (or 25% of the world's production forests) and is represented in more than 50 countries around the world. The important role of PEFC in safeguarding the world's forest is globally recognized, with PEFC being an official indicators for achieving UN SDG Target 15 and GBF Target 10.

Mr Arndt is also a public speaker and pro bono leader of Toastmasters International, having won several local, national and regional public speaking contests.

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### Jamie Ash



Jamie Ash is a Policy Analyst in the Trade and Agriculture Directorate at the OECD where she leads work on climate change mitigation in the agriculture, forestry and other land use sectors. She has extensive experience in climate change policy having held policy advisor roles in national and sub-national governments in New Zealand and Australia.

In Australia, Jamie led the development of the New South Wales government's first climate change adaptation plan. She was also a key member of the secretariat for the New South Wales Net Zero Commission. The state's independent climate change advisory body, established in 2024, and drafted climate change adaptation advice for their first report.

In New Zealand, she advised the government on agricultural greenhouse gas emissions mitigation, including emissions measurement and design of a tax aimed at reducing agricultural emissions. She also led a workstream looking at incentives for removals from forestry and other land use on New Zealand farms.

A New Zealand citizen, Jamie holds a Master's Degree in Economics from the University of Otago.

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### Olga Bogdanova



Since 2005, Olga Bogdanova has been working for the governmental sector. Her current position at the Ministry of Climate and Energy of Latvia is Deputy State Secretary for International Affairs and Climate Policy. Olga Bogdanova is the president of World Energy Council Member Committee Latvia. She is a Deputy Chair of the Supervisory board of the Power Transmission System operator of Latvia AS “Augstsprieguma tīkls” holding the controlling stock of the Latvian gas transmission and storage system operator.

She is a member of the Studies Committee at the World energy Council, an alumni of the World energy Council Future Energy Leadership Program (2018-2022), and an active expert at the World Energy Council. Olga Bogdanova has Doctor Degree in Economics. She is an Associate Professor at the University of Latvia, Faculty of Business Management and Economics and an expert of the Latvian Scientific Council in economics. Dr.oec. Bogdanova is co-author of 4 scientific monographs and author of more than 35 scientific publications focused on the challenges in the energy field, regional cooperation issues and economic development.

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### Piotr Borkowski



Piotr Borkowski has been the Executive Director of the European State Forest Association (EUSTAFOR) since September 2012, where he facilitates the cooperation and experience exchange among Europe’s state forest management organizations and coordinates state forest advocacy concerning forest-related policy developments at both EU and pan-European levels. Prior to his work with EUSTAFOR, Mr. Borkowski worked in the Polish State Forests dealing with forest management, including forest fire prevention. Subsequently, he worked for the forestry department at the Ministry of Environment of Poland as Head of the Liaison Unit Warsaw of the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE) (currently Forest Europe). Before joining EUSTAFOR, he worked for the European Commission (DG Agriculture and Rural Development), concentrating on forest-related policies in the EU. Mr. Borkowski holds an MSc in Forestry from the Forestry Faculty of Warsaw Agricultural University.

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### Barry Gardiner



Barry Gardiner is a senior researcher at the Institut Européen de la Forêt Cultivée (IEFC) in France, a researcher at the University of Freiburg in Germany, and an honorary research fellow at Forest Research in the UK. He has a particular interest in different risks to forests. His research focus has been primarily on wind and snow damage to forests, and he developed a forest wind/snow risk model that has been adapted for use in many countries. From 1987 to 2011 he worked at Forest Research in Scotland on wind risk to forests and the influence of forest management on timber quality. From 2011 to 2015 he worked as a Senior Scientist at INRA Bordeaux on a 4-year scientific package entitled “Wind Damage to Forests in a Changing Climate: Impacts and Mitigation” and from 2016 to 2019 he worked as a senior researcher at the EFI Planted Forests Facility. He currently is working on various projects focused on multiple risks to forests and how to incorporate risk management into forest management practice including the risk of damage from wind, bark beetles, drought and fire. He is an author on more than 100 scientific papers and has edited 3 books. He was awarded Docteur Honoris Causa de l’Université Laval de Québec in June 2016.

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### Jose Enrique Garcilazo



Jose Enrique Garcilazo is the current Deputy Head of Division for Regional Development and Multilevel Governance in the Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities at the OECD. He is also the Head of the Regional and Rural Unit. His work mainly focuses on analysing future opportunities and challenges brought by megatrends in OECD regions. Current projects aim at delivering rural well-being and rural innovation, elevating the role of rural policies in the transition to a low carbon economy, managing natural resource activities in rural regions and enhancing service delivery to address demographic challenges. Author of three books and a variety of articles, Jose Enrique has been at the OECD since 2005. He occasionally teaches at Science Po in the Masters of Public Affairs and in the Masters of International Relations program. Prior to the OECD, he obtained a PhD degree from the University of Texas at Austin at the LBJ School of Public Affairs.

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### Ebba Henning Planck



Sweden holds the chairmanship of Forest Europe during the period 2025–2026. The responsibility for coordinating this process lies with the Liaison Unit Sweden, which acts as the secretariat for Forest Europe. The unit is hosted by the Swedish Forest Agency and plays a central role in facilitating international cooperation on sustainable forest management across Europe.

The Head of the Liaison Unit is Ebba Henning Planck. She has been with the Swedish Forest Agency since 2022 and previously held a senior position responsible for national wildlife management.

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### Peter Holmgren



Peter Holmgren has almost 40 years of experience in international forestry. He holds a PhD in Forestry from the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences. Between 1998 and 2012 he served at the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) headquarters in Rome, first as responsible for the Global Forest Resources Assessment, then as Chief of Forest Resources Development and finally as Director Climate, Energy and Tenure, heading up FAOs work on Climate Change. From 2012 through 2017 he was Director General of the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), an international organisation headquartered in Bogor, Indonesia. Since 2018 Dr. Holmgren is based in his native Sweden and works through his company FutureVistas Inc. supporting forest-based corporations and organisations in strategic development and policy matters. He is currently, among other things, focussed on the role of forests and wood-based products for the climate transition.

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### Āris Jansons



Āris Jansons is Director of the Forest Department, Ministry of Agriculture. He previously worked as a senior researcher at the Latvian State Forest Research Institute "Silava" and professor, director of PhD program Forest Sciences at Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies. Leader of the development of tree breeding program for main commercial tree species in Latvia, now being implemented in practice, producing seed material for regeneration of ~10000 ha annually. Experienced as lead auditor of forest management (FSC, PEFC). Currently main professional interests are related to forest adaptation, natural disturbances (primarily wind and fire), resilience of forests and forestry, climate-smart forestry as well as old-growth forests.

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### Kristaps Klauss



Kristaps Klauss is one of the leading voices in the Baltic forest and wood sector. As Vice President of the Latvian Forest Industry Federation, he actively represents the industry's interests in both national and EU-level policymaking. He also serves on the board of EOS, contributing to pan-European advocacy for sustainable and competitive sawmill industries.

Klauss is known for promoting sustainable forest management, with a strong emphasis on balancing economic growth, environmental responsibility, and social interests. He firmly opposes the notion that nature conservation must be achieved through prohibitions alone, advocating instead for coexistence between environmental, economic, and societal goals.

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### Armands Krauze



Armands Krauze, is the Latvian Minister of Agriculture. He is an experienced agronomist, farmer, beekeeper, and politician with a strong background in the agricultural sector. He holds a degree in Agronomy and Horticulture from the Latvian University of Agriculture (1991–2000) and a beekeeping qualification from Vecbebri Technical School (1985–1988). His career began in 1988 as a beekeeper, followed by international floriculture training in the USA (1994–1995).

He has held various roles in agriculture and public administration, including agricultural advisor (1996–2000), expert in organic beekeeping (2000–2020), and sanitary inspector (2000–2004). In government, he served as Parliamentary Secretary at the Ministry of Agriculture (2010–2011, 2014–2016) and the Prime Minister’s Office (2016–2019). He has been a Member of the Saeima since 2014 and was appointed Minister of Agriculture in 2023.

Internationally, he was a member of the European Economic and Social Committee (2006–2014) and President of the Council of Beekeepers of the Nordic and Baltic States (2005–2006, 2017–2018). He chaired the Latvian Beekeeping Society (2000–2023).

Politically, he has been a member of the Latvian Farmers’ Union since 2009, serving as Chairman of the Board (2019–2023) and Deputy Chairman since 2023. He also chaired the Union of Greens and Farmers (2015–2019, 2022–present). His career demonstrates a strong dedication to sustainable agriculture, rural policy, and farmer representation.

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### Tomass Kotovičs



Tomass Kotovics studied agriculture In Latvian Academy of Agriculture and has received an MBA from Stockholm School of Economics in Riga.

Since 1996 he has joined the Forest Sector, Republic of Latvia, working for the Ministry of Forestry, later State Forest Service of the Republic of Latvia.

Since 1999 he joined the JSC Latvia’s State Forests being responsible for international relations and communication in the company, since 2005 as CCO and Head of the Communication Department.

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### Aivars Lapins



Aivars Lapins has an agriculture engineering degree from Latvia University of Agriculture and had also been studying in Sweden and UK. He was managing the setting up of on-farm demonstration network in Latvia in 1995 to 1997 after which he joined public administration. He has served in different senior positions in the ministry of Agriculture including Deputy state secretary. In 2004, he was Cabinet Member of Commissioner designate Mrs. Sandra Kalniete. In 2017 he served as state secretary of Ministry of Health. After duties of Advisor to Minister of Agriculture he was posted in Paris to serve as Counsellor of Ministry of Agriculture since 2020. He speaks Latvian, English, French and Russian.

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### Elisa Lanzi



Elisa Lanzi is a Senior Economist at the Climate, Water and Biodiversity Division of the OECD Environment Directorate. She is the Head of the Climate Change Mitigation team, currently working on climate mitigation policies and their potential to transform our economies and reduce emissions. Previously, Elisa worked on modelling for environmental policy analysis, with focus on air pollution, climate change, and the circular economy. She also worked on trade and the environment, climate change impacts, the competitiveness impacts of climate policies, climate change adaptation, and green innovation. Before joining the OECD, she worked at Fondazione Eni Enrico Mattei (FEEM), where she focused on economic modelling to assess sustainability and on the economic consequences of climate policies.

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### Markus Lier



Markus Lier has over 20 years experience and expertise in forest-related research and forest-related policy making at national, EU and international level.

Currently working at the European Commission as Policy Analyst in DG Agriculture and Rural Development, Unit B2 Environmental Sustainability. During his work he focuses on forest related issues.

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### Marcus Lindner



Marcus Lindner is Head of the Resilience Programme at the European Forest Institute. He has over 30 years of experience in research on climate change impacts and the development of response strategies in forest management, forest sector sustainability assessment and biodiversity conservation in European forests. Dr. Lindner was involved in over 40 European projects as coordinator or partner. He recently coordinated the Horizon2020 project RESONATE on resilient forest value chains in Europe.

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### Oana Neagu



Oana Neagu is Director of the General Affairs team at Copa Cogeca. The team covers topics related to environment and climate change, food and feed, forestry, animal and plant health, research and innovation, quality and promotion, etc.

She is responsible for forestry, circular bioeconomy and sustainable finance. She is an active member of various European Commission experts' group on forestry environment, circular economy, etc.

Oana is an agricultural engineer and holds two master's degrees one on business administration and one on rural development. She previously worked at the European Commission's Directorate General for Agriculture as a policy officer, in charge of managing market measures. Prior to joining the Commission in 2006, she was the counsellor for European integration at the Ministry of Agriculture in Romania and was involved in preparing Romania's accession to the European Union.

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### Walid Oueslati

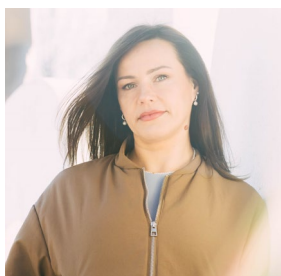


Walid Oueslati is the Head of Climate, Biodiversity and Water Division. Before taking this role, he was working as a senior economist at the OECD Environment Directorate. He was previously a full professor of Environmental Economics at Agrocampus, University of Angers (France) and a visiting professor at Newcastle University (UK).

Walid Oueslati holds a PhD degree in economics from the University of Paris - Nanterre (France). He has extensive research and research management experience across a number of fields in environmental policy and economics, ranging from pure academic to policy supporting research. He published over fifty scientific articles in refereed journals, policy reports, textbooks and several conferences.

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### Ilze Ozola



Ilze Ozola is a Latvian peatland scientist and Chairman of the Board of the Latvian National Peatland Society. She holds a Ph.D. in Geology from the University of Latvia, where her research focused on Holocene vegetation changes and peatland development in Northern Vidzeme, providing important insights into peat composition and landscape evolution.

Dr. Ozola has more than a decade of experience in peatland science and management, with a particular focus on rewetting, restoration, and paludiculture. She co-founded the Lake and Peatland Research Centre and has led pioneering pilot projects in Latvia for Sphagnum and Typha cultivation on rewetted peat soils. Since 2019, she has served on the Advisory Board of the Latvian Forest Certification Council, contributing to the integration of sustainability principles in forestry standards and practices. Internationally, she represents Latvia as the 1st Vice President of the International Peatland Society (IPS), engaging with global networks to advance science-based, sustainable peatland management. While supporting innovation and the introduction of alternative materials in the growing media sector, Dr. Ozola emphasizes that peat remains critical to forestry, as most tree seedlings begin their life in peat-based substrates. Her work highlights the need for cross-sectoral understanding between peatland and forest management to ensure climate-smart and resilient land use strategies.

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### Arvīds Ozols



Arvīds Ozols is a Forestry engineer with over 40 years of experience in forestry, forest research, forest and related policy development in Latvia and internationally. He has worked in Latvian Forest research institute as researcher, Head of Sector and deputy Director.

Has served as Undersecretary of State in Ministry of agriculture, Director of Forest department in Ministry of agriculture, Director General of State Forest Service.

He has experience as Vice Chairman and Chairman of European Forestry Commission, Vice Chairman and Chairman of United Nations Forum on Forests and also as Chairman of EU Council Working Party on Forestry. Has also served as Representative of shareholder in a/s Latvijas valsts meži (Latvian State Forests)- acting as general meeting of JSC on behalf of the state as owner.

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### Ewald Rametsteiner



Ewald Rametsteiner is a forester from Austria who has been working as the Deputy Director, Forestry Division, NFO, since 1 April 2019. He worked as Programme Coordinator (Global Delivery) of FAO's Strategic Programme "Sustainable Agriculture" (SP2) from 2015 until 2019. Before joining the SP2 Management Team he was the leader of the Forest Governance Team of the Forestry Department. Prior to FAO he worked at the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis and the European Forest Institute. He was member of Secretariats of intergovernmental bodies and policy advisor on sustainability issues for a range of international organizations and governmental bodies. He holds a PhD in Forest Policy and Economics from the University of Applied Life Sciences, Vienna, Austria.

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### Tiina Ryttilä



Tiina Ryttilä serves as a Senior Ministerial Advisor at the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry of Finland, where she is responsible for global and pan-European forest policy processes. She holds a Master's degree in Forestry from the University of Helsinki.

With over a decade of experience in Brussels in various roles, Tiina brings extensive international expertise to her current position. In Finland, she has held key roles including Director of the Decision Makers' Forest Academy and advisor to two successive governments.

Tiina is deeply committed to advancing the role of the forest sector in achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

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### Giovanni Santopuoli



Giovanni Santopuoli holds a Master's degree in Forest and Environmental Sciences and a Ph.D. in "Protection and Quality of Agro-Food and Forestry Production" at the University of Molise (Italy), where he is currently Professor of Forest Management and Planning. His research focuses on forest monitoring, management, and planning, with particular emphasis on biodiversity conservation and the provision of ecosystem services. In recent years, his work has investigated tree growth responses to climate change through the application of innovative technologies, including remote sensing and the Internet of Things (IoT), in support of climate-smart forestry. He has been actively involved in numerous research projects at the local, national, and international levels.

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### Jennie Sölving



Jennie Sölving Deputy Director, is currently working at the Secretariat for EU International Affairs at the Swedish Ministry for Rural Affairs and Infrastructure.

Jennie has 20 years' experience in working with OECD matters, as the OECD coordinator at the Ministry as well as the Swedish delegate to the Committee for Agriculture. During the years 2017-2019 she was the Chair of the Committee. Jennie has also been working with different issues concerning the Nordic Council, currently in a steering group for a Program on Bioeconomy.

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### Yohei Sukegawa



Yohei Sukegawa is the first secretary of Permanent Delegation of Japan to the OECD and takes charge of agriculture, forestry and fisheries issues. Before joining in the delegation, he worked for the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. He was involved in international agricultural trade negotiations such as the WTO as well as worked for domestic departments of the Ministry including Technology Policy Office and Research Promotion Division.

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### Florian Steierer



Florian Steierer is an Economic Affairs Officer at the joint UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section in Geneva, Switzerland. Key areas of his work comprise forest products markets and marketing and he coordinated the last forest sector outlook study. A trained forest engineer, Florian studied at the Universities of Freiburg in Germany and Nancy in France. Before taking up his current role, Florian worked as a Forestry Officer with expertise on wood energy at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in Rome.

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### Ioannis Tikoudis



Ioannis Tikoudis is an OECD Economist specializing in evidence-based policy analysis with the use of economic modelling and econometric methods. His past work has focused on transport, land-use, housing, and energy sectors. Ioannis has co-authored several OECD reports, including the “Global Drought Outlook: Trends, impacts and policies to adapt to a drier world” (forthcoming in June 2025), “How Green is Household Behaviour? Sustainable Choices in a Time of Interlocking Crises” (2023), “Decarbonizing Urban Mobility with Land Use and Transport Instruments” (2020), and “Rethinking Urban Sprawl: Moving Towards Sustainable Cities” (2018). His research has been featured in scientific outlets such as the Journal of Urban Economics, the Scandinavian Journal of Economics, the Journal of Economic Geography, Land Use Policy, Energy Policy, Transportation Research Part B & D, and Economics of Transportation.

Ioannis is leading the technical branch of the newly established OECD program on Forests. His work focuses on developing forest-relevant indicators, producing statistical projections of deforestation risk, and conducting economic analyses on the cost of forest carbon sequestration.

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### Magnus Viklund



Magnus Viklund is the Head of the Policy Unit of the Swedish Forest Agency (Skogsstyrelsen), Swedish Forest Agency - Skogsstyrelsen. He has been with the agency since 2004 and has held various management positions since 2009, ranging from regional district to national units on inspection and policy matters. He holds a Master Forester’s Degree from the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences.

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### Linde Zuidema



Linde Zuidema is an Expert in the Climate Department at the European Environment Agency (EEA). In this position, she is contributing to the EEA's assessments on topics related climate and land use. In 2024-2025, she has led an assessment study on the EU's LULUCF sector, which will be published in June 2025. Before joining the EEA, Linde has worked as a consultant, primarily advising EU institutions on climate and environmental policies, EU-level thinktanks and non-profit organisations. In 2019, Linde was a Policy Leader Fellow at the European University Institute, where she continued as a part-time researcher until 2022.

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### Daiga Zute



Daiga Zute is a forest researcher with a policy background. She was a national LULUCF expert for Latvia (the Ministry of Agriculture) with more than 10 years of national forest-climate policy development related experience. As a researcher she is focused on climate change mitigation aspects in managed and un-managed forests, including old-growth forests. Her PhD study is titled "Carbon budget in old-growth conifer stands on organic soils in the context of EU 2030 policy targets".

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### For more information

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- Main contact:  
Please do not hesitate to contact **Ms Sora CHOI** from the OECD Secretariat ([Sora.CHOI@oecd.org](mailto:Sora.CHOI@oecd.org)) should you require any further information or assistance.