

The European Commission presented its Forest strategy, part of the climate plan, for absorbing more greenhouse gases from the atmosphere and encouraging biodiversity. Thus, among the measures, the European executive supports the planting of 3 billion trees and the provision of financial incentives for forest owners, while monitoring existing forests.

The minister of Environment, Water and Forestry Tanczos Barna signed, together with 10 other EU ministers, including those from Austria, Hungary, Poland, France and Germany, a letter to Frans Timmermans, Vice-President of the European Commission for the European Green Agreement for 2030, in which he criticizes the EU Forest Strategy.

In an interview with the Hungarian press, Tanczos Barna says that he does not agree with the strategy of the European Commission and claims that “the forest management system in Romania is well regulated and severe”.

The Community bloc proposes the use of the Common Agricultural Policy for payment schemes granted to forest owners, while monitoring existing forests, which account for almost two-fifths of the continent. The European Commission has said it is preparing a new set of high-tech surveillance measures and rules to protect Europe’s forests “under increasing pressure”, while streamlining governance in all 27 Member States.

The European Commission’s announcement has though met the hostility of the timber companies, who say the new EU forest strategy does not take into account the interests of forest owners and investors.

At the same time, 11 Member States signed a letter to the Vice-President of the European Commission, initiated on the proposal of Austria, one of the EU countries that strongly supports the logging industry. The 11 forest ministers, including Romanian Minister Tanczos Barna, are calling for a review of the EU’s planned forestry strategy, which they say unjustifiably favors “green issues”.

Tanczos Barna says that the European Commission’s project violates the right of EU member states to decide their forest policies and claims that “Romania’s forest management system is well regulated and severe.”

According to the newspaper Magyar Nemzet, the Romanian official said that the protection of forests is a financial burden for a member state because when the exploitation of a forest is prohibited, the rights of the owner are restricted, and in this case compensations must be granted.

“When drafting such a strategy, the jurisdiction of the Member States, the principle of subsidiarity and practical issues concerning forest diversity and sustainable exploitation must be taken into account (...) No consultations have taken place in the Standing Committee on Forests or with EU Member States. , and the project was not developed

jointly. We ask to debate the forest strategy “, said Tánczos Barna.

In retort, the European Commission contradicted the Romanian Minister of Environment, Tanczos Barna, who claimed in the Hungarian press that the EU strategy on forests would not have been debated with the member states.

“An open public consultation was organized via the European Commission’s website, in all official EU languages, with over 19,000 responses received. Specific consultations were also held with the competent authorities of the EU Member States responsible, with NGOs, academic and international organizations, “the European Executive said on Monday.

At the same time, the European Commission adopted the New EU Forest Strategy for 2030, a flagship initiative of the European Green Deal that builds on the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030.

“By addressing the social, economic and environmental aspects all together, the Forest Strategy aims at ensuring the multifunctionality of EU forests and highlights the pivotal role played by foresters,” says the EC in a press release.

Source: actmedia.eu