

Romania's environment minister insists he agrees with EU forest plan, but more talks needed on funding

Romania does support the European Commission's plan to protect forests and tap into their ability to fight climate change, the environment minister said, apparently seeking to clarify earlier comments that suggested the opposite.

## **EU Forest Strategy**

Barna Tanczos however said that more talks were needed to identify goals and funding sources.

On July 16, the European Commission on adopted the New EU Forest Strategy for 2030, a flagship initiative of the European Green Deal. The proposed actions will increase carbon sequestration through enhanced sinks to mitigate the effects of climate change. The policies will protect old-growth forests, and restore degraded forests. Forests have shrunk due to logging, demand for biomass energy and threats worsened by climate change such as wildfires.

## **Trees planted**

Under the new plan, three billion trees will be planted. Financial incentives given to forest owners.

Romania was one of 11 member states including Austria, Germany, Finland, Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic which signed an open letter late last week. It asked Brussels to hold targeted debates over the strategy. In an interview with the Hungarian media, the minister said he didn't agree with European Commission strategy. He said it "violated the rights of EU members to decided forest policy."

## **Forest management**

Mr Tanczos, a member of the Hungarian community, claimed "the forest management system in Romania is well regulated and severe." He said that several EU states including Romania, which have most of Europe's old forests, would end up taking on a bigger share of the monitoring and protection. In an apparent attempt to clarify earlier comments, he said Monday, "a European forest strategy is necessary."

„Very clear definitions of old growth, secular and primary forests are needed so that each member state knows exactly what obligations it has."

## **Virgin forests**

Romania is home to some of Europe's last remaining virgin forests. It loses an estimated 20 million cubic meters of timber each year to illegal logging.

It said it was preparing a new set of high-tech surveillance measures and rules to protect Europe's forests which are "under increasing pressure."

Source: universul.net



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