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DOCTORAL THESIS SUMMARY

**TOPIC: LEGAL PROTECTION OF FORESTS IN THE
EUROPEAN UNION**

Doctoral supervisor

Professor PhD. NICOLETA DIACONU

**Thesis developed for the purpose of obtaining
the title of DOCTOR in "Law"**

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SUMMARY OF THE WORK

The research objective of the issues of forest protection in European Union, had as **general objective**: *awareness of the challenges of the European forestry sector, knowing the developed solutions in this sector and improve it.*

For the operationalization of this general objective, we considered 8 **specific objectives**, namely:

- *awareness of the importance of forests;*
- *knowing the factors that generated the decrease of forested areas;*
- *identifying and analyzing EU public policy documents relevant to forests and the forestry sector;*
- *knowing the relevant European cooperation structures and mechanisms in the forestry sector;*
- *identification and analysis of the main regional legal instruments in the forestry sector;*
- *knowing the peculiarities of forest protection in some EU Member States;*
- *knowing the peculiarities of forest protection in Romania;*
- *formulating proposals to improve the solutions developed for forest protection.*

The complexity of the scientific approach required an extensive documentation, a systematic and planned research, which involved the delimitation of **hypotheses** to guide this research, namely:

- hypothesis no. I: *the importance of forests, through the functions they perform, requires ensuring their protection;*
- hypothesis no. II: *the protection of forests in the EU can only be achieved through the collective and individual effort of European states;*
- hypothesis no. III: *the effort of the European states for the protection of forests is materialized through the elaboration of some instruments, structures and mechanisms of cooperation, at regional level and the implementation of the agreed measures, at national level;*
- hypothesis no. IV: *the implementation, at national level, of the agreed measures for forest protection must be effective, not only formal (regulatory) and the effectiveness of this implementation must be monitored and verified.*

These hypotheses were not only the starting point in the research carried out but, through them, the activities that were carried out but, through them, the activities that were carried out to obtain the results pursued by the proposed scientific approach were permanently verified.

We **structured** the issue in two parts, respectively:

- *the first part, dedicated to the analysis of forest protection issues at regional and sub-regional level, comprising the first four chapters, respectively: Legal coordinates of the European Union's environmental policy (Chapter 1),*

Legal coordinates of the Union reference framework for on forests (Chapter 2), European structures and mechanisms for cooperation in the forestry sector (Chapter 3), European legal instruments for sub-regional cooperation in the forestry sector (Chapter 4),

- *the second part*, dedicated to the analysis of *forest protection* issues at the level of *some Member States*, comprising the *last two chapters*, namely: Particularities of forest protection in some Member States of the European Union (Chapter 5), Particularities of forest protection in Romania (Chapter 6).

At the end of each chapter we formulated short intermediate conclusions and, at the end of the paper, we highlighted the normative and organizational proposals based on the research carried out, with the arguments presented in the final conclusions; separately (in Annex 4), we presented the case of Holzindustrie Schweighofer.

From the beginning we have emphasized (in the ***Introduction***) that the *importance of forests is difficult to describe*, as they are *complex terrestrial ecosystems*, fulfilling multiple and interdependent *social, economic and ecological functions*, playing a key role in maintaining and regulating *ecological balance* and providing *jobs, operating income and raw materials* for industry and energy production.

Thus, the issue of forest protection is *current and extremely important* and, in this context, at international, regional, sub-regional and national level, *considerable efforts are made* to preserve and develop them, but also to prevent deforestation and trade in wood or products obtained illegally.

We established ***the legal coordinates of the European Union's environmental policy*** in Chapter 1, appreciating the usefulness of an introduction to the issue of forest protection in the EU, in view of the EU's broader environmental and the interdependence between environment and forests.

In this chapter, we have presented the evolution of the seven action programs for the environment and the relevant provisions of European Union law, as well as the objectives, purpose and principles of European Union policy in this field.

The establishment ***of the legal coordinates of the common framework for forest issues*** was done in Chapter 2, starting from the clarification made in *the EU Strategy for Forests and Forestry* (in arguing its adoption), regarding the non-existence of this framework, as well as the absence of a common forestry policy.

Thus, starting from the finding of the non-existence of a reference framework for forest issues, *we have identified the main public policy*

documents and legal instruments relevant to forests and the forestry sector that can be considered as currently constituting this common framework.

The main *public policy documents* that make up the common framework for forest issues, identified: *EU strategy for forests and forestry sector* (COM (2013) 0659), *Green Paper on forest protection and information in the EU* (COM (2010) 66) and *the European Union Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade Action Plan* (FLEGT) (COM (2003) 251).

The main *legal instruments* that make up the common framework for forest issues, identified: *Council Regulation* (EC) No 2173/2005 of 20 December 2005 *on the establishment of a FLEGT licensing scheme for imports of timber into the European Community*, *Regulation* (EU) No 995/2010 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 October 2010 *laying down the obligations of operators who place timber and timber products on the market*, *Commission Delegated Regulation* (EU) No 363/2012 of 23 February 2012 *on the procedural rules for the recognition and withdrawal of recognition of monitoring organizations* as provided for in Regulation (EU) No 995/2010, *Commission Implementing Regulation* (EU) No 607/2012 of 6 July 2012 *on the detailed rules concerning the due diligence system and the frequency and nature of the checks on monitoring organizations* as provided for in Regulation (EU) No 995/2010.

This common framework for forest issues *appears to be satisfactory* and is *intended to compensate for* the absence of an EU policy in forestry, only in this way *so might explain the* "vision" on the role of "narrowness" of the EU in this sector, a role "designed" (primarily) to "add value to national forestry policies and programs" through the activities mentioned in the Green Paper.

Following the presentation of the framework for public policies and regulation of the forestry sector in the EU, in the next chapter (Chapter 3), we presented the organizational framework in this sector, with a focus on *the relevant European cooperation structures and mechanisms*.

Among the structures and mechanisms, we identified: the Forest Information System for Europe (FISE), the Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Facility and the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (Forest Europe), with a role well determined.

In the end of the analysis on forest protection issues at EU level, we presented the *European legal instruments for sub-regional cooperation in the forestry sector* (Chapter 4), given the particular importance they have for the areas for which they have been adopted.

At the sub-regional level, we identified the development of two mechanisms based on treaties, for the protection and sustainable development of mountainous regions (namely the Alpine region and the Carpathian region) respectively: the Alpine Convention and the Carpathian Convention.

Prior to the presentation of the Romanian reality in the forestry sector, we proceeded, in the penultimate chapter (Chapter 5), to identify and analyze the *particularities of forest protection in some Member States of the European Union*, more precisely in France, Austria and Sweden, as these countries have registered positive developments, even if it has specific features.

Thus, the choice of these states is not accidental; we took into account two important aspects, respectively: the form of ownership of forest lands and the regulation of activity in the forestry sector.

Regarding the *form of ownership of forest lands*, the three states under analysis occupy the first positions (positions 2-4), in terms of the share of private ownership of these lands.

Regarding the *regulation of activity in the forestry sector*, the differences between the three states under analysis are significant, namely: from over-regulation (many regulations, difficult to understand and connect, even if they have a coherent structure), in the case of France, to a relatively moderate regulation (clear, logically structured regulations, relatively easy to understand), in the case of Austria and to a sub-regulation (few regulations, very easy to understand), in the case of Sweden.

Particularities of forest protection in France

France is in a leading position in terms of *the growth rate of forested area* in Europe, a success that is due not only to common factors and other countries, but also to *specific factors*.

The Forest Code (F.F.C.) is the *main regulation in the French forestry sector*.

A *first particularity* of the regulation is the concern of the French legislature as to the *facts in which the provisions of that regulation are infringed*.

A *second particularity* of the regulation is the *non - imposition of the forest regime* for forests and wooded areas privately owned.

A *third particularity* of the regulation is the consecration of the *right to participate in the distribution of wood products in community forests to meet rural or domestic needs (l'affouage)* [*L'affouage*" is a personal right recognized to the inhabitants of a commune or division of which meets certain conditions in order to be able to participate in the distribution of wood products from community forests to meet rural or domestic needs; by extension, the name was given to the cutting or portion of the cutting whose products are intended for the beneficiaries of the right (l'affouagistes), as well as to the products themselves. "*L'affouagiste*", is the beneficiary of the right (l'affouage), respectively the one who meets the conditions to appear on the list (called "role d'affouage"), depending on the method of product sharing established by the City Council; the role (list) is set each year by this council].

A *fourth particularity* of regulation is represented by a *vague definition* of what regulation [by art. L. 111-2 F.F.C.] considers *forests and other forested lands*.

The institutional / organizational framework in the French forestry sector consists (mainly) of:

- *Superior Council for Forests and other Forested Land*;
- *Regional Commissions for Forests and other Forested Land*;
- *National Forest Office (NFB)*;
- *National Center for Forest Property (NCFM)*.

Particularities of forest protection in Austria

Austria is among the countries with a high *forested area*; the factors that led to this situation are *factors common* to other countries.

The Federal Forestry Act (A.F.F.A.) is the main regulation in the Austrian forestry sector.

A *first particularity* of the regulation is the *clarification of the conditions* that the forest must meet.

A *second particularity* of the regulation is the *spatial planning of the forest habitat* (forest spatial planning).

A *third particularity* of the regulation is the imposition of (a) *prohibitions on maintaining the integrity of forested areas* and (b) *obligations to conserve certain categories of forests*.

A *fourth particularity* of the regulation is represented by the *grouping in three large groups* of the main violations of the provisions of this regulation, considered *contraventions* (administrative offenses), and the *establishment of rather mild sanctions* (if they do not constitute crimes within the jurisdiction of the courts and are not sanctioned with more severe punishments or other administrative sanctions).

The institutional / organizational framework in the Austrian forestry sector consists (mainly) of:

- *Directorate-General for Forests and Sustainable Development* [third Directorate-General for the Austrian Federal Ministry for Sustainable Development and Tourism (BMNT)];
- *Federal Office for Forests (BFW)* [within the Austrian Federal Ministry for Sustainable Development and Tourism (BMNT)];
- *Austrian Forest Research Center (BFW)*;
- *The Austrian Chamber of Agriculture (LKO)* and *the Regional Chambers of Agriculture*.

Particularities of forest protection in Sweden

Sweden is (in Europe) the country with *the highest degree of afforestation*, and this situation was generated by a combination of *common factors*, as well as *specific factors*.

The Forestry Act (S.F.A.) is the main regulation in the Swedish forestry sector.

A *first particularity* of the regulation is the emphasis on the *importance of the forest* and the *clarification of forest land types*.

A *second particularity* of the regulation is the *non-imposition of a forest regime* for forest lands, but only of some *obligations, attributions or responsibilities* with a rather general character.

A *third particularity* of the regulation is the *limitation of the powers granted to the Government* (or to the public authority designated by it) *to adopt regulations* on the observance of interests related to nature conservation and protection of cultural heritage in connection with forest management.

A *fourth particularity* of the regulation is (a) *grouping into two main groups* the main infringements of the provisions of this regulation and *establishing fairly lenient sanctions*; and (b) *establishing the possibility of not imposing any sanction* in cases of minor infringements of the provisions of this regulation.

The institutional / organizational framework in the Swedish forestry sector consists (mainly) of:

- *Swedish Forest Agency* (organized within the Ministry of Enterprise and Innovation);
- *Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry* (KSLA);
- *Federation of Swedish Forest Industries* (through the Department of Forests and Forest Areas);
- *Federation of Swedish Family Forestry Associations* (LRF).

The most important part of the research was dedicated, in the last chapter (chapter 6), to the Romanian reality in the forestry sector, identifying and analyzing the ***particularities of forest protection in Romania***.

In Romania, the forested area is *below the European average*; with all the problems caused by illegal deforestation caused by the lack of diligence of law enforcement or land owners, it has *grown steadily*.

Romanian initiatives on nature protection (in general) and forests, in particular, are *old and valuable* and, many of them, have been *regulatory landmarks*.

The main regulations in the forestry sector are: GEO no. 195/2005 on environmental protection, Law no. 46/2008 - Forest Code and Law no. 171/2010 on the establishment and sanctioning of forestry contraventions.

The general regime for biodiversity protection is established by the framework regulation on environmental protection, GEO no. 195/2005 and the regime of the national forest fund and the forest vegetation outside it is established by the Forest Code.

A *first particularity* of the regulation is the emphasis on the *importance of the national forest fund* and the *clarification of the term forest*.

A *second particularity* of the regulation is the *imposition of the forest regime* for the forest fund and the *forest technical norms* regarding the

evaluation of the wood mass and the *regulations* regarding the circulation of the wood material, for the forest vegetation on lands outside the national forest fund.

A *third particularity* of the regulation is represented by the establishment of the *obligation of administration or provision of forestry services*, for the entire national forest fund.

A *fourth particularity* of the regulation is the *obligation to establish a forest conservation and regeneration fund*.

A *fifth particularity* of the regulation is represented by the conferring of a *special importance to the sustainable development* of the forest fund.

The *institutional / organizational framework in the Romanian forestry sector* consists (mainly) of:

- *Ministry of the Environment, Waters and Forests;*
- *Forest guards;*
- *National Forest Administration - Romsilva.*

The conclusions and proposal of law ferenda derived from the research carried out, we have structured them according to the issues analyzed in each chapter; below are presented only the proposals, keeping in the order from the full version of the doctoral thesis (the argumentation of each proposal can be found there), namely:

(1) We have proposed that the *future policies in the environmental field to be refocused and prioritized* in the context of environmental problems persist.

(2) We have proposed *the development and adoption of a new EU Forest Action Plan*, maintaining the structure and concision previous plan.

(3) We have supported (as relevant) proposals for *improving and adapting the EU Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan* to the current challenges (from its assessment and implementation), namely:

- addressing new challenges, in particular with regard to deforestation and forest conversion;

- clarified the objectives and logic of the intervention;

- improved strategic orientation and monitoring of actions;

- strengthened management and monitoring of results and allocated appropriate human and financial resources.

- pay more attention to internal and external communication at all levels.

- changes in priorities and approaches within and between areas of action, in particular with regard to the implementation of Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs) and the Timber Regulation (EUTR) and private sector involvement.

- change of geographical orientation towards non-PCAs countries;

- focus on international coalitions, where global exploitation and trade need to be addressed;

- a more effective approach to the fundamental challenges of governance, which persist and slow down progress;
- explain more clearly the contribution to the higher goal of sustainable forest management;
- greater attention to the internal timber markets and support for the actors operating in them;
- due regard to the obligations arising from international conventions;
- wider political and financial support and promotion in EU Member States, as well as increased coordination, for effective implementation.

(4) We have proposed the *development and adoption of an EU Forest Policy*.

(5) We have proposed that *the Romanian legislator* should pay attention to the *opportunity to manage*, according to a *simple management plan* (referred to in Art. L. 312-2 F.F.C.), the *areas* of forest land under *private ownership*, especially those *with a small area*, where the imposition of the forest regime, with all the obligations arising, is not financially justified.

(6) We have proposed that *the Romanian legislator* should pay attention to the *opportunity of expressly consecrating* in R.F.C., the *right to participate in the distribution of wood products from community forests to meet rural or domestic needs* (provided in art. L. 243-1 F.F.C.), which would solve some of the illegal subsistence cuts (for domestic needs).

(7) We have proposed that *the Romanian legislator* should pay attention to the *opportunity of spatial planning of the forest habitat* (*forest spatial planning*) (provided in art. 6 A.F.F.L.), respectively of the *representation and advance planning* of the forest conditions of the national territory or part of it, *by reference to the functions of the forest and through development plans*, which would *blur the chaotic diversification of areas and forms of ownership* in which they are held.

(8) We have proposed that *the Romanian legislator* should pay attention to the *opportunity of not imposing the forest regime*, on *privately owned forest lands*, especially those *with a small area*, where the *imposition of the forest regime*, with all the obligations arising, *is not financially justified*, but only of some *obligations regarding the management, conservation and exploitation* of these surfaces (according to sections 8, 11, 14, 15, 18, 25, 27 S.F.A.)

(9) We have reiterated the proposals regarding the *areas* of forest land under *private ownership*, particularly those with a *small area*, where imposing this regime is not justified, in the sense that:

- the *non - imposition of the forest regime*, but the *imposition of obligations on the management, conservation and exploitation* of those areas, *following the Swedish model*, or

- the *imposition of management*, according to a *simple management plan* for those areas, *following the French model*.

(10) We have reiterated the proposal, in order to *sustainably develop* the forest fund and to *blur the chaotic diversification of areas and forms of ownership* in which they are held, to *represent and plan in advance* the forest conditions of the national territory (or part of it), by *reference to forest functions and through development plans, following the Austrian model*.

(11) We have proposed that *the text criminalizing the act of reducing the area of the national forest fund*, respectively art. 106 para. (1) R.F.C. to have the following content: "*Reduction of the surface of the national forest fund without observing the provisions of art. 36 and 37 constitute a forestry crime and shall be punished by imprisonment from 6 months to one year or by a fine*".

(12) We have proposed that *the text criminalizing the destruction of the national forest fund and of the forest vegetation outside it*, respectively art. 107 para. (2) letter c) R.F.C. have the following content: "*in the forest located in protected natural areas of national, international, community interest or Natura 2000 sites*".

(13) We have proposed that *the text criminalizing the unlawful use of special marking devices*, respectively art. 107¹ R.F.C. have the following content: "*Use of special marking devices for marking trees for harvesting, trees delimiting logging parquet, stumps of illegally cut trees and timber transported by road, rail and sea, without right or in breach of specific regulations (...)*".

(14) We have proposed that *the text criminalizing the act of grazing without a right in the forest fund*, respectively art. 108 para. (2) letter b) R.F.C. have the following content: "*in the national forest fund located in protected natural areas of national, international, community interest or Natura 2000 sites*".

(15-17) We have proposed that *the text criminalizing the theft of products of the national forest fund and of the forest vegetation outside it*, namely:

- as para. (1) in art. 109 R.F.C. have the following content: "*Theft of trees felled or broken by natural phenomena or of trees, seedlings or shoots that have been cut or removed from roots, forests, forest protection curtains, degraded land that have been ameliorated by afforestation works and of the forest vegetation outside the national forest fund, as well as of any other specific products of the national forest fund constitutes a forest crime and is punished as follows (...)*";

- as letter b) a para. (2) in art. 109 R.F.C. have the following content: "*in the forest located in protected natural areas of national, international, community interest or Natura 2000 sites*";

- introduction of a new paragraph to art. 109 R.F.C., respectively para. (3), with the following content: "*Attempt is punishable*".

(18) We have proposed, in relation to *the special procedural provisions on the identification, inventory and retention of timber*, as follows:

- para. (1) and (2) of art. 112 R.F.C. to become par. (1), with the following content: "*The forestry personnel provided in art. 111 has the competence to*

identify, to inventory, in the places where it is located and to retain the wood materials coming from the commission of some deeds that can constitute forest crimes";

- para. (3) in art. 112 R.F.C. to become par. (2).

(19) We have proposed, in relation to *the special procedural provisions on referral to the courts*, that art. 113 R.F.C. to have the following content: *"The documents concluded by the forestry staff provided in art. 111, together with the material means of proof, shall be submitted, immediately, to the criminal investigation bodies"*.

(20) We have proposed that *the text of the contravention of the act of grazing in forests where it is prohibited*, respectively art. 11 letter d) of Law no. 171/2010 to have the following content: *"grazing in forests where it is prohibited, if the amount of damage to the forest, established by law, is up to 5 times the average price of one cubic meter of wood per foot, at the time of the act"*.

(21) We have proposed that *the text of the contravention of the act of destruction of the national forest fund and of the forest vegetation outside it*, respectively art. 8 para. (1) letter a) and para. (2) letter a)-c) of Law no. 171/2010 to have the following content:

"(1) The following facts constitute forest contravention:

a) cutting, uprooting or uprooting trees, without right, as well as destroying or damaging trees, seedlings, Christmas trees or shoots from the national forest fund or cutting, uprooting or uprooting trees, without right, as well as destruction or damage to trees on land with forest vegetation outside the national forest fund, if the value of the damage, established by law, is up to 5 times the average price of one cubic meter of timber per foot at the time of the act (...)

(2) The facts provided in par. (1) shall be sanctioned as follows:

a) with a fine from 1,000 lei to 2,000 lei if the value of the damage, established according to the law, is at most equal to the average price of one cubic meter of wood per foot at the date of committing the deed;

b) with a fine from 2,000 lei to 4,000 lei if the value of the damage, established according to the law, is from 1 to 3 times the average price of one cubic meter of wood per foot at the date of committing the deed;

c) with a fine from 4,000 lei to 8,000 lei if the value of the damage, established according to the law, is from 3 to 5 times the average price of one cubic meter of wood per foot at the date of committing the deed (...)".

(22) We have proposed that *the text of the contravention of the theft of products from the national forest fund and the forest vegetation outside it*, respectively art. 8 para. (1) letter b) and para. (2) letter a)-c) of Law no. 171/2010 to have the following content:

"(1) The following acts constitute forest contravention (...)

b) theft or appropriation of trees cut with or without right, of seedlings, Christmas trees or shoots from the national forest fund or of Christmas trees from specialized crops or theft or appropriation of trees cut with or without right from lands with vegetation outside the national forest fund, if the value of the damage, established according to the law, is up to 5 times the average price of one cubic meter of wood per foot at the date of the deed.

(2) The facts provided in par. (1) shall be sanctioned as follows:

a) with a fine from 1,000 lei to 2,000 lei if the value of the damage, established according to the law, is at most equal to the average price of one cubic meter of wood per foot at the date of committing the deed;

b) with a fine from 2,000 lei to 4,000 lei if the value of the damage, established according to the law, is from 1 to 3 times the average price of one cubic meter of wood per foot at the date of committing the deed;

c) with a fine from 4,000 lei to 8,000 lei if the value of the damage, established according to the law, is from 3 to 5 times the average price of one cubic meter of wood per foot at the date of committing the deed (...)"

(23) We have proposed that the text of the contravention of the act of amending or quashing an act of enhancement, in violation of technical forestry rules, respectively letter a) a para. (1) of art. 14 of Law no. 171/2010 to have the following content: "modification or cancellation of an act of valorization in violation of technical forestry norms, which results in the production of a damage whose value, established according to law, is up to 5 times the value of one cubic meter of wooden table on the foot at the time of the crime".

(24) We have proposed that the text of the contravention of the act of constituting the act of enhancement of the timber, in violation of specific technical rules, respectively letter c) a para. (1) of art. 14 of Law no. 171/2010 to have the following content: "the establishment of the act of valorization of the wood mass in violation of the specific technical norms in force, which results in the production of a damage whose value, established according to the law, is up to 5 times the value of one meter wooden cube on the foot".

(25) We have reiterated the proposals, as a possible solution to illegal logging subsistence (domestic needs) to be expressly enshrined in R.F.C. the right to participate in the distribution of wood products from community forests to meet rural or domestic needs, following the French model (l'affouage).

(26) We have specified that the formulation of detailed proposals for each of the problems specific to the Romanian forestry sector (identified in various contexts) is (unfortunately) difficult and that some of these problems have a pronounced technical character and exceed our competences; thus, at the level of principle, we have proposed the responsible analysis of each general problem by the competent and responsible factors in the field.

(27) We have retained (judged to be relevant) some of the suggestions made (in the context of identifying such general problems) and we have proposed:

- (a) *rethinking the regulatory framework*, for:
- ensuring the *normative stability* in the forestry sector, by avoiding the frequent modification of the regulations or the abrogation of some of them for the creation of others, with a similar content;
 - *avoiding regulatory overlaps* (sometimes even contradictory), due to over-regulation;
 - ensuring an *effective correlation* of the legal provisions specific to the forestry sector with those specific to other sectors;
 - orientation of the normative framework towards the *prevention of the commission of deeds* and the identification of *applicable solutions* in this respect;
 - ensuring a *simplified regulatory regime* for private privately owned forest funds, so that Romsilva and other forest fund managers are no longer obliged to provide forest services and bear some costs for forest fund holders who do not pay these costs;
- (b) expedite the *completion of the reforestation process* and identify possible solutions to *avoid segmentation* of forest fund ownership, by acquiring privately owned areas within public property or by exchanging or compensating for these areas, up to expropriation, in accordance with the procedure provided for such situations;
- (c) ensuring *effective financing* of the forestry sector, in line with its real needs;
- (d) *rethinking aid* for private forest fund owners by:
- identifying and providing *appropriate, sufficient and effective support formulas*;
 - identifying and providing *facilities* for the conservation and enhancement of the biodiversity of forest ecosystems;
 - *ensuring the* administration or the forestry services, as well as the elaboration of the forestry arrangements *for the whole surface*;
- (e) *rethinking the communication activity* in the forestry sector, by:
- creation of a *communication strategy* and common information and communication platforms in the forestry field;
 - the *involvement of the factors* in the field for the establishment of such a platform, and the thorough training of the staff;
 - the creation of *pre-established* internal / external *communication tools* at the sector level, in order to avoid communication blockages with partners and interested structures, but also the dilution and delay of messages to the public;
 - the creation of *forestry education programs* for civil society (in particular, children);
- (f) *rethinking some activities of the specialized departments* within MEWF, namely:
- *quantification of ecosystem services* provided by the forest (in accordance with the functional forest zoning system);

- *updating indicators* for sustainable forest management, taking into account trends at European level, but also at national level;
- *updating the forest inventory*, which would allow reporting and fulfillment of obligations to international bodies in the field;
- updating technical rules on progress in forest fund management, forestry operations and associated technologies;
- creation and operationalization of a *computerized record* of forest lands, ensuring the visibility of the delimitation in the land between owners;
- *making the national forest fund accessible*, by identifying the necessary funds and those responsible for creating access roads to this fund;
- limiting / eliminating the influence of the political factor, in order to ensure continuity and leadership in Romsilva;
- (g) *rethinking the human resources activity* in the forestry sector, by:
 - creating medium and long-term *development and training strategies* for forestry human resources;
 - creating / updating *occupational standards* adapted to current situations;
 - identification of *resources* to ensure an appropriate, motivating *salary* for forestry staff;
 - ensuring the *stability of forestry staff* in management positions and ensuring promotion in these positions on criteria of proven competence, not on political and opportunity criteria;
- (h) *rethinking the exploitation, processing and recovery* of forest products, by:
 - the creation of a *national policy on the recovery of wood*, in order to maximize its value on the market, with minimal costs and a low impact on the environment;
 - ensuring the *collection and dissemination of relevant information* on the market for forest products (internal and external), for a real radiography and predictability in terms of trends;
 - creating specific *programs*, identifying and providing *facilities* for the acquisition and use of modern technologies with low environmental impact;
 - ensuring *transparency* regarding the capitalization of wood from the privately owned forest fund;
 - conducting specialized *studies* and *updating research methods* in the field;
- (i) ensuring the *reduction of the volume of illegally cut timber* from the national forest fund, through information and awareness campaigns, identification of resources and creation of a video surveillance system (terrestrial and aerial) of high risk areas, making the identification and reporting system accessible;
- (j) *rethinking the structure and activity of Romsilva*, by:
 - the elaboration and implementation of a long-term strategic plan that outlines the development direction and allows the prioritization and allocation of resources within the Romsilva structure;

- adapting the practices or the way of carrying out the Romsilva activity to the external conditions, which are in a radical change;
- the creation of tools and procedures for establishing the costs necessary for the provision of public functions;
- complete certification of the forest area managed by Romsilva;
- creating public-private partnerships, in the context of increasing energy demand based on wood products;
- the optimization of the forest resources, in certain areas, from the perspective of the management of the forest fund public property of the state by Romsilva.

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