

Develops sustainable and profitable forest management models for small forest holdings.
European collaboration supporting small forest holdings with practical, profitable and close-to-nature solutions.

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WHAT SMURF DOES

Improvement of the forest sector value chain, increasing business opportunities, creating economically viable, sustainable and profitable management models, integrating forest owners' organisations.

90

Organisations involved

19

Countries represented

800+

Surveys and interviews

€1M

Cascade funding distributed

MAIN SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

Increase profitability

Creating diversified value chains that maximise the economic benefits derived from small forest properties, including the use of non-wood forest products (NWFPs), sustainable tourism and other ecosystem services (PES). Carbon credits.

Promote joint and professional management

Characterising and replicating solutions for the establishment of groupings and joint management groups: Management Boards, Certification Groups, Shared Forests, etc.

Strengthen organisations

Integrating small forest owners' organisations into the design and implementation of solutions, ensuring that the strategies developed respond to the needs and realities of these organisations.

Promotion of Close-to-Nature Silviculture (CNS)

Diversification of forest management models, adapted to European regions and species, through modelling and field data.

METHODOLOGY & RESULTS

SMURF combines scientific research, technical knowledge and direct collaboration with local, regional and national forest owners' organisations.

Forest structure analysis

Data collection to characterise holdings, management practices and specific challenges.

Development of new silvicultural approaches

11 forest management models based on Closer-to-Nature Silviculture (CNS) with continuous cover forestry, focused on the individual tree

Cascade funding

SMURF distributes EU funds (€1M) to forest owners' organisations for their participation in specific project activities, guaranteeing a direct on-the-ground impact.

Economic viability

New business models, (new technologies, non-wood forest products and damaged wood) to improve the profitability of forest holdings.

PES systems

Implementation of a harmonised Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) system that rewards forest owners for environmental benefits such as carbon sequestration or biodiversity conservation, among others. New European carbon credit system

LAURUS Network

Workshops, seminars and training to build capacity, share best practices and transfer knowledge.

Two European Conferences on Small Forest

The 1st European Conference on Small Forest Holdings (2025) gathered over 200 stakeholders from across Europe, including forest owners' organisations, public institutions, NGOs and value chain actors, to discuss challenges and opportunities for small forest holdings. A second edition is planned for 2027 as a final conference of the SMURF project.

SMURF SOLUTIONS

European collaboration to support small forest holdings.

1

Diagnosis of forest value chains

90 organisations involved from 19 countries, plus more than 800 surveys and interviews.

2

LAURUS European Support Network

A European network of technical staff from forest owners' organisations focused on training, innovation and new contacts

3

On-the-ground applicability

Direct participation of organisations to deliver practical solutions adapted to real needs.

