



9 February 2006

FINNS MUST JOIN FORCES TO IMPLEMENT RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY PROGRAMMES IN THE FOREST-BASED SECTOR

Finland has been a leading country in research and education in the forest sector in the past decades. This may not be the case in future.

"Research resources have been fragmented and unnecessary overlap has resulted. There is also a lack of vision. The forest cluster, research institutes and universities must join forces by concentrating resources and specializing in key areas of expertise. Maintaining a leading position requires a strong national strategy and different actors' commitment to implementing it. The forest industries want Finland to remain on the cutting edge of research, innovation and education internationally," says President Anne Brunila of the Finnish Forest Industries Federation, who spoke at the Forest-Based Sector Technology Platform seminar in Helsinki on 9 February 2006.

The forest industries' great challenges are overcapacity in Europe, rigid costs and operating models, rapid changes in the global operating environment and the loss of technological leadership. Investments must be made in research, development and education to ensure internationally competitive expertise and innovations so that the sector can respond to changes in markets and demand.

"In order to develop operating models that improve productivity and flexibility, technologies and new products we must create a shared vision to succeed. As Finns we must take care of the strength of our own forest sector and cluster. This requires a more ambitious approach to increasing the cluster's strengths and closer cooperation among different actors," Brunila adds.

Setting research priorities is part of the European Forest-Based Sector Technology Platform. Its purpose is to improve the sector's competitiveness on global markets and create the proper conditions for the sector's development and renewal. The Technology Platform is based on a vision for 2030 according to which the European forest-based sector is a technology leader that plays a key role in promoting sustainability and fostering the extended use of renewable forest resources.

www.forestplatform.org

European Technology Platforms are a new form of cooperation designed to coordinate research and financing in order to strengthen European competitiveness.

Finnish Forest Industries Federation

P.O. Box 336, FI-00171 Helsinki, Snellmaninkatu 13, 00170 Helsinki

Telephone +358 9 132 61, Fax +358 9 132 6656, name.surname@forestindustries.fi, www.forestindustries.fi



9 February 2006

The Forest-Based Sector Technology Platform brings together key actors in the sector with the aim of spurring joint research efforts in Europe. It provides the forest cluster with the possibility to focus and coordinate resources for research in a way that supports companies' business objectives and creates a good foundation for improving competitiveness through R&D. The Strategic Research Agenda maps out priorities and areas in which research and development need to focus in future.