



## Policy integration and implementation across Europe

### WP 6.1 A case study of forest ecosystem services in national and regional policy

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#### Introduction

In this case study, four different sites in Europe are studied, with the aim of improving our understanding of how policy in different geographical and cultural contexts internalizes the present challenges of conflicting uses of forest ecosystem services (FES) but also how they acknowledge the synergies.

To ensure the long-term utilization of various services provided by forest ecosystems (FES), it is crucial that policy governing different FES are sustainable. To achieve this, policy coherence and choice of policy implementation is fundamental. This case study provides an overview of policy contexts for FES across Europe, illustrates how policies are targeting the same objectives, and identifies the synergies and conflicts in important nexuses.

#### Results

To summarize the policy integration analysis on the vertical level, policy coherence (measured in high or low), displays conflicts and synergies across policy objectives (as analyzed in PI and EPI), together with policy implementation. The results indicate that there is, in general, high level of policy coherence across forest and climate policies in all CSRs, illustrated by the synergies of sustainable forest management and climate change mitigation. Moreover, there are also the acknowledged conflicts between biodiversity and forest as well as climate-related policies, thus high PI in combination with hard policy instruments. Consequently, low policy coherence is found between bioeconomy, energy, and biodiversity-related policies, where a low degree of EPI and goals are, for instance, not harmonized or unclear. Few hard policy instruments are also found within these policy sectors.

#### Discussion

The results indicate that, even though the analyzed regions have different forest types, hence the regions are typically characterized by different challenges and prerequisites, their priorities are rather similar. All regions are characterized by integrated forest management; thus, all four groups of forest ecosystem services are integrated and included in policy formulation. Furthermore, the regions, regardless of being a member of EU or not, acknowledge climate change and climate change mitigation as a major challenge. This focus could be a reflection of their respective memberships in the United Nations (UN).

All regions bring forward strong synergies between forest and climate change mitigation, however with differences of effects for FES. Catalonia (ES) and Grisons (CH) emphasize the importance of forests to mitigate hazards for society (e.g. erosion, fire), while Hesse and Thuringia (DE) identify biodiversity and recreational benefits in combination with climate change mitigation. Estonia focuses on growing forests, providing for e.g., carbon storage, but also for genetic variations and protection against forest damages (e.g. fire, storm, pests, and insect outbreaks). The analysis of objectives and the synergies/conflicts mentioned shows a high level of policy integration, which entails that policy recognizes synergies and conflicts between different FES and that policy documents to a large degree cross-reference to each other.

#### Methodology

The levels of policy integration and environmental policy integration, in tandem with policy coherence, describes the relationship between different policy areas; **how synergies are realized and how conflicts or trade-offs are being decided upon**. Being able to shape future integrations, priorities, and policy implementation is vital for upcoming policy making, since this ensures that policy goals are on target and minimizes the risk of policy failures.

We use the frameworks of policy integration (PI) and environmental policy integration (EPI) in order to understand how different policy objectives in the four CSRs take FES into account. The goal of PI and EPI is to explore how policy objectives are integrated between different policy sectors (horizontal integration), and how these are implemented and whether they are coherent (vertical integration). To further explore the differences in vertical integration between the regions, we also apply the theoretical tool of the Doern continuum. The analysis is limited to the policies specifically related to FES, and thus is based on documents that directly mention FES within the following sectors: biodiversity, bioeconomy, climate, energy, and forest. These are deemed to be the main policies affecting FES in the chosen CSRs.

Four case study regions (CSRs) have been chosen for this study. The included CSRs are **Catalonia in Spain, the country of Estonia, the canton of Grisons in Switzerland, and the two German regions of Hesse and Thuringia** (jointly analyzed as one case study region). The regions are chosen based on their representation of the different geographical and institutional contexts present in Europe.


	Catalonia (ES)	Estonia	Grisons (CH)	Hesse and Thuringia (DE)
Policy instruments <b>Hard/Soft</b>	Combination of H/S instruments  <b>Hard</b> in FO,CC,BIO Sanctions, Financial mechanism <b>Soft</b> in EN, BEC Strategies	Combination of H/S instruments  <b>Hard</b> in FO,EN,BIO Sanctions, Licences <b>Soft</b> in BEC, CC License, subsidy without sanctions	Combination of H/S instruments  <b>Hard</b> in FO Sanction  <b>Soft</b> in EN, BEC, BIO, CC Obligations but no sanctions	Combination of H/S instruments  <b>Hard</b> in FO Sanctions, Fines, Monitoring and enforcement systems <b>Soft</b> in CC, EN, BIO Obligations with controls
Policy coherence <b>High/Low</b>	<b>High</b> across FO/CC/BIO <b>Low</b> across EN/BEC	<b>High</b> across FO/CC <b>Low</b> across EN/BEC/BIO	<b>High</b> across & BIO/EN CC/FO <b>Low</b> across BIO/EN	<b>High</b> across FO/CC <b>Low</b> across BIO/EN

*Note: BIO=Biodiversity, BEC=Bioeconomy, CC=Climate, EN=Energy, FO=Forest*

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