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# A new role for EU forests and the forest sector in the climate targets beyond 2020

Brussels, Think Forest, 13 October 2015



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# 1599 map of arctic exploration by Willem Barentsz

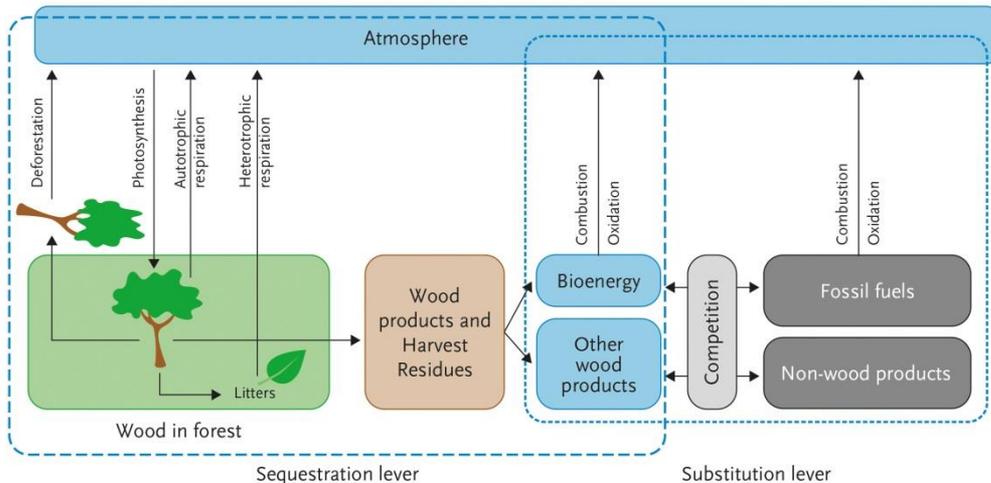




## Current role of European forests

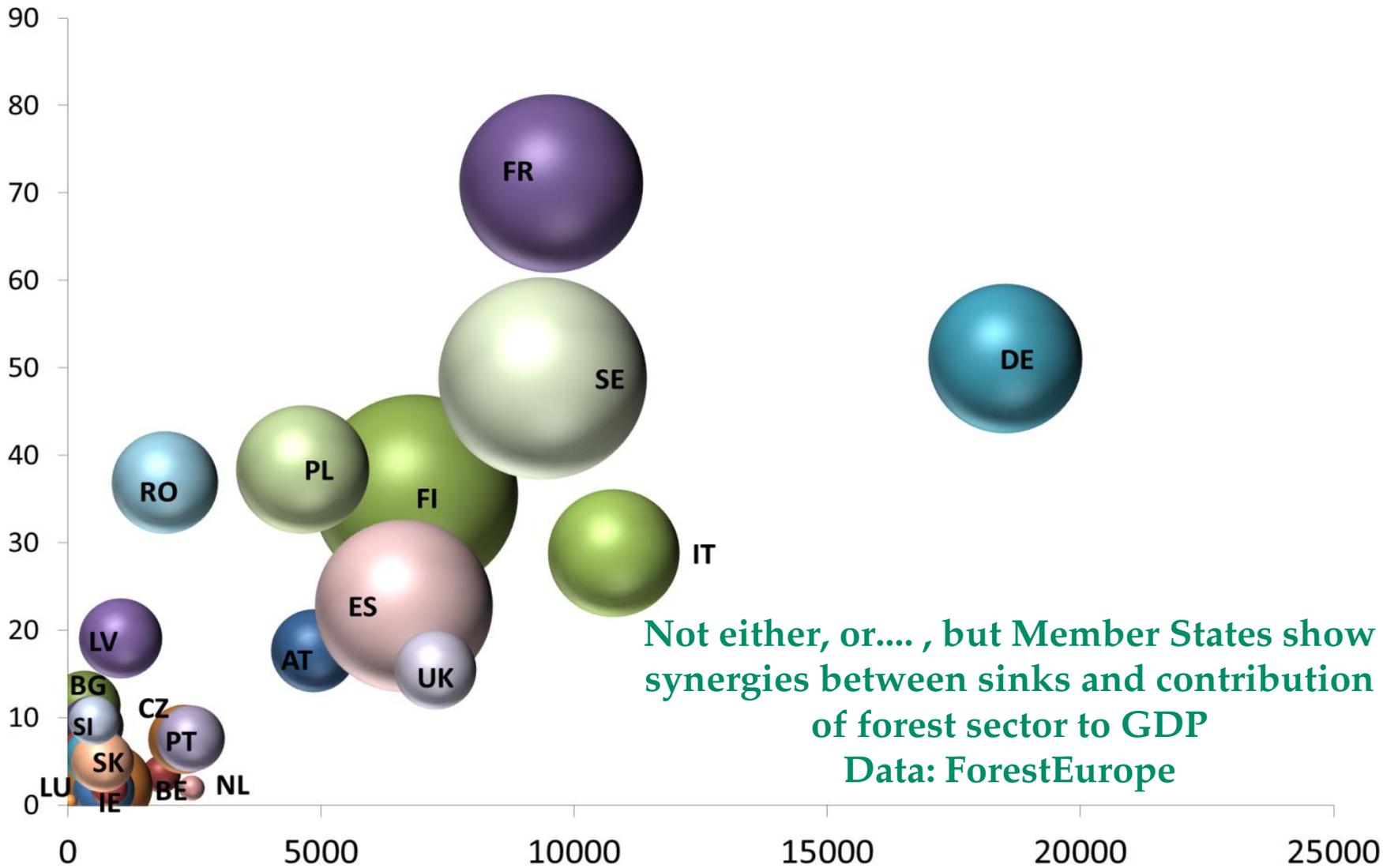
- Sink of 450 Mt CO<sub>2</sub> , or 9% of total EU emissions,
- Harvested wood products sink of 44 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>
- Biomass for bioenergy producing 3% of total EU energy need

Some signs of saturation



Biomass sink as reported to UNFCCC (2000-2006)

Mt CO<sub>2</sub>/y



Contribution to GDP (M Euro/y)

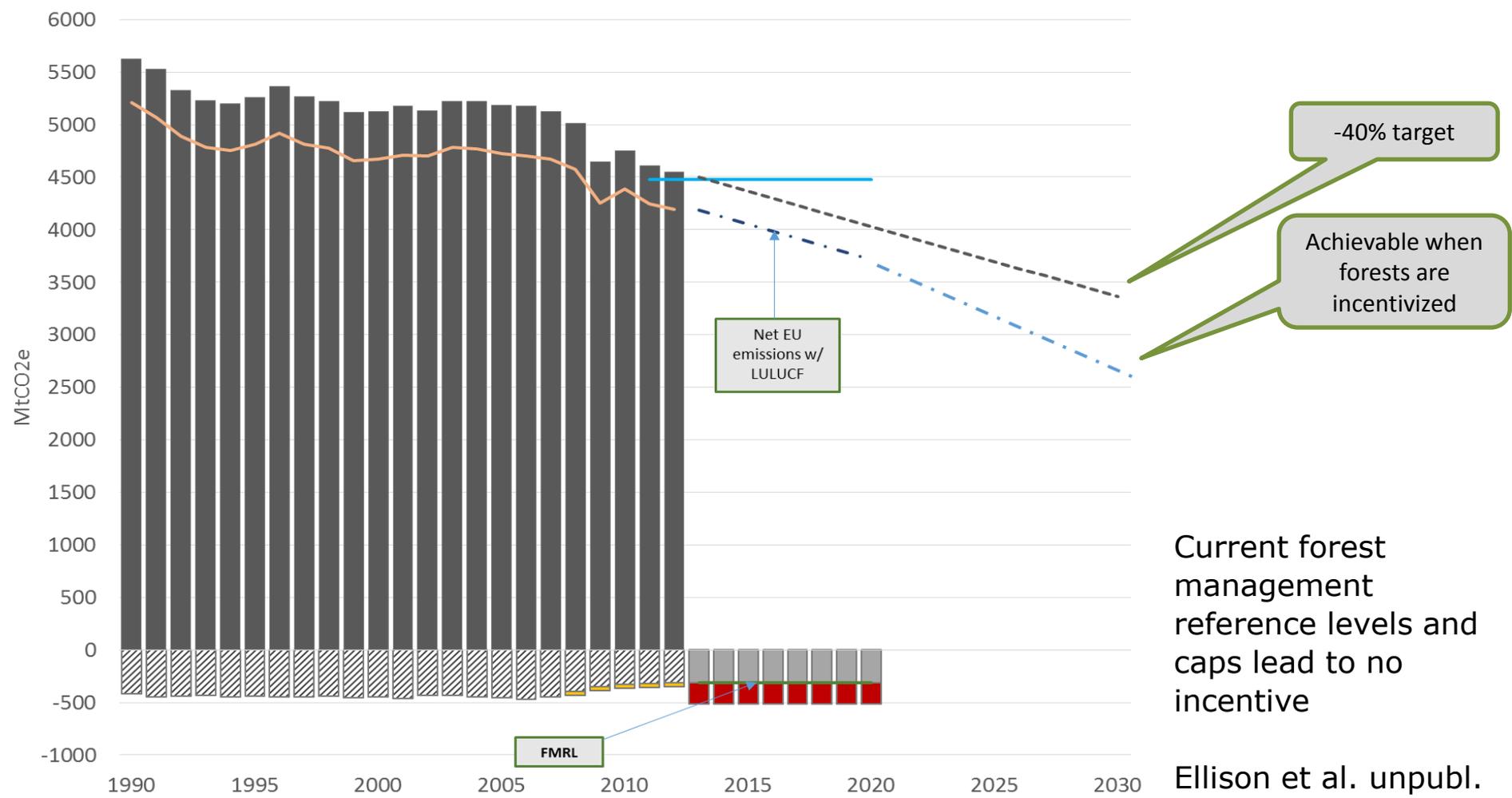


## Why has nothing happened in the forest sector

- Believed monitoring uncertain
- Perceived permanence risk
- Perceived that not much can be achieved
- Sink is already there and large. Taking up forest sink was perceived as just reducing targets



# The challenge: how to take up forests

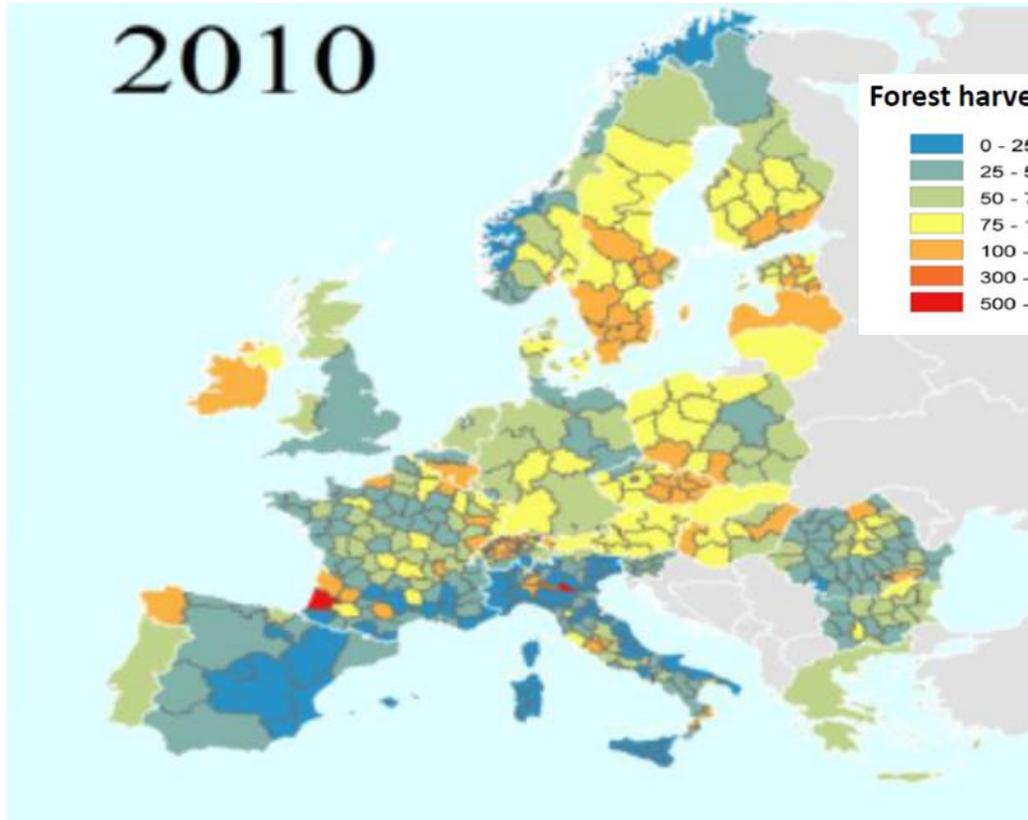


Current forest management reference levels and caps lead to no incentive

Ellison et al. unpubl.



# Variety amongst Member States offers opportunities



Harvesting intensity as % of increment (Levers et al. 2014)



# Reasoning why we can and should take up forests now

Each sector has to take its role

Developing countries are phasing-in land use

Forests and forest sector can be taken up in the overall target (phased-in), with own increasing role.

Why:

- ✓ We in EU have rather stable sink, with a managed forest resource base.
- ✓ New monitoring techniques available. Incomparable to 1997
- ✓ Clear synergies; not an either , or !
- ✓ Policies, economic incentives and investments are needed to turn a saturating sink



## What we propose

- ✓ **Great scope** to further enhance the role of EU forests in tackling climate change (up to another 10% of all emissions compensated) ;
- ✓ Provided that the right economic incentives towards Climate Smart Forestry and the forest sector are given (not only sinks, but also products & energy)
- ✓ **EU should set an overall framework target** which it wants to achieve through its forests and forest sector.
- ✓ Then this overall target is **allocated** to the member states
- ✓ Member states should create policies, economic programs and instruments. Locally specific measures can be stimulated in a Climate Smart Forestry & Forest Sector.



# No single sector can solve the whole problem, and no single sector can provide quick fixes

Climate smart forestry and forest sector takes into account local circumstances and creates win-win.

Measures are e.g.

- ✓ E.g. storm prone areas: bring down stock
- ✓ Drained peat areas: reduce drainage
- ✓ High stocked area: bring down stock and combine with innovation in products
- ✓ Remote areas: strict reserves
- ✓ Outgrown coppice: regenerate, stimulate local biomass innovation and plant adapted species





**There are no dragons... only opportunities**

Thank you !

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