



The “Club du Bois” at the European Parliament An open discussion platform for the woodworking industries of Europe

Historical Background

Following the exhibition “Tackle Climate Change: Use Wood” in the European Parliament in Brussels in February 2006 by the Wood in Sustainable Development process led by EOS and EPF under the CEI-Bois Roadmap and as suggested by former MEP Mrs Catherine Guy-Quint, Mr Ladislaus Döry, vice-chairman of CEI-Bois and President of the European Panel Federation, established the “Club du Bois”, a periodical and informal gathering of MEPs and industry representatives on EU legislative issues touching upon the woodworking industries of Europe.

The Club du Bois is chaired by a MEP who has sincere interest to the industry, and sponsored by the woodworking industries associations. MEPs from all political families and nationalities are invited by the MEP chairing the Club a few weeks ahead. Industry sponsors are expected to promote participation of their own constituency’s MEPs, repeating the invitation and accompanying them that day whenever possible.

Following the European elections in 2010 in which Mrs Guy-Quint didn’t candidate anymore, a new chairperson of the Club du Bois was introduced: Dr. Ernst Strasser. Dr. Strasser used to be the Minister of the Interior in Austria and previously worked in the Umdasch group at the beginning of his career, where he gained experience in the woodworking industry. Dr. Strasser resigned from the European Parliament in March 2011. Thanks to the excellent contacts of Mr Dominique Coutrot of the French member Association UIPP, EPF and CEI-Bois welcomed the confirmation of MEP Mr Gaston Franco to take over the Chair of the Club du Bois. Since 2012, Gaston Franco was Chair of the European and Euro-Mediterranean Affairs Committee of Nice (Côte d’Azur).



Within the European Parliament, Mr Franco was the Chairman of the Forestry Subgroup of the 'Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development' Intergroup of the European Parliament, and Member of the EP Committee on Industry, Research and Energy. He was also Member substitute of the EP Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety.



A typical session of the Club du Bois runs as follows, but remains flexible in timing and format:

- a) **In Brussels:** Breakfast meeting from 8.00 to 9.30, held inside the European Parliament.
- b) **In Strasbourg:** Meeting from 16.00 to 18.30 inside the European Parliament followed by dinner in a well-known restaurant.

Time schedule 'Breakfast Meeting'	Time Schedule afternoon meeting	Action	Expected outcome
8 o'clock	16.00	MEP Chairman of the Club du Bois welcomes the group and explains the most recent legislative developments of common interest, what is at stake 	Gather new information about prospects for the industry
8.15	16.15	President of EPF/EOS thanks the MEP and explains the points of view of the industry and the effects of the legislations discussed on the industry. Guest speaker(s) (such as an academic presenting a supporting study) will be introduced at this point.	Inform the MEPs present of the current situation of the industry & formulate what they expect EU politicians to do
8.45	16.45	Other MEPs present are given the floor by the Chairman. The debate starts.	MEPs are free to express their views and sponsoring members can also ask questions at that time.
9.30	17.30	Conclusions and next steps	Individual meetings with participating MEPs are planned
		End of the session of the Club du Bois (in Strasbourg, dinner is served at the selected restaurant)	



About Us

European Panel Federation (EPF): EPF has members in 25 countries and represents the manufactures of particle board, MDF, OSB, hard and softboard. The EU wood panel industry has a turnover of about 22 billion euro every year, creates over 100,000 jobs directly and counts more than 5,000 enterprises in Europe.

The European Organisation of the Sawmill Industry (EOS): Through its member countries EOS represents some 35 000 sawmills in 13 countries across Europe manufacturing sawn boards, timber frames, glulam, decking, flooring, joinery, fencing and several other wood products. Together they represent 75 % of the total European sawn wood output and a turnover of almost 34 billion EUR, creating over 259 000 job opportunities annually in the EU.