

Statement of the National Commission of NSZZ „Solidarność”

No 3/23

on amendments to the European Treaty regarding the transfer of forestry from the competences of member states to the common competences of the EU

The National Commission of NSZZ “Solidarność” has received with great concern and disbelief the news that the European Parliament’s Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety has given a positive opinion on the European Commission’s proposal to amend the European Treaty regarding the transfer of forestry from the competence of member states to the common competence of the European Union. In practice, such a change means the loss of an extremely valuable resource, building the strong position of Poland, the Polish economy and serving Polish society.

We demand that the Polish authorities strongly oppose these plans, including a possible veto against these changes to the EU Treaty. We call on all Polish MEPs, all Polish representatives in the EU Community institutions, and all Polish political groups to take every measure possible against the possessive plans of the European Parliament and the European Commission for Polish State Forests.

As a reminder, under the existing provisions of the Treaty, the EU does not have a common forestry policy, therefore, forestry still remains a national competence. For several years, EU legislation has been violating this principle, affecting forestry through acts issued at various levels, from the Biodiversity Strategy, Forestry Strategy, Climate Law to regulations, e.g. those already adopted, on provisions covering forestry under LULUCF, and those planned for 2023, on nature restoration or drawing up strategic forest plans and forest monitoring. Now the European Commission has formally requested the inclusion of forestry as part of the EU’s shared competence. Forests and forest management is a revenue-generating sector, but also one that requires investment, especially if it is to be managed in a balanced and sustainable manner that secures society’s access to its multiple functions and benefits.

In its documents, the European Commission states that forests are the most valuable ecosystems on Earth from the point of view of biodiversity, and cites the threat of deforestation. But it does not comment on the fact that on our continent this threat does not exist and that in Europe forest

area is expanding! In Europe it has increased by 14 million hectares, or almost 10%, over the past 30 years.

The shift away from multifunctional and sustainable forest management to exclusion of this sector from economic activity, will lead to a drastic increase in deforestation outside of the European Union. Thus, the global effect of the area of forest resources will be reduced, and instead of preventing climate change, which was an EU objective, will only worsen the EU's economy based on wood raw material. The future of the world is the relationship between nature and technology. The science-policy-practice nexus is the challenge of our time.

The National Commission of NSZZ "Solidarność" will take all measures, both at the EU forum and vis-à-vis the Polish authorities, to oppose this plunder of the State Forests and to preserve them for Polish society and Polish economy through forest management on the basis of the principle of sustainability and multifunctionality.

Spała, 7 March 2023

National Commission  
of NSZZ „Solidarność”