

1. Please can you set out what benefits the UK derives from participation in the EFI

The European Forest Institute is an important partner for the UK.

The EFI brings together and provides context for cutting edge research and scientific knowledge, enabling policymakers to make informed and evidence-based decisions. It is one of the few entirely forest focused institutions, whose work helps underpin the UK's leadership on international forest policy issues and our efforts to deliver on the UK's White paper commitment to curb illegal logging and its associated international trade, as well as end extreme poverty and tackle climate change and forest and biodiversity loss.

EFI is an important convening partner on international forest issues. EFI currently has a network of circa 130 member organisations from 39 countries. They broadly represent forest research, industry, forest owners, environmental research and international forest related organisations. The UK is able to derive benefits from drawing on the knowledge and expertise of other EFI members as well as leveraging the network to advance UK thinking and policy objectives.

In addition, EFI has been involved directly with supporting the delivery of the FCDO's flagship [forest governance programme \(FGMC\)](#). This programme aims to reduce the illegal use of forest resources and ensure benefits for poor people who depend on forests for their livelihoods. With the support of this programme and other development donors EFI have established the expertise and stakeholder network on forest governance, deforestation and climate change that provides guidance to over 20 tropical forested countries.

2. Please can you explain why, having ratified the convention in 2007, the UK has now decided to host an office of the EFI in the UK. The EM states very briefly that this is "to enable increased collaboration with the organisation", but what exactly does that entail and why is a UK office necessary or desirable? What benefits will the office bring to the UK in return for its £350,000 support?

Having deepened links with EFI over the last 10 years, there is an opportunity to host an expansion of EFI's International Partnerships Facility in the UK. The International Partnerships Facility is a global centre of knowledge and expertise that supports policy and governance reforms to safeguard the world's forests. EFI does this by facilitating partnerships between producing and consuming countries that engage key stakeholders in lasting solutions. Forests are home to most of Earth's terrestrial biodiversity. They are central to mitigating climate change and adapting to its impacts, essential to sustainable food production, and are key to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. But the expansion of agricultural crops, illegal logging and land-use conflicts are driving forest loss.

The Facility assists a range of actors in tropical forest producer countries to strengthen and implement legal frameworks and policies. They also help inform policy developments in consuming countries. The Facility includes experts in forest and land-use management, commodity supply chains, economic modelling and finance, governance and institutional reforms, gender, multilateral processes, certification and licensing, legal and policy analysis,

bilateral trade negotiations, multi-stakeholder and deliberative processes and communications.

Having a physical presence in the UK would allow UK based organisations, as well as HMG, to benefit from more regular in-person collaboration opportunities and the convening power of EFI. EFI would host a small permanent London team, drawing internationally renowned expertise into the UK. With the importance of private sector climate finance rising rapidly up the agenda there are potential opportunities for EFI to collaborate with the UK's world-leading financial sector in new forest focused financial initiatives. At the Climate COP26 in Glasgow the UK Presidency put nature and forests at the heart of climate talks and set out an ambitious global vision to reverse global forest and biodiversity loss. This included scaling up UK commitments through the International Climate Finance to support developing countries as well as strengthening HMG capacity to support this vision with the formation of an International Forest Unit that sits across DESNZ and FCDO. The physical presence of EFI in London will serve to strengthen the capacities of the IFU in our international outreach and engagement with tropical forest countries.

Initial UK financial support would help with some of the start-up costs and enable new UK based workstreams to be launched.

3. What are the “regular activities” which the office will conduct as referred to in paragraph 4.2 of the Explanatory Memorandum?

EFI conducts [research](#) and provides [policy support](#) on issues related to forests ([European Forest Institute \(efi.int\)](#)). They facilitate and stimulate forest-related networking and promote the dissemination of unbiased and policy-relevant information on forests and forestry. EFI also advocates for forest research and for the use of scientifically sound information as a basis for forest policies. Their work in the field of policy support includes enhanced support for decision takers and policy makers. A London-based office would provide a platform to support the full range of EFI's activities as well as an enhanced International Partnerships Facility. The headquarters of the EFI will remain in Joensuu, Finland.

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