

## SMURF PROJECT HOLDS FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN BORDEAUX: CONSOLIDATING KNOWLEDGE AND FIELD EXPERIENCE

- The SMURF consortium gathers at Campus Educatif Bordeaux from 23 to 25 September 2025 to review achievements and next steps in the project.
- Consortium visits *Écomusée de la Truffe* and Vaunac forest plot to explore cultural and practical aspects of sustainable forest management

**(Bordeaux, France – 29 September 2025)** – The SMURF (Sustainable Management models and value chains for small Forests) project recently wrapped up its Fourth General Assembly from 23 to 25 September 2025 at the Campus Educative Bordeaux, graciously hosted by its French partner, XYLOFUTUR. This gathering brought together 22 participants from 10 consortium partners across Europe, who took the time to review the project's progress, share insights, and strengthen their collaboration to push forward innovative and profitable solutions for small forest owners.

The event kicked off with warm welcoming remarks from Álvaro Picardo Nieto, the project coordinator from CESEFOR, alongside the dedicated XYLOFUTUR team. The first day was all about reflecting on the achievements from the project's first year, providing updates on various work packages, and holding a workshop focused on communication, dissemination, and exploitation to ensure that the results of SMURF gain the visibility and impact they deserve.

On the second day, participants enjoyed a blend of cultural learning and hands-on experience. In the morning, the consortium visited the *Écomusée de la Truffe* for a guided tour that showcased the rich traditions and economic significance of truffle cultivation in the area. In the afternoon, they headed to the commune of Vaunac for a visit to a forest plot, where they learned about land consolidation operations (AFAFE) in partnership with *Centre National de la Propriété Forestière* (CNPF). This visit was a fantastic opportunity to see practical measures aimed at tackling forest fragmentation and promoting sustainable management practices, all while engaging in discussions with local forestry experts.

The third and final day was dedicated to conversations about the latest developments across the remaining work packages. Partners shared the progress made so far and reaffirmed their commitment to continue delivering innovative tools and strategies that will enhance forest management and support small forest holders throughout Europe.

Overall, the Bordeaux General Assembly concluded with a series of project reviews, workshops, cultural exchanges, and discussions. Participants shared updates on ongoing activities and explored next steps to further advance the development of tools and strategies aimed at improving forest management and finding new business opportunities to support small forest holdings across Europe.

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**About SMURF:** The SMURF project, aligned with the EU's Forest Strategy, promotes sustainable forest management through innovative Closer to Nature Silviculture practices (CNS) and a harmonized European Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) system. By tailoring solutions for small forest properties, SMURF enhances carbon farming, biodiversity, and forest product valorization. With a multidisciplinary approach and diverse stakeholder engagement, SMURF provides holistic sustainability solutions across the forest-based value chain. Ten organizations from Spain, Belgium, Italy, France, Portugal, and Denmark collaborate with a translational, multidisciplinary, and multi-actor approach. This project is granted by the European Research Executive Agency (REA) under the Horizon Europe program.

For more information about the SMURF project, visit [www.smurfproject.eu](http://www.smurfproject.eu).

**Contact information:**

**Álvaro Picardo Nieto.** Project coordinator. CESEFOR (Soria, Spain). [alvaro.picardo@cesefor.com](mailto:alvaro.picardo@cesefor.com)

**Estibaliz Garmendia.** Communications Manager. Contactica (Madrid, Spain). [estibaliz.garmendia@contactica.es](mailto:estibaliz.garmendia@contactica.es)