## Local foresters at the heart of a European project

# The SMURF must make it possible to better support the owners, enhance their forests and build a common strategy by 2030.

Marc Clopez has been president of the Federation of forest groups of Hérault for a year and a half. There are 43 groups in the department, which represents 7,700 hectares of forests. In the Community of communes Lodévois and Larzac, there are three: Roqueredonde, Lauroux and Les Plans.

A group is a private civil company. In the 1960s, the State helped with reforestation, by financing only the planting of softwoods, to have more quickly wood to inject into the economy.

### Associations will investigate

In order to know how to help the one million forest owners in Europe to gather and produce more and better, the idea of the SMURF project was born. A consortium of nine structures was formed, responsible for administering this project and managing it to complete it. After a call for applications in 2024 from the associations of owners, thirty-seven were selected, including four in France.

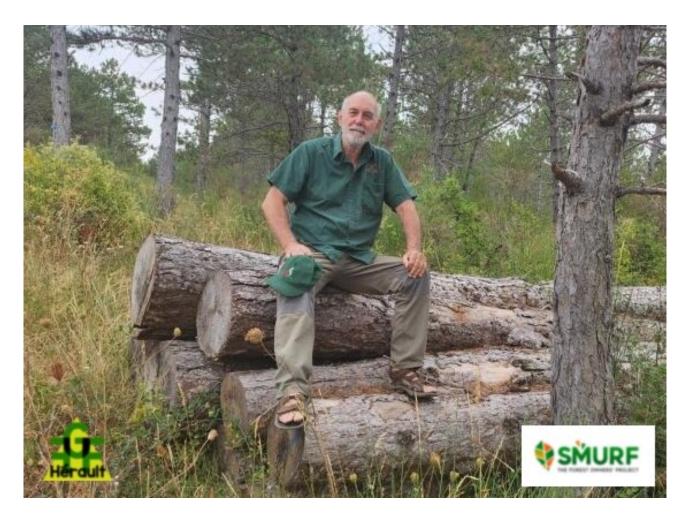
These associations are funded by Europe to investigate, qualify small forest property and conduct a review at the European level, before implementing a European forestry strategy. SMURF defends the right of each owner to decide on the objectives and management systems to be applied in their forest.

### A common but specific policy

The first step is to conduct surveys among forest groups. This survey should be completed by the end of 2027. We will extract what is best in each country and offer it to others, for example by mixing species to avoid a monospecific crop more sensitive to fires and diseases. It would be necessary to achieve a common but specific policy for each state. The objective is a forestry strategy for 2030," explains Marc Clopez.

Forests must protect soils, allow walking in them and this is not valued by the owners. It is one of the roles of the Smurf project. The forest has an economic, social, and environmental role.

In France, 75% of the forest is private, 80% are small landowners. *This survey must allow them to value their forests and ensure their sustainable management*," he says, convinced.



## Lodévo<u>is</u> Un projet pour valoriser les forêts

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## Les forestiers locaux au cœur d'un projet européen

Le SMURF doit permettre de mieux accompagner les propriétaires, valoriser leurs forêts et bâtir une stratégie commune à l'horizon 2030.

