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AGRICULTURE & INNOVATION

Sustainable mobilisation of forest biomass

How to improve the sustainable mobilisation of biomass from our forests in the EU?

The EIP-AGRI Focus Group on Sustainable Mobilisation of Forest Biomass (SMFB) brought together 20 experts to address the currently underused potential supply of forest biomass. The experts analysed the main challenges, opportunities and sources of innovation to increase the supply of forest biomass as a raw material for all potential markets, while safeguarding the economic, environmental and social functions of the forest. The group delivered its final report in February 2018.

The Focus Group considered that SMFB can only be enhanced when the complexity of its framework conditions is well-understood, and by adopting a multi-actor approach. European forest ecosystems are diverse and significant regional differences exist in harvesting operations, availability of biomass and its uses. The final report compiles some suggestions on good practices and strategies. These include opportunities for digitisation along the value chain, harvesting and transportation technologies, decision support systems and incentives for SMFB. Furthermore, the Focus Group has identified three key factors to consider:

- ▶ The diverse regional profiles of the forest-based sector and the stakeholders involved in the mobilisation of forest biomass across Europe
- ▶ The evolution in market trends and the kind of forest biomass which will be needed in the mid- and long-term
- ▶ Mobilising forest biomass in a sustainable way can contribute to mitigate climate change, prevent forest fires or restore habitats.

“Working together with experts from all over the EU gave me a new perspective. It is challenging to work together and to define common innovation needs and research challenges. The whole exercise gave us more than just new friendships and a large network of experts from all over the EU, we gained an insight in different aspects of sustainable wood biomass mobilisation issues.

Working together is a basis for understanding the larger picture”

- Nike Krajnc (Slovenia), expert from the EIP-AGRI Focus Group on Sustainable mobilisation of forest biomass -

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Ideas for Operational Groups

- ▶ Develop regional models (including Decision Support Systems) for improved forest management in small-scale forests
- ▶ Develop or test new models for innovative virtual timber sales/marketing hubs
- ▶ Review existing awareness-raising measures for forest owners addressing the importance of their forests in providing ecosystem services
- ▶ Promote and adapt existing “good practice” examples to share existing knowledge amongst practitioners and/or regions
- ▶ Profile regional models for the development of forest owner groups to become more self-sufficient without over-dependency on “volunteerism”

Research needs

- ▶ Study the impact and effectiveness of incentives for SFMB
- ▶ Study the functioning of regional forest ownership organisations to identify lessons
- ▶ Develop different scenarios on future demand and supply of forest biomass
- ▶ Develop user-friendly systems to exchange knowledge on forest management planning in the long term across European regions
- ▶ Analyse the potential of new cross-regional value chains and production systems
- ▶ Identify options and incentives for carbon sequestration related to active forest management and the use of timber and other forest-based products

More ideas for Operational Groups and research needs available in the Focus Group report

See the final report for recommendations to better support SMFB and provide more efficient approaches to innovation at national or EU level.



More information on the EIP-AGRI website

Focus Group webpage	Inspirational ideas: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Foresters prevent forest fires in Portugal with woody biomass- Creating vital cork forests in Portugal with satellite and GIS data- Improving forestry value chains in Finland- SIMWOOD project
Final report	EIP-AGRI Brochure Creating diverse forests with multiple benefits

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