

## 5th Newsletter

BIO4ECO aims to improve regional and national **policy processes and policy implementation** and delivery addressing the **transition to a low carbon economy**, in relation with renewable energy use energy efficiency of building and forest and agricultural biomass.

Find in this Newsletter different activities the BIO4ECO Project has carried out during the 5<sup>th</sup> semester.

### EXCHANGE OF INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE:

#### Study visit in North Karelia

On June 12th and 13th, about 30 people travelled to Finland. During the study visit, attendees had a first-hand experience on integral solutions for bioenergy policies and strategies.

Regional Council of North Karelia was in charge of the organization.

The study visit concerns about integral solutions for bioenergy policies and strategies, local stakeholders and project partners' presentations.

Study visits, along with thematic workshops and local stakeholder groups meetings, are the cornerstone of the learning process of the BIO4ECO Project.



# BIO4ECO

Interreg Europe

6th - 7th of September 2018

COORDINATED BY THE FRENCH FEDERATION OF FOREST MUNICIPALITIES



## Thematic workshop in Paris

The Federation of Forest Communes hosted the last workshop for the European partners of the BIO4ECO program, on 6 and 7 September in Paris. The workshop theme was “*Prioritization of bioenergy production at different geographical scales*”. The sharing of exemplary actions and the dissemination of good European practices will enable everyone to work for the improvement of the forest and energy policies of his country. In this [video](#), you can see a summary of the event.

## OTHER REGIONAL POLICY LEARNING EVENTS:

### LSG meeting in Latvia on innovative bioproducts

According to the Latvian Bioeconomy Strategy 2030, the replacement of fossil resources with bio-based resources could not be achieved by means of simple replacement of raw materials – it requires cardinal changes in the production chain and processes, considerable investment and innovation in both the development of new products, the modernization of production and the ability to enter the world’s production chains. It has to be taken into consideration that it requires a lot of investment in both technological resources and human resources.

The info day "Opportunities for Entrepreneurs and Scientists in the Bio-based Industries Joint Undertaking: The 2018 Call for Proposals was held on April 20 at the Ministry of Agriculture, in cooperation with the Bio-based Industries Joint Undertaking (BBI JU).

The purpose of the Info Day was to provide information to the potential participants of the BBI JU 2018 call. In the first part of the day, the representative of the BBI JU informed on the opportunities offered by the BBI JU to participate in the 2018 calls, as well as on how the submission and evaluation process of Horizon 2020 takes place. In the second part of the info day, the bioeconomy experts were informed about the opportunities offered by other EU financial instruments, as well as examples of success and experience from entrepreneurs who successfully participate in the BBI JU project or act in the field of bioeconomy. During the day, participants had the opportunity to ask questions to the BBI JU representative and Latvian experts.

The Bio-Based Industries Joint Undertaking (BBI JU) is a €3.7 billion Public-Private Partnership between the EU and the Bio-based Industries Consortium. The purpose of the BBI JU is to realize the potential of Europe's bioeconomy for the recycling of bio-waste and by-products into environmentally friendly everyday products using innovative biorefinery technologies. Every year, BBI JU announces open call for proposals for specific bio-industry topics through research and innovation activities. BBI JU is directly responsible for the design and implementation of these calls, as well as for coordination and support measures under the terms of participation of the EU's research and innovation program Horizon 2020.

Info Day was organized within the framework of the expanded LSG of the Interreg Europe project BIO4ECO.

### LSG meeting in North Karelia

The local stakeholders of BIO4ECO Project had the first meeting after the renewal of the group on 24.4.2018 in Joensuu, North Karelia. The group selected Mr. Lauri Sikanen from the Natural Institute of Finland (LUKE) as a chairman and Mrs. Leena Leskinen from the Finnish Forest Centre as a vice chairman. The topics of discussion were e.g. the new Regional strategic programme of North Karelia, working principles and working plan of the group and the actions to improve the forest bioeconomy in the region.



### 5<sup>th</sup> LSG meeting in Abruzzo

Last 3<sup>rd</sup> of May, the Abruzzo Region, organized the 5<sup>th</sup> meeting with members of its Local Stakeholder Group.

During the meeting, the representatives of the Abruzzo Region shared with LSG members the know-how and the experiences acquired during the learning process activated in the study visit which took place in March 2018 in Romania. The Abruzzo Region's representatives also illustrated the aims of the next study visit planned in June in Nord Karelia (Finland) with a specific focus on "Integral solutions for bioenergy policies and strategies".

Additionally, LSG members have been acknowledged on the results of the inter-departmental meetings with the Abruzzo Region Energy Service and the Abruzzo Region Service for the Promotion of Cooperation for the Development of the Wood-energy supply chain carried out in March and April 2018 and which also involved the State Forestry Corps.

Key elements of the action plan that is going to be drafted by the Abruzzo Region have been then illustrated to the participants and namely:

- innovation
- knowledge of local dynamics

LSG members agreed that the Action Plan may become an effective planning tool for the regional policy makers as well as for the regional stakeholders and it is then auspicious that it will be promptly adopted by the Regional council with a formal act. The Action Plan may in fact become also the reference document for the 2021-2027 programming period

The meeting closed with the planning of following steps to draft the Action Plan.

#### 4<sup>th</sup> LSG meeting in Catalonia

Last 28th May, a Catalan LSG meeting was held in Llanars (Girona, Catalonia) to share impressions of the last international thematic workshop “How to increase social acceptance of bioenergy policies”, organized on March in Centru Region (Romania).

The meeting, attended by 18 people, served to present the first catalan good practices that have been uploaded on the BIO4ECO website. During the day, participants also had the opportunity to visit the facilities of the local heat network.



Finally and most important, attendants discussed about possible actions that should enable the achievement of the objective set by the Catalan Strategy: the promotion of energy uses from forest and agricultural biomass. To take advantage of the study commissioned by the DARP

in the Biomass Cluster to find regulatory solutions for the sale of heat to networks by public entities (contracts can no longer be validated) and the sale of biogas to networks.

· An attendant suggested that, from a bioeconomic point of view, biomass consumption should be further expanded to other areas beyond bioenergy, such as green chemistry, biofuel or bioplastic.

#### Interdepartmental meeting in Latvia on the BIOEAST initiative

Latvia is the first EU-13 Member State to adopt a national bioeconomy strategy. The development of the strategy was supported by the BIO4ECO project. The knowledge and experience gained during the development of the strategy are valuable and therefore should be passed on to those countries that are still at the start of their national strategies.

During the meeting, representatives of several departments of the Ministry of Agriculture discussed the joining of Latvia to the BIOEAST initiative. BIOEAST is a Central and Eastern European initiative for knowledge-based agriculture, aquaculture and forestry in the bioeconomy, started by the Visegrad Group Countries: Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, and joined by Bulgaria, Romania, Slovenia, Croatia and the Baltic States (Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia).

The interdepartmental meeting was organized as a preparation before BIOEAST National Contact Points meeting that was held on June 29, 2018 in Brussels. During the meeting, it was concluded that the BIOEAST initiative and cooperation between the countries would strengthen the positions of the new EU Member States in the next Horizon Europe Research and Innovation framework program. Therefore it was decided to join the initiative.

BIOEAST offers a shared strategic research and innovation framework for working towards the development of a sustainable bioeconomy in the Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries. The comparative advantage in the EU of the CEE countries, namely the sustainable biomass production and processing, could lead to the benefit of the society by creating jobs and growth in the private sector. The macro-region's environmental, economic, societal, geopolitical, cultural and historical homogeneity and complexity could provide the framework conditions favourable to development of a sustainable circular bioeconomy. However, to achieve this goal, the traditional primary production and processing sectors must be modernized through a robust research and innovation initiative in bioeconomy.

### **An unified bioeconomy ecosystem (Vidzeme, Latvia)**

Since the adoption of the national-level Latvian Bioeconomy Strategy 2030, Vidzeme Planning Region has been involved in the Interreg Baltic Sea region project Rural RDI milieus in transition towards smart Bioeconomy Clusters and Innovation Ecosystems (RDI2CluB). Within the project a regional bioeconomy development plan will be developed. In order to continue work on the development of a unified bioeconomy ecosystem in Vidzeme, experts from the field of bioeconomy were invited to the meeting – including the BIO4ECO experts who were involved in the development of the national bioeconomy strategy.



Under the leadership of Vidzeme Planning Region and Institute for Environmental Solutions, representatives from several ministries, universities, enterprises, business support organizations and research institutes (including the Ministry of Agriculture, the Rural Support Service, the Ministry of Economics, the Institute of Agricultural Resources and Economics, the Ministry of Economics, Farmers' Parliament, Felici Ltd.), exchanged views, experience and knowledge at the round table and later in working groups. During the meeting, experts discussed the issues of bioeconomy and the potential forms of cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region. The meeting was also practical as the experts defined areas of action for the development of the bioeconomy ecosystem in the region.



Together with experts, six key areas for action were defined to develop the bioeconomy ecosystem in Vidzeme. Among them is the mapping of bioeconomy resources and competencies and capacity building for the creation of high added value products and services. As one of the key actions, is the strengthening of the Latvian high added value and healthy food cluster by building the partnership's activities based on value chain and taking a step towards the circular economy. An important role is also given to educating and informing the society, especially entrepreneurs, about the production and purchase of sustainable products and services.

#### 4th LSG meeting in Centru Region

On the 21st of June 2018, the 4th regional stakeholder group meeting of BIO4ECO project took place in Sfantu Gheoghe, Romania. Organized in the framework of EUSEW 2018 - EU Sustainable Energy Week 2018, the meeting gathered more than 40 representatives of public authorities, clusters, NGOs, and universities from Centru Region, Romania.

The meeting was structured into 2 sessions: the first session focused on energy efficiency policy instruments and regional funding opportunities.

During this session, an overview of the learnings and good practices showcased within the international study visits organized by the project partners was given. Projects and good practices that support the implementation of the energy efficiency policies at regional and national level were also presented.



The second session included a training activity dedicated to public authorities – a theoretical & practical course about the nZEB concept. This session provided practical trainings, demonstrations and information regarding the implementation of nearly-zero energy buildings (nZEB) and the EU Energy Performance of Buildings Directive in Centru region.

The lessons learned during the training activities and the good practices presented within this event will contribute to a better implementation of the projects funded through ROP P.I 3.1 (the policy instrument tackled by Centru Region, Romania) and to a better understanding of the existing mechanisms for implementing energy efficiency measures at organisational, local and regional levels.

### Workshop BIO4ECO Ljubljana, Slovenia

On June 21, 2018, a participatory workshop was held by Slovenia Forest Service in Ljubljana with the topic of "Current Challenges in the Design of Efficient Use of Wood Biomass". There were 20 participants, including representatives from the Ministry of Infrastructure, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, the Biotechnical Faculty of the Department of Forestry, the Forestry Institute, the Forest Service, biomass companies and some other organizations.





The leader of the workshop Jurij Beguš firstly presented the workshop's goals, which was followed by a presentation by Uroš Habjan from the Ministry of Infrastructure, entitled "Promoting the effective use of wood biomass in Slovenia". The workshop moved onto the participatory methods, through which the participants assessed the current state of use of wood biomass in Slovenia, made suggestions for improving the situation, determined the importance of the proposals and prepared action plans.

## LSG meetings in Slovenia

Slovenia Forest Service organized two events as part of BIO4ECO disseminating activities for different stakeholders.

### **Stakeholder meeting BIO4ECO Murska Sobota 19. 6. 2018**

In Slovenia Forest Service Regional Unit Murska Sobota we organized meeting, participated mainly by SFS staff, who are more intensively involved in biomass issues, with the aim to discuss the possibilities of designing strategy for the efficient use of wood biomass.



### **Stakeholder meeting BIO4ECO 5.7.2018, Slovenia**

In Slovenia Forest Service Regional Unit Ljubljana we organized field visit and workshop for stakeholders. The event was held in the area of village Ig. In the field visit the participants were introduced with novelties in the production of wood biomass, presented by the local biomass producer. Later during the workshop participants got the basic information about the project activities and discussed the problems in biomass production chain.



### **LSG meeting in Nurmes, North Karelia**

The second LSG meeting this year took place 15.8.2018 in the city of Nurmes in North Karelia. We travelled to Nurmes, where we got a chance to get acquainted with their new bioeconomy area, Nurmes Biopark. The area is partly ready and partly under construction. We visited a wood terminal, where energy wood is stored and comminuted. The location and the premises of the terminal were excellent; the road was good, the ground was covered with asphalt, the place was sunny and windy the angle of the ground enabled the water from rain or melting snow to pour away. In addition, we saw the railroad and its bioeconomy terminal construction site and visited one large harvesting company.

The new regional smart forest bioeconomy strategy, which combines the policy instruments on the background of the project (regional RIS 3 strategy and regional climate and energy programme) was presented to the local stakeholders. In addition, the draft of the action plan was presented and discussed. According to the meeting, the topics selected to the action plan seemed to be suitable for the current situation in the region.



Availability of skilled labour for practical workers was one of the problems and development needs and thus one of the actions in our upcoming action plan will deal with securing the availability of skilled labour in the region in order to keep the wheels of bioeconomy rolling.

## Forest sector meets future policy makers in Latvia

Enlarged stakeholders' meeting took place on 11 September. That was great opportunity for forest representatives ask questions and receive answers from political parties - future policy makers, about their points of view on forest sectors development issues before election of 13th Saeima. There were discussed effective land management and biomass production opportunities in forestry, appropriate compensations for restricted forest management in protected areas, climate change impact on forestry etc. Forest sector presented sectors' development vision 2030 in line with Latvian Bioeconomy strategy. Particular importance was attached to the designation of new nature protection areas and balance between economic and ecological objectives in forest management.

In second part of meeting participants were informed about lessons learned and outcomes from BIO4ECO project study visit to North Karelia and thematic workshop in France - biomass production and use for renewable energy at different geographical scales. Participants also valued BIO4ECO Action plan project especially forest related part - Action 2 - Effective and sustainable resource management in forestry, which promote sectors long term development goals. Action plan measures facilitate National Bioeconomy strategy implementation and effective land use for low carbon economy.

## 5th LSG meeting in Centru Region

On the 19th of September, 2018, the Regional Development Agency Centru organized the 5<sup>th</sup> LSG meeting in Centru Region.

The meeting took place at the Research and Development Institute of Transilvania University of Brasov, and gathered more than 60 representatives of public authorities, clusters, NGOs, companies and universities from Centru Region, Romania.

The objective of this event was to debate how the priorities of Centru Region, regarding Energy Efficiency and Sustainable Environment, as outlined within the Regional Planning and Programming Documents (Smart Specialization Strategy of Centru Region and the Regional Development Plan 2014-2020), have succeeded in achieving their objectives through projects funded under the Regional Operational Programme 2014-2020, in particular Priority Axis 3.1 and to identify solutions that lead to an increased correlation between the regional needs and the objectives funded through the European programs.

### Interreg BIO4ECO Project Partners







## 5<sup>th</sup> LSG meeting in Catalonia

On September 26th, about 15 people participated at 5th LSG meeting in La Masó (Tarragona). During the meeting they shared experiences and impressions on the thematic workshop on prioritization of bioenergy production at different geographical scales, held in Paris three weeks before. Furthermore, the Catalan Action Plan was presented to the stakeholders and debated in order to achieve the goal fixed in the policy instrument, that is the Regional Strategy for the energetic development of forest and agricultural biomass.

## Good practices and action plans

As a main output, during this semester all partners' *action plans* were finished and posted on BIO4ECO web page. Sixteen *good practices* proposed by each partner in order to improve the policy instruments are available too in [BIO4ECO library](http://www.interregeurope.eu/bio4eco).

### Interreg BIO4ECO Project Partners







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