



EU-PROJECT

Hardwoods are good – supporting entrepreneurs in the South Baltic Region

Hardwoods are good – supporting entrepreneurs of the forestry hardwood chain in the South Baltic Region is a project which is funded by the South Baltic Programme of the European Union. The project focuses on improving the forestry based hardwood chain and to set up a permanent network for hardwood related topics. Partners and associated organizations from five countries take part in the project. The target groups are the main actors in the forestry hardwood chain – the small and medium sized entrepreneurs in wood production, timber harvesting and processing. The project is running from 2010 to 2012 and has an overall budget of 1.2 million €.

Why is this project needed?

Hardwoods are important for their recreational and biodiversity values but they also constitute an important economic basis in many rural areas around the South Baltic Sea. Without an increased interest for European grown and processed hardwoods and without an innovative entrepreneurship the hardwood based forestry related sectors will not survive on the highly competitive global markets. In the hardwood value chain there are lots of problems and challenges that need to be solved. Here are some examples:

- Working and economic conditions for entrepreneur are bad.
- Support structures for innovations are missing or need to be further developed.
- Transport chains are indistinct and improvable.
- Small wood assortments and scattered forest stands require special solutions.
- Raw material is limited and sawn wood competes with the bio fuel market.
- Statistics are missing.
- Increase knowledge on the use of bio energy is needed.
- National wood classification systems are not comparable or even missing for hardwoods.
- Female entrepreneurs are heavily underrepresented in the sector.

What are the main issues of the project?

The project consists of three kinds of activities:

1) Developing the basis for exchange to benefit entrepreneurs of the forestry hardwood chains, focuses on analysis of the day to day situation for entrepreneurs. Project activities will lead to a report on entrepreneurs' working conditions and training needs, and a SWOT-analysis report from each country involved. Data links to bioenergy projects and forest statistics will be presented on the projects website.

2) Innovation and training of models aims at catching the best support practices to foster innovation of entrepreneurs in forest management, extraction of forest products and in small-scale forest based industries. The results will be printed in a handbook. To create a



web based pilot model, based upon visual assessment, enabling comparisons of timber log qualities between countries is another important output of the project.

In the EU there is an ongoing work to find a common system for competence assessment. The project will suggest a system for competence assessment from harvesting to sawmill. This system will make it possible to validate and compare the knowledge level of entrepreneurs from different countries around the South Baltic Sea. It will also point out weaknesses in the competence profile of the entrepreneurs, which makes possible complementary education to fill the gaps.

3) Setting up a network for hardwood related issues around the South Baltic Sea. The networks will consist of project members and enterprises. The project shall define topics of interest to be dealt with in the networks. The networks aim at six focus themes:

- i) Promote small assortments;
- ii) Support entrepreneurial involvement in non-wood forest benefits;
- iii) Promote forest entrepreneurs in rural development;
- iv) Stimulate and increase female representation in the wood sectors and facilitate contacts between them;
- v) South Baltic wood market; possibilities of using hardwoods and who is who on the market?
- vi) Facilitate constant cooperation between entrepreneurs.

Project partners

Swedish Forest Agency (project leader)
 Forest Owners Association of Lithuania
 Regional Directorate of State Forest Gdansk
 High Competence Network Germany - HolzClusterNord

Associated organizations

Immanuel Kant University (Russia)
 Wood Centre Foundation Nässjö (Sweden)
 SODRA Forest Owners Economic Association (Sweden)
 European Network of Forest Entrepreneurs, ENFE (Germany)
 Confederation of European Forest Owners, CEPF (Belgium)
 Forestry Association of Mecklenburg–Vorpommern (Germany)

You are welcome to contact us and to visit our website at www.skogsstyrelsen.se/projekt.

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