



Hardwoods – an underused treasure in the South Baltic Region

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A SWOT ANALYSIS

- to describe the structure and conditions of SMEs in the hardwood value chain in the South Baltic Region.
- based on facts and figures provided by the partners of the project
Hardwoods are good



Strengths:

- **Good growing conditions** for high quality hardwoods throughout the Region
- **Potential for good timber quality**
- **Excellent forest management** with high competences in managing mixed stands, particularly in Poland and Germany
- **Excellent infrastructure** – harbours and sea routes for inter-regional trade (low cost for transport)



Weaknesses:

- **Cost of harvesting** hardwoods and wood mobilisation.
- **Qualification** of forest owners, forest management, contractors and forest workers.
- **Lack of positive attitude** towards hardwood production (SE).
- **Low expectation of economic benefits** from hardwoods. Growing hardwoods is a long term business, compared to softwood.
- Rather **low amount of really good qualities** of hardwood timber to establish a prosperous hardwood value chain.



Opportunities:

- Use of the high growth and quality potential.
- Development of processing enterprises.
- Specialisation on Hardwood products.
- Regional trademark “Baltic Wood”
- Huge potential for non wood forest products and services: tourism, quality of life.



Threats

- Nature conservation limits utilisation of wood.
- Aesthetical value of the forests and effects for tourism.
- Increasing bio-energy demand
- Future lack of qualified work-force.
- Climate change which may lead to many new tree diseases. Many hardwood species have problems; ash disease, oak



	Internal Factors		
External Factors	SWOT Analysis	Strength	Weaknesses
	Opportunities	Strategic Goals S-O	Strategic Goals S-W
	Threats	Strategic Goals S-T	Strategic Goals T-W



Strategic Goals **Strenght** - Opportunities

- Encourage silvicultural treatment to enrich the timber size and quality.
- Promote hardwoods in stand regeneration.
- Develop processing enterprises specialised on hardwoods and high value end products (furniture etc.)
- Market the Region with a positive image (landscape, tourism etc.)



Strategic Goals **Strenght** - Threats

- Promote the motto “protection by management”
- Foster optimisation of the raw material to serve both, energy and industrial use
- Increase the economical viability of enterprises by market development to increase the attractiveness of jobs in forest based sectors



Strategic Goals Weaknesses - Opportunities

- Improve competences and skills in hardwood management
- efficient harvesting technology
- timber assortment
- Establish regional market chains and customer relationships to ensure that processing enterprises get required quality
- Promote value of hardwoods (“Baltic Wood”)



Strategic Goals Weaknesses - Threats

- Foster environmentally friendly harvesting technologies
- Promote the benefit of producing and using high quality hardwood timber to maintain and re-establish hardwood stands
- Foster optimised assortment and utilisation (select end use bio fuel from thinnings and quality timber from selective final harvest)



Conclusions

- The potential of hardwoods in the Region is fairly underused!
- Utilisation and branding should respect and promote the high ecologic and tourism value of South Baltic Forests.
- Hardwood value chains need
 - development of the wood processing capacities
 - networks of forest owners, harvesting enterprises and wood processing companies.
 - Competent forest owners, forest management, contractors and forest workers and sawmillers!