

# Five Reasons to Produce Woodfuel

## Which One is Right For You?



### AFO – Activating Private Forest Owners to Increase Forest Fuel Supply

AFO's main objective is to increase wood fuel supply from privately owned European forests. In terms of bioenergy production, private forest owners (PFO's) form a significant forest owner group, as they possess most of the European wood energy potential. The AFO programme is seeking to carry out a range of activities to initiate woodfuel supply clusters among PFO's.

These clusters aim to bring together producers with potential local wood energy users, focusing on local small and medium scale heat plants. The project runs from 2009-12 across six countries with five specific target areas. Finland and Austria are countries of high woodfuel utilisation and significant experience of bioenergy harvesting and procurement systems. The aim is to transfer best practices to PFO's in less experienced partner countries (France, Slovenia, Latvia and UK). Results and best practices acquired through the project will be disseminated throughout all EU member states.



### 1. Profit from Owning and Managing Woodland?

Small woods can provide a financial return for the forest owner. Woodfuel (often called biomass or bioenergy) businesses can create new, strong and expanding markets for small-diameter round wood, which in the past has been difficult to market. Harvesting woodfuel from your woodland financial return to support woodland management. Woodfuel also presents significant opportunities for farm and rural diversification.

### 2. Woodfuel Thinning to Maintain the Productivity and Increase the Value of Forests?

Harvesting timber can help sustain the yield and improve the quality of woodlands and forests. In the UK two thirds of woodlands consist of trees planted after 1950. These forests benefit from regular thinning operations, thinning in forestry is the selective removal of trees, primarily undertaken to improve the quality and value of woodlands. Due to modern technology and the increasing demand for woodfuel, thinnings from young stands have become more profitable. Managing woods will also help produce high quality products such as saw logs in the longer term that could replace carbon intensive building materials.



### 3. Managing Woodlands for Woodfuel Helps Improve Biodiversity and Supports Jobs within Local Communities?

It is widely recognised that sustainable woodland management improves the biodiversity potential of woodlands. Opening up the canopy while harvesting allows sunlight in, enabling a wider range of species to prosper in the woodland and providing better recreational opportunities.

Woodfuel production supports local employment providing green jobs across the supply chain. To create and maintain the woodfuel stream from forests to energy production, green jobs are required: forestry workers, plant manufacturers and operators. By creating a sustainable woodfuel sector businesses can support local communities, including forest workers and contractors.

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## 4. Creating Long Lasting, Profitable Business Relationship?

Supply chains are a key component of woodfuel systems. Forests and woodlands growing near potential users of woodfuel provide excellent opportunities to create a thriving and sustainable business of Forest owner clusters, such as co-operatives, have been proved to work well in supporting woodfuel supply. One of the most effective ways to sell woodfuel is to do it at the local scale.

The AFO project is organising several events and field trips, to support networking and co-operation between forest owners and woodfuel users.



## 5. Help Protect the Planet?

Climate Change is one of the greatest threats facing the modern world. Fossil fuel based energy production is a significant contributor to the increase in atmospheric carbon dioxide. Woodfuel – as a carbon lean energy source – is an efficient and effective form of renewable fuel. Every cubic meter of woodfuel can produce the same energy as up to 80 litres of oil or 0.11m<sup>3</sup> of coal. The goal is to generate 15% of our energy from renewable sources by 2020. In addition to this we need to cut the total amount greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2050. These targets require a significant increase in the use of wood as a source of energy. By managing your woodland for woodfuel production, you can help create a healthy environment and support a shift towards renewable energy.

## Useful Links and Further Information:

### Biomass Energy Centre

"A 'one stop shop' to provide information to anyone in the UK with an interest in biomass derived solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and associated conversion technologies."

[www.biomassenergycentre.org.uk](http://www.biomassenergycentre.org.uk)

### Forestry Commission

Further information on using wood as fuel and finding your regional contact:

[www.forestry.gov.uk/woodfuel](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/woodfuel)

[www.forestry.gov.uk/yhwoodfuel](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/yhwoodfuel)



### The South Yorkshire Forest Partnership

The South Yorkshire Forest Partnership brings public, private and community organisations together to realise major environmental and economic regeneration, transforming the region's post industrial landscape.

[www.wood-fuel.org.uk](http://www.wood-fuel.org.uk)



The Intelligent Energy – Europe programme is run by the Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation (EACI) on behalf of the European Commission, and seeks to bridge the gap between EU policies and how they impact on the ground. The Intelligent Energy – Europe [IEE] programme works to make Europe more competitive and innovative while, at the same time, helping it to deliver on its ambitious climate change objectives. In mid-2008, the EACI managed more than 400 IEE projects and the establishment of 60 new local or regional energy agencies has been supported by the programme. IEE-funded initiatives also include the ManagEnergy Initiative and the Sustainable Energy Europe Campaign. We can all benefit from the better market conditions brought about by projects supported by the IEE programme.

[www.ec.europa.eu/intelligentenergy](http://www.ec.europa.eu/intelligentenergy)

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