



AFO - Activating Private Forest Owners to Increase Forest Fuel Supply

The challenge

The increased use of renewable energy is one of the many weapons used to combat climate change. From the European point of view, forests fuels are essential, since the estimated contribution of wood energy to the EU's renewable energy target in total is about 50 percent. The EU aims to have renewable energy supplying about 20% of the EU's total energy consumption by 2020. As European bioenergy resources become more efficiently mobilised, the security of Europe's energy supply becomes higher.

Since Private Forest Owners (PFO's) own 60 percent of the forests in Europe, they are the most important owner group in terms of wood fuel trading. However, co-operation between PFO's is often weak and the formation of new business relationships may be significantly boosted by activation through a third party.

The objective

The main objective of the AFO project is to activate forest owners and increase the wood fuel supply at both regional and local levels. The project aims to activate an important fraction of the 12 million PFO's in Europe and start them supplying wood fuel, especially to small and medium-sized heating plants.

The strategy

The project operates in selected target regions that have a high proportion of private forest ownership (France, Slovenia, Latvia and the UK). It will start by analysing the potential wood fuel supply and use in relation to current regional markets. After assessing through inquiries the potential woodfuel supply and demand and the parties involved, the next step will be to initiate and support the formation of wood fuel supply clusters and organise supply chains. This will be followed by the dissemination best practise examples from Austria and Finland - countries with the most expertise and long traditions of forest fuel production. In the last phase of the project, results and approved activation methods will be disseminated to all twenty-seven EU countries.



The AFO project sets out to discover the best tools for activating private forest owners and establishing wood fuel supply clusters for bioenergy production. It aims to increase the utilisation of Europe's vast forest fuel reserves. This will benefit both the economy of the forest owners and rural areas and increase the use of renewable energy sources. The project will be carried out during 2009-2012.



Expected results

- Identification and activation of wood fuel suppliers and users in the target regions. Analysis of regional wood fuel reserves and barriers hindering their mobilisation.
- As a result of project activities, creation of substantial wood energy supply chains and heating facilities in the target regions.
- Proven and applicable promotion methods for forest fuel utilization in small and medium scale heating enterprises.
- On the whole, the project expects to enhance wood fuel markets and create new business opportunities in the target regions. Through EU-wide dissemination, the proven activation methods and supply chain models will support the ambitious energy and climate policies of the whole EU-27.

How to get involved – and why?

As an existing or future forest owner or wood fuel user, you are a member of our main target group and thus most welcome to attend our seminars, field trips, workshops and study tours. By attending these AFO-activities, you get an excellent opportunity to meet new buyers and suppliers of wood, to network with potential supply cluster partners and to learn more about energy wood harvesting and procurement systems – in an international context. Through AFO activities, potential wood fuel suppliers and users will be brought together to build up actual business relationships. In the process, they will have access to the vast experience and know-how provided by our Austrian and Finnish partners. It is intended that their experts will be visiting our UK events. There may also be opportunities to go on study tours in these countries. Read more about AFO activities on our web site: www.afo.eu.com

More information

www.afo.eu.com

Jyrki Raitila, project co-ordinator
jyrki.raitila@vtt.fi
Tel. +358 40 7195 117
VTT, Technical Research Centre of Finland
P.O. Box 1603, FI-40101 Jyväskylä, Finland

Martti Kuusinen
martti.kuusinen@tapio.fi
Tel: +358 20 772 9050
Forestry Development Centre Tapio
Soidinkuja 4, FI-00700 Helsinki, Finland

Intelligent Energy  Europe

AFO is supported by the European Commission under the Intelligent Energy – Europe Program. The sole responsibility for the content of this brochure lies with the authors. It does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the European Communities. The European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.



Partners

Technical Research Centre VTT,
Finland (co-ordinator)
jyrki.raitila@vtt.fi

**Forestry Development
Centre TAPIO**,
Finland
martti.kuusinen@tapio.fi

**Technical Centre of Forest,
Wood Products and Furniture**,
France
ludovic.guinard@fcba.fr

**Institute for Forestry
Development IDF-CNPPF**,
France
olivier.picard@cnppf.fr

Forestry Commission,
UK
rudie.humphrey@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

**South Yorkshire Forest
Partnership**,
UK
robin.ridley@syforest.co.uk

Energy Restructuring Agency,
Slovenia
natasal@ape.si

BIOENERGY 2020+ GmbH,
Austria
rita.ehrig@bioenergy2020.eu

Environmental Projects State Ltd,
Latvia
Aija.zucika@videsprojekti.lv