

POLICY BRIEF 3RD SEMESTER – CENTRU REGION

June 2017

Executive Summary

The aim of the BIO4ECO project is 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.

The policy instrument tackled to be improved at regional level is the Regional Operational Programme 2014-2020, Priority Axis 3, Investment Priority 3.1 «Support to energy efficiency, intelligent management of energy and for use using renewable energy sources in public infrastructure, including public buildings and residential houses». The activities developed within the project at regional level, supports the beneficiaries of the Regional Operational Programme 2014-2020, Priority Axis 3, Investment Priority 3.1, by sharing them the best practices in bioenergy sector, presented during the international study visits organised by the project partners.

Taking advantage of the regional event organised by the Green Energy Romanian Innovative Biomass Cluster (within the [BioVill project](#), in Covasna County) the Regional Development Agency Centru shared with the participants the project's objectives, the policy instrument tackled within the project and the best practices identified by the international partners. Also, during the two days meeting the participants tried to identify cross-project links and connections between BIO4ECO and BioVill.

Both BIO4ECO and BioVill projects foster the development of the bioenergy sector, by encouraging the use of biomass for energy production, the involvement and active participation of stakeholders and citizens, the development of local bioenergy value chains and technologies, as well as capacity building about financing schemes and business models.

Process

The project activities are based on the international exchange of experience which will allow the integration of the lessons learned into the Action Plan elaborated at regional level.

In order to realise the foreseen activities, each project partner created a local stakeholder group (LSG), composed of policy makers and other relevant representatives of bioenergy sector, in order to support them to improve the policy instruments tackled at regional/national level.

As part of the exchange of experience process, in the first phase of the project, the stakeholders are taking part at the international study visits and thematic workshops organised by the project partners. After attending these events, they are discussing the visited/presented GP examples within the LSG meetings and analysing the possibility of transferring them in their area, using the EU funds available through the ROP 2014-2020 IP 3.1. The LSG will support also the project partners in the elaboration of the regional Action Plans.

Activities and outputs of the project

The main activities realized within the BIO4ECO Project focused on **exchange activities**:

- **Local Stakeholder Group meetings:** The members of the Local Stakeholder Group of Centru are actively involved in the activities of the group. They met twice, since the beginning of the project, once in the first semester (September 2016) and once in semester two (January/February 2017). During these meetings, they discussed and analysed the Good Practices regarding energy production from biomass identified in Catalonia, Bansko and Abruzzo Region. The idea of sharing these GP, on using biomass for energy production, is to inspire and encourage the potential stakeholders (beneficiaries) to implement similar projects in their region, using the funds available within the ROP 2014-2020, Priority Axis 3, Investment Priority 3.1.
- **Thematic Workshop and Study visits:** The BIO4ECO Project aims at integrating lessons learned throughout different study visits. The staff of RDA Centru attended together with 4 members of the LSG, the thematic workshops and study visits, organized during the 1st and 2nd semester, in Spain), Bansko (Bulgaria) and Pescara (Italy). The workshops represented an opportunity to exchange experiences and good practices among project partners and local stakeholders on issues of particular relevance to the region related to the use of biomass, which represents an important renewable energy source. The discussion during the workshops focused on “Bioenergy and bioeconomy and the role of the public policy” – Solsona, “Role of forests within regional and national low carbon and bioeconomy strategies and programmes” – Bansko, “Integral solutions for bioenergy policies and strategies” – Abruzzo Region.
- **Regional studies/analysis:** The BIO4ECO team of the Regional Development Agency Centru elaborated the analysis of the national/regional policies, with regards to the development of biomass for energy use. The analysis highlighted the great potential of forest biomass in Centru Region.
- **Attendance at regional & international seminars:** A member of the local BIO4ECO team attended an international seminar on financing and business models for bioenergy projects. The event was organized in the framework of

“Bioenergy Villages (BioVill) – Increasing the Market Uptake of Sustainable Bioenergy” a H2020 project that aims to support the development of regional bioenergy concepts and the establishment of bioenergy villages in Croatia, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia. This will be achieved by identifying suitable biomass value chains according to local and regional needs and transferring existing experiences from Austria, Germany to the South-Eastern European partners. Thereby, both BIO4ECO and BioVill projects foster the development of the bioenergy sector, by encouraging the use of biomass for energy production, the involvement and active participation of stakeholders and citizens, the development of local bioenergy value chains and technologies, as well as capacity building about financing schemes and business models. This way, within this event, the representative of BIO4ECO team presented the policy instrument, the GP presented by the BIO4ECO international partners and were identified several cross-project links and connections between BIO4ECO and BioVill.

Conclusion

- The members of the LSG will have the opportunity to learn from the GPs that will be presented during the next international study visits and workshops, organized within the BIO4ECO and BioVill project; there is a need for better involvement and active participation of stakeholders and citizens.
- The activities developed through the BIO4ECO and BioVill projects will contribute to the sustainable development of the bioenergy sector in Centru Region.
- There is a need for strengthening the role of the locally produced biomass as a main contributor for energy supply at local level.
- There is a need for the development of local bioenergy value chains and technologies. The local economy can be increased by developing local value chains.
- The agricultural by-products, forest wood wastes and other renewable energy resources, locally available, need to be better valorised.
- Based on the local biomass potential, small-scale heating systems should be encouraged to be installed.
- Bioenergy represents a viable and optimal alternative in rural area and small municipalities.