

POLICY BRIEF 4TH SEMESTER – CENTRU REGION

March 2018

Executive Summary

European models of increasing the acceptance of bioenergy policies shared during the international thematic workshop “**How to increase the social acceptance of bioenergy policies**” organised in March 2018, in Brasov, Centru Region, Romania.

The thematic workshop was organised as part of the BIO4ECO Interreg Europe Project which aims 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.

Process

The Regional Development Agency Centru organised in March 2018, within the BIO4ECO project, the international thematic workshop “How to increase the social acceptance of bioenergy policies”. In this framework RDA Centru took the opportunity to facilitate the exchange of experiences and good practices on policies that support the use of biomass for energy production, between the participants at the workshop. The 2 day event aimed at highlighting the role of the local / regional authorities and decision makers, in improving the acceptance of green energy policies in European communities.

The European experts attending the workshop debated the topic of local communities’ involvement and public awareness of the political instruments in the field of bioenergy. Various European perspectives and visions regarding the use and exploitation of biomass resources for energy production were discussed, good practices in the field were shared and a number of innovative approaches of involving regional actors in improving policies and strategies in the field of bioenergy were identified.

A section of the workshop was dedicated to study visits in Covasna County. During these study visits, Good Practices on how the locally produced biomass is used for bioenergy and how the local communities are involved in the valorisation of the biomass resources were presented to the participants (project partners and stakeholders).

Activities and outputs of the project

BIO4ECO Project is based on **exchange activities**, which will allow the integration of the lessons learned into the Action Plans elaborated by each partner.

The thematic workshop organised in Braşov, as part of the exchange activities realized within the BIO4ECO Project, got together over 60 participants, bioenergy experts, stakeholders and project partners from 8 European countries. They had the opportunity to share their projects/initiatives in the field of bioenergy and acceptance of bioenergy policies, to discuss and learn from the European models presented and to assess the potential of transferring similar projects in their regions.

European models on social acceptance of bioenergy policies within the local communities were presented by stakeholders from Romania, France, Finland and Slovenia. Some examples of how this issue is addressed at regional level are: the capitalization of local energy resources at Mikes Castle in Zăbala; involvement of the local community in the valorisation of local biomass resources in Gheliința village: presentation of "*1 Village, 1 MW*" concept and the biomass plant from a bakery located in Gheliința; Moacșa energy willow plantation; the biomass heating system of the green house flower Dalia, located in Valea Crişului village; valorisation of biomass at the heating system of the ASIMCOV headquarters in Sfântu Gheorghe.

Conclusion

The exchange of experience activities realised as part of the thematic workshop, led to the following conclusions:

- Biomass represents a viable and optimal alternative in rural area and small municipalities and guarantees a constant flow of energy and if the right policies are applied, biomass use doesn't have any risks to people and health => the existing biomass policies must be disseminated to the public.
- Based on the local biomass potential, small-scale heating systems should be supported and installed in rural and urban areas.
- Each region involved in the project has its own policy framework aimed at supporting the social acceptance of bioenergy and biomass use and social acceptance of bioenergy plants depends on the social acceptance of bioenergy policies.
- The context has a very important role in the acceptance of bioenergy, and some contextual elements like social, cultural, historical and, political situations of each context should be considered in order to better understand the social acceptance of bioenergy systems and policies.
- Local social acceptance can be achieved by ensuring clear benefits to local communities, engaging them in the process and by raising awareness regarding the existing technologies, systems and energy resources used in producing bioenergy.