

7th Newsletter

BIO4ECO aims to improve regional and national **policy processes and policy implementation** and delivery addressing the **transition to a low carbón economy**, in relation with renewable energy use“ energy efficiency of building“ and forest and agricultural biomass.

Find in this Newsletter different activities the BIO4ECO Project has carried out!

Thematic Workshop in Romania: "Support the transition to green communities – funding opportunities & policy instruments & CoViD recovery solutions". 7th – 8th of June | CENTRU REGION ROMANIA

On 7-8 June the BIO4ECO project partners and their stakeholders met for the 3rd interregional meeting, hosted by RDA Centru, and organised in the framework of the additional activities of the BIO4ECO project.

The aim of this event was to discuss how forests are managed in Centru Region Romania and to assess the COVID-19 impact on this sector. During the meeting several GPs were presented. Also models of sustainable communities from Centru Region and from other partner countries & models for mitigating the effects of Covid-19 in bioenergy sector, in the field of sustainable development and energy efficiency, were presented.

The first day of the event was dedicated to a thematic workshp on *Transition to green communities - funding opportunities and policy tools. Post-COVID-19 approaches*. The workshop gathered 45 persons and was organised on June 7, 2022 in Viscri, Brasov County, a small rural community best known for its highly fortified church, originally built around 1100 AD by the Szecklers.

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This day included discussions & debates regarding the forest management and status quo biomass use in Centru Region and short presentations of other regional approaches from Finland and Catalonia, including discussions with the project partners and their stakeholders on other approaches for supporting the sector and to improve the policy instruments, tackled within the project.

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The discussions started with a short presentation from Ms. Ovidia Caba, Head of the Programming and Regional Policy Unit from RDA Centru, who briefly presented how green communities are approached in Centru Region. The presentation of Ms. Caba started with an overview of Centru Region and its main features, in terms of natural assets, 49% of the region's area is covered by Natura 2000 sites, over 48% of the region is occupied by mountainous areas, over 37% of the area of the Centru Region is occupied by forests and forest vegetation which provide various socio-economic benefits and support the development of ecotourism, mountain and rural tourism.

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The second presentation entitled Forest Management in Romania was provided by dr.M.Sc.Norocel Nicolescu, professor within the Faculty of Silviculture and Forest Engineering, Transilvania University of Braşov.

In his presentation Professor Nicolescu stated that the Romanian system of forest zoning is the most complicated in Europe, being heavily focused on protection functions rather than on timber production. During the presentation, Professor Nicolescu highlighted that all Romanian forests, regardless of the ownership state, must be (1) either managed or (2) must provide various ecosystem services. All forest activities are performed only by (1) state or (2) “regime” forest districts. All Romanian forests are managed following forest management plans (FMP). All management activities are based on the current legal framework: Forest Law, released in 2008 but revised many times since then), specific Technical Norms (no. 1...7/2000), Ministerial Orders, etc. All management measures carried out in Romanian forests are part of FMPs and mandatory for all forests, regardless of the ownership type and Romanian forest owners (public or private) do not play any role in choosing forest management measures, such as regeneration methods, tending operations, silvicultural systems, rotation ages, etc. Professor Nicolescu also presented briefly the methods used for forest regeneration and some data on wood harvesting.

At the end of its presentation, he invited all participants to take a look at the newest book published by Transilvania University Press - Plan B for Romania’s Forest Society, a book concentrating information on how the forest-based sector can support the bioeconomy journey and transition to a predominantly circular, bio-based economy, reducing the dependency on fossil fuels and contribute to climate change mitigation, environmental protection and societal cohesion.

After these main presentations, the workshop was divided into two sessions:
 Session 1 – presentation of models and good practices, including a short overview of the existing funding opportunities in the Centru Region for developing these green communities. Presentation of Viscri and Toplita Communities were made.
 Session 2 - the second session started with the presentation of the results of the study conducted in Centru Region on the impact of COVID 19 on the biomass use and forestry sector and continued with 2 presentations from the BIO4ECO PPs from Finland and Catalonia, on regional approaches for supporting green communities and social and environmental responsibility criteria used for forest fires prevention.

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The workshop ended with debates and discussions between participants. The questions raised were:

- What are the challenges of your communities in the transition to green communities: carbon neutral economy, energy efficiency targets?
- Do you consider that the policies and programs for 2021-2027 are in line with the needs of the communities?
- Are the immediate priorities and needs of your communities in line with the objectives of Green Deal?
- How can be integrated the lessons learnt from the BIO4ECO learning exchange into the policy instruments tackled in each region?

The second day of the event was dedicated to field trip at Sinca Veche Virgin Forest. The field trip started with a stop in Sercaia at the Forestry Service managing the forest of Sinca Veche.

After lunch, the lunch included a short visit of the [Rupestral Monastery of Sinca Veche /Temple of Wishes](#), one of the oldest cave monasteries in Romania. According to several researches that have been undertaken in this area, Sinca Veche Monastery is supposed to be even older than 7,000 years, being founded by the same ancient civilization that built-up the White Temple, located on the Snake's Island. This temple, according to some historians, unique in the world, was the refuge for Transylvanian monks when they were asked to abandon the Orthodox belief, by an order given by Maria Teresa in 1762.



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The solutions allowed by the forest and wood sector for the development of rural and mountain regions, illustration of wood use for building construction. Jura region, France

On the 21st and 22nd of September 2022, the French Federation of forest municipalities hosted the last meeting of the BIO4ECO Interreg program in Pontarlier and its surrounding region.

More than 4 years after the beginning of this European program, the participants, mainly representing public authorities, were invited to exchange on the various strategies and actions implemented in their countries and regions.

For this two-day event in Pontarlier, a study visit was organized on the chosen topic of the “The solutions allowed by the forest and wood sector for the development of rural and mountain regions, illustration of wood use for building construction”.

After a word of welcome by **Daniel Perrin**, President of the Doubs Forest municipalities association, the first day of this Interreg visit started in Supt located next to the first visit of the day: a public forest nursery. **Adriano Raddi**, lead partner of the Interreg, gave an inspiring opening address in which he recalled the main goals of the BIO4ECO program.

Before beginning the planned visits of the day, the choice was made to make an introduction about the French forestry system and its functioning. This presentation was handled by **Mathieu Perez** from the French National Forest Office. Nowadays, among the forest sector, one of the biggest issues remains the adaptation of the forests to climate change. After this introduction, the first visit took place in a public forest nursery located in Supt. During this visit, the delegation had the opportunity to see all the process of harvesting, drying, and preparing the seeds of different species such as douglas, fir, etc. The visit was made by **Laurie Schiff**, the director of the plant.

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After a quick lunch, the afternoon was dedicated to forest visits, led by the local representative of the NFO, **François Chanal**.

- the first one was a biological reserve located next to a nature reserve. A nature reserve is an area of land protected and managed to preserve a particular type of habitat and its flora and fauna which are often rare or endangered. The combination of each protected area allows a better understanding of the biodiversity and its movements.
- On the contrary, the second visit was a managed forest owned by a municipality. This forest used to be managed in a regular way. As the 1999 storm destroyed several trees in this forest, the municipality and the NFO saw it as an opportunity transform it into an uneven forest. The transformation is still in process.

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To finish the day, a cultural time was set, with the visit of a cheese making factory and a typical regional dinner. During the dinner, the process of the cow bell manufacturing was presented to the participants.

The second day of the Interreg started with a study visit of Mignovillard. The delegations were welcomed by the city town mayor of Mignovillard, **Florent Serette**. This day was dedicated of the use of the wood and more precisely timber construction.

Before the different presentations of the day, a steering committee took place led by **Adriano Raddi** to analyse the perspectives of the BIO4ECO project.

After this introduction, **Theo Launay** from the French Federation of forest municipalities made a presentation of its policies regarding the use of the local wood in building construction. Different tools were presented such as the certification brands, AOP, etc.

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These tools allow the municipalities to use local wood and to locally maximize the economic benefits of their investments.

After the introduction, **Florent Serre** presented a local timber construction project. This exemplary construction is a building designed to host a medical office, a seniors' residence, and a nursery. One of the specificities is that it is made partly in concrete and partly in local timber. Indeed, the wood comes directly from the forest owned by the municipality and was processed by two companies located in the village: the Chauvin sawmill and the Xlam cross-laminated timber factory. After the presentation of the building, the delegations visited the worksite and saw the CLT facade in timber.



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The visit continued to the two factories located in Mignovillard: the Chauvin sawmill and the Xlam CLT factory. Both plants belong to the same group, the Chauvin group. Those visits allowed the delegations to follow the wood from the forest to the worksite. In the sawmill, the different specificities of production lines were presented with also the treatment of the wood. In the CLT factory, were also presented the different production lines and the technical performances of the products.

Those two visits concluded the study visit in France and the last meeting of the BIO4ECO Interreg program!

Good practices and action plans

You can consult all these documents in [BIO4ECO library](#)

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