



Priority challenges of regions for Innovation in the forest-based sector

Analysis of the ERIAFF survey
for the **5th Eu Forest Innovation Workshop**
Brussels, 18th January 2023



- A Mentimeter Survey
- 8 questions in 2 sections
- Launched on 07/12/2022 until 11/01/2023:

We would be glad if your regional experts on forest policies (Forest Department Managers/Officers) could take a little of their time to answer a brief **online survey** (it should take around 15min):

(SurveyMonkey) <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9XCN5MW>

It is aimed at describing the general perspective about forest innovation policies and funding landscape.

- 37 answers with 23 valid responses
- 23 regions from 7 countries



Regional responses

- | | | |
|------------|------------|---|
| 1. Sweden | 11 regions | (Västra Götaland (2), Jönköping, Gävleborg, Jämtland Härjedalen, Norrbotten, Gävleborg (2), Västernorrland, Västerbotten, Blekinge, Kronoberg, Halland) |
| 2. Finland | 4 regions | (North-Karelia, Central Ostrobothnia, Oulu, “South Karelia, Kymenlaakso and South Savo”) |
| 3. Spain | 2 regions | (Basque Country, Castille and Leon) |
| 4. Greece | 2 regions | (Western Macedonia, Prespa Macedonia) |
| 5. Italy | 2 regions | (Tuscany, Bolzano) |
| 6. Austria | 1 region | (Styria-Steiermark) |
| 7. Germany | 1 region | (Bavaria/Bayern) |



Sections

- **Section A – Policies and governance instruments**
- **Section B – Innovation priorities**

Questions

1. Do you have an implemented Forest Strategy at regional level?

2. Concerning possible support to innovation actions/investments through European Cohesion Funds, **is forestry and forest-based sector included in your Regional Smart Specialization Strategy (S3)?**

3. Concerning the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and Rural Development, **have your Region implemented any of the following tools to support innovation in the forest sector?** (EIP AGRI Operational Groups - Networking actions – Investments - Other CAP forest related measures)

4. The importance of Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKIS) is recognised by the new CAP as a specific cross-cutting objective. **Could you indicate if any of the following innovation actors focusing on forestry or forest-related topics are present in your Region?** (Innovation Cluster - Technology Pole – University -Private Innovation funds - Publicly owned innovation funds -Wood-related industry clusters – Other)





5. Could you rate your level of agreement with following sentences ?

Questions

(1 do not agree – 5 fully agree):

- a. **My Region has a very dynamic and innovative forest sector.**
- b. **My Region provides support to innovators active in the forest sectors, who can find all the relevant funding and supporting tools to implement their projects.**
- c. **Forestry and forest-related activities are well integrated in regional policies.**
- d. **Forestry does not require specific instruments to foster innovation because the sector has easy access to other non-sectorial support mechanisms.**
- e. **Digitalization applied to forestry is already giving relevant results in my Region.**
- f. **Technology innovation is more important than non-technology one.**

6. Is your Region interested in interregional cooperation activities at European level?

Questions

7. Please, select and rank a maximum of 5 topics, with a value of 1 for the issue of first priority for your region and with a 5 for the issue that would occupy the 5th place.

8. Please, rank the instruments that you find more appropriate to support innovation in the forest sector



Conclusions

- 1. In total, 14 regions consider to have an innovative forest sector and 10 others don't**
- 2. All the 23 regions have innovation actors in the forest-based sector:**
 - Universities and clusters are present in 78% of the regions
 - 53% of the regions have innovation funds for the sector
- 3. 18 regions consider that forestry and the forest-based sector are well integrated in regional policies (78%),**
but it seems that there is margin for improvement
- 4. Most regions have a Regional Forest Strategy (78%)**
- 5. S3 incorporates forestry and the forest-based sector in all the 23 regions,**
fully (61%) or through other sectors (39%)



- 6. More than half (12) of the regions consider that forestry and the forest-based sector require specific instruments to foster innovation**
- 7. Almost 2/3 of the regions consider they provide some support for forest innovation, *but it seems clear that it is not an strong support***
- 8. 18 regions have implemented some type of support tools in the CAP (78%)**
But most of them only networking actions (65%)
Only 35% support investments and only 17% support Operational Groups
- 9. Regarding the type of innovation, technological innovation is recognized as relevant but it seems that other types, and particularly social innovation, also play a key role**
- 10. 14 regions consider that digitalization applied to forestry is already giving results in the region (61%)**



11. Five priorities are clear:

1. Improving sustainable and multifunctional forest management:

Forest management addressing trade-offs and synergies between multiple ecosystem services

2. Increasing **forest landscapes resilience** in a context of global changes and more forest disturbances

3. Increasing sustainable wood and other **forest products mobilization**

4. Increasing forest's and forest product's carbon sinks: **Climate Smart Forestry**

5. **Social and business innovations and policy instruments supporting the European forest-based bioeconomy**



12. Although there are other relevant ones:

6. Proper and balanced **communication on forests** and the forest-based sector:
Understanding public opinion and improving the acceptance of forest activities
7. Finding a **skilled and motivated workforce**.
8. **Restoring** natural and semi-natural **forest habitats**
9. **Digitalizing** the forest-based sector.
10. Renewable **building materials** for ealthier living: Trees and forests greening cities



13. The most valued instruments are

- Regional R&I Programmes
- National R&I Programmes
- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)
- CAP/Rural Development
- Own resources by foresters or their cooperatives

14. There are many more instruments not fully known and used

**15. In our opinion, the CAP is not sufficiently supporting
innovation the forest-based sector**

**16. There is an strong interest in interregional cooperation activities
at European level**



for your attention!

tiia.talvisara@eastnorth.fi

&

alvaro.picardo@jcyf.es