Landesbetrieb Wald und Holz Nordrhein-Westfalen

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Towards a European wood start-up ecosystem

Lessons learned from across European regions

SESSION

When
26 May 2025
16:00–17:30 CEST

Where
EXPO-Canopy, P35, North Rhine-Westphalia Pavilion, LIGNA 2025, Hanover, Germany

Rationale

Forest-based industries have the opportunity – and the responsibility – to lead transformative change in how we produce, consume, and regenerate materials within the European bioeconomy. They also face significant challenges, including the impacts of climate change, resource availability, and the need to remain competitive in a rapidly changing global market.

Therefore, forests must be managed to be more resilient and multifunctional, while industries must keep advancing in material efficiency, circularity, and the development of high-added-value products. Innovation is key to this transformation, but the pace of innovation must accelerate.

But how? Collaborative partnerships, targeted policy incentives, and an innovation mindset across the sector, along with identifying, connecting, and supporting start-ups, can bring fresh ideas and disruptive solutions.

Organised by Wald & Holz of North Rhine-Westphalia, the Bioregions Facility, European Forest Institute, this session explores how to better support forest and wood-based start-ups by learning from successful initiatives across European regions. The aim is to share lessons learned, identify best practices and concrete collaboration opportunities to unlock the potential of innovation – and ensure the sustainability, resilience, and competitiveness of Europe's forests and forest-based industries.

Programme (CEST)

- **16:00** | Welcome words
- **16:10** | Brief presentations by initiatives supporting forest/wood innovation:
  - Woodknowledge Wales: Christiane Lellig, Regenerative Development at Woodknowledge Wales
  - Zentrum Holz: Lukas Emmerich, Wood Sciences and Cluster Manager at Landesbetrieb Wald und Holz North Rhine-Westphalia
  - LaWoodTech: Claudia Antoniotti, European Mission Manager at Xylofutur
  - VDMA Woodworking Machinery x Startup-Machine: Ger Gerdes, Consultant & Expert Technology Scouting, VDMA - Mechanical Engineering Industry Association
  - Bioregions Facility: Siebe Briers, Expert at the European Forest Institute and Deputy Coordinator at the Bioregions Facility
- **17:10** | Round table: Opportunities for collaboration
- **17:30** | Closing remarks