

# GROUP WORK REPORT:

## Cross-Sectoral Contributions - “TIPS” for Policy-Makers”

### 1. Forum and working method

#### Forum

Renewable Resources – Sustainable Future is a forum organised during Finnish EU presidency, bringing together key actors from different sectors in Europe. The forum aimed at strengthening the understanding of the potentials of renewable natural resources, particularly in relation to competitiveness, sustainability and wellbeing in Europe.

The forum is an initiative and joint contribution of Finnish Forest sector organisations; especially forests and wood illustrate a renewable natural resource with multiple potentials. These potentials are related to, for example, construction, energy, environment, and rural development.

The forum was designed to be interactive and output oriented. In addition to this group work report, the results of surveys of the participants’ knowledge and opinions are published (see [www.smy.fi/renewableresources](http://www.smy.fi/renewableresources)).

#### Working method

The working methods of the Forum are adopted from the Forest Academy – communication concept (see [www.forestacademy.fi](http://www.forestacademy.fi)), designed by the Finnish Forest Association specially for enhancing cross-sectoral communication and cooperation. The group work design “Tips for policy-makers” is dynamic and ensures effective information input even with a considerably high number of participants and sectors represented. The design is based on the GroupExpo method, but owing to time constraints, a shorter application of the method had to be designed for the purpose of the forum.

In the group work, participants were divided into six thematic groups. Each group had one question to be answered. In the 1<sup>st</sup> Round the groups addressed the respective questions to produce the first set of outcomes/ answers to the questions. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> Round the participants were re-grouped, and the new groups completed the work with further outcomes on the same questions. This was followed by a “voting” where participants visit all the questions and give scores to those outcomes they judge being of most value/ importance. The working atmosphere was relaxed and enhanced network building.

## 2. Results

The results of each group work are organised thematically. The headings marked with grey (A, B, D, etc.) represent a synthesis by the organisers, whereas the statements under them represent the original results obtained from the group work.

In Chapter 3, additional notes from each group work rapporteur are presented.

<b>1. COMPETITIVENESS</b>	
What are the competitive advantages of renewable natural resources in Europe?	
<b>A. Traditions, image and environmental awareness</b>	<b>17</b>
There is a growing awareness amongst public about environmental concerns. (2 <sup>nd</sup> Round)	5
There is a long tradition and culture of utilisation of renewables in Europe. (1 <sup>st</sup> Round)	5
The European standard of living creates a demand for renewables. (2 <sup>nd</sup> Round)	5
The use of renewables is well accepted by the general public. (1 <sup>st</sup> Round)	1
Political support is available for rural jobs creation and business development. (1 <sup>st</sup> Round)	1
<b>B. Expertise and innovation</b>	<b>11</b>
The know-how, expertise and technology for the transformation of renewables are available; a leading expertise is already achieved. (1 <sup>st</sup> Round)	7
The renewables offer a huge potential for innovations. (1 <sup>st</sup> Round)	4
<b>C. Resource availability</b>	<b>4</b>
Europe IS mostly sustainable in renewables and CAN still improve (1 <sup>st</sup> Round)	2
The use of renewables reduces the dependency on non-renewable imports; Europe can be self-sustained in certain materials. (2 <sup>nd</sup> Round)	2
The resource base (especially forests) IS available in Europe. (1 <sup>st</sup> Round)	-
The infrastructure (for the production chain) and distribution channels are well developed. (1 <sup>st</sup> Round)	-
<b>D. Other</b>	<b>-</b>
Potential uses and benefits of the renewables are multiple. (2 <sup>nd</sup> Round)	-

<b>2. SUSTAINABILITY</b>	
What advantages (+) and disadvantages (-) do renewable natural resources have in contributing to sustainable development in Europe?	
<b>A. Availability and locality</b>	<b>+23 / -1</b>
Renewable natural resources are available locally and their use supports local and rural development. (+)	14
Renewable natural resources provide a secure supply of material. (+)	9
The competition between other land use patterns can favour other solutions. (-)	1
<b>B. Environmental impacts</b>	<b>+1 / -3</b>
There is a risk of loss of biodiversity and landscape values (when too little available and/or to slow regeneration). (-)	3



The environmental impact can be minimised while using renewables. (+)	1
There is a risk of over-exploitation in a number of resources (e.g. fisheries). (-)	-
<b>C. Cost and efficiency</b>	<b>+1 / -1</b>
Wood products manufacturing carry less energy (is less energy demanding) than alternatives. (+)	1
The cost of renewable resources as a raw material is generally not yet competitive. (-)	1
<b>D. Global responsibility</b>	<b>-1</b>
Transferring the load of “bad” production to other continents is a moral question and does not resolve this problem which is of global nature. (-)	1
The growing use of renewables might be an occasion to the developing countries and thus an answer to the global aspect of the whole concern. (+)	-
<b>E. Other</b>	<b>+1</b>
The malleability and adaptability of the renewable raw material supports the manageability in production and in use of the products. (+)	1
The growing use of renewables requires a long lead in time as far as the planning and target setting is concerned. This might be controversial to consumer expectations and to actual proceedings in political decision making, which are guided by short-run objectives mainly. (-)	-
Wind in the sails... it is THE moment to ACT! (“Now or never”). (+)	-

### 3. CASE FOREST

What are the main challenges of the forest sector in promoting the use of wood?

<b>A. Communication and awareness building</b>	<b>16</b>
Professional communication and awareness rising about the many qualities of forest products (difficulty in convincing consumers of the special qualities of a renewable material).	11
Negative perception of felling trees (perceived as just plain wrong).	5
Bringing the use of wood as a part of education curricula.	-
<b>B. Policy coordination</b>	<b>10</b>
The coordination of policies related to the impact on forests and forestry (energy, industry, transportation).	7
Finding the right combination (or a proper balance) between energy and material uses of forest products.	3
<b>C. Cost structure and externalities</b>	<b>4</b>
Understanding the positive effect forests have on water resources and making people pay for this service.	2
Developing the product concept for environmental services including carbon sequestration.	1
To make natural forest management economically viable.	1
Finding the right price for the right material.	-
<b>D. Information</b>	<b>0</b>
Better information of forest resources utilisation.	-
Knowing the limits of forest utilisation and mobilising them.	-
<b>E. Other</b>	<b>2</b>
Promoting high standards of sustainable forest management globally.	2



<b>4. POLICIES</b>	
What are the bottlenecks in global or regional policy trends that discourage the utilisation of the potentials of renewable natural resources?	
<b>A. Costs and externalities</b>	<b>11</b>
Policy is not willing/ able to introduce externalities in the economic calculations	8
Renewable natural resources have a higher cost	3
<b>B. Short term business view</b>	<b>9</b>
Companies and decision makers prefer short term benefits	9
<b>C. Cross-sectoral coordination and consensus building</b>	<b>5</b>
The cross-sectoral nature of the issue makes the decision complex	2
Global level disagreement in climate change actions	1
The lack of global consensus and policy focus on management and utilisation of renewable natural resources	2
<b>D. Fragmentation</b>	<b>2</b>
The lobby of non-renewables has a bigger influence on the policymaking	1
The fragmentation of the renewable natural resources sector	1
<b>E. Information and knowledge</b>	<b>2</b>
The lack of knowledge	2
Not enough R&D funds available especially in the forest sector	-
<b>F. Image</b>	<b>1</b>
Exploiting forests has a negative image from the environmental point of view	1

<b>5. INFORMATION</b>	
What steps should be taken to increase natural resources information and knowledge in Europe?	
<b>A. Fragmented data</b>	<b>14</b>
Efficient data collection should be organised.	9
Effective data analysis should be carried out.	3
Information created by more targeted data collection and improved analysis should be discussed and developed amongst stakeholders. Tools: platforms and joint programmes.	2
Lack of basic information on certain sectors, for example "how the sea works" -	-
<b>B. Focus group: Young people</b>	<b>7</b>
Information should be distributed from nurseries to universities (educational curricula).	4
Outdoor education is needed including visits to farms to make pupils familiar with natural resources.	3
Computer games simulating the nature and human impact to it through the use of natural resources, the natural cycle and dynamics etc.	-
<b>C. Media coverage</b>	<b>5</b>
Concentrate work on better media (newspaper) coverage on permanent basis.	5



TV should be involved in the dissemination of information on natural resources.	-
<b>D. Other</b>	<b>5</b>
Dissemination of good practices and “benchmarking”, but also “name and shame” bad practices.	3
A task force should be created for making an action plan.	1
Different information approaches should be adopted for different natural resources.	1

## 6. DIALOGUE

What steps should be taken to increase cross-sectoral dialogue and coordination of natural resources in Europe?

<b>A. Cross-sectoral international decision-maker dialogue</b>	<b>20</b>
Create a European Natural Resource Academy to increase cross-sectoral dialogue (according to the model of the Forest Academy of Finland) .	9
Raise awareness among the general public and decision makers (including education and attitude building).	8
Create a political high-level group setting up a world plan gathering various sectors for a more integrated policy on environment, industry and competitiveness.	3
<b>B. Policy coordination</b>	<b>7</b>
Find and analyse gaps and interferences between the different sectors. This includes “footwork” to be able to distinguish these.	5
Promote the mechanisms of policy coordination for example on National Forest Programmes.	2
Ask the European Commission to finalise the thematic strategy on the sustainable use of natural resources.	-
<b>C. Present examples</b>	<b>3</b>
Create a European award for best cross-sectoral innovation in natural resource use for: energy, construction, natural resources etc.	3
<b>D. Interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral research</b>	<b>2</b>
Promote interdisciplinary research on the use of natural resources, including social and natural sciences.	2
Increase the possibility of making cross-sectoral doctoral thesis.	-
Create a framework for cross-sectoral practical training.	-
Create a program similar to Erasmus for graduate students.	-
Analyse the existing information, for example on technology platforms and in the Commission’s work on natural resources.	-
Evaluate the effectiveness of the above.	-

### 3. Notes of the rapporteurs

#### 1. Competitiveness (Juhani Karvonen)

##### **What are the competitive advantages of renewable natural resources in Europe?**

The question could be considered on two axes. The 1<sup>st</sup> round concentrated in the regional differences between Europe and the rest of the world, whilst the 2<sup>nd</sup> round completed with issues related to the differences between the materials (renewables – non-renewables).

Further, a few concerns were expressed about the sustainable growth rate, the psychology and image of renewables versus consumer behaviour and the future role of Russia.

#### 2. Sustainability (Tiina Byring)

##### **What advantages and disadvantages do renewable natural resources have in contributing to sustainable development in Europe?**

This group seemed to hold the key for crystallising some of the main ideas of the forum, since the outcome “Renewable natural resources are available locally and their use supports local and rural development” received the highest score of all (whilst in other groups the scores were more dispersed between the outcomes).

On the other hand, other outcomes of this group did not receive as much scores as the discussion of the voters would presume. For example the issue of land use raised a lot of discussion during the voting process. The opinions expressed would underline that the ecological footprint of Europe cannot be carried by its own land resources. On top of the factual deficiency of land resources comes the competition between different land uses: other land use alternatives might be economically more lucrative in the short run, which can affect the preferences in e.g. political decision making.

Also, the comments of the voters noticed that sustainability is very much a global issue. Taking the “bad” production to countries with very limited capacity for sustainable/ environmentally friendly production will definitely not solve the problem.

#### 3. Case Forest (Krista Kimmo):

##### **What are the main challenges of the forest sector in promoting the use of wood?**

Both two rounds discussed whether the definition of "promoting" in this concept means plainly marketing or if it includes incentives/enforcing such as legislative, economic and political measures to enhance the use of wood.

The first round was very consistent in keeping their answers on a general level, whilst details or issues related to only a specific country were disregarded since they could have a different interpretation in each individual country (due to, for example, traditions and differences in forest structure or climate).



The most important challenge identified was the need of professional communication to inform the general public of the many environmental and societal services forests also provide.

The challenge that scored third highest points - the negative perception of felling trees - was the input of the second round, where the opinions expressed were generally more dispersed and the approach more pragmatic. Some of the challenges identified by the 2 rounds overrun; ex. the communication-challenge encompasses the negative impression.

Both groups, however, agreed that the issues are global or at least common to several countries but their implementation can be anything from global to local.

#### 4. Policies (Outi Marin)

**What are the bottlenecks in global or regional policy trends that discourage the utilisation of the potentials of renewable natural resources?**

The first round oriented the discussion towards natural resource policy analysis and brought up unanimously the bottlenecks in global and regional policies that discourage the use of renewable natural resources. These bottlenecks include, according to the group, the high costs of renewable natural resources, which bring along other constraints when combined with the short term horizon in policy and business making as well as the narrow spatial scope.

This is reflected by incapacity to set right prices to the total societal cost of non-renewable natural resources exploitation. Sustaining economic growth and high consumption deviate views and interests from a long-run sustainable natural resource policy.

The second round mostly agreed with the first one but the approach was more oriented to the need to influence the political and business world decision makers. The second group discussed a lot of supervision of interests and highlighted also the lack of knowledge in general and also the lack of new knowledge, which comes through research and development work.

Even though these issues encounter, they were seen as two separate issues of equal importance, hence the duality of the statements of this group.

Yet both tours were unanimous about the cross sectoral nature of the issue, which makes the decision making complex. This can be clearly seen especially in the EU level decision making.

The voters found the points easy to understand and didn't really discuss about them. The voter pairs were also rather unanimous.

#### 5. Information (Sirpa Kärkkäinen)

**What steps should be taken to increase natural resources information and knowledge in Europe?**

The group approached the question from two points of view: 1) is there/ is there not information and how can the lacking information be collected and 2) how should the knowledge level be raised?



The 1<sup>st</sup> round was of the opinion that the information exists but it too dispersed, which makes the impartial data collection time consuming. Therefore, the group recommends beginning with a proper data collection. The 2<sup>nd</sup> round pointed out that the availability of data varies greatly between different natural resources and that there is no common rule about how to add knowledge.

While addressing the issue of raised knowledge level, the group manifested that the work should already start with the primary education (e.g. kindergartens), which should include experimental introduction to the natural resources (e.g. visits, learning “at site” in the nature etc.).

## 6. Dialogue (Kai Lintunen)

**What steps should be taken to increase cross-sectoral dialogue and coordination of natural resources in Europe?**

The outcome “Raise awareness among the general public and decision makers” actually belongs to the question 5 about information. As it has been so highly scored, it has been maintained here as a part of the dialogue question.

## 4. Participants

Theme (Rapporteur)	1 <sup>st</sup> Round	2 <sup>nd</sup> Round
<b>1. Competitiveness</b> (Juhani Karvonen)	Sirkka Hautojärvi, Marco Mensink, Aarne Reunala, Petri Rinne, Wladyslaw Strykowski, Andres Talijärv	Bortlova, Rob Busink, Michael Dudley, Joseph Spitzer, Tomasz Wojcik
<b>2. Sustainability</b> (Tiina Byring)	Gunnel Adlercreutz, Rob Busink, Michael Dudley, Arvids Ozols, Petri Vasara, Bernhard Zimmer	Sirkka Hautojärvi, Jukka Koivumäki, Luis Leal, Matti Määttä, Chris Van Riet
<b>3. Case Forest</b> (Krista Kimmo)	Alexander Buck, Jukka Koivumäki, Luis Leal, Martin Siecker, Tomasz Wojcik	Algis Gaizutis, Linda Hedlund, Seppo Kallio, Nikolaus Lienbacher, Lutz Ribbe, Ernst Zürcher
<b>4. Policies</b> (Outi Marin)	Linda Hedlund, Matti Määttä, Lutz Ribbe, Risto Päivinen, Ignacio Seoane, Joseph Spitzer	Peter Botschek, Katarina Celic, Marco Mensink, Mikko Ohela, Arvids Ozols, Birte Schmetjen
<b>5. Information</b> (Sirpa Kärkkäinen)	Pavla Bortlova, Seppo Kallio, Nikolaus Lienbacher, Birte Schmetjen, Seppo Vihersaari, Ernst Zürcher	Risto Päivinen, Aarne Reunala, Petri Rinne, Martin Siecker, Andres Talijärv, Bernhard Zimmer
<b>6. Dialogue</b> (Kai Lintunen)	Peter Botschek, Katarina Celic, Tim Christophersen, Algis Gaizutis, Mikko Ohela, Chris Van Riet	Gunnel Adlercreutz, Alexander Buck, Ignacio Seoane, Wladyslaw Strykowski, Petri Vasara