

GROUP WORK REPORT:

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

1. Forum and working method

Forum

The “Renewable Resources – Sustainable Future” forum aimed at strengthening the understanding of the potentials of renewable natural resources, particularly in relation to competitiveness, sustainability and wellbeing in the Nordic and Baltic countries.

The forum was organised during Finnish presidency of the Nordic Council of Ministers. It was organised by the Finnish Forest Association and financed together by the Nordic Council of Ministers and the Finnish Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. A similar type of forum was already arranged in 2006, during Finnish presidency of the European Union.

The working methods of the forum were 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).

Working method

The working methods of the Forum were adopted from the Forest Academy – communication concept (see 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 five thematic groups. Each group had one question to be answered. In the 1st Round the groups addressed the respective questions to produce the first set of outcomes/ answers to the questions. In the 2nd 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.

1. GREEN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT POLICIES

What natural resource related principles of criteria should guide green public procurement policies

A. Sustainability criteria	21
Use life cycle assessment approach (when ever possible)	7
Best available approach / technology should be linked to the criteria	6
Products should be produced and consumed sustainably, i.e. renewable and recyclable	5
As far reaching global harmonization of criteria as possible	2
Creating down-to-earth criteria through which green is defined (already agreed criteria)	1
B. Process	5
Commitment of political or high authority level, support for operative level	
Knowledge based verification manners are needed	1
Utilisation of best practices and bench marking	4
C. Principles	
Creating green competitiveness	

2. POLICIES FOR ENERGY AND MATERIAL PRODUCTION

How should policies guide the distribution of natural resources for energy and material production?

A. Criteria	
When deciding and guiding the distribution, a holistic and balanced view is needed (basic needs, climate and environment, sustainability criteria etc)	5
Support green public procurement policies& apply their criteria	
B. Policy means	
Foster innovative technologies for longer term	8
Efficient use of market-based mechanisms in partnership with private sector	4
Harmonise legislation, standards and labelling (EU and global)	2
Efficient use of incentives and other stimulating and restrictive policy measures	1
More cross-sectoral dialogue, seminars and networking needed (continue also with this initiative)	
Elaborate international and multilateral cooperation	
C. Targets	

Efficiency of using natural resources (e.g. energy saving, developing less energy consuming products) or the most efficient way of solving the problem	2
Minimize dependency of fossil fuels and imported resources	2
Exploit synergies between sound resource management and business competitiveness.	1
Target is to answer local people`s needs and to keep the rural areas inhabited	1

3. INFORMATION AND COMPREHENSIVE KNOWLEDGE

What action should be taken to increase information and comprehensive knowledge on natural resources in the Nordic and Baltic region?

A. Knowledge generation	
Prepare a white paper on knowledge-based bio-economy in the Nordic-Baltic region, paid by the Nordic Council of Ministers	9
Finding existing information and knowledge to identify opportunities and identity gaps	2
Finding new ways of managing and presenting information	1
Coordinate research	
B. Awareness raising and image building	
Increase education for children	6
More information (adult-education) on natural resources should be arranged for local action	2
“God-father” – companies for schools	1
Information campaign or competition to industry (of eco- efficiency etc.), led by the NGOs or teachers	
Examples of best practises of sustainable development based on natural resources in the Nordic- Baltic region should be shown in a tv-series, paid by the Nordic Council of Ministers	<u>5</u>
The image of the whole sector of natural resources should be up-dated	

4. INTERESTS AND CONFLICTS

What joint interests or conflicts are expected to impact natural resources policies in the Nordic and Baltic region?

A. Finding common ground	
Common interests – identification is crucial, realizing the possible conflicts is a big challenge	7
Who is responsible for building networks (having a responsible organisation)? Nordic Council of Ministers could be active	3
Clarifying the objectives of dialogue is the basis	2
Setting up a common language (inc. networking, definitions of renewables, simplicity of communication)	2
B. Building on existing networks	

Building on existing networks / structures	6
Identification of all networks	1
C. Network development	
Northern dimension needs to be strengthened	3
Small networks combined with a larger process	3
Information and knowledge –based networks	
Flexibility is needed in networks	
A. Finding common ground	

5. DIALOGUE AND NETWORKS	
What action should be taken to increase dialogue and networking in natural resource issues in the Nordic and Baltic region?	
A. Finding common ground	
Common interests – identification is crucial, realizing the possible conflicts is a big challenge	7
Who is responsible for building networks (having a responsible organisation)? Nordic Council of Ministers could be active	3
Clarifying the objectives of dialogue is the basis	2
Setting up a common language (inc. networking, definitions of renewables, simplicity of communication)	2
B. Building on existing networks	
Building on existing networks / structures	6
Identification of all networks	1
C. Network development	
Northern dimension needs to be strengthened	3
Small networks combined with a larger process	3
Information and knowledge –based, dynamic networks	
Flexibility is needed in networks	

3. Notes of the rapporteurs

1. GREEN PUBLIC PROCUREMENT POLICIES (Outi Marin)

What natural resource related principles of criteria should guide green public procurement policies?

Both groups found the question difficult to answer. Part of this was due to the different backgrounds and therefore different perspectives of the participants.

The first group emphasized that sustainability in both production and consumption should be the key principle when creating GPP's. The group also discussed long about subsidiaries and that the Green public procurement policies should not function as subsidiaries for eco-friendly production of goods. GPP's should not create unfair competition and the non-discrimination should guide as a principle.

The first group also mentioned that renewability should be a criterion as such. The second group emphasized especially the importance of using best possible technology and latest information. Also high-level support for operational level was found important, and coordination and harmonization were mentioned.

2. POLICIES FOR ENERGY AND MATERIAL PRODUCTION (Kaisa Pirkola)

How should policies guide the distribution of natural resources for energy and material production?

Both groups stated that when deciding and guiding the distribution of natural resources for energy and material production, a holistic and balanced view is needed. Both groups had a broad consensus that it is a very complex task to take into account several different aspects of the resource use. As main criteria or targets were mentioned: minimize negative effects on climate and environment, minimize the dependency on imported resources, take into account the needs of local people, follow sustainability criteria and at the same time try to maximize the added value and be competitive on global and local markets. Anyhow, in many cases there is still lack of information also on real effects and consequences of the distribution of a certain resource for energy or material production.

The second group highlighted that in the future, new technologies might change "the optimal distribution" of a certain natural resource and the best distribution might look quite different from today. Therefore, one of the most important tasks is to foster innovative technologies for longer term. Also the synergies between sound resource management and business competitiveness were underlined.

3. INFORMATION AND COMPREHENSIVE KNOWLEDGE (Hanna Kaurala)

What action should be taken to increase information and comprehensive knowledge on natural resources in the Nordic and Baltic region?

Rather than discussing research and information needs, the groups focussed on communication issues: the image of natural resources sectors, how to deliver natural resources information, and how to ensure that consumers have enough information about natural resources. Especially, the participants found it important to improve childrens' (future consumers) knowledge about natural resources. Ideas on different kinds of campaigns, including tv-series, were presented. A need to create common guidelines (white paper) for natural resource sectors was also expressed.

4. INTERESTS AND CONFLICTS (Teemu Seppä)

What joint interests or conflicts are expected to impact natural resources policies in the Nordic and Baltic region?

The plus score on the joint interests and conflicts we came up with pretty much sums it up. On the one hand there is the conflict between different renewable resource uses; as an example the case of energy crops vs. open, cultural landscape was discussed. On the other hand the issue of different national subsidies on the use of renewable resources and their perverse effect on the market was considered to be a big obstacle, and some steps should be taken to get around this problem.

Although the group came up with more conflicts than joint interests, participants from different countries still recognised a genuine common tradition of wanting to take care of the environment.

5. DIALOGUE AND NETWORKS

What action should be taken to increase dialogue and networking in natural resource issues in the Nordic and Baltic region?

The first group mostly discussed the general level of developing existing networks: the importance of knowing just what the goal of a network is, why the dialogue needs to be improved, and what and where the right means of developing are (such as using provocative articles and leaflets or developing Internet forums for citizens, for instance). The group agreed on the importance of clarifying objectives and strategy, needed in EU legislation information sharing and UNEP participation as well as biomass strategy development. This specifying could improve the information flow between expert level, policymakers, industry, agriculture and citizens.

The second group added a more strategic level to the discussion. The group found that identifying responsibilities was as important as identifying stakeholders and interest groups. A responsible organisation could help engage weaker parties of the group and strengthen northern

dimensions. The group brought up a good point that behind the problems of strengthening existing networks is often the lack of knowledge: it is difficult to develop a network only a few people know of. The group also pointed out that the Baltic dimension could be defined in different ways. The Finns generally call Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania the Baltic countries, while other Europeans may refer to Baltic countries as all the countries surrounding the Baltic Sea.

In the voting part, common interest identification was found the most crucial proposal. Some participants found the theme to be a bit too abstract, and called for more practical suggestions.

4. Participants

Theme (Rapporteur)	1 st Round	2 nd Round
1. Green public procurement policies (Outi Marin)	Andersen Jakob, Eksymä Riku, Kristoffersen Herbert, Landers Tomas, Wide Johan	Honkasalo Antero, Savolainen Varpu, Zboril Josef
2. Policies for material and energy production (Kaisa Pirkola)	Aho Mika, Andersen Bent, Sormann Monika, Steffensen Lise Lykke	Bertzina-Veita Ina, Cice Linda, Vigants Edgars, Wide Johan
3. Information and comprehensive knowledge (Hanna Kaurala)	Aatinen Helena, Koch Niels Elers, Nilsson Staffan, Savolainen Varpu	Baevre Olav Arne, Eksymä Riku, Rozite Vida
4. Interests and conflicts (Teemu Seppä)	Baevre Olav Arne, Bertzina-Veita Ina, Cice Linda, Kurki Leila, Vigants Edgars	Aatinen Helena, Andersen Bent, Kristoffersen Herbert, Landers Tomas, Steffensen Lise Lykke
5. Dialogue and networks (Elina Antila)	Honkasalo Antero, Lehtinen Karl-Johan, Palojärvi Lauri, Rozite Vida, Zboril Josef	Andersen Jakob, Koch Niels Elers, Kurki Leila, Nilsson Staffan