

SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT: March 17.- 20.2016, Milverton, Somerset, UK

in co-operation with EuCANCiC



Announcement

Sustainable forestry is one of the topics Forum Synergies is focusing on and we are happy to announce the first in a planned series of four workshops.

After an inaugural meeting in 2012 a small working group started to plan the activities and set up a workplan. This group brought together representatives from 4 countries who agreed a programme to deliver four workshops based around the following **topics**:

- (1) To raise **awareness** of the different services provided by sustainable forest management (United Kingdom)
- (2) To analyse **strategies** of how forests can be a lever for local development in rural communities (Germany)
- (3) To share **experiences** of how rural communities are involved in looking after woodlands (Sweden)
- (4) To give local actors and authorities better **access** to practical knowledge about sustainable forest management (France)

What we want to reach:

- (1) To understand and communicate what **sustainable forestry means in practice**.
- (2) To disseminate the **EU Forestry Strategy** amongst practitioners and civil society.
- (3) To help formulate realistic, complementary and consistent **policies in and between member states**.
- (4) Propose **actions** and recommend **support**.

We have identified so far these **main elements** which are important factors in the context of sustainable forestry and which will have to be taken into consideration in the process of discussions:

- Sustainable management across the main European forest types (Mediterranean, Central European, temperate, Scandinavian)
- Dissemination of good practice at stakeholder level
- State Action Plans and programmes
- Member state coordination/cooperation/consistency at the stakeholder level and where appropriate try to link up rural development funding between and across state boundaries to improve consistency of management, sustainability and communication
- The role of forests at the heart of Europe's Green Infrastructure and in delivery of the 2020 Biodiversity Strategy
- Promotion of woodland and wood products and the communication of forestry benefits to decision makers and civil society.
- The cultural role of woodlands to communities and in the landscape
- The role and importance of small woodland owners
- The development of information systems
- Climate Change mitigation
- Forestry policy coordination at the National and European levels
- The impact of forests as a source for "green electricity", renewable resource
- The "access to forests" as an upcoming conflict between big companies and small owners.

Main objectives of the 1st workshop

The ultimate aim of the Forum Synergies project is to increase the capacity and ability of individuals, NGOs, local and EU governments to deliver forestry management that is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable.

The first workshop in the UK will set the scene by examining what is meant by sustainable forestry. It will raise awareness for the wider benefits of sustainable forestry management and the services it provides apart from timber production, like e.g., climate change mitigation, flood control, biodiversity aspects, landscape values, forests as recreational space for people as one of the social functions forests provide. All these aspects will promote discussion and exchange of good and/ or innovative practices. The second day will be dedicated to creating a common vision of sustainability, services and current policies. We will contrast these findings with the goals and impacts of current national policies and the EU Forestry Strategy. These findings will enable us to find a common understanding and make proposals for activities on EU, national and regional/ local level.

The main elements will be:

- (1) Immersion in local realities (field trips)
- (2) presentations from other countries on the main issues of the workshop
- (3) link between local experiences and policies (national and European)
- (4) working groups to formulate proposals on 3 levels
 - options for activities in the participants' own regions
 - for policy makers
 - for the next workshops

Venue

We are happily looking forward to our upcoming meeting on SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT we will meet in the county of Somerset in South West England.

The region is rich in examples of the work of national organisations and other local initiatives such as the Forestry Commission's Ward Forester scheme which is an attempt to bring management to woodlands that receive no management. Others include significant land owners like the Clinton Devon and the Ilchester Estates who have an excellent understanding of the natural environment and how their forestry operations can be improved through sustainable management practices. Additionally the Sylvanus team in Devon and Cornwall has long championed sustainable management to reinvigorate native woodlands.



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Gathering Information

International Sustainable Buffet:

All participants are invited to contribute a speciality from their region for our international sustainable buffet that will be offered on 18-03-2026.

Market of initiatives: During our "market of initiatives" we offer you the opportunity to share your project/experience with other participants in a "market place" (with tables to put posters, leaflet etc.) and also to make a brief presentation of your initiative (with video or powerpoint).

We ask all participants who want to present their activities during the market place to send a short summary of their presentation. We will distribute this summary among all participants.

Costs : There is no fee for attending the Workshop. Meals and overnight accommodation will be funded by Forum Synergies and the local host organisation. Participants are asked to pay for their travel to and from Somerset. The organisers may be able to make a contribution to these travel costs, where participants have good reason to ask for such help. The organisers may be able to arrange to pick up participants arriving at Bristol airport or at Taunton Railway Station.

Draft programme

Arrival: 17 March 2016 Welcome & introduction to the programme

- Welcome by our hosts and Forum Synergies
 - Informal buffet supper
 - Introduction to Milverton, the workshop venue: its history, present situation, and local initiatives
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Day 1: 18 March 2016 Discovering the region and activities

Day 1 will be dedicated to understanding the situation in the UK - from policy framework to local reality.

At the end of the day we intend to have a clearer view on :

- a) what sustainable forest management is
- b) which services are provided to society by forests

1) Morning - early afternoon (9:00 - 15:00): Field trips, including lunch

- Visit 2 or 3 field experiences including discussion with local people:
 - a) a local woodland nature reserve
 - b) a commercial forestry estate
 - c) a National Trust site + a state forest in an area of outstanding natural beauty
- Main questions to be raised and discussed during the field trips.
Participants will bring findings to the working groups
 - a) what seems to be sustainable - elements of sustainable forestry management
 - b) what seems to be not sustainable
 - c) which woodland services can be detected?

Tea break on return to Milverton

2) Afternoon: Working groups (15:30 – 16:30)

- main issues / questions / ideas raised during the field trips
- conclusions and criteria

Group representatives will bring findings to the plenary

3) Early evening: Plenary - feedback on field trips (16:30 - 18:00)

- Short feedback by each working group
- debate and exchange
- Introduction to the "market place": speakers briefly present the topic they will present

4) Market Place of initiatives (18:30 – 19:45)

presentation of experiences/ projects by participants

Dinner & international buffet (20:00)

Day 2: 19-03-2016 From policies (national and European) to concrete experiences

09:00 –10.30 Introduction –the policy context

International definitions of sustainable forestry

What is the European forestry policy?

What are the national policies related to sustainable forestry and the services it provides?

3-4 short statements by participants about the reality of forestry policy in different countries

Summary

10.30 - 11:00 Coffee break

11:00 - 12:30 Setting the conceptual agenda for this and subsequent workshops.

The aim of this plenary session is to agree the scope of the main theme of the series of workshops, namely Sustainable forestry management in Europe :

- Which forests are we talking about ?
- What do we mean by sustainable management of forests ?
- What are the main topics to work on? Topics identified so far:
 - Timber production
 - Biodiversity
 - Climate Change adaptation, including flood control, erosion prevention and shade/heat/humidity regulation
 - Landscape– contribution to landscape character, improvement or transformation
 - Wood Fuel
 - Carbon sequestration
 - Added value to woodland products
 - Benefits to local communities
 - Access, recreation and exercise
 - Volunteering opportunities
 - Shooting
- What outputs do we want from the whole series of four workshops ?
- What should we aim to achieve in this workshop ?

12:30 - 14:15 Lunch and Site visits to local saw mill and ancient woodlands

14:30 - 19:00 From experiences to concrete proposals:

The afternoon programme is left flexible, in order to respond to the conclusions from the morning session. It is likely to include a set, or two successive sets, of simultaneous working groups focused on specific themes which then report back to a plenary session. The aim is to accumulate ideas and examples which contribute towards the vision of sustainable forestry management, so that this vision can be passed forward to the further three workshops in the series.

It is envisaged that a small editorial group will work in the evening to produce a short summary of the key ideas that have been offered, to form a starting point for the discussion on Day 3

Dinner

Day 3: 20-03-2016 Conclusions and next steps

09:00 - 11:00 Commitments & homework

This final plenary session will focus on the conclusions from the preceding discussion, with a view to agreeing how these conclusions might be reflected in terms of policy, practical action and contribution to continuing discussion. The session may focus on the following questions :

- Is there broad agreement on the key ideas emerging from Days 1 and 2 ?
- What do these ideas imply for policy makers at European and national level ?
- What are the implications of practical action in the participants on organizations and regions ?
- Should the ideas from this workshop be published in some form ?
- What message, or what suggested tasks, do we offer to the further workshops in the series ?
- Which countries, which organisations and which networks should be considered as participants for the future workshops ?
- How do we secure continuity between the different workshops, and an effective output from the overall programme ?
- What plans for the 2nd workshop: co-organising partner, location, date, finance ?

Official closure
