

Forum Synergies sustainable forestry group report

13 January 2012, St. Michel l'Observatoire, France

Sustainable forestry exchange

Preparatory meeting : 13 January 2012

This preparatory meeting was held in St. Michel l'Observatoire, southern France during the Forum Synergy "life shop". This was an opportunity to meet other network members and both FS presidents.

The goal of this meeting was to clarify the scope and priorities of our exchange activities, financing, and a schedule for the workshops to be organized about sustainable forestry in Europe.

During the afternoon, the person in charge of writing the forest charter of the Luberon regional natural park presented an overview of forest management in the forest and the main strategies.



I Introduction

What is Forum Synergies?

Titus Bahner, the FS coordinator of the "Sustainable Development in Lake Aeras" program and of "Acces to Land for Community Connected Farming" program introduces the Forum Synergies network:

Forum Synergies is a European network of practical pioneers in many aspects of sustainable rural development that has gathered rich and varied practical experiences since 1994. Forum Synergies holds contacts with different rural organizations as well as with policy makers on EU level, turning practical experiences into an input for the evolution of EU sustainability policies.

For more information : www.forum-synergies.eu

Why a FS forestry exchange?

To date, in Europe, there is no common EU forestry policy, only guidelines. At the EU level, there are no network promoting exchanges on sustainable forestry practices done by civil society. There are:

- research networks: European forest Institute, International Model Forest Network,
- the Ministerial conference on the protection of forests in Europe, who acts as a network on protected forests
- professional networks: the forest owner association network, the forest inventory network, Prosilva Europe (forest experts)

Forum Synergy's work on forests could contribute to enable good initiatives around Europe to be known and support the debate of how to manage forest in an economical, ecological and social sustainable way or ways.

About Pro Silva

Nicolas Luigi, general delegate of Pro Silva France for the South-East introduces the Pro Silva forestry principles :

PROSILVA is a European federation of professional foresters across 24 European countries (and more recently in New England, USA) which advocates and promotes ProSilva Close to Nature Forest Management Principles as an alternative to clear felling, short-term tree plantations.

For more information: www.prosilvaeurope.org

II Objectives of the exchange

General objective

The goal of the project is to support and promote initiatives of sustainable forest management by exchanges on good and/or innovating practices. This shall lead to capacity building of private actors, NGOs, local and UE governments for a forest management economically, socially and environmentally sustainable.

This goal will be reached with the organization of workshops in specific places in Europe where initiatives worth to be shared.

Specific objectives

According to the participants (listed at the end of the document), the specific objectives of these exchange workshops would be:

1. to analyze strategies of how forest can be a lever for local development in rural communities (Germany)
2. to raise awareness about the different services provided by a sustainable forest management (United Kingdom)
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)

5. to develop political proposals to regional, state and EU governments and promote them at the EU parliament (all)

This last point will be treated at the end of each workshop.

III Sustainable forestry workshops

Analyze strategies of how forest can be a lever for local development in rural communities

With the development of renewable energies, the use of wood as a heating source is increasing considerably, as logs, woodchips, pellets and briquets. But where does this wood comes from? Does it comes from a local forest or does it travel kilometers to get to the boiler?

Wood is also used in house building, boards for shelves, pickets,... The different uses of wood could become a source of economic development in rural areas. But how to manage to set up short circuits to value, on the local plan, the outer-urban or rural forest? How to secure and promote (label) short circuits of wood consumption? What are the strategies to strengthen the local wood market?

We will focus on these various questions during this first workshop. We may organize it in Wulkrow (northeast of Germany) where the network "BIOFestbrennstoff MOL" aims to revitalize the local economy by promoting the production and consumption of renewable wood fuels in a environmentally friendly, economically advantageous and sustainable way or in Sweden where there exists a strong tradition of local use of wood within the rural communities.

The first workshop could also be organized in Wulkrow **and** in Görde. In Görde, the forest is also a space of recreation and of public training. So it would be interesting to study the ways of enhancing public awareness about the importance of sustainable forest management.

Raise awareness about the different services provided by a sustainable forest management (United Kingdom)

The forest services may be summarized as:

- environmental: climate and the water regime regulation, ground protection, contribution to air and water quality
- economic: wood cutting, hunting, fruit and mushrooms picking
- social: landscaped charm of the forest, place of ressourcement and sports practices

In England, more than 42,000 people responded to the panel's call for views. They expressed their heartfelt connections between the forests and woods of England and the people who live, work and relax in them. The final report of this panel will be published in April 2012, but in the progress report, it already appears that both the benefits and the costs of forests have been underestimated.

A workshop could be held in England about the different services provided by forests and how to raise the awareness about the value of forest services in Europe.

Share experiences of how rural communities are involved in looking after woodlands

In Sweden, there exists a strong tradition of local wood use within the rural communities. A traditional "right of way and picking" authorizes everyone to move freely in nature and pick mushrooms and berries, whoever is the owner of the ground. The forest is a very active living environment in Swedish rural communities: they hunt, pick, cut wood fuel, sell quality timbers. It is a way of life.

Holding a workshop in Sweden would be very interesting to better understand the link between forest and people. We would focus on laws, knowledge, techniques (mechanization), and habits which promote a sustainable forest management in a Scandinavian country.

Give local actors and authorities better access to practical knowledge about sustainable forest management (France/Sweden)

The close-to-nature management of the European network Pro Silva is rather original and innovative. In a ProSilva forest, planting never undergoes cuttings. The ProSilva forestry promotes a natural, sustainable, stable, continuous, irregular, mixed, productive and friendly forest. It is based on the management of quality. This method deserves to be better known.

A specific focus will be placed on this point and on specific ecological alternatives to preserve forest health (disease control).

A workshop could be held in Alsace, France where there are some Pro Silva forest which would worth to be visited.

Develop political proposals to regional, state and EU governments and promote them at the EU parliament (all)

In every workshop and especially in the last one, we will compile our sharing, feeling and new understanding of sustainable forest management to make proposals to regional, state and EU governments. We will ask for an appointment at the EU parliament to share our recommendations, ideas, feeling of what could be done at the EU level.

IV Workshops sites

Proposition of main themes by country

1. Germany:
 - **analyze strategies of how forest can be a lever for local development in rural communities**
 - share experiences of how rural communities are involved in looking after woodlands
 - give local actors and authorities better access to practical knowledge about sustainable forest management
 - develop political proposals to regional, state and EU governments and promote them at the EU parliament
2. United Kingdom:
 - **raise awareness about the different services provided by a sustainable forest management**
 - analyze strategies of how forest can be a lever for local development in rural communities
 - promote experiences about the role of forests in the local development of a community
 - develop political proposals to regional, state and EU governments and promote them at the EU parliament
3. Sweden :
 - **analyze strategies of how forest can be a lever for local development in rural communities**
 - give local actors and authorities better access to practical knowledge about sustainable forest management
 - promote experiences about the role of forests in the local development of a community
 - develop political proposals to regional, state and EU governments and promote them at the EU parliament

4. France:

- **give local actors and authorities better access to practical knowledge about sustainable forest management**
- develop political proposals to regional, state and EU governments and promote them at the EU parliament

Map localization

This a map where the participants offer to organize a workshop but we will try to find the most adapted place for each workshop in every country:



V Structure of exchange workshops

As the workshops about sustainable development in lake areas were a success, we propose to keep the same structure:

After arrival of the participants in the afternoon of the first day and a welcoming evening, the workshops proceed in three steps.

On the first day the host organization presents their situation and the foreign guests ask questions to better understand the situation and relate it to their own experiences. The participants are taken to a first field trip to get a more practical feeling about the local situation.

The second day allows the international guests to contribute their views, ideas and experiences with

respect to the local situation. Another field trip brings the participants to local initiatives and civil society groups to talk with them about their vision, their practical options and the specific local obstacles to their engagement.

The third morning session is dedicated to politics: How can national and EU policies support local actors to take up the challenge of sustainable development? Towards the end of the session the moderators try to crystallize conclusions in order to formulate a valuable feedback to EU decision makers.

In order to enable the local public to participate in the meeting there is a political evening with a public presentation of the foreign guests and with latest information about EU political tendencies. Local politicians, national and EU governmental officials are invited to explain their view on possible support for sustainable development initiatives. A cultural event with presentation of local culture and room for talk and drinking gives participants a direct contact to the people.

VI Financing and fund-raising

This is a work document and we need to improve the content before asking for funding. But we agree that every partner will look for a financing for the workshop he will be in charge of.

The expected funders are:

- Fondation de France: programme "l'Europe en plus large"
- Grundvig (deadline: 21 February 2012)
- Swedish FSC network
- Janun (Germany)
- UK Foundation
- Swedish Foundation
- REN + (Germany)

VII An example: Luberon regional natural park

Field visit

All the participants of the Forum Synergies Lifeshop have been invited to a 1 hour presentation of the regional natural park of Luberon by Sophie Bourlon. She was the forest engineer in charge of the forest charter of the park.

Forest covers 950 km² (51% of the park) and the main essences are: *Pinus halepensis*, *Pinus sylvestris*, *Quercus pubescens* and *Cedrus atlantica*. The main forest valuations are: decking (paper industries), tourism, fuel-wood and timber. The wooded areas are mostly private (72%). The PNRL's mission is defined in the charter (2009-2021) presenting 5 strategic priorities:

- protection and promotion of natural, cultural and landscape heritages
- territorial planning in order to improve the environment and quality of life
- economic and social development: create synergies between environment quality and economic activities
- reception, education and information: school environment trainings, cultural creation and performances

- experimentation: initiation of new processes and action methods that could be transferred to other territories



VIII Participants

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Pro Silva France

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