

Rome, 23rd-24th June 2011

*Present and future role of forest resources in the
socio-economic development of rural areas*



**ANNO INTERNAZIONALE
DELLE FORESTE • 2011**

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ITALIAN NATIONAL RURAL NETWORK FOREST EVENT



EFI ASSOCIATED EVENT



Typology: European Congress.

Title: Present and future role of forest resources in the socio-economic development of rural areas

Dates: 23rd-24th June 2011.

Duration: 2 days.

Location: Rome.

Language: English.

Organising committee:

MIPAAF-NRN (National Rural Network - Italian Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policies)

INEA-FO (Forest Observatory of the National Institute of Agricultural Economics, Italy)

Promoters:

EN RD (European Network for Rural Development)

FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations)

EFI (European Forest Institute)

CRA (Agricultural Research Council, Italy)

CFS (State Forest Service, Italy)

PQSF (Framework Programme for Italian Forestry Sector)

EFI (European Forest Institute)

Target people and Congress structure

- Researchers
- Governmental institutions
- Academics
- Professionals and Technicians from rural development and forest sector
- Entrepreneurs and firms from the forest sector
- Associations and NGOs

Congress presentation

For centuries forests have been representing, along with agriculture, the main resource for the development of rural and mountain areas. Today great emphasis is placed, by society and by international/national policies, on environmental protection. This attention means that today the role of forests goes beyond production objectives, involving new issues and challenges such as climate change mitigation, biodiversity conservation, energy production, management of the water cycle, soil erosion and desertification containment, prevention of natural risks and management of forest historical-cultural landscape.

Forests represent a very important issue for the European Union, even though they are not taken into account by EU's constitutional treaties. Thus, they have no specific dedicated Common Policies and, according to the subsidiary principles, they are still under the full competence of EU Member States.

In the last few decades, the role of forests have become more and more important in a perspective of socio-economic development of rural and mountain areas and within the environmental protection strategies. The European Union has launched several actions related to the forestry sector, even if without activating a dedicated forest policy but operating within other thematic areas such as agriculture and the environment.

In the Eighties European Union adopted a set of Regulations aiming to contain deleterious anthropic impacts on forests [Reg. (EC) No 3528/86 and No 3529/86; Reg. (EC) No 2157/92 and No 2158/92; Reg. (EC) No 2152/2003 "Forest Focus"; Reg. (EC) No 614/2007 LIFE+].

The first actions of forest policy were formulated as part of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). An example is provided by the two main accompanying measures: the EU Reg.2080/92 (funding "*first afforestation of agricultural lands*"), and the EU Reg. 867/90, (funding "*forest firms' investments*").

In the late Nineties, with the aim to solve all the problems affecting the whole European forest sector, the EU approved the Resolution 1999/C/56/01 for a Common Forest Strategy. With this Resolution the Council asserted that "*EU can positively contribute to the implementation of sustainable forest management and can promote the multifunctional role of forests, giving to member States the role and responsibility in the formulation of forest policies*". This is the actual first Common Forest Strategy, which revises and reorganises all the forestry measures that were implemented to date in different ways across Europe. The Resolution provides an explicit connection to the international commitments undertaken for the forest sector (Rio de Janeiro 1992, MCPFE, etc).

With Agenda 2000 policies and strategies for the forest sector start to assume a relevant and integrated role within Rural Development, both at National and European level. This scenery is today confirmed in the 2007-2013 Programming period, where a pool of forestry measures is provided within the four different prior axis of the Rural Development Policy. In this way sustainable forest management and forest multifunctionality assume a strategic role, also based on the relevance of the financial resources allocated to forest measures.

With the aim to achieve a sustainable forest management and to increase the value of forest multifunctionality, in 2006 EU adopted [COM (2006)302] its own Forest Action Plan (FAP). The FAP intends to increase the value of the European forest heritage, conserving and empowering the multifunctional role of forests by stimulating an environmental-aware forest management. This has been done to provide renewable and environmentally-sustainable raw material and to foster – especially in rural areas – local development, employment, environmental protection and public services.

In 2010 these concepts have been recalled within the EU Green Paper on “*Forest Protection and Information in the EU: Preparing forests to climate change*” [COM(2010)66].

In this context, given the new relevance held by the forest sector under the European Policy for Rural Development, some questions arise:

1. What will be the destiny of forests in Europe?
2. Which are the orientations of rural development policies concerning the forest sector for the programming period 2013-2020?

The planned two-day congress aims to describe, analyse and get acquainted with the actions provided for forests and the forest sector by Rural Development, identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and proposing ideas and suggestions for the present and future Common Program.

Day - 1 (Thursday 23rd June 2011):

The congress will start with a **plenary introductory session** with presentations about the relationship between forest resources and socio-economic development of rural areas.

9.00: Registration

9.30: Welcome and opening remarks

10.00: Forests within European Union Policies

10.30: Future scenarios of European Forests

11.00: Rural Development Policies and Forestry: the point of view of central and northern European Countries

11.30: Rural Development Policies and Forestry: the point of view of Mediterranean Countries

12.00: Present opportunities of sustainable and multifunctional forest management for the Development of Rural areas.

12.30: Discussion

13.00: Lunch

14.30: Parallel sessions and poster session

The congress will continue in the afternoon with **parallel sessions** which aim at analysing and describing, from different points of view, the role played by forest resources in the socio-economic development of rural areas. Each session will be chaired by a *key-note speaker* who will introduce the topic with an introductory presentation. A *rapporteur* will join each one of the sessions with the specific task to summarise the contents of the contributions and to report the main results during the day-2 plenary session.

Contributed papers will be selected by the scientific committee to be presented in each of the four sessions. In addition posters may be presented and selected. They must be related to one (or more) of the sessions' themes and should present **concrete experiences, best practices, opportunities and constraints concerning the forest sector in the context of socio-economic development of rural areas**. Considerations, results and methodologies concerning the evaluation of forestry policies will be also accepted both as papers or posters (eg. methodologies for assessment and evaluation of results and impacts).

Contributed extended abstract must be sent by email as word document to romaforest2011@inea.it indicating in the email subject "Extended abstract submission for oral presentation" or "Extended abstract submission for poster session".

Full text papers will be required after the congress to be published online and on dedicated monographical issues of selected thematic peer-reviewed Journals.

A *rapporteur* will join each session with the specific task of summarizing the contents of the contributions and report the main results during the plenary session scheduled on the second day of the congress.

Session 1 - Forests, conservation of biodiversity, landscape protection and public services

What does society require from forests? The role played by Rural Development Programs in encouraging forests to face new social and environmental challenges.

Contents:

1. Analysis of measures and actions planned in the frame of European Rural Development Policies for conservation and improvement of Biodiversity and concerning the provision of public services and the protection of rural and forest landscapes;
2. Trade-off between Biodiversity and forest productivity: how much does Biodiversity conservation cost?
3. Innovative solutions to enhance the social functions provided by forests within Rural Development;
4. Linkages, relationships and synergies with other Policies (environment protection, regional development, national and regional policies...);
5. Integrated planning for the valorisation of forest public services;
6. Biodiversity measurement, monitoring and evaluation techniques;
7. Evaluation of forest social functions;

Session 2 – Forests, agroforestry and bioenergies

Forest management in relation to the production of renewable energy. Utopia or real opportunity for the environment and for the development of rural areas? The role played by Rural Development Programs in supporting agroforestry and forest biomass production/use.

Contents:

1. Analysis of measures and actions planned in the frame of European Rural Development policies for Agroforestry and forest biomass production/use;
2. Effects and innovative solutions of Agroforestry system activity on land use: erosion, risk of Soil runoff;
3. Linkages, relationships and synergies with other Policies;
4. Innovative solutions within Rural Development for the production and provision of energy from forest biomass;
5. Short chains and vertical integration;
6. Measurement, monitoring and evaluation techniques of environmental and socio-economical impacts;

Session 3 – Strategies for mitigation of and adaptation to climate change

How can forestry measures of Rural Development Programs contribute to contain climate change effects on European forests? Which adaptation measures can be implemented? Which strategy could be more convenient in a perspective of climate change mitigation: forest management or abandonment?

Contents:

1. Analysis of measures and actions planned in the frame of European Rural Development concerning the provision of public services and the protection of rural and forest landscapes;
2. Innovative solutions to enhance the social functions provided by forests within Rural Development;
3. Evaluation of forest social functions;
4. Integrated planning for the valorisation of forest public services.

Session 4 – Competitiveness of the forest production sector: wood&non-wood products, supply chains and strategies for a forest-based local governance

Wood and non-wood forest products supply: illusion or factual contribution to European economy and employment? Which role can be played by efficient supply chains and by forest-based local governance strategies in empowering the forest production sector in a perspective of rural development? Which contribution from Rural Development Programs?

Contents:

- Analysis of measures and actions planned in the frame of European Rural Development for the competitiveness of firms and the production-provision of raw material for industrial purposes;
- Trade off between production/provision of raw material and environmental protection;
- Non wood-products
- Innovative solutions within Rural Development for firms competitiveness and for the production-provision of raw material for industrial uses;
- Linkages, relationships and synergies with other Policies;
- Short chains and vertical integration;
- Local governance and participatory approaches;
- Forest certification;

Day - 2 (Friday 24th June 2011):

9.30: Plenary session

The second day will be opened by a plenary session during which parallel sessions' rapporteurs will present a synthesis of relevant issues discussed during the first day. A lecture by a representative of the European Commission will follow. Planned interventions by representatives of European forest stakeholders will close the morning.

Session 1 - *Forests, conservation of biodiversity, landscape protection and public services*

Session 2 - *Forests, agroforestry and bioenergies*

Session 3 - *Strategies for mitigation of and adaptation to climate change*

Session 4 - *Competitiveness of the forest production sector: wood&non-wood products, supply chains and strategies for a forest-based local governance*

11.00: Coffe Break

11.30: Lecture by the European Commission – The future of Policies

12.00: The session will be closed with comments and proposals from invited stakeholders (5 minutes each)

13.00: LUNCH

14.30: Round table with EU Commission, European forest stakeholders (public and private), National Authorities, Associations and Non-profit Environmental Organizations. Drafting of a summary document reporting shared proposals for future forest strategies within EU Rural Development.

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