

Robinews

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Giving Rural Europe a New Future



North East SOUTH West
INTERREG IIC



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REGIONE LIGURIA



LAND
BRANDENBURG



Región de Murcia



Comisiwn Coodwigoeth Cymru
Forestry Commission Wales



Autonomous Regions
of Košice and Prešov

THE 9TH STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE INTERREG IIC PROJECT ROBINWOOD WILL BE HELD IN GENOA ON 13 AND 14 OF JULY 2006

The 9th steering committee of the RobinWood project will be held in Genoa on 13 and 14 of July 2006. The main theme of the meeting will be the approval of international partnership subprojects as they are presented by 30 June 2006, deadline of the call for projects for the "Creation of inter-regional partnerships and final proposals for subprojects", which is the second step in the RobinWood project.



During this second phase the local partners are called on to create an inter-regional partnership subproject comprising partners from several regions involved and then to submit a final proposal for a subproject. The aim of the second phase is to foster knowledge exchange between the various local players involved, each one making their experience and good practices already implemented in the territory available for the others.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON HYDRO-GEOLOGY AND FOREST MANAGEMENT IN MURCIA: A NEW OPPORTUNITY FOR DISCUSSION FOR THE PARTNERS OF THE ROBINWOOD PROJECT DEDICATED TO THE WOODS-ENERGY CHAIN



The "International conference on hydro-geology and sustainable forest management" was held from 10 to 12 May at the Centro Social of the University of Espinardo, in Murcia (Spain). The conference was organised as part of the European project RobinWood.

On the first day discussions were held on international partnerships between local bodies in the five European regions that obtained grants for projects to conduct experiments in the wood - energy chain.

The day on 11 May was dedicated to the International Conference on hydro-geology and forest management and studies and experiences were presented by representatives of the European partners involved.

On the day of the 12th a technical visit was made to the Parque Regionale de Sierra Espuña, where the conference participants were able to see the effects of erosion, typical of this region in Spain, as well as the results of reforestation interventions made to prevent the problem.



HYDRO-GEOLOGIC PLAN, ABANDONING AGRICULTURAL AREAS AND EROSION: THE FIRST-HAND EXPERIENCE OF MURCIA PRESENTED AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON HYDRO-GEOLOGY AND FOREST MANAGEMENT



Murcia, which in the RobinWood project is responsible for initiatives to improve hydro-geologic issues, gave a presentation to the other European partners on the typical problems of its territory and illustrated results they obtained in facing them. Francisco Cabezas, from the Istituto Euromediterráneo de Acqua and creator of the



National Hydro-geologic Plan, strongly criticized the European directive on water management which, starting from 2015, will prohibit the use of underground water for irrigation. As a result, it will cut water sources in half for Murcia and have "a devastating effect that will give rise to an economic and social crisis". The problems of the region, aridity and the reduction of hydro-geologic risks were also stressed by Joaquín Segado, responsible for sustainable development and environmental protection, and by Francisco López-Bermúdez, professor at the University of Murcia, who brought attention to the problem of abandonment of agricultural areas which risk causing irreparable damage to the fertility of the land, thus aggravating the problem of erosion and flooding.

The experience of the Spanish region is of great interest to all RobinWood partners, who focus on improving the hydro-geologic situation through sustainable forest management.



ROBINWOOD AT ENERGETHICA, THE FIRST SHOW ON RENEWABLE AND SUSTAINABLE ENERGY



The RobinWood project was presented at Energethica, the first show on renewable and sustainable energy, which was held in Genoa at the Fiera del Mare from 25 to 27 May. Daniela Minetti (Regione Liguria, Italy) coordinator of the project, spoke at the international convention "Actions for energy efficiency: do more with less" during the third section: 'Best practice in the EU to 25'. The aim of her speech was to describe the organisation and purpose of the RobinWood project and describe the developments of the project itself, with the assignment of

grants in favour of local bodies that have presented projects to revitalise the territory by developing the wood-energy chain.



EUROPEAN COMMISSION ADOPTS AN EU FOREST ACTION PLAN ON 15TH JUNE



The Action Plan builds on last year's report on the implementation of the EU Forestry Strategy and consequent conclusions by the Council. The Action Plan focuses on four main objectives:

- *to improve long-term competitiveness;*
- *to improve and protect the environment;*
- *to contribute to the quality of life; and*
- *to foster coordination and communication.*

Eighteen key actions are proposed by the Commission to be implemented jointly with the Member States over a period of five years (2007–2011).

Building on the Council Resolution of 15 December 1998 on a forestry strategy for the European Union, the Action Plan provides a framework for forest-related actions at EU and Member State level. It also serves as an instrument of coordination between EU actions and the forest policies of the Member States. Recognising the wide range of natural, social, economic and cultural conditions and differences in forest-ownership types in the EU, the Action Plan acknowledges the need for specific approaches and actions for different types of forests. It emphasises the important role played by forest-owners in the sustainable management of forests in the EU.

In order to improve long-term competitiveness of the forest sector, the Action Plan encourages innovation and research activities as well as training for forest-owners and forest workers. In line with the Biomass Action Plan and the EU Biofuels Strategy, it also proposes actions aimed at increasing the use of forest resources for energy production.

For more info:

http://ec.europa.eu/comm/agriculture/fore/index_en.htm



ROBINWOOD PRESENTED AT THE EU REGION COMMITTEE AS AN EXAMPLE OF “GOOD PRACTICE” ON NATURAL CATASTROPHES



On April 26, during a meeting of the EU Region Committee dedicated to natural catastrophes (fire, flooding and aridity), the president of the Autonomous Community of Murcia, Ramón Luis Valcárcel, presented a document containing examples of good practices implemented for the environment, among which the activities of the RobinWood project.

The Region Committee is a political assembly of representatives from local and regional bodies in the European Union. Founded in 1994, it has given a voice to local and regional representatives in the decision making process within the European Union, and, through these representatives, it is trying to bring citizens closer to European institutions. Thanks to the Treaty of Amsterdam, the Region Committee is called on to refer to the European Commission and the Council of Ministers also concerning environmental issues.



FAO SUPPORTS BIOMASS AND SUSTAINABLE ENERGY AS A FUNDAMENTAL SOURCE OF ENERGY TO FIGHT FAMINE AND POVERTY IN THE WORLD



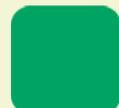
The report presented at the 19th session of the FAO Agriculture Commission, held in Rome from 13 to 16 April, stresses the fundamental role of agriculture and forestry to eradicate extreme poverty and famine and to ensure sustainable development.

Bioenergy, which includes timber and biomass, energy cultivation (such as sugar cane and sorghum) and agricultural and forest residues to generate heat, ethanol, biodiesel, bioelectricity and biogas, is indeed considered fundamental to reduce environmental degradation and help control climatic changes.

Despite the progress made over the last ten years in environmental sustainability, FAO stresses that the steps taken to develop and use new energy systems are still too few. Gasoline still ranks number one as the most common fuel source providing over 35% of primary commercial energy, then coal with 23% and natural gas with 21%. Whereas energy from biomass and forests provide only 15% and 9% of world energy. The commitment of FAO in favour of the development of bioenergy is born from 20 years of experience throughout the world, with the awareness, as the report underlines, that the use of biomass as energy would not only ease the world energy crisis, but it would create a beneficial circle of investments and business in rural areas of developed and emerging countries.



ROBINWOOD PRESENTED INNOVATIVE ENERGY TECHNOLOGIES AT THE SPREEWALD FAIR



RW in Brandenburg supported the regional fair Spreewaldmesse in the beautiful "little Venice" of Spreewald forest an area with many small canals some 70 km South of Berlin. During the weekend 21st and 22nd of May the city of Lübben organized the event together with their twinned towns from Saarland (Neunkirchen) and Poland on the nice Spree island opposite the old castle. For the first time Spreewald fair put special attention to renewable energy sources and the mayor of Lübben, Mr. Bretterbauer, as well as the Landrat of Dahme-Spreewald county, Mr. Wille, expressed their gratitude to the Robinwood initiative for the support when opening the fair on Saturday morning.



Based on the initiative of a local farmer who is going to establish a

biogas plant and the pioneering installer of wood heat plants Fischer the physics teacher of Paul-Gerhardt-Grammar-School Mister Mehlhorn animated his pupils to start work on understanding innovative energy technologies. Three groups were formed on biogas, fotovoltaic and wood pellets. Instead of writing a test the pupils from the 12th class could pass their annual exams by preparing a flyer and the exhibition for usual customers.

RW Brandenburg partner with its expert CEBra took over the responsibility to give advice on the right technical terms and the useful form of communication to pass over the message of wood heating overcoming the prejudices of necessary hard work, low performance or missing availability of pellets. Members of the state forest administration supported the stand with energy wood and Fischer offered a real pellet boiler that pupils could explain to visitors.

 **The content of this document reflects the point of view of the writer. The MA is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information within.**

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