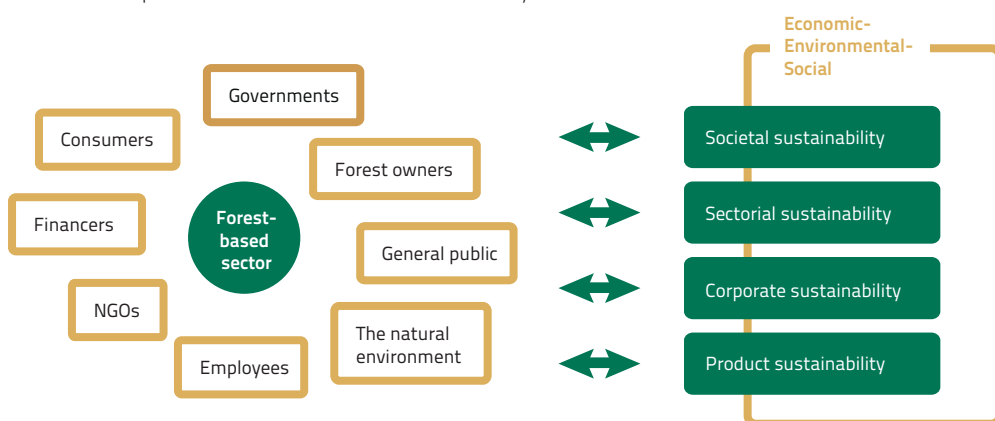


NEWSLETTER
MARCH 2015

WOODEN ROAD TOWARDS BIOECONOMY

Innovative communication for the forest-based sector

Wood is a promising resource to contribute to a transformation of society towards a bio-economy. However, views and demands on forests have been gradually changing. This is a challenge for the sustainability communication of the forest-based sector. Objective of the W3B project is to develop cost-effective, innovative and stakeholder-oriented communication strategies, which are customized to current topics of interest that operate on different levels of sustainability.



Scope of the W3B project

- Map the current state of communication of the forest-based sector
- Research the societal perception of the forest-based sector
- Use living labs as a feasible tool for the development of narratives for social media marketing
- Assess their efficiency using cognitive response experiments
- Provide recommendations for successful communication strategies in the future

Call for your contribution: Invitation to open stakeholder workshop

Freiburg, Tuesday 21 April and Wednesday 22 April 2015.

UNIQUE forestry and land use GmbH, Schnewlinstr. 10, Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany

09:30-10:00 "In what we do believe" Presentation of the overall project (Tobias Stern, project coordinator)

10:00-11:00 Project results:
"The eight identified topics of interest (TOI)"-Results from literature review and stakeholder (UoH)

Findings of literature review (UoH)

Presentation of public survey and required inputs from partners (UP FAMNIT) and first results of the survey (WoodKplus)

Findings of the content analysis (Wood K, UoH, UoP)

11:15-12:15

Contributions by external speakers

- The timber era has just begun - the need for cross-sector promoting of wood use
Hagen Maraun, managing director of proHolz Baden-Württemberg GmbH
- Campaigns of the industrial sector and demands on the project
N.N.
- Effective communication of stakeholder groups in the forestry sector
Prof. Dr. Kleinschmit, Chair of Forest- and Environmental Policy at the University Freiburg inquired

12:00-12:30

Plenum discussion about further proceedings regarding designing and testing of online media campaigns (UNIQUE)

12:30-13:00

Closing remarks and next steps (Tobias Stern)

13:00-14:00

Open lunch at a nearby restaurant (UNIQUE)

Visit us on www.wood-w3b.eu

Current state of communication: results of literature review

The need of stakeholder communication is generally emphasized reviewed literature both at European level and within case countries. Yet, solutions on how to communicate and build the image have not been approached, at all. The communication and image building processes, abreast with recognition of specific information are crucial when aiming at providing specific information for different stakeholder groups.

Current state of communication: results of the content analysis

Despite rapidly increasing global awareness of environmental issues and growing demand for corporate environmental disclosure, little is known regarding how different segments of the European forest industry communicate their sustainability efforts to the general public. An online content analysis was used to map the current state of forest sector communication in the four forestry-rich project countries: Austria, Finland, Germany and Slovenia.

The existing online communication of 80 companies and industry associations were content analysed using Atlas.ti/MaxQDA softwares during summer-fall 2014 with a focus on eight topics of interest (see box for more details). Overall, the results, based on 7000 observations in the content of forest sector online communication, show with some exceptions a high conformity in communication both across countries and industry segments. The most commonly communicated topic was "forests and economy", particularly within large companies and especially in Finland and Austria. Instead, "added value" was emphasized especially within family businesses and SMEs operating in Slovenia. In comparison, the least emphasized topics in our total sample were "wood based innovations" and "forest ecosystem services".

This can potentially be a cause of some concern due to the timeliness and strong future orientation of both issues. Furthermore, stakeholder expectations about tailored communication were rarely expressed in explicit terms, making the evaluation of the communication efficacy and effectiveness difficult. Future development needs are arising from a lack of awareness of some topics and the very specialized information requirements of some stakeholder groups.

TOPICS OF INTEREST

Together with stakeholders of the forest-based sector eight topics of interest have been identified that are addressed in the project:

Wood based innovations

strengthen the consumer acceptance of wood-based innovation products

Multifunctional forest management

explain forest ecosystem services and emphasize their value for the society and the environment

Conservation by production

communicate efforts for sustainable forest management

Forests and global warming highlight the role of forests and wood products for climate mitigation

Forests and the economy

communicate the importance of forests for economic development, employment, material and energy supply

Added value

communicate added value of wood in form of value chain awareness to end users

Building with wood

Improve the image of wood for construction purposes

Efficient use of wood

communicate the importance of efficient and cascading use of wood

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Research the societal perception: example study from Austria - successful communication depends on people's environmental involvement

An example study from Austria investigated the perception of the forest-based sector's communication concerning the sustainability of wood production. Based on 170 respondents it was found that the level of environmental awareness has an influence on the perception of forest management: respondents with higher environmental awareness agree that forest management contributes to a healthy forest, whereas respondents with lower environmental awareness agree that forest management causes a decrease in forest cover. As these topics have been largely communicated in Austria, this suggests that people with higher environmental involvement are more receptive to the sustainability communication of the forest-based sector.

Detailed results

The results of the study 'Wood you believe it? Pro-environment is Pro-forestry' will be presented in detail at the conference 'InWood2015: Innovations in wood materials and processes' in Brno, Czech Republic on the 19th-22nd of May, 2015.

For more details please visit: www.inwood-project.eu/en

THE PROJECT TEAM



PROJECT FUNDING



Tekes
REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION,
SCIENCE AND SPORT



WoodWisdom-Net
www.woodwisdom.net

W3B FACTS

Type: ERA-Net WoodWisdom

Budget: 737,790 Eur

Duration: 3 years (2014-2017)

Participants

13 research partners

4 countries

Coordinator

Dr. Tobias Stern

Kompetenzzentrum Holz GmbH

Team Marktanalyse und

Innovationsforschung

t.stern@kplus-wood.at

www.wood-w3b.eu

CONSORTIUM



Kompetenzzentrum Holz GmbH
Austria

www.wood-kplus.at



UNIQUE forestry & landuse
Germany

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