Innovation in Forestry

How to boost innovation in forest sector in EU Regions, Nov 13\textsuperscript{th}, 2019

Bernhard Wolfslehner
You [...] believe to get a grip on climate change by means of regulations. God bless you! What we need, are inventors in their garages (Michael Friedman, 2009)
Innovation is more than garages

„... a process by which new products and techniques are introduced into the economic system.“ (Schumpeter 1947)

Note: difference to invention (=not yet brought to practice)

Many types of innovation:
✓ new/improved product/process
✓ new marketing method
✓ new organisational method etc. (OECD 2005)
✓ institutional (Weiss et al. 2011)
✓ social (Ludvig et al. 2018)
Important innovation processes

- co-operation along the forestry-wood chain
- use of information technologies
- forest owners' co-operation
- marketing of wood
- wood processing technologies
- improvements in transport and logistics
- harvesting techniques and facilities
- infrastructure development

(Rametsteiner et al. 2005)
Forest innovation examples

Photos: Projekt Kernbuche; Weiss; Statforsten; WildGood; BMLFUW; Shropshire; ETH; Cairn o Mohr; Zivojinovic.
Innovation support not systematic

But a lot of anchor points for bottom-up initiatives

⇒ Increased attention on wood in a bioeconomy
⇒ Renewed interest in non-wood forest products
⇒ Opportunities for regional approaches (e.g. marketing, best practices)

For upscaling innovation support needed (e.g. LEADER, clusters, etc.)

⇒ “top-down support for bottom-up innovations”
Interaction – coordination - cooperation

⇒ of all actors crucial (government+ industry+ research = „triple helix“)
⇒ Forest owner cooperations innovation in forest management and e.g. NWFP, forest pedagogics, recreation, bio-energy production etc...
Civil society & social innovation

... in response to societal challenges ...

⇒ reconfiguring social practices by inclusion of civil society actors to tackle

• vulnerable groups (e.g. green care, social farming...)
• rural development (collaboration for territorial marketing...)
• social participation (volunteering, social enterprises ...)

EU Horizon 2020 project SIMRA (Social Innovation in Marginalised Rural Areas; 2016-2020)

Photos: BFW, AT; Charcoal Land initiative, SI; Nature Parks, AT; Bergwaldprojekt, AT; Woodland Skills Centre, UK.
Innovative Business Models

- **Vertical Integration (B2B)** – Producers’ coordination
  - Producers & 1st processing in Cork for joint marketing
  - Co-ops to tackle grey markets (truffle, pinenuts)
  - 2nd level co-ops in pinenuts for joint marketing

- **Horizontal integration**
  - Territorial marketing
  - Producers’ association for NWFP certification
  - Joint wood auction

- **Digital-based innovations (B2C)** – info accessibility, transparency, dispersed users
  - Online picking permits (APP, Q codes)
  - E-auctions (hunting permits)
  - PES donations – virtually meeting the landowner

- **Prospective(?)**
  - Community-supported forestry (ownership ↔ use)
  - Collaborative economy
  - Wellness treatments
  - Social entrepreneurs
  - Crowdfunding
Some innovation topics

⇒ Policy instruments (formal/informal) as
   (a) barriers / support in timber construction
   (b) support of social innovation in forestry
⇒ Role of regional/programmes to create opportunity structures for rural areas (e.g. EU LEADER)
⇒ New innovation processes incl. across sectors
⇒ Forest services (e.g. „Green Care Forest“ in AT and Italy)
⇒ Role of forest ownership structure in innovation
⇒ Usage of long-lasting wood products and future trends for enhanced wood in combating climate change
Thank you!

Bernhard Wolfslehner

bernhard.wolfslehner@efi.int

Forest Policy Research Network, c/o

University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences,
Vienna (BOKU)

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