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

**PLENARY SESSION**

**23<sup>rd</sup> June 2011**

# ***Rural Development Policies and Forestry: the point of view of central- north European Countries***

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# Outline

1. Rural areas and regional types of forestry
2. Differing perceptions of forests and forestry
3. Actual and future role of forestry in IRD programmes
4. Conclusions

# Rural areas in the EU

„The overall picture for rural areas in the EU is increasingly diverse....:

some regions are facing decline with young people leaving and land abandoned,

while others are among the most dynamic in the EU“

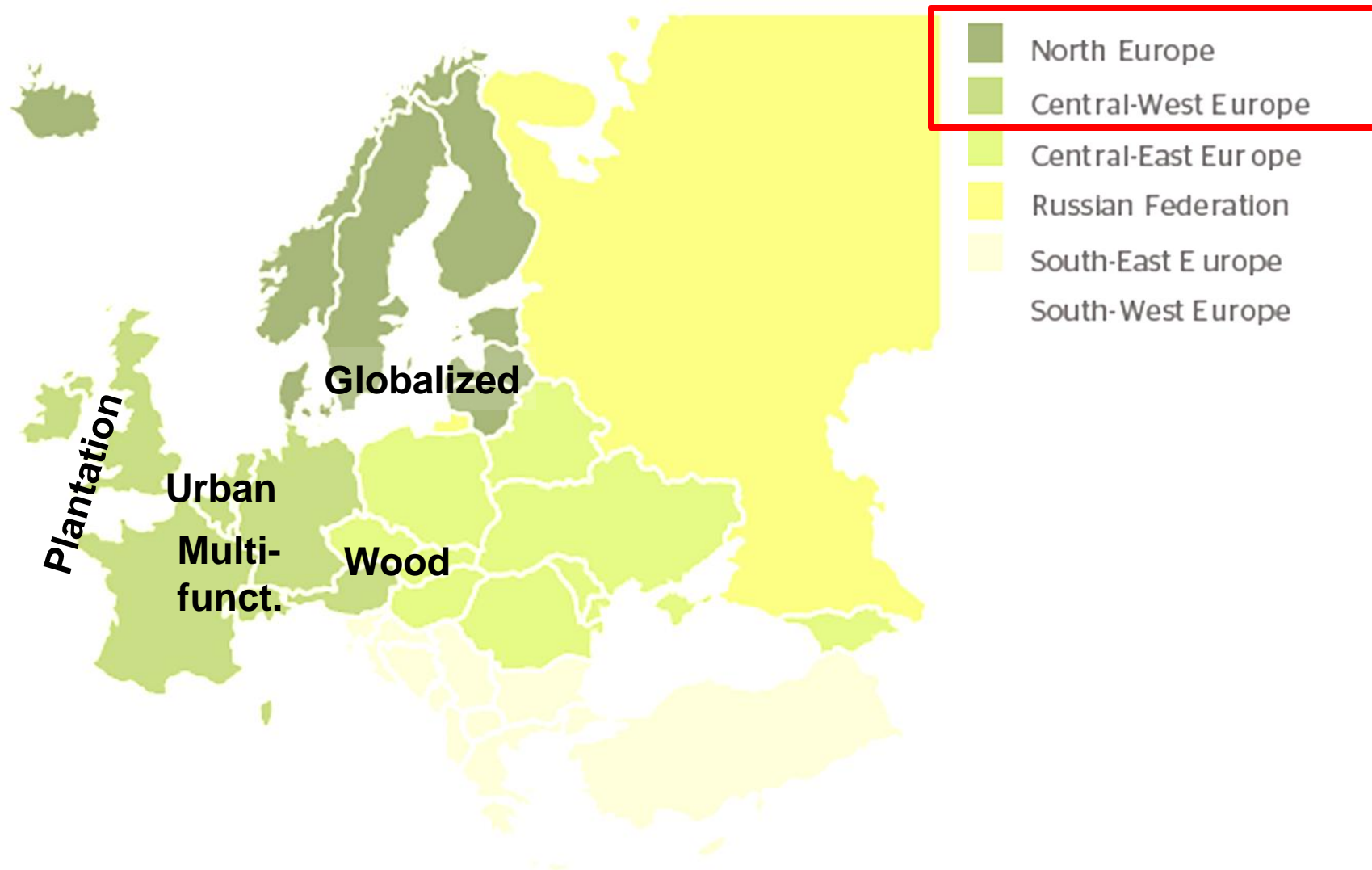
*Agricultural Policy Perspectives  
Briefs No. 4, January 2011*

## Rural area classes:

- Rural area with urban characteristics
  - Diversified rural area
  - Agricultural/growth area
  - Agricultural /decline area
  - Remote area
- 
- traditional areas
  - afforestation areas

*Elands & Wiersum 2003*

# Country groups and types of forestry



# Forest issues in Northern Europe

- Boreal forests
- Forest sector mostly privately-owned
- Well organized
- Focussed on wood production
- Strong commitment to achieving environmental objectives
- Areas of concern:
  - Eutrophication
  - Forest biodiversity



# Forest Issues in Central-West-Europe

- Not central to economy or society
- Strong reactions to threats to forests
- densely populated countries, forests primarily in rural and mountaineous areas
- Stable and well-resourced forest institutions (?)
- Areas of concern:
  - Eutrophication
  - fragmentation
  - Negative net entrepreneurial revenues (some)
  - Negligible share of wood in total energy supply (some)
  - Small share of the total workforce engaged in forest sector





# Forest issues by Country Groups

## **Group I (Austria, Finland, Norway, Sweden):**

- wood production as a key forest function
- forestry an important sector in the national economy
- forest areas of the countries large, both relatively and absolutely

## **Group II (Belgium, the Netherlands):**

- agricultural sector strong/agricultural land use dominates
- high population pressure
- forestry a marginal sector in the national economy
- forest areas small, forest properties fragmented
- other land uses dominate forest land use

## **Group III (Denmark, Ireland, Switzerland, United Kingdom)**

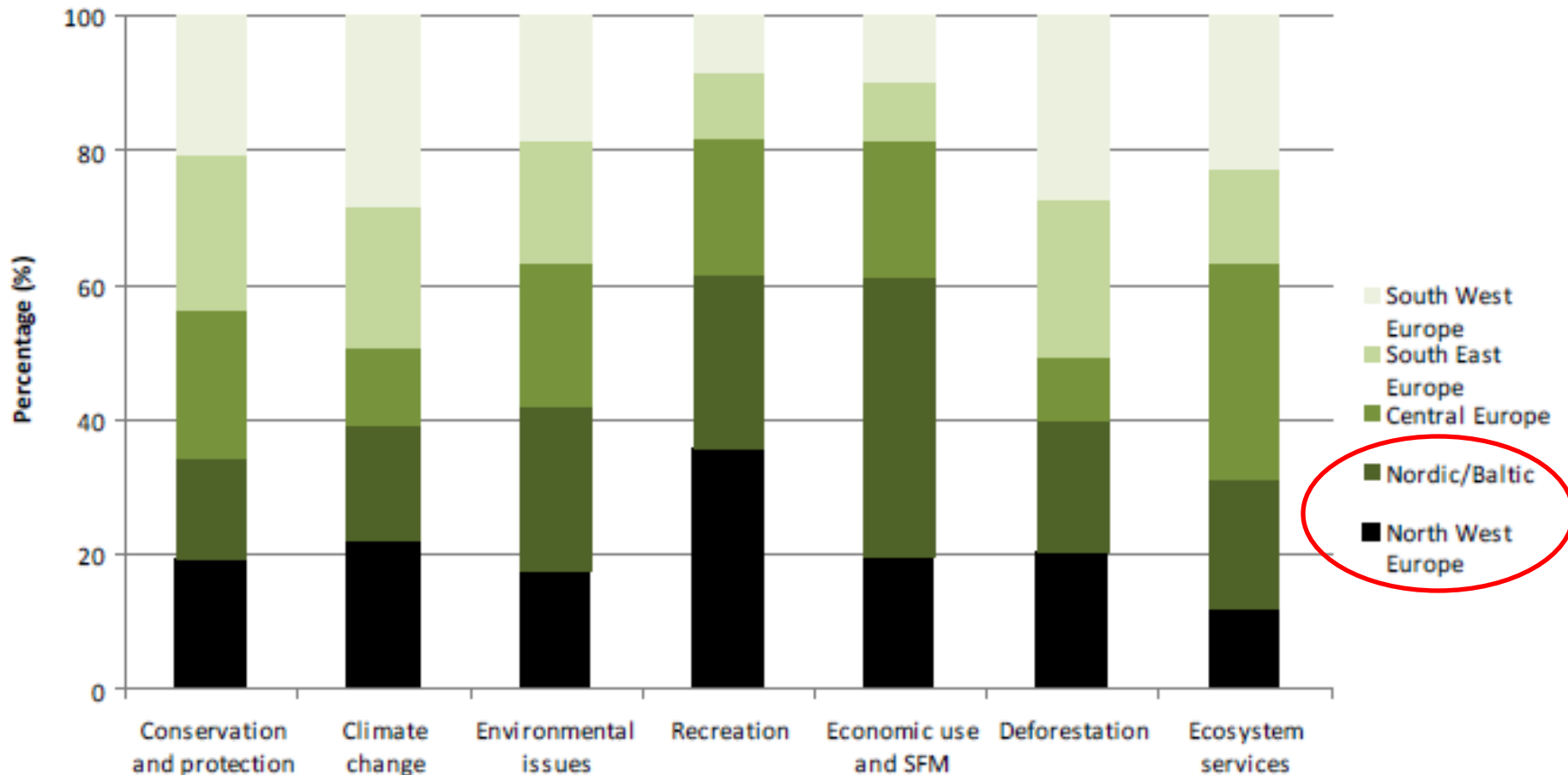
## **Group V (France, Germany)**

## Forest issues by Country Groups (2)

- **Group III (Denmark, Ireland, Switzerland, United Kingdom)**
  - other forest functions than wood production also important (such as protection function in Switzerland)
  - other forest products than timber (Christmas trees, foliage etc.)
  - forestry of little importance in national economy
  - afforestation/forest area increase envisaged
  - forest areas small, relatively and in absolute terms
- **Group V (France, Germany)**
  - large forest areas in absolute terms, forests parcelled
  - per capita forest area less than in the northern countries
  - other land uses dominate forest land use
  - high population pressure
  - wood production as important forest function



## Regional differences: first and second most important topic when thinking about forests



[Source: ECORYS]

**Regional  
comparison:  
  
most  
important  
topics when it  
comes to  
forests (in  
totals and  
percentage)**

	Regional comparison							
	Eastern region		Southern region		Western region		Nordic region	
	Question 4		Question 4		Question 4		Question 4	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Conservation, restoration and protection	4	6,2%	4	13,8%	7	18,9%	1	4,8%
Climate change	1	1,5%	3	10,3%	4	10,8%	2	9,5%
Environmental issues; forest health and pollution	4	6,2%	1	3,4%	2	5,4%	1	4,8%
Forest fires			9	31,0%				
Recreation and accessibility	11	16,9%	3	10,3%	8	21,6%	4	19,0%
Bio- and Landscape diversity	7	10,8%	1	3,4%	5	13,5%	4	19,0%
Forest management, sustainability and economic use	6	9,2%	5	17,2%	4	10,8%	4	19,0%
Deforestation, overexploitation and illegal activities	11	16,9%	1	3,4%	2	5,4%	3	14,3%
Ecosystem services (clean water & air, non-timber products, bioenergy)	12	18,5%			3	8,1%	1	4,8%
Symbolic and aesthetic values	6	9,2%	1	3,4%	1	2,7%		
Other	3	4,6%	1	3,4%	1	2,7%	1	4,8%

[Source: ECORYS]

Rametsteiner et al. 2009

**Regional comparison: important topics for the younger generation when it comes to forests**

	Regional comparison							
	Eastern region		Southern region		Western region		Nordic region	
	Question 5		Question 5		Question 5		Question 5	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Conservation, restoration and protection	3	5,3%	5	18,5%	5	15,6%	2	11,8%
Climate change	1	1,8%	1	3,7%	3	9,4%		
Environmental issues; forest health and pollution	4	7,0%	2	7,4%	6	18,8%	1	5,9%
Forest fires	1	1,8%	2	7,4%				
Recreation and accessibility	21	36,8%	5	18,5%	10	31,3%	5	29,4%
Bio- and Landscape diversity	5	8,8%	5	18,5%	5	15,6%	3	17,6%
Forest management, sustainability and economic use	6	10,5%	1	3,7%	1	3,1%	4	23,5%
Deforestation, overexploitation and illegal activities	3	5,3%			1	3,1%		
Ecosystem services (clean water & air, non-timber products, bioenergy)	5	8,8%	2	7,4%			1	5,9%
Awareness-raising			1	3,7%				
Symbolic and aesthetic values	1	1,8%	1	3,7%	1	3,1%		
Other	7	12,3%	2	7,4%			1	5,9%

[Source: ECORYS]

Rametsteiner et al. 2009

# Regional comparison: public opinion about the importance of different forest benefits

	Regional comparison							
	Eastern region		Southern region		Western region		Nordic region	
	Question 9		Question 9		Question 9		Question 9	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Preserving biodiversity	16	20,8%	6	18,2%	13	29,5%	6	23,1%
Regulating climate	9	11,7%	9	27,3%	11	25,0%	2	7,7%
Providing biomass for energy	11	14,3%	4	12,1%	3	6,8%	9	34,6%
Providing wood as renewable material	14	18,2%	4	12,1%	2	4,5%	1	3,8%
Providing opportunities for recreation	23	29,9%	10	30,3%	13	29,5%	6	23,1%
Other economic use	2	2,6%			1	2,3%	2	7,7%
Other	2	2,6%			1	2,3%		

[Source: ECORYS]

Rametsteiner et al. 2009

# Variety of national forestry measures in RDP

- Most Member States
  - outlined the role of forestry as a multi-functional activity in their national Rural Development Programmes (RDPs), and
  - placed substantial responsibility on forestry to deliver a number of public goods.
- Some Member States, such as France and Germany, specify the importance of forestry in helping to address climate change.
- Forestry measures included in all programmes, except those of Malta and Ireland

# Perceptions mirrored in national forestry measures in RDPs

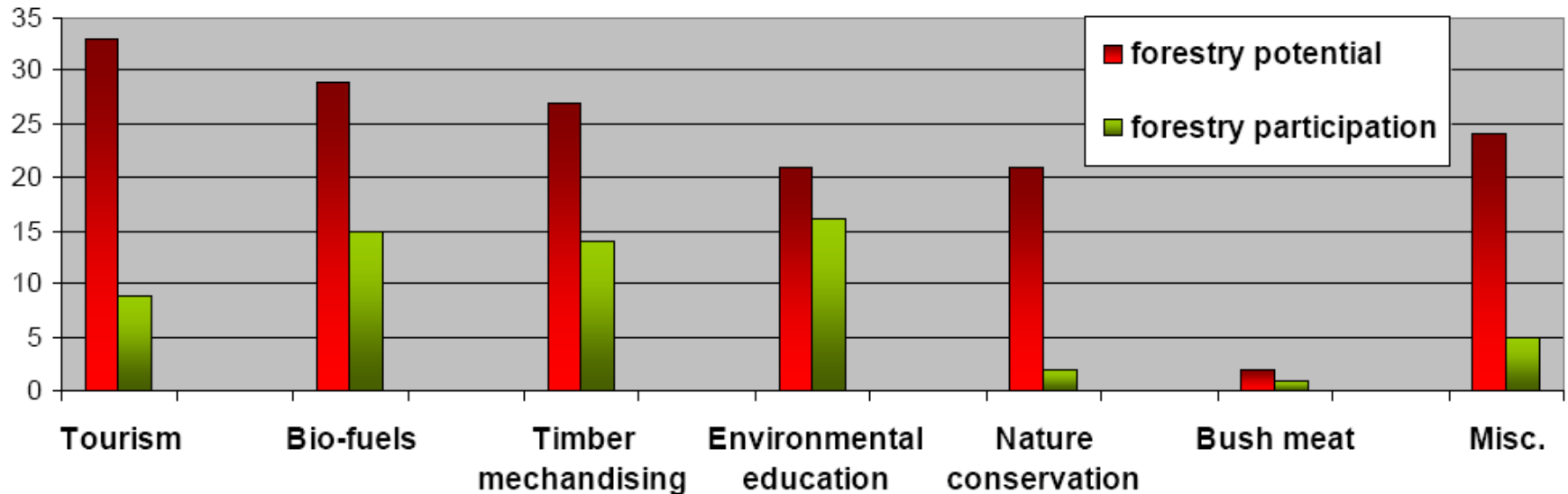
Forestry Measure	Member states
Processing and marketing of forestry products	<i>Finland, France</i>
Forests as ecological corridors	<i>Netherlands</i>
Urban forests (creating urban green space networks)	<i>Netherlands</i>
Forests and sustainable water management policy	<i>Netherlands</i>
Enhancement and expansion of native woodland	<i>Ireland</i>
Support for agro-forestry	<i>Finland</i>
Wood as an energy source	<i>Finland, Germany</i>
Sustainability and biodiversity guidelines	<i>Ireland</i>

# The role of forestry in IRD programmes

- Policy integration is a challenge for forestry (rural governance, new rural paradigm, neo-endogenous rural development, integrated rural development)
- Until today forestry plays a minor role in IRD
  - Sectors tend to avoid being coordinated by sector-external entities and programmes
  - Forestry lacks the ability, resources, institutional preconditions for cooperation
  - refusal among forestry actors (agricultural bias)



## The role of forestry in IRD programmes (2)



- participation of forestry is a question of *willingness, ability, opportunities*
- Are there specific factors of success for participation of forestry in IRD programs?

# Factors of success for participation of forestry in IRD

1. Resources
2. Dedicated promoters
3. Problem pressure *and* willingness to find solutions
4. Win-win-situations
5. Allies
6. Strong advocates
7. Active management of the „project foreign policy“
8. Competency in processes, give-and-take, ability to learn
9. Connectivity

# Future potential of forestry and FBIs

- important role in rural economies
- strong potential to contribute to a sustainable future of Europe, for instance in the following fields:
  - Recreation and tourism;
  - Nature protection, biodiversity conservation and landscape amenities;
  - Protective functions such as against natural hazards;
  - Bio-energy production
  - climate change mitigation
  - Bio-based products, including food, fibres, chemicals and wood construction



## Conclusions (1)

- Fundamental differences in forest resources, ownership, role of forests, their societal perception and the institutional set-up in the countries in this group (e.g. Netherlands, Finland)
- Forestry measures in IRD underfunded for a long time, bureaucratic procedures - positive tendency now
- forestry participation in IRD is promising and challenging at the same time



## Conclusions (2)

- Key issues for forestry in rural areas in Central-North European countries
  - production and competitiveness vs. amenity
  - bio-based energy and sustainability
  - integration vs. segregation/wilderness
  - rural identity, urban-rural interface, „rural islands“
  - natural disasters





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# Rural area classes and predominant value orientation

Rural areas	Predominant value orientation
Rural area with urban characteristics	Urban based values
Diversified area	Combination of urban and rural based values
Agricultural/growth area	Traditional rural based values emphasizing agricultural production processes
Agricultural/decline area	Traditional rural based values emphasizing agricultural production processes
Remote area	Increasing flux of urban based values due to impact of migrants and tourists