Regional news

SIMWOOD in Brussels

The work of the SIMWOOD project was presented at a Club du Bois meeting at the European Parliament in Brussels on 20 April.

The meeting was organised by the European Organisation of the Sawmill Industry (EOS), the European Panel Federation (EPF) and the European Confederation of Woodworking Industries (CEI-Bois), and included MEPs and stakeholder representatives.

Andreas Kleinschmit von Lengefeld from SIMWOOD partner FCBA gave an overview of the project, and highlighted the growing demand for wood.

>> More information

Investing in the forest sector

The Nordeste Forest Council (CFNor) met on 20 April in Bragança. CFNor is an informal group of people linked to the forest sector in the Nordeste Transmontano region of Portugal, and was created under the SIMWOOD project in 2015. The group aims to contribute to the promotion of forestry in this region, increasing the supply of goods and services from the region's forests and promoting sustainable development.

Photo: IPB

Sixteen participants attended from a variety of organisations, including the Portuguese Forest Service (ICNF), the Intermunicipal Community of Trás-os Montes, the National Centre of Competences in Dried Fruits, the Association of Wood and Furniture Industries of Portugal, and several companies.

The audience heard the latest results from the CIMO/IPB SIMWOOD team, including tools to support management, evaluation of logistics costs and decision-making on planning and management of forest resources in the Nordeste region. These tools were considered essential, and should be used in the review of the Regional Forest Management Plans now begun, especially in the integrated management of forest stands and in the distribution and marketing of products.

Photo: IPB

The priority areas for the promotion of the forest sector in the Nordeste region and the mechanisms that can promote it were discussed. The high diversity of forests, forest products and services in the region represents an equally diverse set of opportunities for the development of economic initiatives related to the production, processing and distribution of forest products, with the potential to create jobs and wealth and for fixing population in the region.

The production of energy at local and municipal levels from forest biomass based on efficient processes and low environmental impacts, wood processing in sawmills or other units in the forest and in the region and the payment of ecosystem

services to forest owners contributing to their supply were the most discussed topics.

There was however, a trend to consider multifunctional forest management a priority, combining the production of the woody material with the production of non-wood forest products such as mushrooms, resin and others, and provide other services such as the production and regulation of water quality, carbon sequestration and maintenance of the aesthetic and cultural value of forest landscapes.

The meeting established concrete links between decision-makers, businessman, industrials, forest producers, technicians and scientists, facing real opportunities for the development of a strong forest sector in the Northeast of Portugal.

Training of Forest Service managers

On 7 April the local SIMWOOD team organized a one-day training session in Bragança (Nordeste Transmontano, Portugal) for managers from the Portuguese Forest Service (INCF). Four managers attended the session, two of them from the Bragança office of ICNF, all directly involved in forest planning and management in the North region.

The session's objective was to introduce the major tools developed within SIMWOOD regarding the management of forest stands and forest landscapes in the region, and to receive some feedback on them. These tools include a forest growth and yield simulator (FlorNExt©), a landscape forest management simulator (FlorNExtPro©) and a transport cost and emissions calculator (WRoute©).

The tools operate at local and regional scales defining optimal forest management practices and extractable volume and are the core of the decision support system (DSS) to be implemented and tested in the Nordeste Pilot Project.

>> Access the FlorNExt© application

Recent project publications

Fernando Pérez-Rodríguez, Luís Nunes, João Azevedo

A software tool for accurate assessment of costs and CO_2 emissions in wood transport using OpenStreetMap©
Mathematical and Computational Forestry & Natural-Resource Sciences 8(1):35-53

Costs and environmental impacts are key elements in forest logistics and they must part of decision-making. The evaluation of transportation fuel costs and carbon emissions depend on spatial and non-spatial data but in many cases the first type of data are difficult to obtain. On the other hand, the availability of software tools to evaluate with rigor transportation fuel quantities and costs and emissions of carbon dioxide is limited.

We present a software tool that combines two empirical validated models of truck transportation using DEM and an open spatial data tool, specifically OpenStreetMap©. The tool provides outputs such as maps with distribution of transport performance (relation between beeline and real road distances), cost and CO_2 emissions for four types of truck. These outputs can be successfully included in forest decision-making support systems. Finally, in this work we applied the tool in a particular case of forest logistics in northeastern Portugal.

Press round up

SIMWOOD's work in its 17 regions has been featured in the media over the last few months.

The project's work in the Småland region was highlighted in the county of Kronoberg's monthly newsletter:

>> Månadens innovativa exempel: SimWood ('The regional innovative example')