

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**12 January 2016**

### **SIMWOOD project makes good progress**

The SIMWOOD Mid-Term Conference took place at Kilkenny Castle and JFK Memorial Park and Arboretum, Wexford, in Ireland from 30 November to 2 December. It brought together over 70 forest-related scientists and stakeholders from all over Europe, many of whom were Irish non-members of the SIMWOOD project.

The conference highlighted that SIMWOOD is making good headway. Project coordinator, Roland Schreiber (Bavarian Forest Institute) said “Thanks to the constructive cooperation between the project partners we made significant progress in achieving the set objectives. The identified wood mobilisation solutions will be implemented and tested in the model regions and the gained experience will be compiled in our information system “Mobiliser” and made available for a broader public. We are looking forward to an interesting and challenging 2016!”

The event was opened with welcoming words and a series of recommendations for wood mobilisation by experts from [COFORD](#), the Council for Forest Research and Development, a representative body from the forest sector in Ireland.

The SIMWOOD project was praised by the representatives of its Advisory Board of the Regions, following an overview given by Roland Schreiber and Áine Ní Dhubháin (University College Dublin) with a summary of project status, regional profiles and focus studies.

Feedback was also positive regarding the progress of the pilot projects which aim to improve wood mobilisation in the 14 SIMWOOD regions. A presentation revealed that the number of studies found in literature evaluating the measures in favour of mobilisation is very low.

SIMWOOD’s mobilisation support tool known as the “Mobiliser” was demonstrated for the first time by Richard Sikkema (Joint Research Centre). He showed how this tool could provide relevant information on the lessons learned in the project in an interactive way, for example using search tools, maps, wiki, etc. The Mobiliser tool will be launched in 2017.

During the fieldtrip, the participants visited a broadleaf forest in County Wexford, where the owner is diversifying the plantations and their products as a response to an increasing demand for fuelwood (including wood chips). In this way, as much added value from the wood is captured as possible and forestry work can be paid for. The forest owner also demonstrated how financial support has contributed to creating roads and how the advice of management support groups like the [Irish Wood Producers](#) have helped to plan wood mobilisation.

## **More information**

In November 2013, 28 organisations from 11 countries (Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and United Kingdom) began the European collaboration FP7 project **SIMWOOD (Sustainable Innovative Mobilisation of Wood)**.

This four-year project seeks to provide solutions on how to mobilise forest owners, promote collaborative forest management and ensure sustainable forest functions in order to mobilise the present unlocked wood resources in Europe.

More information about the project is available on its website: [www.simwood-project.eu](http://www.simwood-project.eu)

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