

THE 3 PILOT FORESTRY AREAS



The project concerns **three forestry areas** of the Tuscan-Emilian Apennines and alpine forests:

- 1 The Forlivese Regional Forestry Land:** a forest area of 24,000 hectares belonging to the **Emilia Romagna Region**, with the presence of different forestry companies which harvest about 10,000 m³ of wood per year, mainly for energy use;
- 2 The Consortium Comunale Parmensi:** a forest area of about 8,000 hectares belonging to the **Emilia Romagna Region**, with 2,000 hectares PEFC certified and managed by the Adjustment Plans approved by the regional government. The 100 or so local forestry companies harvest about 10,000 m³ of fuel wood per year, mainly for energy use;
- 3 The Fusine Regional Land:** a PEFC certified forestry area of 2,000 hectares belonging to the **Friuli Venezia Giulia Autonomous Region**, which produces 2,000 m³ of wood per year. The specific feature of this area is related to the type of wood grown there, timber suitable for use in the furniture industry and in construction.



The **LIFE PROGRAMME** is a financial tool proposed by the European Union to support, at EU level, the measures and projects to safeguard biodiversity and nature through awareness-raising policies on environmental issues. The programme's general aim is to contribute to the implementation, updating and development of EU policies and legislation concerning the environment and climate through the co-funding of innovative projects that demonstrate the efficacy of new techniques and methodologies in the environmental field.



NATURA 2000 is the main instrument of the EU for biodiversity conservation. It involves a network of core breeding and resting sites for rare and threatened species and some rare natural protected habitat types stretching across all the EU, both on land and at sea.



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Partner:



the ENHANCEMENT OF FORESTRY SYSTEM

INCREASING SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY MANAGEMENT, PROMOTING THE ECOSYSTEM SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE FORESTS THEMSELVES, IMPROVING THE WOOD PRODUCTION PROCESS



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THE LIFE CO2PES&PEF PROJECT

FORESTS ARE A PRIMARY RESOURCE FOR SUSTAINING LIFE ON OUR PLANET.

ITALY HAS A HIGH LEVEL OF FORESTRY PROTECTION. HOWEVER, NOTABLE PROBLEMS EXIST IN THE PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF FORESTRY ACTIVITIES. CURRENTLY, ONLY 19% OF STATE FORESTS IS SUBJECT TO PLANNING, WITH AN EVEN LOWER RATE IN FORESTRY MANAGEMENT.

THIS HAS CONSEQUENCES ON THE FORESTS' VULNERABILITY TO CLIMATE CHANGE AND EXTREME EVENTS SUCH AS FIRES AND WINDTHROW, AS WELL AS ON THE TERRITORY'S SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY. GIVEN THAT 80% OF THE WOOD PROCESSED IN ITALY COMES FROM ABROAD, ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT SOURCES OF INCOME FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES IS BEING OVERLOOKED.

THEREFORE, **THE LIFE CO2PES&PEF PROJECT** BEGINS FROM THE IDEA OF COMBINING FOREST CONSERVATION AND ITS PROCESSES AND SERVICES WITH THE **NEED TO INCREASE CO₂ SEQUESTRATION, DECREASE CARBON LOSS DUE TO EXTREME EVENTS AND MAXIMISE FOREST GROWTH** WITHOUT LOSING ITS ROLE IN SUPPLYING RAW MATERIALS ESSENTIAL FOR INDUSTRY.

AN APPROACH THAT COMBINES WOOD HARVESTING WITH STRENGTHENING FOREST GROWTH OVER TIME, FOSTERING CO₂ SEQUESTRATION AND, AT THE SAME TIME, REDUCING THE RISKS OF FIRE AND WINDTHROW. **THIS IS ONE OF THE CHALLENGES THE PROJECT AIMS TO TACKLE.**

MAIN OBJECTIVES

1 To identify a set ecosystem services and assess their benefits in the three relevant forestry areas.

The analysis serves to assess the contribution of sustainable forestry management, the conservation and the increase in carbon sink and stock capacity and other ecosystem services; to establish a register of ecosystem services certification; to provide an economic evaluation of the ecosystem services supported and/or incentivised and/or arising from the bureaucratic practices of forestry management;

2 To improve the wood production system.

Analyses of the life cycle of wood products complying with the PEF methodology (EU Recommendation 2013/179) to reduce the environmental impacts of these products and their production processes. Specifically, studies, performance improvement plans and tools will be developed to assist the companies operating in the forestry and wood sector in the application of the PEF methodology and in their consequent performance improvement;

3 To create an ecosystem credit scheme to finance these ecosystem services.

The LIFE CO2PES&PEF Project aims to establish a validation protocol for the services, that may be certified, so as to turn the relevant ecosystem services into “products” with a monetary value. For this, an ecosystem credit register and market will be created and, as well, an online platform will be set up with a software to manage ecosystem credit trading between suppliers and buyers;

4 To draw up an information toolkit for the policy authorities and policy-makers.

The toolkit may be replicated by local, national and European institutions and contains information on developing adjustment plans, guidelines for good practices to increase forestry ecosystem services to be included in the Regional Rural Development Plan, and incentives for the use of wood following the ‘waterfall’ methodology.

PES: PAYMENT OF ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

LIFE CO2PES&PEF is aimed at strengthening the generation of Italian forest ecosystem services based on two specific activities:

- 1 sustainable and “climate-smart” forestry management, which maintains a high carbon sequestration selecting the most suitable trees to quickly absorb CO₂ and produce renewable resources such as wood, where there is long-term carbon sequestration;
- 2 reduction in the widespread risk of fires and storm damage, increasingly more likely due to climatic crisis, resulting in constant losses of sequestered CO₂.

To support the ecosystem services provided by the Italian forests and the development of a new and sustainable wood industry, the project will establish a register and an ecosystem credit scheme, similar to those of the international agreements on carbon emissions, but addressed to a voluntary market. A validation protocol for the services will turn the relevant ecosystem services into products with a monetary value.

PEF: PRODUCT ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT

The Product Environmental Footprint is a method to measure the environmental impacts of a product and/or service using specific indicators (impact categories), such as, for example, greenhouse gas emissions, water consumption and resource consumption. The PEF methodology is based on a Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) which assesses the “environmental footprint” of a product - from raw material extraction to processing, distribution and consumption or disposal -, thus, considering all the impacts throughout its entire life cycle.

The LIFE CO2PES&PEF Project also foresees the development of a preliminary analysis for some products of the wood sector, and on the basis of the findings, guidelines will be drawn up consistent with the Product Environmental Footprint Category Rules (PEFCR) that support other Italian and European organisations to further develop the methodology.

USEFUL PRODUCT TOOLS

The project provides for establishing support elements and tools useful for companies, forestry sector technicians and policy-makers. These are:

- 1 A toolkit for companies in the wood industry and the forestry sector, so the application of the PEF can be replicated in other contexts and assist companies in enhancing the procedures undertaken during the project, also for the purposes of Green Public Procurement;
- 2 A screening of three products from the wood industry, representative of the three pilot forestry areas following the PEF methodology (EU Rec 2013/179);
- 3 An operative plan to assist the companies in improving their product environmental performance on which the environmental footprint was calculated;
- 4 The development of a certification standard for the ecosystem services in order to link them to an economic quantification and place them on the environmental compensation market;
- 5 The defining of an ecosystem credit ‘negotiating box’;
- 6 The verification of the legislation and the organisational and management procedures to include the ecosystem credits in the green bonds;
- 7 The drawing up of policy guidelines for the regions involved;
- 8 The increase in the monitoring of forestry activities, forestry certification and ecosystem credit certification and management.

If you are interested in participating in the project visit the website:

lifeco2pesandpef.eu

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PROJECT PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITY

Buying ecosystem credits on the voluntary market is a great opportunity for companies and technicians in the forestry sector interested in the positive implications of the project. By participating in the ecosystem credit scheme, a company will:

- Support the development of a new and sustainable wood industry and the European policies aimed at creating credits in the Land Use, Land-use Change and Forestry sectors, contributing to setting up an economic and financial circle defending Italian and European forests and their climate-smart management, as requested in the recent EU Green Deal;
- Provide incentives for the supply of Italian wood, reducing the need for foreign raw material imports which today make up about 80% of what is processed in the wood and wood-furnishing supply chain. The increase in the supply of Italian raw material will have positive implications in terms of employment for the initial phase processing industries, heavily hit over the last decades, and will result in increasing the managed and certified forestry areas improving the quality of the ecosystem services. The decreased demand for foreign wood imports will significantly contribute to reducing the risk of foreign illegal or non-sustainable wood harvesting. However, above all, the use of ‘local’ raw materials will make the entire supply chain, including the national secondary processing phases and the country’s manufacturing excellence, more sustainable;
- Allow for investing in concrete high-visibility environmental tools, with the possibility to participate in a voluntary instead of a mandatory market;
- Enter as a part of an online platform that manages the ecosystem credit trading between suppliers and buyers;
- Receive the results of a first experimentation. An initial series of ecosystem credits will be created for at least two of the three pilot areas of 20 hectares and will be assigned to a selected group of companies, in order to evaluate the role of the trading platform.