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and



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European regions fostering
innovation for sustainable
production and efficient use
of woody biomass

www.rokwood.eu

CONTRACT N°: 319956

Starting date: 1st December, 2012

Duration: 36 months



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Biomass is increasingly being seen as an important energy source for Europe. In 2009, the European Commission (EC) set a binding target for renewable energy to comprise a 20% share of the overall EU energy mix by 2020.

This could be achieved by tripling the amount of biomass energy used compared to the figure in 1997. The production of wood chips from woodland management and the growing of dedicated woody energy crops is key to this expansion. These sources could provide up to 50% of the target.



The ROKWOOD project is aiming to help create the right market conditions and improve the policy framework for the increased planting and use of woody energy crops grown in short rotations plantations (SRPs). These crops include willow, poplar, Robinia, Eucalyptus and Paulownia.

ROKWOOD supports the transnational cooperation between six European research-driven clusters. Each of the participating clusters in Germany, Spain, Sweden, Poland, Ireland and United Kingdom comprises a relevant research body, a business and a local authority.



ROKWOOD OBJECTIVES

- Find out the main obstacles and barriers hindering the development of local biomass regions in Europe.
- Generate at least 10 innovative cooperative project ideas tackling the technical barriers (e.g. harvesting, drying technologies).
- Identify financial resources for the development of innovative products and services in this sector.
- Reach as many stakeholders as possible by effective dissemination activities.

ROKWOOD IMPACT

Meeting this target is a tall order but should bring huge opportunities for energy crop growers and technology providers. Currently there are around 60,000 hectares of SRPs in cultivation. This needs to rise to a predicted 4.5 million hectares to meet the targets.

More than 1 million European farmers are expected to participate in woody biomass production schemes by 2020.

Local supply of biomass from SRPs will increase security of fuel supply, help stabilize energy prices, keep revenue in the local economy, and reduce carbon emissions.

Significant numbers of jobs will be created in machinery production, wood chip transportation and through the manufacture, installation and maintenance of biomass systems.

