

## Forest EcoValue

### Supporting multiple forest ecosystem services through new circular/green/bio markets and value chains

The Forest EcoValue project, co-financed by the Interreg Alpine Space Programme, aims to propose sustainable business models and payment schemes for forest maintenance, by maximizing the value of ecosystem services.

Forests play a key role for climate change mitigation and resilience in the Alpine region, offering multiple ecosystem services, environmental social benefits, like CO<sup>2</sup> absorption, air pollution reduction, increase of biodiversity, resilience to natural risks and many others.

Alpine forests are threatened by abandonment, climate change and territorial degradation that progressively lead to a pauperization of natural resources and to a decrease in the provision of forest ecosystem services.

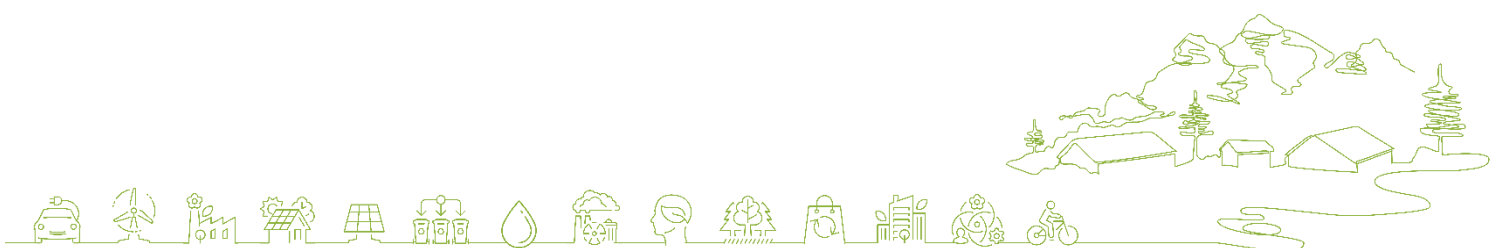
As a result, forests maintenance costs are high and economic sustainability for the public and private owners is far from being reached: public funds and the revenues generated by the traditional wood value chains are no longer sufficient and the attraction of additional resources becomes an evident need.

Some compelling examples of economic valuation methods and payment schemes already exist, such as for carbon credits, but it is necessary to explore new business models and define the economic conditions in relation to the multiple ecosystem services of forests.

### Main project challenges

The Forest EcoValue project is based on the acknowledgment that restoring and maintaining healthy forests can generate a value for the benefit of the whole Alpine region, as well as green businesses and sustainable job opportunities for the alpine communities.

The Forest EcoValue project intends to tackle this challenge and turn it into an opportunity, by developing **innovative sustainable win-win business models for forest management and maintenance**, based on green value chains, and involving different sectors (energy, construction, chemistry/pharma, food, recreation etc.), public and private actors, as well as citizens. The project will propose **new frameworks for public-private markets and payment schemes**, maximizing the value of forest ecosystem services towards the regional value chains.



## Project Activities

The proposed solutions will be tested in a pilot action consisting of a network of 5 Living Labs (In Austria, France, Germany, Italy and Slovenia).

The project will focus on a subset of ecosystem services from the following categories: **provisioning** (e.g. biomass, raw materials, chemicals); **regulation** (e.g. biodiversity, natural risk reduction, CO2 absorption); **cultural** (e.g. recreation, habitat experience, health).

On the selected subset of forest ecosystem services (FES) the project will:

- Map and analyse forests' delivery capacity
- Identify and estimate the economic potential, define business models and markets frameworks
- Test the models and tools in the Living Labs by involving local stakeholders
- Drive a consultation on the need for innovative policies to foster alpine forests' maintenance, FES markets and green value chains
- Release transferable methodologies, tools, models and policy proposals
- Ensure training and capacity building activities

### WP1: Setting the Ecological & Economic framework

Two interrelated working groups will address the bio-physical and economic dimensions and release a common proposal on data and methods to set-up effective market frameworks for the selected FES.

### WP2: Testing an economic approach for managing FES in a network of 5 Living Labs

**Transferable guidelines and tools** for the establishment of public-private markets for the selected FES in alpine communities.

**Regional roadmaps** adopted by Stakeholders in the Living Lab areas, on actions and next steps for further implementation

**Regional feasibility assessment** for the LL territories based on the pilot experience; recommendations.

### WP3: Release of validated tools and proposals for policy actions; dissemination

Multi-regional and multilevel **policy dialogues** on how to contribute to create enabling conditions for FES markets

**Policy memos** on improvements to enable/facilitate the development of FES markets and forest-based value chains in the Alpine Region

**Regional capacity building workshops** in each LL, addressed to forest owners, businesses, public administrations

Online **summer school** for SMEs and public/private operators in the Alpine Region



## Partnership

The Forest EcoValue project brings together partners from 5 European countries and involves 10 organizations of very different types and with complementary skills: ecosystem services mapping, forest management, green economy value chains, environmental economics, financial modelling, policy analysis and training.

- IT Finpiemonte SpA – Regional financial and development agency (Coordinator)
- IT FLA - Lombardy Foundation for the Environment
- IT Lombardy Green Chemistry Association
- AU Biobase – Austrian innovation platform for bio-economy and circular economy
- AU University of Graz
- SI Slovenia Forest Service
- DE Ifuplan - Institute for Environmental Planning and Spatial Development GmbH & Co. KG
- FR INRAE National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and the Environment
- FR Regional Centre for Forest Property Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes
- FR Forests National Office

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