SPEED-UP INNOVATIONS
FOREST-BASED SECTOR TECHNOLOGY PLATFORM IN ACTION

22-23 November, 2006 in the Sibelius Hall, Lahti, Finland

European Forest-Based Sector Technology Platform proceeds from strategy to action

Concrete projects according to the European Forest-Based Sector Technology Platform's Strategic Research Agenda must be prepared rapidly so that available funds can be steered to the sector. The importance of the matter was emphasized at the sector's international conference on R&D in Lahti, Finland on 22-23 November 2006. Around 400 research and financing experts from all over Europe are attending the conference.

The EU's 7th Framework Programme outlines the focuses of European research and financing in 2007-2013. The research budget amounts to over 50 billion euros. Applications are being invited and the European forest-based sector considers it essential to be strongly involved in the first round of applications. "Over a thousand European experts from the forest industries and forestry, research institutes, universities and branch organizations have prepared the forest-based sector's strategic research programme for the past three years and now is the time to reap the benefits," says Mr. Markku Lehtonen, the chairman of the conference's preparatory committee.

The WoodWisdom-Net programme has also been opened to European research projects. In planning the programme attention was paid to the Forest-Based Sector Technology Platform's research agenda and national research strategies in the field. WoodWisdom-Net is a concrete result of European cooperation in the forest sector among the European Commission, national research financers, the forest industries and research organizations in the field.

Innovation is one of the themes of the Finnish Presidency of the EU. The Forest-Based Sector Technology Platform will help provide a basis for the sector's competitiveness in Europe. Investments must be made in research so that the sector can renew itself, grow and remain competitive. The EU's research programme emphasizes the utilization of renewable resources and sources of energy and governing climate change, among other things. The forest industries are in an excellent position to address these issues.

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European Technology Platforms are a new form of cooperation designed to coordinate research and financing. The Forest-Based Sector Technology Platform brings together key actors in the sector with the aim of spurring joint research efforts in Europe. It provides industry with the possibility to focus and coordinate resources for research in a way that supports companies' business objectives and creates a good foundation for improving competitiveness through R&D.

The Forest-Based Sector Technology Platform has defined a vision for 2030 according to which the European forest-based sector is a competitive, knowledge-based industry that is customer-driven, enjoys global technological leadership and plays a key role in promoting sustainable development. Europe has shifted significantly to utilizing sustainable raw materials by ensuring the multiple use of forests. The European Forest-Based Sector Technology Platform's Strategic Research Agenda maps out areas in which research and development need to focus in future in order to achieve the vision.

More at www.forestplatform.org

CEI-Bois cepi confederation of european paper industries CEPF WoodWisdom-Net EUROPEAN COMMISSION Forest-Based Sector Technology Platform