

# BENWOOD Project

## **EU research is developing guidelines for production of biomass from forests' nurseries**

***The €1 million EU research project "Benwood" is developing guidelines for farmers and stakeholders from the energy and biomass sector in order to exploit in the most sustainable way biomass generation from the "Short Rotation Forestry" (SRF) method. The project aims also to enhance the Afforestation and Reforestation projects in developing countries.***

"Short Rotation Forestry" (SRF) allows the creation of biomass used in the green energy industry and replacing the fossil fuels. This system uses pest resistant deciduous trees, adapted to local climates and soils and able to quickly rebuilt new shoots after being cut. Cultivated and harvested these trees are a source of biomass.

Benwood foresees also exchange of best practices and business models, eligible planting material and field maintenance. Up to date scientists stressed for example the importance to look at the soil's depletion of organic matter when making land use planning. Lots of areas in countries suffer from nutrient depletion and as well of a strong reduction of the content of organic matter in the soil. Short Rotation Forestry (SRF) can help in regional planning where dung (manure) is used as a fuel. Instead of being burnt, the manure should rather go to the fields. Short Rotation Forestry could then provide with wood to replace dung fuel.

A relevant aspect of Benwood is its international dimension, with the participation of researchers from 12 countries including Brazil, China, India and Africa and the special attention to the developing countries needs and specificities in order to help the to implement the Clean Developing Mechanism (CDM) and Joint Implementation (JI) under the Kyoto Protocol. The CDM allows industrialised countries to provide money as project co-financing to a developing country power plant replacing its coal-firing by biomass firing, for example. The project reduces the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of that power plant. The emission reduction is accounted for in the balance of the state that has provided the co-financing.

These two types of project-based mechanisms (CDM and JI) make possible for industrialised countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in other countries by means of projects, thereby offsetting their own emissions and fulfilling part of the Kyoto goal. It is also a valuable contribution towards sustainable development of the developing countries, particularly through the transfer of environmentally friendly technologies.

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