



Call for Papers – Abstracts

Med Bioenergy Clusters

Dr. FALLAS Yannis, University of Western Macedonia (external associate)

Abstract

The development of Clusters around the Mediterranean Basin has been one of the key horizontal pillars of the Strategic Med project Proforbiomed, which aimed at the energetic exploitation of residual forest biomass in the partner regions from six EU Med countries: Greece, Slovenia, Italy, France, Spain and Portugal.

The University of Western Macedonia, together with the Region of Western Macedonia, established the Cluster of Bioenergy and Environment of Western Macedonia, as a not-for-profit company, with 21 initial members from the Triple Helix of the Region: public sector, enterprises and research and development and innovation actors. Its aim is to develop the exploitation of biomass for domestic use, district heating networks, co-firing with lignite, improvement of energy efficiency, etc, based on forestal and agricultural biomass. The establishment followed a long path of cooperation links developed over a decade through European (Innovative Actions, Interreg, FP7, etc) and national (Regional Innovation Poles, etc) programmes. Following its establishment, CluBE has undertaken an information campaign that has revealed a great interest of regional actors, who are willing to join forces with the initial members, thus this number is expected to double soon.

The success of CluBE has been thereafter transferred to other Med Regions as well: thus, UoWM has animated meetings organized by the local partners in Algarve (Pt), Solsona and Valencia (Es), Sondrio and Viterbo (It), Patras (Gr). The presentations made by UoWM during these meetings and the discussions that followed revealed a great interest of local and regional stakeholders to participate in such efforts, with important results on the economic and social development, namely in less favored rural areas, as well as on environmental and wild fire protection.

Overall, developing clusters in a traditional sector of the economy is more challenging but also more promising for the economic development of regions lagging behind.