## ABOUT THE PROJECT

### SIMWOOD – Sustainable Innovative Mobilisation of Wood

**Duration:** 4 years (2013–2017)
**Budget:** 7.5 million euros
(EU contribution 5.9 million euros)
**Funder:** EU 7th Framework Programme (FP7)
**Partners:** a total of 28 organisations
from 11 European countries

### National research organisations



### Small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs)



### European research organisations



### Project support organisations

Bavarian Research Alliance

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www.simwood-project.eu

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**Find out about SIMWOOD in your region:**
www.simwood-project.eu/contacts.html

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# SIMWOOD

Sustainable Innovative
Mobilisation of Wood

## FORESTS ARE A MAJOR NATURAL RESOURCE

Forests cover 159 million hectares or 37% of Europe's land area (Eurostat 2013). As a major biological resource they have multiple ecological, economic and social functions. They provide a multitude of forest products – and are the backbone for employment and growth in forestry and numerous industries which use wood as a raw material.

Europe's forest-based industries have 4–5 million employees, around 600,000 enterprises and a turnover of 550 billion Euro.

## AN INCREASING DEMAND FOR WOOD

The sector's forecasts for the coming decades predict a substantial increase in the demand for wood: 'solid' uses will grow steadily, while new chemical uses of wood will emerge and start to gain momentum. The highest growth rate is expected in bioenergy – wood energy plays a critical role in Europe's future renewable energy supply and the achievement of climate protection objectives.

Current trends in increasing demand are expected to lead to a **scarcity of wood,** stronger competition and structural shifts in the forest sector.

## UNLOCKING FOREST RESOURCES

There is lots of unused wood potential in European forests. Most of this is 'locked' in forests that belong to an estimated **16 million private forest owners.**

Forest ownership is changing. Rural owners, together with their capacity for actively managing their own forests, are declining. The new generation of forest owners lives a more modern urban lifestyle and loses interest in their land or sees other priorities than timber production.

## SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL BARRIERS

The main challenges in forest ownership are demographic change, the increasing fragmentation of forest lands and the unstable income incentives from timber sales per owner.

- Timber is no longer their first priority and other uses such as recreation or nature conservation are gaining in importance, so **integrated forest land use approaches** are needed.
- In a marginal/unstable income situation, novel practices have to offer economically viable solutions, so **collaborative forest management approaches** are required.
- The **transfer of useable forestry knowledge** to forest owners and stakeholders is also needed.

## ENVIRONMENTAL BARRIERS

Sustainable forest management has to ensure a variety of forest functions as well as wood production. There is growing demand from society for non-economic ecosystem services like biodiversity conservation and water quality regulation.

## SIMWOOD

The SIMWOOD project aims to **mobilise forest owners, promote collaborative forest management and ensure sustainable forest functions.**

The project concentrates on **five research themes:** forest governance; forest ownership; forest management; forest functions; forest harvesting.

It carries out case studies in **14 model regions,** with the help of local stakeholders and develops regional profiles, containing:
- Information about each region's challenges and opportunities for wood mobilisation
- Goals and strategies, and proposed measures
- Criteria and indicators for cross-regional comparison of wood mobilisation

The proposed solutions will be tested, and this information and analysis will feed into the project's main output: the **SIMWOOD Mobiliser.**

This **pan-European online information system** will help unlock substantial forest resources in a sustainable manner, and spread transferable solutions and viable policies across Europe.