

SUMMARY OF THE FRENCH NRA



With 16 millions of hectares of forest land, a biological production of 103 millions of m³, France has access to a considerable, and still increasing, amount of **renewable natural resource**. However, the balance of trade of the sector is in the red, due to massive imports, in particular for wood furniture industries.

In France, the mobilization of this resource with economically acceptable costs faces major issues: this resource is more and more **in competition** with southern hemisphere forests with fastest growth and genetically mastered quality.

With its qualities, this resource and its multiple products and associated uses (wood, paper, energy, services and activities ...) can play a **key role in the sustainable development** of society (trapping CO₂ into constructions, use of bio-products, renewable energy source ...). French industries of the sector will contribute to this only by staying competitive on the international level; conceiving **products and services with a high added value** reaching the requirements of customers, and discovering **innovative valuations**.

To reach these conditions of success, important **investments in research and development** are required. However wood is one of the material man has used for a long time, the scientific and technical community has only few data on it. It is probably because this material, that can be used directly, was not created by man unlike metal, glass, concrete ... and so, was not studied on all its properties.

Taking account of French specificities, which are identical for most of Southern Europe countries (diversity of forest resource, decisive role of rural development, important number of forest owners, sector mostly composed by SME, location of research institutes), **the French forest-based sector has some priority research areas**.

The French **NRA (National Research Agenda)** describes these priorities **for the 10 years coming**. This document was produced by a collective action gathering all stakeholders : public and private forest owners, forest managers, industries, research institutes, public bodies. It is based on the SRA (Strategic Research Agenda) settled by the **Forest-based sector Technology Platform (FTP)**, in 2005, and for which stakeholders from 18 member nations had already contributed.

In cohesion with the proposals of the national forest program, the NRA stresses **14 areas** on which research communities and public and private funds have to focus in priority, in order to help the sector's companies to **face the challenges of globalization** and get advantage of **development opportunities**.

The SRA had identified 26 priority research areas, whereas the NRA only keeps 14 of them, taken as the most pertinent to fit French issues.

The list below present them referring to strategic objectives and numbering defined by the European FTP.

□ **Strategic objective 1**

Development of innovative products for changing markets and customer needs

- 1-1** A new generation of functional packaging
- 1-2** Paper as a partner in communication, education and learning
- 1-4 & 1-5** Living and building with wood
- 1-8** Pulp, energy and chemicals from wood bio-refinery
- 1-9** "Green" specialty chemicals
- 1-10** New generation of composites

□ **Strategic objective 2**

Development of intelligent and efficient manufacturing processes, including reduced energy consumption

- 2-2 & 2-5** Processes optimising raw material consumption
- 2-6** Performant processes including bio-energy production from forest biomass

□ **Strategic objective 3**

Enhancing availability and use of forest biomass for products and energy

- 3-1** Trees for the future
- 3-2** "Tailor-made" wood supply

□ **Strategic objective 4**

Meeting the multifunctional demands on forest resources and their sustainable management

- 4-1 & 1-6** Forests for multiple needs
- 4-3** Adapting forestry to changes

□ **Strategic objective 5**

The sector in a societal perspective

- 5-1** Assessing the overall performance of the sector
- 5-2** Instruments for good forest-sector governance

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