



BRANCHES

# Boosting RuAI bioeconomy Networks following multi-actors approaCHES

**Deliverable D2.2: Summary report 2 of workshops**

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**&**

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<b>Title</b>	Deliverable D2.2: Summary report 2 of workshops
<b>Creator</b>	Raffaele Spinelli & Robert Prinz
<b>Description</b>	The deliverable summarises the second set of conducted BRANCHES WP2 workshops in WP2 partner countries.
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The sole responsibility for the content of the workshop reports stated in the Workshop Annex (A to D) lies with the authors of the individual workshop reports or the hosts of the events. It does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the author of the deliverable, who is not responsible for images, videos or any use that maybe made of the information contained therein.

## 1 Goal of Workshops

“Workshops” aim to achieving several goals at one time, and namely:

Workshops are a fundamental tool to stimulate a two-way exchange of knowledge between the three main stakeholder groups: researchers, advisors and farmers/foresters. Therefore, workshops allow quick access to the latest research results to advisors and farmers/foresters, and at the same time make scientists aware of practitioners’ needs and inform them about the progress of informal innovation (that is: innovation achieved independently by practitioners). By analyzing workshop reports, one can eventually map the current needs and interests of supply chains by raw-material type (e.g. agro- and forest biomass, and short rotation coppice). Experts and practitioners are invited to specific tailored workshops, and active discussion between researchers and foresters, farmers and entrepreneurs is promoted. The Technical Partners (TPs) and Sectorial Partners (SPs) have the task of organizing the contents of all workshop reports, while TPs prepare and translate the documentation. In the framework of the present project, workshops are regularly held within the context of relevant sectorial fairs or events to keep the National Thematic Networks (NTN) alive and promote personal contacts.

## 2 Type of Workshop

Workshops can be held as online, physical or hybrid events; they can take place in combination with other events (fairs, tradeshows etc.) or stand alone, depending on the target groups, the aim of the workshop and the available opportunities. The focus of a workshop can be regional, National, or international. Workshops can focus specifically on one of the BRANCHES working packages (WP) or cover the scope of several WPs. National workshops are conducted mainly in local language to support BRANCHES’s bottom-up approach which aims to enable the widest possible participation. However, in case of international events, they can also be held in English to allow a wider participation.

## 3 Number of Workshops

The BRANCHES plan includes 11 workshops on subjects covered by WP2. That number is divided among participant countries as follows:

- Finland:
  - 3 workshops
- Poland:
  - 3 workshops
- Spain:
  - 2 workshops
- Italy:
  - 3 workshops

During the second year (2022) of the BRANCHES project, WP2 has organized or co-organized a total of four workshops.

## 4 Practicalities

When organizing a Workshop, the following practical project guidelines were carefully considered:

- Workshops refer to the BRANCHES project
- Banners or roll-ups are installed at physical workshop sites to advertise the BRANCHES project.
- Photos or screenshots are taken at each Workshop
- Attendance lists are compiled, indicating: 1) date and place and 2) name, company, and Country of each attendee.

## 5 Workshop Reports

A Workshop report has been compiled for each workshop, to provide an overview of the participation, the topics discussed during the workshop and a summary of the main outcomes.

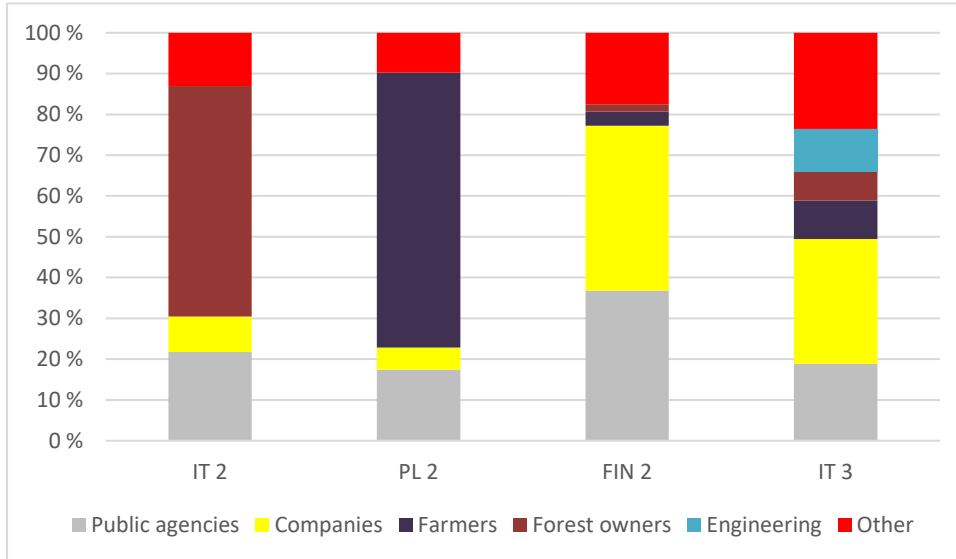
**In summary**, a total of four workshops were held in BRANCHES WP2 during 2022. Workshops were held in Finland (FIN 2), Italy (IT 2 and IT 3) and Poland (PL 2).

The four workshops had different goals and scopes: FIN 2 focused on Terminal Logistics in biomass supply chains, and targeted biomass suppliers specifically; IT 2 offered a general overview of innovative biomass products and supply chains to an audience consisting of forest owners, for the largest majority; PL 2 also offered a similar overview, but it targeted farmers instead; finally, IT 3 matched selected some BRANCHES Best Practices and EIP Agri Focus group members with similar interests in order to develop synergies and foster further cooperation. The different subjects and target audiences also differences in the audience numbers and characteristics. Overall, the four workshops were attended by 257 participants, with a minimum of 23 (IT2 – regional and specifically targeting forest owners) and a maximum of 92 (PL2 – regional but open to the larger world of agriculture). FIN 2 and IT 3 were attended by 57 and 85 participants, respectively.

A pictorial representation of audience composition is presented in the following Figure 1.

Obviously, forest owners were the dominant presence in IT 2 while farmers in PL2, given that those two events targeted specifically those professional groups. Companies were especially well represented in FIN

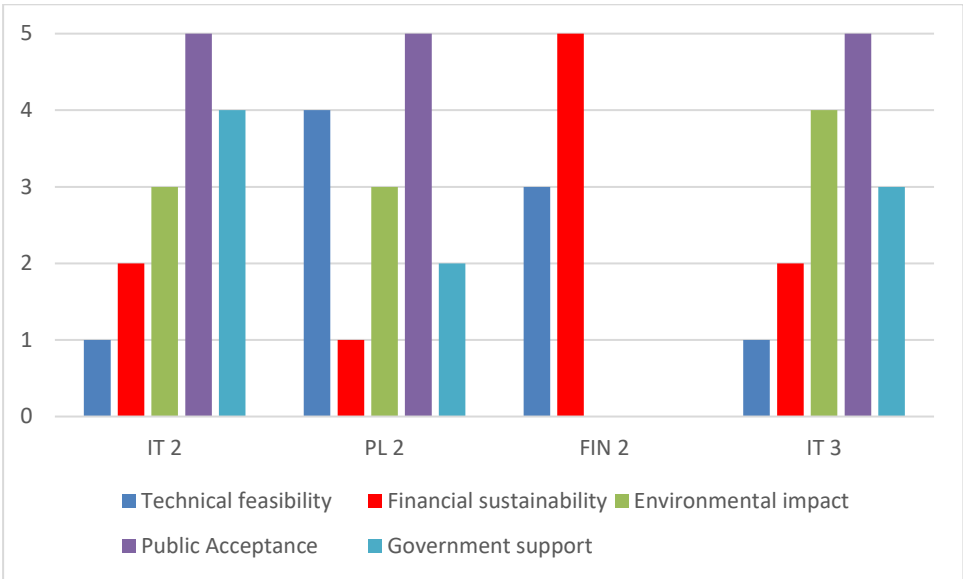
2 and IT 3, since the subject of those two Workshop was quite technical, focusing on new techniques, technology and products.



**Figure 1** – Participant composition for the Workshops conducted during Year 2

All workshops resulted in intense networking and generally allowed recruiting new members into the **National Technical Networks (NTNs)**. In all the four workshops, were presented some selected best practices and feedback was sought about their replicability within the regional and business environment of participants. Additional feedback about the fundamental requirements for the successful introduction of the proposed innovation, was obtained by using a simple structured questionnaire common to all BRANCHES partners, so as to allow comparison. Results from the WP2 Workshops held in Year two are reported in Figure 2, which highlights the strong association between the specific audience and the requirements that audience considers fundamental to successful introduction. In particular, audiences that are strongly participated by communal owners and land managers (forest owners, farmers etc.) seem to place a strong emphasis on public acceptance (IT 2, PL 2, IT 3). They also consider government support

and environmental sustainability as very important requirements. In contrast, audiences dominated by private companies are especially sensitive to financial sustainability and technical feasibility.



**Figure 2** – Ranking of the main requirements for successful implementation as obtained from the audiences of the four WP2 Workshops conducted in Year 2.

The four Workshop Reports are attached to this document as Annexes 1 to 4.

## Annex 1 – Workshop Report “Second workshop Italy”

### Name of the workshop

Gestione ecosostenibile del territorio in Abruzzo  
Sustainable land management in the Abruzzo region

### Description of the workshop

The first meeting of the founding members of the Association "Gestione Ecosostenibile del Territorio in Abruzzo - GESTA" (Sustainable Land Management in the Region Abruzzo) was held on the 10<sup>th</sup> of March 2022 at the headquarters of the ADUC - Amministrazione Beni Separati Usi Civici (Management board for the communal forests) in Preturo, Aquila.

On this occasion, Vito Pignatelli and Matteo Monni (respectively President and Vice President of ITABIA) took the floor to present the BRANCHES Project and propose cooperation between the two initiatives, so as to develop powerful synergies towards the achievement of many common goals.

The GESTA Project has been funded by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forestry Policies within the scope of a ministerial initiative to support increased efficiency in the management of forest areas through the establishment of forest owners associations and consortia. That initiative has been promoted through the 2014-2020 Development and Cohesion Fund and aims at stimulating forest multi-functional management and the sustainable use of renewable resources in rural areas. GESTA is fully aligned with the most recent Italian "National Forestry Plan", which intends to promote active forest management, as opposed to pure conservation. Obviously, active management must be conducted within the framework of sustainability and aims at multifunctional, environmentally-friendly and renewable use. Special attention is paid to forests under collective ownership, which represent a vast area in the mountains of the Abruzzo region. The preliminary step in that direction is an intense awareness-raising activity and the engagement of local public and private owners and other stakeholders (forestry contractors, forest industries etc.). At the time of the first meeting, the working group consisted of 28 deeply motivated stakeholders, and namely: 18 ASBUC (communal forest owners), 4 municipalities and 6 private companies (forest and wood industries). Throughout the duration of the project, GESTA will receive technical support from ITABIA - Italian Biomass Association, CNR IBE and ENEA - National Agency for New Technologies, Energy and Sustainable Economic Development (with the Department of Energy Technologies and Renewable Sources).

During the Workshop, Matteo Monni gave a presentation about the BRANCHES projects and provided the main project information through the Italian version of the project roll up. Furthermore, participants were offered the opportunity to join the BRANCHES NTN and the enlisting questionnaire was distributed to that purpose. Out of the 23 people attending the workshop, 10 returned a filled questionnaire and joined the NTN. More questionnaires are expected to come, once interested participants consult their constituencies.

Workshop type  online  physical  hybrid  other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

Workshop organization  stand-alone  
 in connection with another event  
 other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

BRANCHES working package:  WP1  WP2  WP3  WP4  
 other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_



**Goal of the workshop**

The main objectives of this meeting were: 1) to establish a synergy between GESTA and BRANCHES, since the two initiatives have similar scope and objectives, both hinging on the circular bio-economy and the valorization of land resources and biomass in particular; 2) to recruit the GESTA partnership into the BRANCHES NTN; 3) to disseminate the good practices described within BRANCHES to the largest possible audience, using the GESTA stakeholder group as an amplifier to that purpose; 4) to provide the GESTA group with a menu of possible solutions for replication on their territories (i.e. the Best Practice Abstracts produced within the scope of BRANCHES).

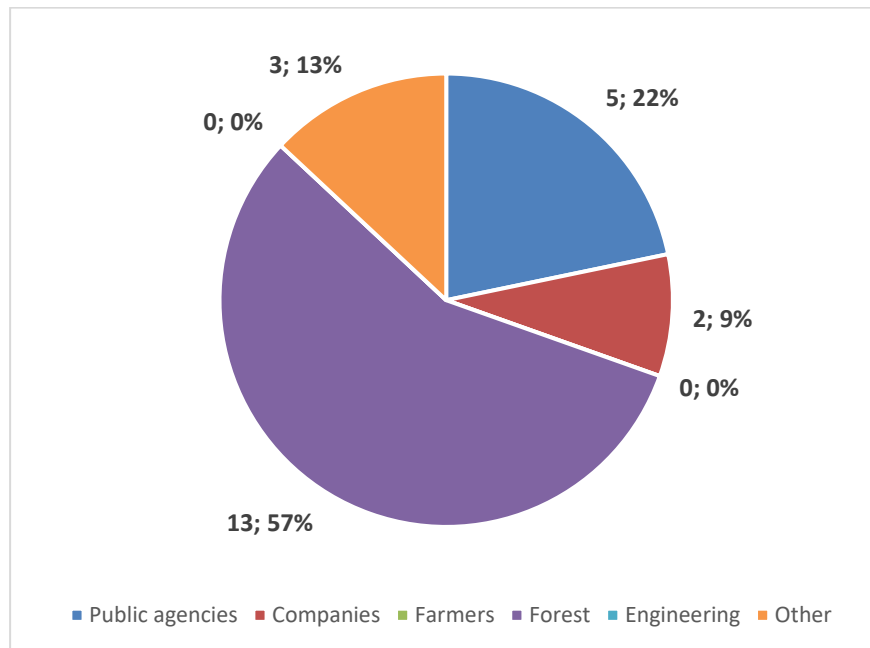
**Place & region of workshop**

Preturo, Aquila, Abruzzo Region (Central Italy)

**Dates of workshop** March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022 (16:30 - 18:30 CET)

**Organizers**

The meeting was jointly planned by the Italian project partners: ITABIA and CNR-IBE.



Number of attendees: 23

Audience breakdown (n° of attendees)	Companies	2
	Public Agencies	5
	Farmers	0
	Forest owners	13
	Engineering	0
	Other	3

### Moderator’s summary of practitioners’ feedback

Once the BRANCHES Project had been presented and its objectives clarified, all workshop participants expressed great interest in being involved in the project activities. There is a strong interest in receiving reliable information on technological innovation and good practices, with a particular emphasis on those related to the active and sustainable management of forest resources. ITABIA invited all participants to attend the 45th edition of EIMA International (Bologna 9-13 November 2022) where it will organize a further BRANCHES dissemination workshop and disseminate detailed information about the planned ShowCase Day.

Recap of issues raised by the audience (rating from 1 to 5 in order of increasing emphasis)

- Technical feasibility                    1
- Financial sustainability                2
- Environmental impact                  3
- Public Acceptance                      5
- Government support                    4



## Annex 2 – Workshop Report “Second workshop Poland”

### Title of the workshop

Warsztaty BRANCHES: Lokalne systemy biogospodarki i energii odnawialnej – dobre praktyki w zakresie łańcuchów wartości i polityk

BRANCHES Workshop: Local systems of bioeconomy and renewable energies – good practices on value chains and policies

**Language of event:** Polish

### Description of the workshop

On 24th April 2022, the University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn (UWM) and The Warmia and Mazury Agricultural Advisory Center Located in Olsztyn (WMODR) held a one-day workshop titled “Local systems of bioeconomy and renewable energies – good practices on value chains and policies. The workshop was organized in the frame of WP2&WP4 of BRANCHES project.

This workshop introduced participants to:

- Short presentation of NBN-PL (National Bioeconomy Network Poland or the National Thematic Network developed under BRANCHES Project) and invitation to join the network;
- Presentations given by Prof. Algirdas Jasinskas and Prof. Kestutis Romaneckas from Vytautas Magnus University (Kaunas, Lithuania) regarding “Lithuanian-Polish cooperation in the framework of Branches” and “Good practices of Lithuanian agriculture and bioeconomy”. Prof. A. Jasinskas and prof. K. Romaneckas visited Poland during workshop as a part of our cooperation (BRANCHES and Lithuania (3rd country));
- Presentation of PA’s of WP2: (1) Network organization of the stakeholders of the sustainable potato market in Poland (CN Nidzica), (2) Value chain in the processing of lignocellulosic biomass (extracted from oak wood);
- Presentation of PA’s of WP4: (1) Activities of W-MODR in the field of innovation support in rural areas, (2) Eco-energy technologies in the aspect of regional development models (OZE Projekt), (3) Current aid funds as a source of knowledge transfer and innovation in rural areas
- Discussion of possibilities and limitations of innovative technologies and supply chains implementation in rural areas (Big-Pol Sp. z o.o.)
- Collecting feedback from the audience (stakeholders, practitioners) during SWOT discussion and survey

Workshop type  online  physical  **hybrid**  other, please specify:\_\_\_\_\_

Workshop organization  **stand-alone**  
 in connection with another event  
 other (please specify \_\_\_\_\_.)

BRANCHES working package:  **WP2**  **WP4**  
 other, please specify: WP1 by presentation of NTN

**Goal of the workshop**

- Invitation to join NBN-PL (to strengthen cooperation between stakeholders and the project)
- Presentation of PA’s of WP2 (2 PA’s) and gathering opinion/suggestion from the audience related to the presented example of Practice abstracts
- Presentation of topic related to regional development models supporting innovations in the bioeconomy
- Discussion between stakeholders, researchers, local administration representatives about *Development directions of innovations in agriculture and forestry and in rural areas in the perspective of 20-30 years?* SWOT in the world café format
- Feedback related to presented PA’s STOT related to innovations in rural areas

**Place & region of workshop**

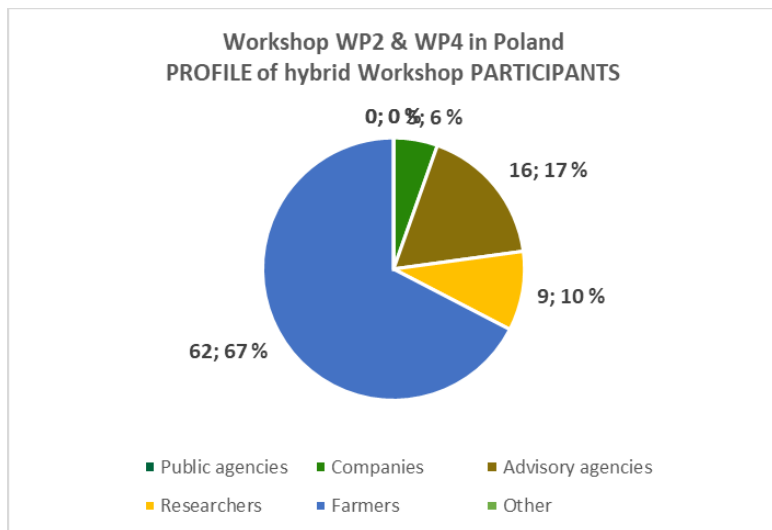
The Warmia and Mazury Agricultural Advisory Center located in Olsztyn, Poland

**Date of workshop:** 24.04.2022

**Organizers**

University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn (Poland)  
 The Warmia and Mazury Agricultural Advisory Center Located in Olsztyn (Poland)

**Number of attendees:** 92 (51 participants in person/at location, 41 participants online)



Audience breakdown (n° of attendees)	Category	Count
	Companies	5
	Public Agencies (administration)	0
	Advisory Agencies	16
	Researchers	9
	Farmers	62
	Other	0

**Moderator’s summary of practitioners’ feedback**

Feedback was generated during panel discussions and surveys.

Link to survey: [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSekzJZnF1MGAGnn8KR0liciS-6cZQgNFxf9KMD6Zp2\\_TUDXpQ/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSekzJZnF1MGAGnn8KR0liciS-6cZQgNFxf9KMD6Zp2_TUDXpQ/viewform?usp=sf_link)

The result of the discussion was compiled into a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) concerning implementation of innovations in rural areas.

According to feedback:

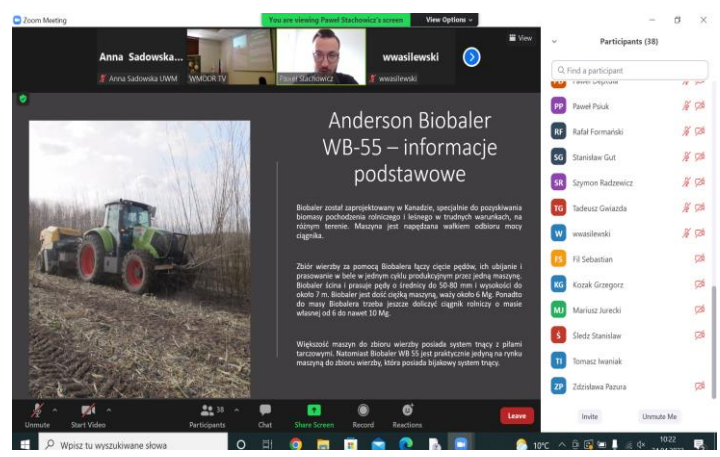
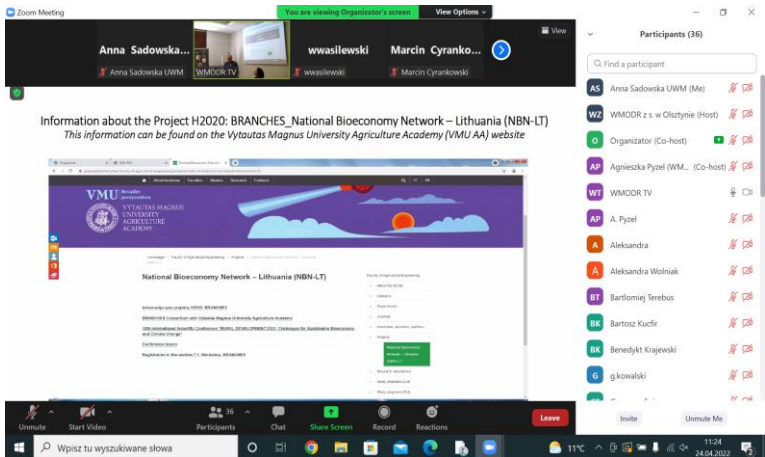
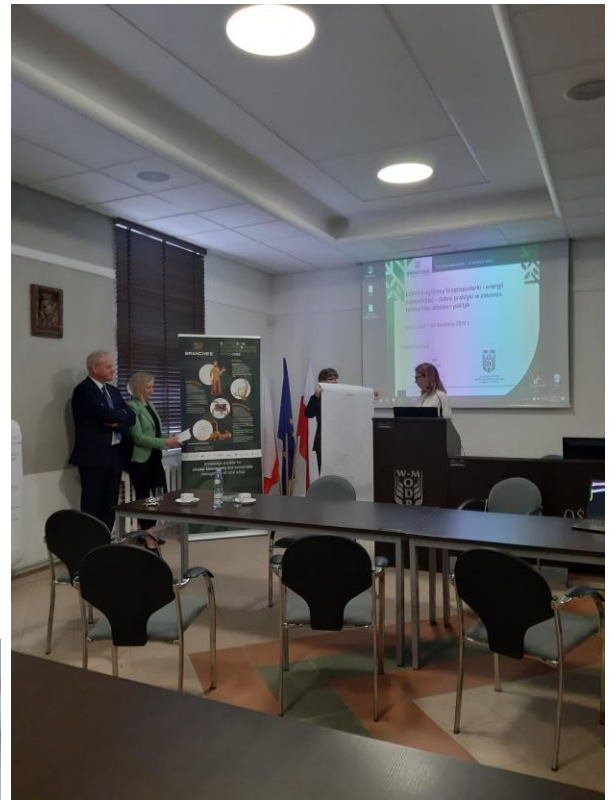
*(This SWOT table is also a part of 4.1.3 –SWOT analysis report on selected regional value chains – form from Poland)*

<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• highly qualified scientific staff</li> <li>• an ambitious young generation</li> <li>• significant potential for the development of agricultural production</li> <li>• the possibility of obtaining funds to finance the investment</li> <li>• high availability of bank loans and guarantee funds</li> <li>• creation of new work places</li> <li>• trainings for farmers and inhabitants of rural areas organized by an agricultural advisory centre</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• insufficient horizontal integration</li> <li>• no active leaders</li> <li>• limited trust between entities due to socio-political conditions</li> <li>• limited flow of knowledge from science to practice</li> <li>• lack of communication and social interest</li> <li>• limited access to financing sources for entities that operate on the market for a short time</li> <li>• aversion to innovation</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increasing competitiveness through integration and cooperation</li> <li>• implementation of new technologies</li> <li>• social consultation</li> <li>• increase in farm income</li> <li>• promotion of innovative solutions in agriculture and forestry in social media                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• striving to diversify the sources of income of the rural population</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lack of ability to implement innovations</li> <li>• frequent changes to tax law</li> <li>• economic crisis</li> <li>• inflation</li> <li>• increase in investment costs at the stage of its implementation</li> <li>• market volatility</li> <li>• additional costs that arise during the implementation of the project</li> </ul>

Recap of issues raised by the audience (rating from 1 to 5 in order of increasing emphasis)

Technical feasibility	4
Financial stability	1
Environmental impact	3
Public Acceptance	5
Government support	2

Images



### Annex 3 – Workshop Report “Second workshop Finland”

#### Name of the workshop

Terminaalit- ja huoltovarmuus – metsäenergian toimitusketjujen kehittäminen tutkimuksen ja käytännön yhteistyöllä

Terminals and security of supply - developing forest energy supply chains through cooperation between research and practice

**Language of event:** Finnish

#### Description of the workshop

The second Finnish BRANCHES workshop was held on Monday 24.10.2022. The hybrid meeting was planned and hosted by Finnish partner Luke on the topics of terminals and security of supply in the field of forest energy. The event took place as a separate event, but in conjunction with an event on bioenergy topics hosted by the Finnish bioenergy association. There was a total of 57 registrations including 12 registered online participants, although not all listed persons were finally able to attend the actual workshop. The participants covered the areas R&D, companies, practitioners, public administration, and associations.

Workshop type  online  physical  hybrid  other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

Workshop organization  stand-alone  
 in connection with another event: Bioenergiapäivät (Bioenergy days organized by the Finnish Bioenergy Association).  
 other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_.

BRANCHES working package:  WP1  WP2  WP3  WP4  
 other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Goal of the workshop

The goal was to present a (second) set of three BRANCHES WP2 Practical Abstracts from Finland and to collect valuable feedback from practitioners/actors in the field.

#### Place & region of workshop

Tampere talo, Tampere & Online, Teams

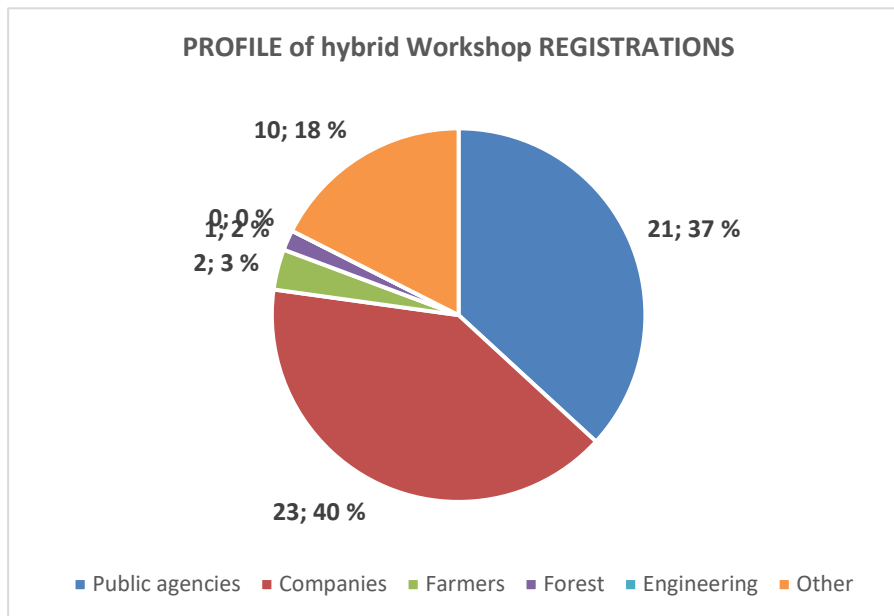
Region: Finland

**Dates of workshop** Monday 24.10.2022 (15:00 - 17:15 EET)

### Organizers

The hybrid meeting was planned and hosted by Finnish partner Luke with input from partner VTT.

### Number of registered participants: 57



Registered participants breakdown:	Companies	23
	Public Agencies	21
	Farmers	2
	Forest owners	1
	Engineering	0
	Other	10

### Moderator’s summary of practitioners’ feedback

The workshop was opened by BRANCHES WP2 Leader Robert Prinz (Luke) who welcomed all participants and guided through the program. The BRANCHES project and the general idea of Finnish National Network was presented by BRANCHES coordinator Johanna Routa. Reijo Wuorio from Hakevuori Oy talked about the challenges and needs from an entrepreneur’s point of view. Senior Scientist Perttu Anttila from Luke presented the topic of forest biomass availability in his talk on “Are there enough forest chips?”. Feed-in terminals as part of the forest chip supply was the topic of the next presentation by Kari Väätäinen (Luke) and Jyrki Raitila (VTT). And finally, the outcomes from an international survey on the industrial end-users’ preferred characteristics for wood biomass feedstocks was presented by Senior Scientist Robert Prinz (Luke). Each presentation was supported by printed versions of the respective Practical Abstracts (PAs) available to the audience in Finnish. Between the presentations, the workshop involved input and feedback from the audience by using the online tool Mentimeter. The workshop included plenty of lively discussions throughout the meeting and particular after the presentations, including lots of questions. Through Mentimeter, a few questions were asked from participants to collect valuable practitioners’ feedback within the project: participants voted the cost-effectiveness of biomass supply chains, security of supply and the role of committed & skilled employees as the three most important aspects of the forest energy supply chain (see Figure



1 below). On the question how the situation has changed from the forest energy security of supply point of view, participants highlighted the importance of cost-effectiveness of biomass supply chains and the raw material availability (see Figure 2 below). Additional valuable feedback was collected on the presented PAs and the suggested focus of BRANCHES WP2 work for the next period. Especially the entrepreneur’s point of view and the feed-in-terminals as part of the forest chip supply were considered the most important perspectives. The feedback will be considered for the selection of future upcoming topics and activities.

Recap of issues raised by the audience (rating from 1 to 5 in order of increasing emphasis)

Technical feasibility	-
Financial sustainability	5
Environmental impact	-
Public Acceptance	-
Government support	-
Security of supply	4
Committed & skilled employees	3

**Figures**

**Mitkä ovat kolme tärkeintä tekijää metsäenergian tuotantoketjussa/toimituksissa?**

Mentimeter

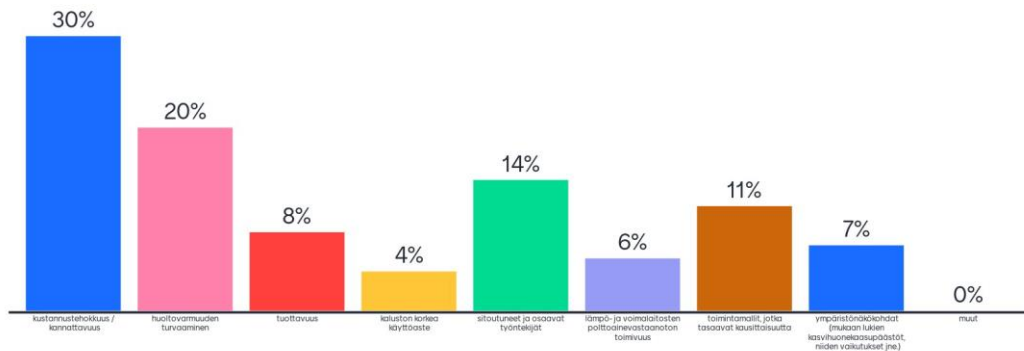
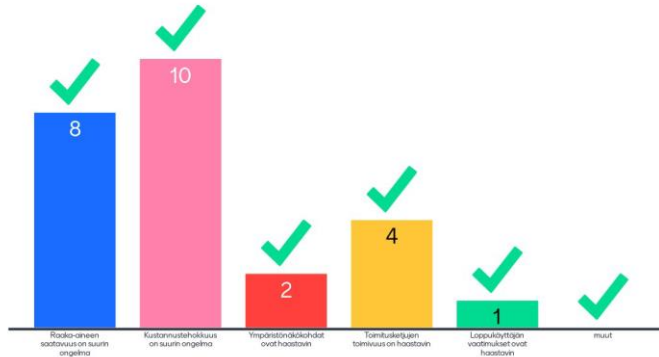


Figure 1. Recap of issues raised by the audience collected using the online tool Mentimeter: the feedback is highlighting the importance of cost-effectiveness of biomass supply chains, security of supply and the role of committed & skilled employees (in Finnish).

# Miten tilanne on muuttunut metsäenergian huoltovarmuuden näkökulmasta?

Mentimeter



25

Figure 2. Recap of security of supply issues raised by the audience collected using the online tool Mentimeter: the feedback is highlighting the importance of cost-effectiveness of biomass supply chains and the raw material availability regarding the forest energy security of supply (in Finnish).

## Images



General view of the audience at the BRANCHES workshop in Tampere. (Source: Johanna Routa/Luke)



Presenters of the Natural Resources Institute Finland (Luke) at the workshop. (Source: Johanna Routa/Luke)

## Annex 4 – Workshop Report “Third workshop Italy”

### Name of the workshop

Buone Pratiche di Bioeconomia: un confronto tra progetti Europei sviluppati in Italia

Good Practice in Bioeconomy: a view of EU projects developed in Italy

### Description of the workshop

ITABIA Italian Biomass Association and CNR IBE (Institute for Bioeconomy) are the Italian partners of the H2020 project "BRANCHES" which aims to disseminate technological innovation to make biomass supply chains more efficient and to create new business opportunities in rural areas. To this end, BRANCHES aims to strengthen the bio-economy sector by facilitating links between the business world and the world of scientific research. This specific workshop aimed at creating synergies between two separate groups, both operating under the EU mandate and both focusing on the Bioeconomy. Those are: the BRANCHES project, as represented by the Italian NTN and the CREA PB National Rural Network, which gathers the Italian Operational Groups active within the EIP-AGRI initiative “Innovarurale” ([www.innovarurale.it](http://www.innovarurale.it)). the National Rural Network represents an excellent observatory of valuable initiatives to be disseminated, and at the same time the ideal match for the BRANCHES NTN, as already stressed by the Commission Evaluators at the BRANCHES General Assembly meeting held in Valladolid the past September. Following such advice, ITABIA and CNR endeavored to contact Innovarurale, in order to select those Groups and Projects that best matched the initiatives undertaken within the scope of the BRANCHES Project. Therefore, the Workshop consisted of a hybrid meeting, organized in Bologna on Thursday November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022 and participated by representatives of ITABIA (V. Pignatelli, M. Monni, S. Mannelli, A. Del Lungo, C. Lombardini), CNR (R. Spinelli) and the NTN (B. Croce, G. Mezzalira etc.), as well as by the representatives of CREA PB (R. Iacono, P. Borsotto) and of the Focus Group Agroforestry (Chairman G. Mezzalira – who is also member of the Italian NTN). After an introduction of the respective projects and networks, the programme included brief descriptions of five selected PAs from BRANCHES, and namely: FIUSIS; BIOCHAR; COBRA; Pellet Vending and Mombracco. In turn, Innovarurale presented the following five projects: TAF 17 (fiber, textiles and covers from lignocellulosic biomass); BIOECOFLYES (conversion of agroindustry waste into insect protein); PROBES (development of new woodchip products for mulching); CAREGA (production of charcoal for culinary uses); CARTER (production and use of biochar). Many matches were found between the Innovarurale and BRANCHES best practices, demonstrating the importance and the replicability of selected practices. In particular, an almost perfect match was evident between BIOECOFLYES and PA13 (Conversion of organic residues to insect biomass), while the current strong attention towards biochar and charcoal was demonstrated by the convergence of CARTER and CAREGA with Pas 14, 15, 22, 24 and 37 (see <https://www.branchesproject.eu/materials/practice-abstracts-and-factsheets> for more details). In the discussion, the importance of developing new products was further stressed. Bio-power, biofuels and wood heating are becoming increasingly popular, but not within the reach of all entrepreneurs. Newer ideas, products and supply chains are needed for extending the benefits of the bioeconomy to those entrepreneurs who cannot easily endeavour into more conventional biomass businesses.

Workshop type  online  physical  hybrid  other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

Workshop organization  stand-alone

X in connection with another event (Energy Exhibition of the EIMA International, 9-13 November 2022)

other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

BRANCHES working package:  WP1  WP2  WP3  WP4

other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

### Goal of the workshop

The goal was to establish contacts between BRANCHES and the CREA PB National Rural Network, which gathers the Italian Operational Groups active within the EIP-AGRI Network. The meeting was participated by ITABIA, CNR-IBE, by members of the BRANCHES NTN, as well as the chairman of the National Rural Network, representatives of CREA PB and by the responsible persons for 5 best practices/projects from each of the two groups (i.e. BRANCHES and CREA-PB National Rural Network). The idea was to show similarities between activities conducted within the two groups and facilitate direct cooperation between the CREA PB/EIP-AGRI teams and the BRANCHES project partners.

#### Specific network activities

The actively participated meeting allowed to collect several and valuable insights that will support further development of the project, promote synergy and boost dissemination. Many similar activities were detected, and direct contacts established. Furthermore, by the comparison of PAs, in the BRANCHES project, and Projects, in the CREA PB National Rural Network, emerged the present day's hottest topics, such as Biochar, alternative wood products (textile, mulch, resins etc.) and waste-to-protein chains.

A further goal of the workshop was to promote the Italian ShowCase Day, planned for 20-21 April, 2023. The idea was to recruit support from other projects and generate synergies towards a "snow-ball" effect.

### Place & region of workshop

Bologna (ITA) Energy Exhibition of the EIMA International

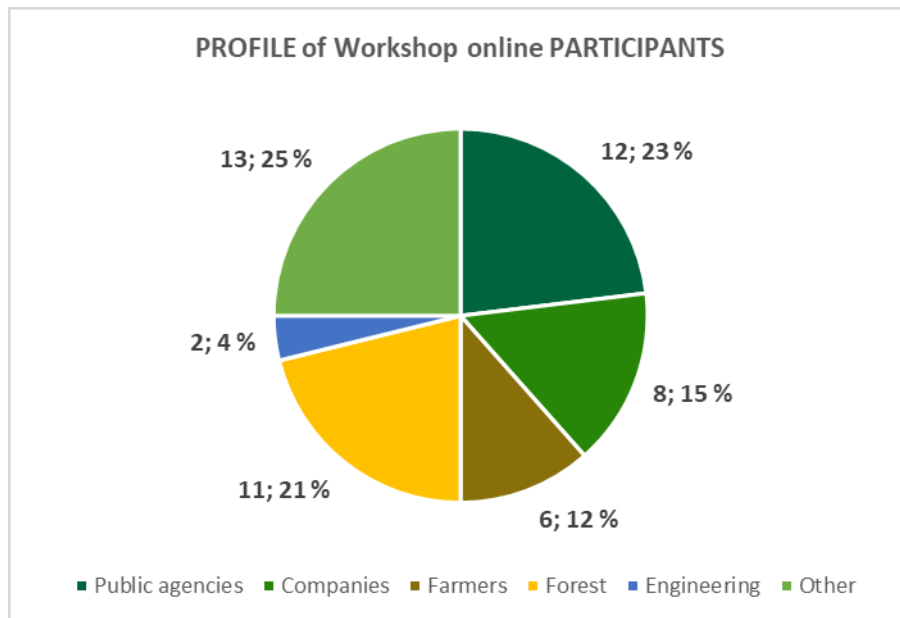
Region: Italy

**Dates of workshop** Thursday November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022 (16:00 - 17:30 CET)

### Organizers

The online meeting was jointly planned by the Italian project partners: ITABIA and CNR-IBE.

**Number of attendees**



Number of attendees: 52

Audience breakdown (n° of attendees)	Companies Public Agencies Farmers Forest owners Engineering Other	8 12 6 11 2 13
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**Moderator’s summary of practitioners’ feedback**

After the opening and the general presentations of BRANCHES, EIP-AGRI and the National Rural Network, 10 projects/best practices were presented and discussed. The general focus was on innovative products, valorization of waste and biochar.

The endless search for newer innovative products is transcending those products that were cutting-edge few years ago and are now reasonably popular, such as bio-power, fuel chips, residential wood heating and pellets. Of course, additional efforts must be made to secure the stable affirmation of those products and their respective supply chains, and to further expand their adoption. However, those products cannot be viable for certain regions or entrepreneurs. Therefore, alternative products must be developed for those cases. Examples are microchips, textiles, charcoal for culinary uses, advanced mulching products.

As to the valorization of waste, the example comes from the ECOFLYES project, which directly matches BRANCHES PA 13. The idea is to turn agroindustry waste into high-value protein using

farmed insects. This seems a promising solution, which is attracted the attention of several research groups worldwide.

Finally, lots of work is focusing on biochar. Many research groups have been working at the subject for years, finding viable technical solutions. One of the main hurdles is the regulatory framework, which often prevents agricultural use. At the workshop, representatives of the CARTER project stated that their product had just been cleared for use as a soil improver, which encouraged further development.

Recap of issues raised by the audience (rating from 1 to 5 in order of increasing emphasis)

Technical feasibility	1
Financial sustainability	2
Environmental impact	4
Public Acceptance	5
Government support	3



Left: President Pignatelli (ITABIA) addresses Dr. Mezzalira (Chairman of the EIP-AGRI AgroForestry Focus Group); Right: President Mannelli (Chimica Verde) debating with Dr. Croce (NTN Branches).



Dr. Spinelli (CNR IBE) presenting information about the Italian ShowCase Day planned for April 2023