



Potential to develop bio-based sustainable business in rural areas - INTRODUCTION TO BIOECONOMY HANDBOOK

The first BE-Rural seminar was organised as a webinar on the 5th of June 2020, late afternoon 14:00 on the GoToMeeting platform. The aim of the webinar was to present the BE-Rural project, its goals, activities and plans for the following period and to introduce the Bioeconomy Handbook developed in this project. The title of the event was: "Potential to develop bio-based sustainable business in rural areas - INTRODUCTION TO THE BIOECONOMY HANDBOOK".

Overview

Date	5 June 2020
Location	Online, GoToMeeting platform
Aim of the event	The aim of the webinar was to present the BE-Rural project, its goals, activities and plans for the following period and to introduce the Bioeconomy Handbook developed in this project.

The event was organised by the regional BE-Rural partner "Silava", the Latvian State Forest Research Institute. The first speaker was Santa Neimane who gave a short presentation about the project and the working group in Latvia. Afterwards, the moderator of the webinar Dagnija Lazdina, invited the participants to introduce themselves. After getting to know the audience better, Dagnija Lazdiņa (the Latvian project coordinator), continued with a presentation about the BE-Rural handbook (aim, basics of the bioeconomy, biomass usage options in a regional bioeconomy, business models for regional bioeconomy, bioeconomy and sustainability).

Later, invited speakers from "Biola" gave a presentation about their company, which uses needles of ever-green trees for food supplement production. Ojārs Polis spoke about the biology and chemistry behind the production, while Ernests Moisejs gave a short overview about the company in general. The aim of their company, since its establishment, has been to apply long-term research results about the forest biomass to gain profit by producing high-quality and environmentally-friendly bio-active products of ecologically clean forest resources - mainly the green mass (spruce and pine needles).

Later we continued with a presentation from another BE-Rural Latvia working group member - Kristaps Makovskis - where he showed the most important results from an agroforestry system research experiment.

In the end, the presentation of one more invited speaker took place - Sandra Eimane - from Novada garša presented the local food web based platform they have established. Novada garša is a sustainable local food system, which ensures locally produced product traceability and quality. Main goals include compiling information about local producers and organizing promotional events. On their platform one may find information about biological agriculture, certification, map with local producers and event schedule. This platform is maintained by the Latvian Rural Advisory and Training Centre. You can find the full presentation [here](#), if due to the difficulties with the internet connection during the seminar the connection was interrupted.

This seminar gave a general overview about the project and good understanding of the term bioeconomy and its role in Latvia. We would like to continue to put emphasis on working with local public sector consultants as they are the key resource for knowledge transfer and development in the rural regions. We plan to cover the management of tree plantations in short rotation systems in forest and agricultural land topic as the next seminar topic. The reason is that during the discussions we detected misconceptions and generally low level of understanding about the topic of agroforestry, presented by Kristaps Makovskis. This upcoming seminar will consist of three sections. At first, introduction to the basic management principles and economic basis. As second, a description on how the legislation differs depending on the land use type, a topic where we saw the biggest knowledge gap. And in the end, cover a section about the environmental impact since it is a key part of sustainable development and one of the BE-Rural priorities.

Please feel free to contact BE-Rural Latvia team in case of questions or interest to participate in the stakeholder working group meetings:

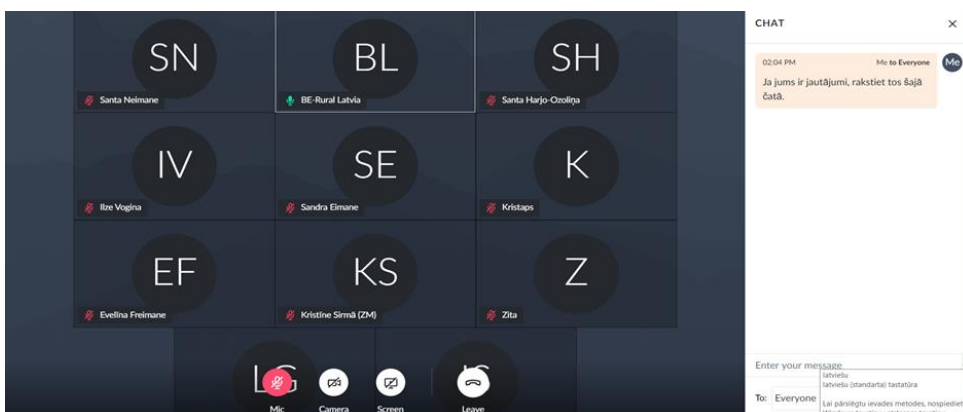
Dagnija Lazdina – LVMI Silava email: dagnija.lazdina@silava.lv

Kristaps Makovskis – LVMI Silava email: kristaps.makovskis@silava.lv

Santa Neimane - LVMI Silava email: santa.neimane@silava.lv

Participants of the seminar who signed the consent form

Name	Surname	Organisation	Stakeholder Category
Mudrīte	Daugaviete	“Vides kvalitāte” sertifikācijas institūcija, LVMI “Silava”	Civil Society, Academia
Indra	Levane	Alūksnes lauku partnerība	Non-governmental institution
Sandra	Eimane	Latvijas Lauku konsultāciju un izglītības centrs	Civil Society
Evelīna	Freimane	Local business	Businesses
Ilona	Platonova	Vidzemes plānošanas reģions	Government
Ilze	Silamiķele	Zemkopības ministrija	Government
Zita	Baranova	Latvijas valsts meži	Businesses



The GoToMeeting platform the seminar was organised in.



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