



**Biomass energy register
for sustainable site development for
European regions**

Grant Agreement No. EIE/07/595/SI2.499697

BEn

**Biomass energy register for sustainable site development
for European regions**

Intelligent Energy – Europe (IEE)

Horizontal Action: Bio Business Initiative

**Deliverable D2.2: Guidelines for successful establishment
of networks**

Authors: Janusz Krupanek (IETU) and the BEn team

Date: May 2009



1. Introduction	3
2. Why cooperate?	3
2.1. Biomass network role in sustainable local development	3
2.2. Network identity	3
2.3. Areas of cooperation	3
2.4. Dimensions of cooperation	4
3. Who should be involved and how?	4
3.1. Key actors	4
3.2. Representation of interests	4
3.3. Leadership	4
3.4. Inclusiveness	4
4. How to organise and manage the network?	5
4.1. Network structure	5
4.2. Management of network activities	5
4.3. Awareness, communication and language	5
4.4. Legal, financial aspects	6
4.5. Network evaluation	6
5. How to cooperate?	6
5.1. Tools and approaches	6
5.2. Support activities	7
5.3. Knowledge management	7
5.4. Communication	7
6. References (Good practice examples)	7



1. Introduction

This guidance is aimed at facilitating the process of regional cooperation towards the efficient use of biomass for energy production by local communities. It should be noted that the conditions of regional cooperation differs depending on the local situation, state of biomass development, and the legal and economic conditions. The guidelines highlight the most important and common issues to be taken into account when fostering regional cooperation.

2. Why cooperate?

2.1. Biomass network role in sustainable local development

- Define the reason to start the process of cooperation and recognise local needs. Organise meeting(s) (informal, formal) with potentially interested stakeholders. It is important to have in mind who should be involved, and their reason for participation. A SWOT analysis with the participation of local partners can be used to help determine the level of engagement of local stakeholders.
- Define together with regional partners the vision/goals to be achieved through cooperation: regional strategic management, fostering trust, stimulating investment, sharing examples, technology transfer, integrating policies on a local level, strengthening competences. Is there a political dimension – lobbying for better national policies?
- Think about concrete actions to be fulfilled and focus your actions on results.

2.2. Network identity

- Remember about continuity of actions. Consider cooperation as a culture and social added value. Develop trust, revise available perspectives, and establish aims.
- Identify already taken actions in the region; determine who is cooperating on what issues. Use personal contacts, media information, and internet to gather information. Do these activities cover the issues you are interested in? If possible, think about coordination of the activities or facilitating the exchange of knowledge between them.
- Network should be well recognised by decision makers and society through good representation and efficient communication.
- Recognise common interest through wide discussion with local partners e.g. brain storming. Identify shared values, potential conflicts and areas of mutual understanding.

2.3. Areas of cooperation

- Define areas of regional cooperation. SWOT analysis is recommended (key topics to be discussed and worked on during the process). Define boundary conditions and dimensions for regional biomass energy development (e.g. preparation of master plan for regional development, definition, which renewable energy issues are relevant: infrastructure development, biomass energy logistics).

2.4. Dimensions of cooperation

- Define at which level of cooperation you can fulfill the goals (local, regional, national, international). Look for appropriate partners and seek cooperation with other networks operating at different levels.
- Clearly define the network function in the context of current management practices in the region.

3. Who should be involved and how?

3.1. Key actors

- Identify relevant groups of interest and organisations representing them. Consider business, NGOs and community-based organisations, administration, competence centers, biomass providers, their responsibilities and roles. Let them express their needs and expectations. Make the list of the actors in collaboration with your partners.
- Include appropriate competences in the network. Develop/involve a regional competence center as the provider of knowledge and facilitator of actions. Involve scientific institutions and business organizations.
- Use the potential of well-developed networks of practitioners with strong assistance of professionals and scientists.
- Remember that personal engagement of actors in network's activity is crucial.
- Consider different levels of actors' engagement in network's activities. Remember that external partners are of high importance. Involve them (government, banks, funds, administrative bodies etc.) as observers, who can offer support for undertaking regional activities.

3.2. Representation of interests

- The most successful activities come from discussing various perspectives and values. Completeness and balanced structure of the key stakeholders is essential.
- Take into account good representation of market opportunities.
- Involve strong strategic players who can support networking but with a representative arena for discussion and decision making.
- Think about the relations between partners/groups or networks (conflict/mutual interest, various perspectives).

3.3. Leadership

- Choose in a clear procedure a partner recognisable in the community as a leader with potential to lead the cooperation (competences, recognition, accountability). NGOs, administration or specially established organizations: e.g. public agencies are especially suitable for this.

3.4. Inclusiveness

- Remember that developing the cooperation is a gradual process. Provide the opportunity to include during the process new partners, new ideas, problems and areas of

cooperation. Welcome and support new members. Define step by step who is missing according to the needs and goals of cooperation.

4. How to organise and manage the network?

4.1. Network structure

- Network structure should reflect the needs and goals of regional cooperation.
- Think about coordinator role, subgroups, planning body, e.g smaller planning team if the network is large, advisory body e.g. competence centre.
- It is good to divide the network into subgroups focused on particular sectors (biogas, biomass heating, cogeneration, aspects (financing, infrastructure) or oriented in fulfilling particular goals (investments).
- Consider various approaches to network establishment (informal organisation, formal body, legal entity) depending on the aims and activities defined.

4.2. Management of network activities

- Start the network activity with understanding each other, recognising problems to be tackled, freely expressing partners' needs and expectations.
- Define in a clear manner the responsibilities/let the partners frame their involvement and responsibility to each other. Avoid misleading signals concerning for example investment opportunities– Particularly with regard to the participation of private firms, technological offers. Be clear about cooperation possibilities and ambitions.
- It is good to formulate and accept a basic strategy or road map for action which can be verified accordingly.
- Provide documentation of network activities, records, sheet/manual for new network members, short and clear reports published on the internet website.
- Fully recognise the external conditions for biomass energy schemes and network activity, including national, European support schemes, legal conditions and existing organizations – make periodical overviews and disseminate them.
- Distribute particular tasks to partners or the organised groups – use their potential and existing possibilities of network organisation. Partners have their own resources, possibilities and experience that can be shared in organising the network – for example dissemination activities, organisation of meetings, events, communication of networks.

4.3. Awareness, communication and language

- Clarify the language – various experts use their own jargon especially in meetings and common communications. Avoid academic attitude.
- Facilitate personal contacts, exchange of experience, knowledge sharing. It is recommended to use face to face ways of communication.
- Provide access to good examples (publications, www), references – window for knowledge, secure experts' availability.

- Undertake activities (e.g. seminars, workshops) aimed at raising awareness of the society in the context of regional sustainability and biomass utilisation for energy purposes.

4.4. Legal, financial aspects

- There are a few organising possibilities. They depend on national/regional conditions. Formal establishment of the network can facilitate the actions giving access to funding. It is good if the network is oriented on carrying out permanent activities in the region. It is not necessary when one of the partners can play the role as organiser. For example local agencies or competence centers with public funding can play this role.
- Secure funding schemes for cooperation appropriately to the time frame and goals to be fulfilled. Continuity and robustness of the cooperation activity is important.

4.5. Network evaluation

- Evaluation of network cooperation and its activities is needed. The most important is the evaluation of the whole cooperation made by the network members with their satisfaction expressed (questionnaire). Evaluation of the events and particular activities is also recommended. The results should stimulate concrete changes.
- Look for good cooperation examples – in your country or abroad. The collected experience can serve as a benchmark for effectiveness, good ideas and methods.
- Identify and disseminate success and failure stories (publications, reviews).

5. How to cooperate?

5.1. Tools and approaches

- Choose the methods of work appropriate to the network role (meetings, discussion panels, seminars).
- Plan activities – clear plan and rationale for the actions.
- Carry out regular meetings with clear objectives, agenda and reports. It is good to have the feedback for the discussion.
- Preparation of strategic documents is advisable when more formal cooperation is established. Logo, web page and promoting materials are recommended.
- Refer to past stakeholder information and consultation process.
- Identify, establish and develop good demonstrative cases of biomass conversion into energy in the region and in Europe. There are many European and national examples of success stories to be reviewed as valuable for the region.
- Integrate various events in order to minimise number of meetings.
- Consider linking the cooperation with other local/regional sustainability topics – organisations, activities, policies. Identify them together with regional partners.

5.2. Support activities

- Organisation of campaigns, site visits, conferences, events and local initiatives tours, demonstrations of technologies (for example: marketing) is recommended. They should be carefully planned appropriately to the needs expressed by the partners.
- Initiate joint support actions of the partners – realisation of common projects i.e helping in applying for investment project funding.
- Provide support to the decision making processes taking place in the region, such as selection of technological options, preparation of documentations (environmental assessment report, prefeasibility and feasibility studies, technical projects, public outreach, marketing) through guidelines, reference cases, contacts to firms and persons, contact point, training activities.
- Organise collective activities with the participation of the society – competitions, picnics and events to integrate the network with the local/regional stakeholders.

5.3. Knowledge management

- Use skills available in the network to analyse community needs, development patterns, habits and life styles. If necessary involve specialists, advisors or hire external services.
- Establish supporting tools for knowledge transfer, exchange of information, e.g. webpage. Collect and store references materials: guidelines, contacts easily accessed by the general public.

5.4. Communication

- Communicate the network results and information about network activities to wide local audience. Use effective communication tools (website, poster, fairs, e-mail newsletters).
- Use clear arguments in communication with the partners and wide public - biomass use for energy purposes in many aspects brings controversies and doubts.
- Look for feedback from the local community (questionnaire).
- Media coverage is essential in dissemination and information.
- Recognise common people for example employees and citizens as a good channel of communication.

6. References (Good practice examples)

Name of organisation	Link
<i>The Baltic Biomass Network</i>	http://balticbiomass.com
<i>Kompetenzzentrum HessenRohstoffe HeRo</i>	http://www.hero-hessen.de
<i>Klaster 3*20</i>	http://klaster3x20.pl
<i>EC Baltic renewable Energy Centre (EC BREC)</i>	http://www.ecbrec.pl
<i>ABS Klaster</i>	http://www.abs-klaster.wroc.pl
<i>Waste Centre Denmark</i>	http://www.wasteinfo.dk
<i>The North Sea Bio Energy</i>	http://www.northseabioenergy.org

<i>Biomass Forum</i>	ben.mclaughlin@onenortheast.co.uk
<i>NREG</i>	rmachen@northumberland.gov.uk
<i>CoRE (Community Renewable Energy Ltd)</i>	ross@core.coop
<i>NEWFuels</i>	john.farquhar@northwoods.org.uk
<i>The Polish Chamber of Biomass</i>	http://www.biomasa.org.pl
<i>NETBIOCOF Integrated European Network for Biomass Co-firing</i>	http://www.netbiocof.net

