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**Realizing market possibilities for increased use of wood in Norway.
A national strategy including: Promotion, Research, Competence and
Investments**

Session II

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INTRODUCTION

This short article covers the theme: Realizing market possibilities for increased use of wood in Norway through a national strategy. It will give some moments on the background for the effort, what kind of changes that are needed, establishing common goals and strategies and shortly describing actions.

BACKGROUND

The overall background for the Norwegian effort is the matter of fact that there has been a lack of growth or total output from the sector. This was pinpointed very clearly when the government in Norway worked with renewal of their forest policy 1997-1999. This work engaged the wood trade, wood industry, forestry and several research institutions. One found that there was a lack of development in general and that the rentability in the companies were rather low. Furthermore one experienced that existing potentials are not utilized. This led to a common action. Government and the forest sector worked together in establishing a developing forest policy and a national development program for the forest sector.

If one wants the forest sector to develop there are several changes needed to come through. This can be described as defined actions within and among the different actors in the chain of custody. In the trade it is needed to move from storage-sale to shop-sale. In the industry it is needed to move from products in bulk to total responsibility for the product delivered. In the forestry it is needed to move from a 100-year perspective to a 20-year perspective. It is more important to develop products and markets than planting more forests. For the chain

of custody in general its a need for changing attitudes and making new desicions and actions.

There is also a need of getting growth impulses into the forest sector to make development happen. Products must be more attractive and to a larger extent be a "first choice" among users. In this respect its needed to develop a new image for the forest sector and the products. It is of special importance that the sector more actively utilizes the "environmental strenghts" in the sector and the "environmental profile" of the products in marketing, lobbying and promotion.

VISION, GOALS AND STRATEGIES

During the common work and efforts the government and forest sector decided to establish a common vision for the forest sector togehter with some common goals, strategies and actions. These are briefly commented below.

The common vision for the norwegian forest sector is that:
"Norway shall become a leading nation in production and new utlization of wood"

The common goals for the forest sector is:

- Increase the use of wood
- Increase the profitability in the companies
- Increase the output from the sector in total

To reach the goals its needed to develop strategies on the following important areas:

- Promotion and information
- Research and development
- Competence and education
- Finance and investments

OTHER IMPORTANT AREAS

In addition to this common actions are needed on other important areas. One has to find, evaluate and develop so-called growth areas. There is also nescesarry to develop a national infrastructure that can act as support or starter for certain processes. When the developing processes are on their way, it has to be tool-boxes both for professional users and consumers available. They shall make it easier for the user to choose and use wood as material. In an macro-perspective it is also important that a developing sector has a "supporting and developing" forest sector policy.

AREAS OF GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Several growth areas are or will be under evaluation and development. This is market or product areas which is considered to have a substantial potential. Among these are:

- Multi-storey housing
- Massive wood elements
- Timber bridges
- Use of wood in health institutions
- Wood in transport and packaging

- Use of wood in the sea-food industry
- Developing traditional use of wood

NATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Development of a national infrastructure which can be a “supporting force” in projects and for the sector in general, has been or will be developed. Until now this includes the following companies, organisations and structures.

- The National Wood Program

This has been the starting point for the development in general and has a central position in financing and in development of projects.

- Wood Focus Norway

This company shall have a national responsibility for promotion and information about wood and wood products towards decision makers and customers in general.

- Wood Centre in Trondheim

This centre is established and situated in Trondheim at the Norwegian University of Engineering and Architecture. Project initiatives, education programs and student activities are among their activities.

- “Woody Greenhouse”

This is an investment and financing company which are under planning and evaluation. The purpose is that this company shall be a development partner for wood trade and industry in product and market development.

- National educational programs

There are established two major educational programs in connection to two of the most central universities for the forest sector.

- Sector development programs on important areas

There are established and will be established and run research projects and programs on areas of vital and common interest for the trade, industry and forestry.

CONCLUSIONS

If the forest sector shall be succesful with their efforts several actions have to be taken and development processes must be realized. This can lead to a total renewel of a traditional sector with traditional products. This can be visualized by describing a “future forest sector” with a new image and different appearance. A modernized and developed forest sector will in the future:

- Focus on environmental aspects
- Be an intensive user/provider of competence
- Focus on markets and customers
- Deliver components and system solutions
- To a much larger extent actively be integrating forward
- Use the arcitects and designers as the forest sector’s front-end

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