



TANDEM FOREST VALUES

Sweden's gift to Finland 2017

Finland and Sweden are leading forestry nations in Europe and the world, and forestry and the forest products industry constitute a cornerstone in the economies of the countries. Together, the countries have less than two per cent of the world's forestry assets but represent nonetheless almost ten per cent of production of the world's forestry-related products. Both Finland and Sweden are working ambitiously through national forestry programmes whose focus is on the emerging bio-economy and a fossil-free society, in addition to developing the forestry sector in general. Distinguishing features of the bio-economy include the utilisation of renewable bio-based natural resources and the use of clean technological methods to improve the condition of the environment, as well as the effective recycling of material. While the forest forms a renewable natural resource with significant potential for development, there are also many challenges to deal with so the forest can satisfy all demands on it and contribute to attaining important societal goals.

The huge expectations of the forest demonstrate the need to develop knowledge about sustainable biomass production and smarter use and processing of biomass, but also the need for a development of patterns of consumption, financial business models for different ecosystem services, and policy instruments.

The forest has a crucial role to play in climate efforts and also in achieving several of the other sustainability targets. Furthermore, a growing number of claims on the forest lead to greater complexity when weighing up how the forest's resources are best used and which new industrial forestry products and processes need to be developed. This alone increases the need for trans-disciplinary knowledge to support the development towards an industry that can better take advantage of and protect all the ecosystems in the northerly forests than it currently does, and which supports industrial forestry development that can meet future needs for new products.

The gift

In order to strengthen and develop bilateral research collaboration in a durable fashion between actors in the field of forestry and industrial forestry in Finland and Sweden, a special investment is being made. The investment consists of two to three separate calls for four to six two-year post-doctoral projects, in total twelve projects.

The first call is planned for December 2017. The project shall build on, or lead to, an active collaboration between research groups at universities or institutes in the respective countries. The projects shall maintain the highest scientific quality and, in the short or long term, shall benefit a sustainable use of the forest as a resource and an ongoing development of the bio-economy. Each post-doctoral position is linked to a host university/institute in Finland or Sweden. During the two-year period the holder of the post-doctoral post is expected to spend approximately the same amount of working hours in each country for a total period of at least six months.

The call contains two key themes

Sustainable forest management: Knowledge is needed, from basic and applied research, which can contribute to new methods of forest management that meet both existing and new needs and targets of forest owners and society. In order to understand the role of the forest in efforts to tackle the climate change, new system knowledge is needed to find out how the managed boreal forest landscape can contribute further, and what the effects of different measures are in the forest and in society.

New products and processes: The Swedish and Finnish forests have a huge potential to contribute to the bio-economic society, in which bio-based materials, products and processes are central to attaining the set climate targets. Therefore, knowledge, which can support development and breakthroughs of both existing and new sustainable products and production processes, is necessary. In addition, system analyses into how forest raw materials ought to be used to create the greatest benefit for society are needed.