

Result of the SWOT analyses, internal and external issues characterising biomass supply chain for pellet production in Western Macedonia, Greece

Internal strengths

- S1. Bordering – strategic position, introduction of raw materials from the neighbouring countries
- S2. Short transport routes in procurement and distribution
- S3. Increasing demand from the domestic sector
- S4. Urban areas located very close to rural areas (reduces logistical problems)
- S5. Local/regional availability of feedstock

External opportunities

- O1. Scope for increase and more efficient use of the regional biomass resources
- O2. Integration of innovation tendencies in the production procedure
- O3. Bioenergy is still at an initial stage in Greece
- O4. Exploitation of wood residues remaining after logging in the forest
- O5. Emerging pellet market also due to the high petrol taxation
- O6. Oil and gas suppliers exposed to the insecurity and price fluctuations of international markets
- O7. Energy efficiency measures financed by the State (changing of boilers for households and administrative buildings)

Internal weaknesses

- W1. Small amount of manufacturers of biomass systems and fuels (e.g. pellets, boiler manufacturers)
- W2. No systematic support for the production of innovative products
- W3. Tight internal market of products and services' production and disposal
- W4. Uncertainty of regular biomass yield (due to forest wildfires, illegal logging etc)
- W5. Low training and specialization of manpower
- W6. Low use of ICT in the supply chain

External threats

- T1. Development efforts often restricted due to lack of financing instruments
- T2. Fast implementation of other renewable energy technologies feeding the market requests
- T3. Perception that technology is unattractive
- T4. Changing governmental policies
- T5. Economic change and volatility in fossil fuel prices
- T6. Illegal logging due to the economic crisis