

## ROMANIA

Quality of life in  
rural areas and  
diversification of  
the rural economy

### Location

Suceava

### Programming period

2007-2013

### Axis / Priority

Axis 4 – LEADER

### Measure

312 - Support for business creation and development  
413 - Quality of life/diversification

### Funding

Total budget 47 000 EUR  
EAFRD 39 950 EUR  
National/regional 7 050 EUR

### Project duration

2014 – 2015

### Project promoter

S.C ECO-DOMANI S.R.L

### Contact

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The establishment of a wood briquette production plant that utilises this wood dust and energetic willow shows how a region's natural resources can be exploited in an eco-friendly way for energy production.

## Summary

This Romanian project demonstrated how a region's natural resources can be exploited in an eco-friendly way to the benefit of the environment and the local community.

It established a renewable energy plant that produces briquettes from the cultivation of energetic willow and wood dust coming from the area's wood industry.

EAFRD funding supported the company to buy the necessary equipment -- a dryer, a mobile chipper, a tractor, a crusher and a trailer -- for harvesting this raw material for briquette production.



## Results

The briquettes are already much in demand, highlighting that they are an economically viable alternative to the burning of firewood in practice.

The project helped further develop the renewable energy sector in the area, harnessing the potential of the wood-processing industry and the cultivation of energetic willow.

The new briquette production plant created two permanent, full-time jobs that were filled by two locals over the age of 50. The company foresees the hiring of a shift worker for the growing of the energetic willow.

Though the final economic success of the project is yet to be determined, the reported high request for pellets from local businesses and residents within the area and from neighbouring villages is encouraging.

## Lessons & Recommendations

- ❑ Under-utilised biomass resources can be successfully exploited in areas where demand for biofuel pellets is high.
- ❑ Banks must be made more aware of the benefits of investing in renewable fuel initiatives. In this case difficulties in accessing additional financing from the banks prevented the investor from purchasing more equipment (new type of mobile chopper to allow transporting the chopped biomass) to increase the scale and productivity of the venture.

## Context

Suceava County in the north of Romania is a wood-processing region that has great potential for cultivating energetic willow (*Salix viminalis*), a fast-growing tree that is commonly grown for biomass and biofuel. Additionally, wood dust, the by-product of carpentry, can be used as fuel. The idea of the project was to use this wood dust in an eco-friendly way that represents an alternative to spreading it on agricultural land which has a negative long-term impact on agricultural productivity.

The establishment of a wood briquette production plant that utilises this wood dust and energetic willow would represent a boost to the local economy and employment prospects. Wood from willow trees has a high caloric content and can be easily stored.

## Objectives

The overall objective of the project was to establish a wood briquette production plant. The briquettes would become an ecological alternative to firewood in the Horodnic de Jos Commune of Suceava and surrounding areas. Firewood is used on a large scale throughout Romania, and the aim of the project was to provide an efficient replacement.



## Activities

The project was initiated by Mr Andronachi, the administrator of S.C ECO-DOMANI SRL that cultivates energetic willow on three hectares. EAFRD funding allowed the company to buy the necessary equipment -- a dryer, a mobile chipper, a tractor, a crusher and a trailer -- for harvesting this raw material for briquette production.

The company carried out market research on briquette production in Romania (this market is still new in the country) ahead of the start of production using both the energetic willow and wood dust as raw materials. The wood dust by-product was sourced from numerous carpentry manufacturers, furniture factories and veneer saw frames.

Operators in the area, including forest owners and wood cutters, were also engaged in the project, especially veneer saw frame owners, to ensure sufficient raw material for production.

In addition environmental authorities and the Sucevita Putna Local Action Group played an important role in taking responsibility for the selection process and overseeing the implementation of the project.



### Additional sources of information

n/a