



## Community forest arrangements as ideal instance for the realization of the profit- sharing model of PRIFORMAN Project

### Introduction

Community forest arrangements are tools for the development of business networks in forestry sector, to valorise public and private agro-silvo-pastoral lands, encourage provision of ecosystem services and conservation.

They're among the instruments recommended by the TUFF and other provisions of the Italian legal system for the associated management of forests. They offer the possibility of participation not only to companies, but also to small forest owners, regardless of the size of the area of land. This enables small forest owners to "join forces" to manage their forests and possibly outsource their management, thus overcoming the problem of 'inactive' owners (lack of physical presence of owners in the area), the problem of 'fragmentation' of forests properties and the possible lack of forestry management knowledge.

The creation community forest arrangements, with the application of the profit-sharing model created by PRI.FOR.MAN, gives the possibility of an allocation of profits not limited to timber extraction, but provided by multifunctional management based on the desiderata of the contractors and the reference regulations. This binome 'community forest agreement - profit-sharing model represents a sustainable model both from the economic point of view (as it allows not only a reduction in costs, but also an increase in profits), the environmental point of view (as it ensures proper management of forests), and the social point of view (as it represents a form of participatory forest management, which could also help to maintain the population of mountain areas).

From the social and technical meetings held during the project emerged some critical issues that need to be addressed in the project follow-up. The first difficulty encountered was to contact all the forest owners. Afterwards was noticed a general owners' mistrust in delegating the management of their funds to third parties for prolonged periods of time, even in the face of clear and reliable legal and technical instruments. Moreover, they showed a common preference to sell the standing forest in order to have a high periodic income rather than opting for an annualisation of profits from shared management, and the preference of purchasing contracts with utilisation companies for individual utilisations, rather than the possibility of taking multi-year management with the associated risks.

During the PRI.FOR.MAN project was produced the contract proposal with the application of the profit-sharing model, but it still need to be signed up by forest owners. The now ongoing NET4GO Project, in Veneto, will focus on putting into practice this innovation.

## Lessons learned

Community forest arrangements are multifunctional tools that provides economical, environmental and social, allowing to overcome many difficulties linked to forest management. They're the most suitable instrument for the implementation of the profit-sharing model devised within the Project and for the success of community forest management. However, to be applied and overcome the general owners' mistrust it's highly necessary to explain the given possibilities, by giving examples of realities that achieved positive outcomes (D'Adderzio, 2023).

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## Further information

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 <p><b>Funded by the European Union</b></p> <p>Funded by the European Union (Grant n. 101086216). Views and opinions expressed are however those of the authors only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or REA. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.</p>	 <p>UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI FIRENZE DAGRI DIPARTIMENTO DI SCIENZE E TECNOLOGIE AGRARIE, ALIMENTARI, AMBIENTALI E FORESTALI</p>	<p><b>PRI.FORE.MAN.</b> Shared Private FOREst MANagement in Eastern Alps</p>	 <p>FOREST4EU</p> <p> FOREST4EU Project  FOREST4EU Project  info@forest4eu.eu</p>	<p>Website</p> 
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