

# W3B Wood Believe - What We Wood Believe? –

**Societal perceptions of the forest-based sector and its products  
towards a sustainable society  
(JC2013)**



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# What We Wood Believe – Societal Perceptions of the Forest-Based Sector (W3B)

## Project description

### W3B FACTS

Type: ERA-Net WoodWisdom

Budget: 737,790 Eur

Duration: 3 years (2014–2017)

#### Participants

13 research partners

4 countries

#### Coordinator

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Kompetenzzentrum Holz GmbH

Team Marktanalyse und

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[www.wood-w3b.eu](http://www.wood-w3b.eu)



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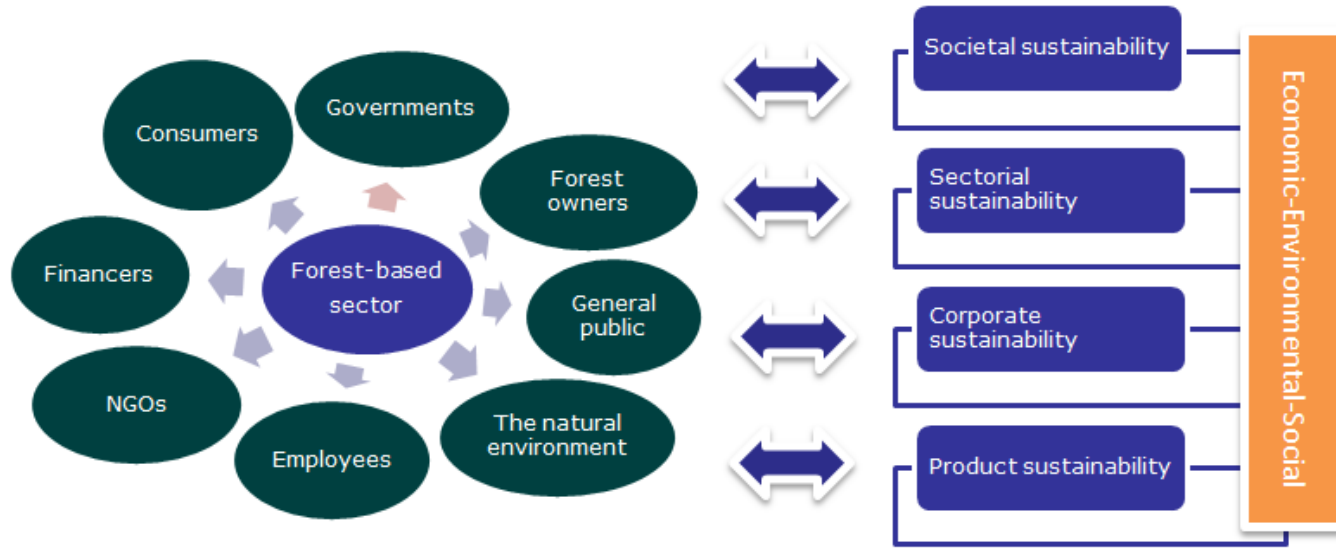
# Forestry under pressure

## Challenges

*'In agreement with the public nothing can fail, without public acceptance nothing will succeed' - Abraham Lincoln*



# What and why?



The European forest-based sector = complex stakeholder-system with interaction to hierarchical levels of sustainability

→ Creating and demonstrating innovative cost-efficient ways for communicating towards stakeholders the relevance of the European forest-based sector and its products for a sustainable

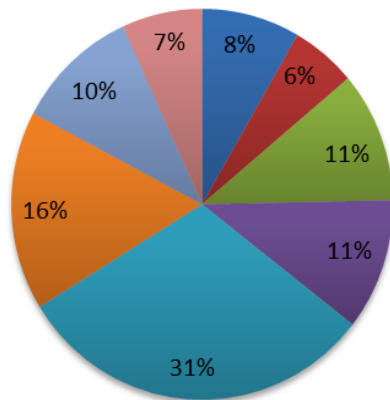
# Project highlights and final results

Content analysis:

Online communication of 64 companies and associations with more 7,000 hits

“Forest and the economy” was the most and “forest ecosystem services” the least communicated topic just before “Efficient use of wood” and “Wood based innovation”

Lack of coordinated messages and communication

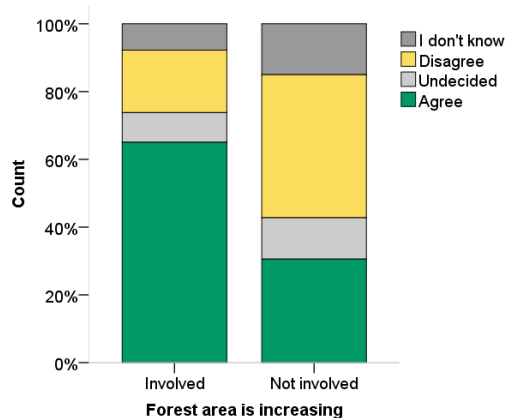


Amount of hits for each TOI (Korhonen et al. 2016)

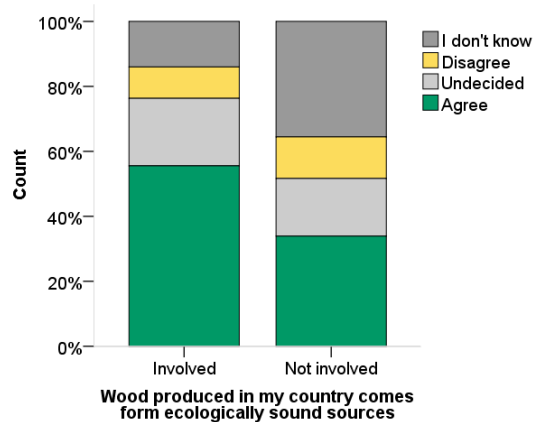
# Project highlights and final results

Online survey:

- Sector connection through profession, education, or forest ownership makes a difference especially regarding the perception of the responsible use of forest resources and the role of wood products in climate change mitigation
- Higher rates of “disagree”, “Undecided”, and “I don’t know” for people not involved in the sector



$p=0.013$



$p=0.000$

Figure: Differences in involvement regarding the perception of communicated items (Ranacher & Stern 2016)

# Can perception be influenced by info?

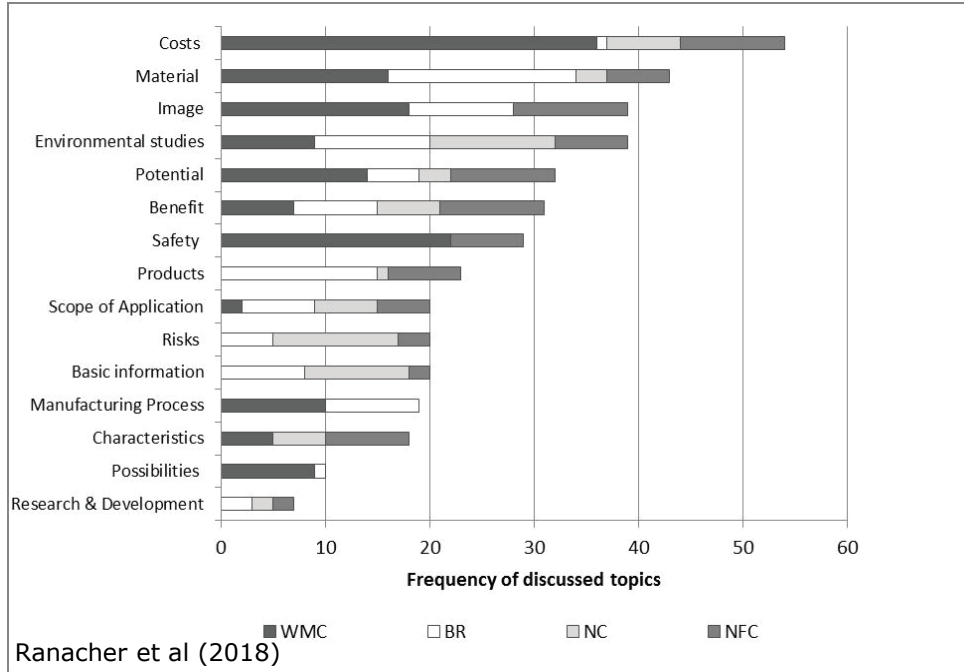
## Cognitive response experiments

- Installed signposts at a new harvesting site in an urban forest, which contained information on: “What happened?”, “Does it affect the forest?”, “How is the wood used?”
- With the signposts forest visitors are less disturbed by the visual appearance, emphasize economic aspects, and are less worried about ecological impacts

Property (attribute or value)	No infoboards A	Infoboards B	Control C
ecology – worries about environmental compatibility	57%	20%	13%
visual appearance	78%	40%	50%
Eco-social market economy	9%	30%	25%
support of regional economy	0%	25%	0%
energy production	4%	15%	13%
greed of gain	9%	0%	13%

Table: Selected attributes recalled by the respondents (Huber et al. 2017)

# What about forest based innovation?



WMC = wooden multi-story  
timber construction,

BR = biorefinery,

NC = nanocellulose,

NFC = natural fiber  
reinforced composites

Overview of topics identified in the focus group discussions in absolute numbers.



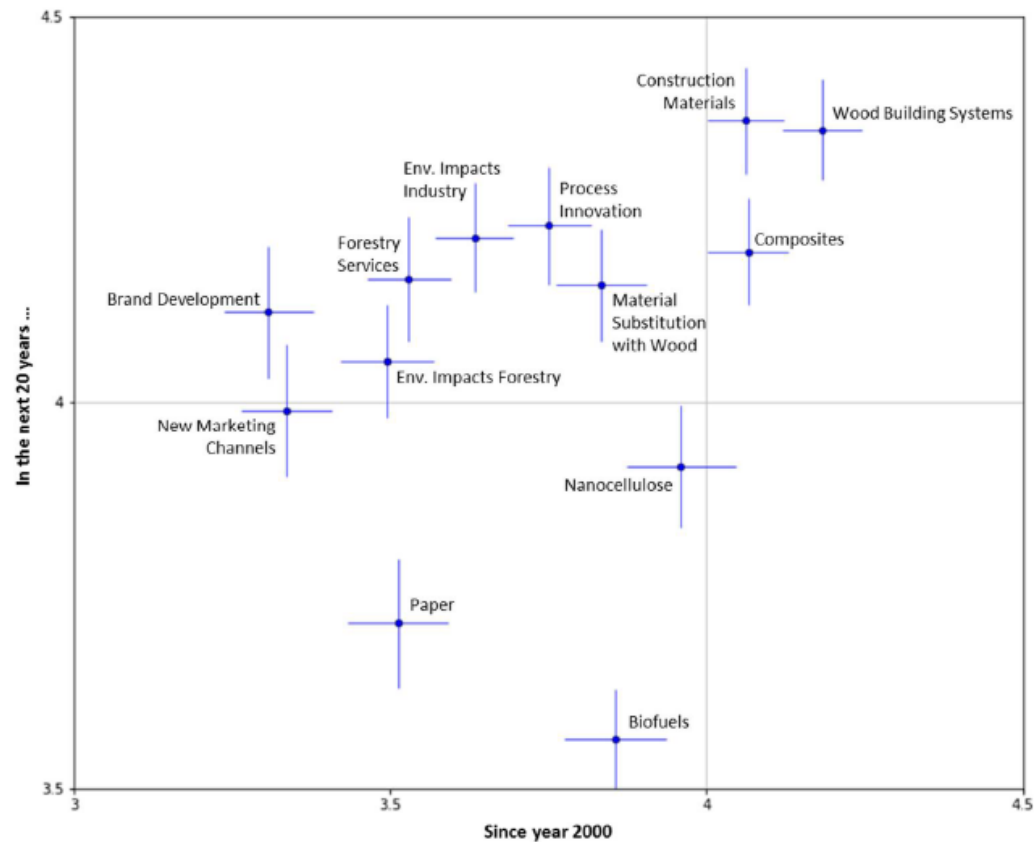
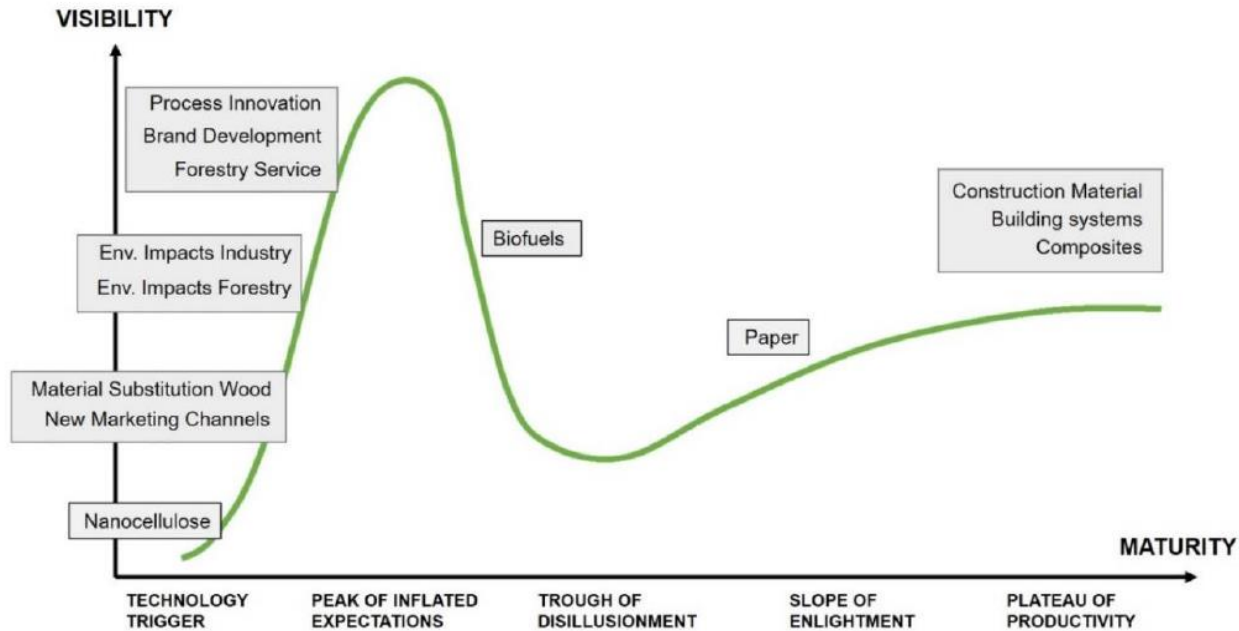


Figure 5. Performance Importance Grid (Scale from 1 = Strongly disagree, to 5 = Strongly agree).



**Figure 6.** Schematic position of the investigated innovation areas in Gartner's technology hype cycle.

Stern et al (2018)

# What about future pathways?

A forest-based Bioeconomy?



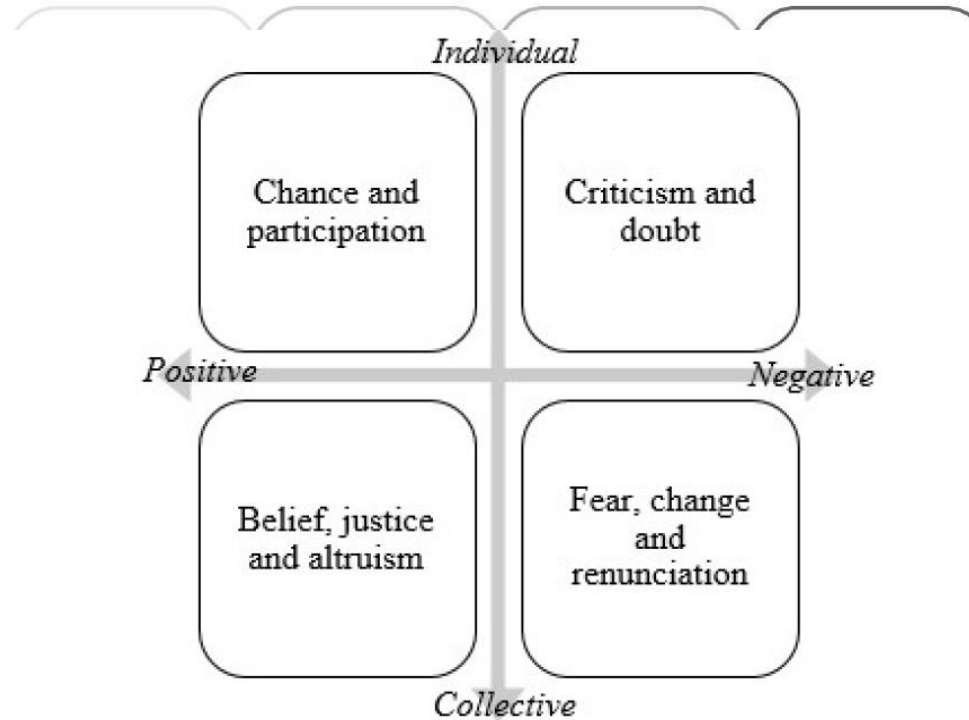


Figure 3. Value matrix and applied value dimensions, adapted from Vringer et al. [39].

Stern et al (2018)

**Table 4.** Significant differences in frequency of attributes by target group ( $N = 456$ ).

Laddering Theme	Target Group				$\chi^2(df)$	$p$ Value
	Students ( $n = 126$ )	Employees ( $n = 153$ )	Farmers ( $n = 67$ )	Pensioners ( $n = 110$ )		
Curiosity /interest	34.92%	20.26%	22.39%	15.45%	$\chi^2(3) = 14.055$	0.002
Back to nature	15.08%	18.30%	34.33%	32.73%	$\chi^2(3) = 16,961$	0.001
Quality of life	8.73%	17.65%	11.94%	22.73%	$\chi^2(3) = 9944$	0.016
Doubts about sustainability and equity of a bioeconomy	8.73%	15.69%	26.87%	15.45%	$\chi^2(3) = 14,896$	0.009
Doubts about effectiveness	16.67%	10.46%	31.34%	15.45%	$\chi^2(3) = 11,101$	0.002
Inequity	5.56%	10.46%	20.90%	11.82%	$\chi^2(3) = 10,667$	0.012
Fear for own existence	0.00%	9.80%	7.46%	3.64%	$\chi^2(3) = 14,561$	0.002

Stern et al (2018)

## Expected impact and target groups

- Basic communication principles need to be acknowledged
- Rethink the content and appeal on the emotional side
- Personal forest sector connection is the biggest factor influencing the perception of pursued topics
- Providing information at a point of emotional activation positively influences respondents attitude
- It is necessary to identify when and where people want to listen and further research on this moment is needed
- To transmit the messages of the sector, we suggest to either provide targeted information at a point of emotional concern or to package the content in an entertaining way e.g. a quiz, game, short movie or comic.
- Available documents: report on major results for scientific community & good guidance report for practitioners

## Where did it lead?

- I got professor
- Lea Ranacher finished her PhD and became deputy team leader at Wood Kplus
- Cooperation with former partners still ongoing
- Topics still under investigation, e.g. perception of climate change in the forest sector

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