Denis Boglio, Forest Sciences Centre of Catalonia, Spain, 13 October 2014

Regarding your call for case studies, we have an interesting case in Catalonia, Spain, but I'm not sure it would qualify/could be of interest to you. I'll describe it briefly and if you confirm a potential interest, I'll then prepare a full brief.

Catalonia is a mediterranean region with about 2M ha of forested land, with a rapidly growing stock in the last 30 years. Market price of wood has been stable during the last 20 years (decreasing 7 folds in real terms) and so the wood production has slowly gone down, being substituted by imported woods from northern Europe. This creates a huge pressure on natural ecosystems: closure of large swathes of natural space, loss in habitats quality, desapearance of some bird species, and an uncontrollable forest fire risk problem.

Since 3 years ago, stakeholders and administration have been working on an innovative kind of PES to try to reverse this tendency, especially at local level around villages and small cities. A public subsidies system has been devised, jointly with a bank (with support of the EIB) to help municipalities substitute their oil/gas boilers for heating, by wood-based biomass boilers. The condition is that they develop a local forest management plan and that the wood they consume come from within their municipal borders. A pilot was conducted in 2014, and 17M€ have been earmarked for the period 2015-2020 for the substitution of 150-200 municipal boilers.