

The transition to a biobased economy needs social science

The SNS-supported workshop “The forest sector in the biobased economy: perspectives from policy and economic sciences” was organised in Uppsala 28-29 August 2013. One main conclusion was that the forest sector must take lessons from economic and political sciences to enhance the adaptation to a green economy.

The transition towards a biobased economy involves economic and policy challenges for the forest sector: in designing appropriate regulations and incentives, salve and in stimulating green forest business development. This warrants a better understanding of how policies and markets shape the conditions for the biobased economy in the forest sector.

The presentations highlighted two key roles of the social sciences. The first involves the conceptualization and definition of the idea of a biobased economy and the implications for society and the forest sector. This inquiry is crucial as the bioeconomy concept is vague and contested, sovaldi sale and may therefore be used differently, and with different policy implications.

The second group of presentations dealt with the drivers, obstacles and effects of a biobased forest economy, including innovation processes, bioenergy policies, corporate strategies and consumer behaviour.

Together, the contributions underscored and illustrated how the transformation toward a biobased economy needs to be further discussed, examined and even questioned in an open public exchange instead of being an issue just to be considered by ‘specialists’.

Further, the workshop clearly demonstrated that the forest sector’s contribution to the biobased economy must take into account decisions and behaviour among policymakers, industry and consumers.

The findings from the workshop will appear in published proceedings and selected contributions in a special issue of Scandinavian Journal of Forest Research.

