



## Revitalising the Piccole Dolomiti wood value-chain with local charcoal production

*In the prealpine area of Piccole Dolomiti, chestnut trees are part of the local heritage but have lost their traditional role for the local economy over the past 50 years. Foresters want to restore the regional wood value-chain by using wood waste to produce locally made wood charcoal.*

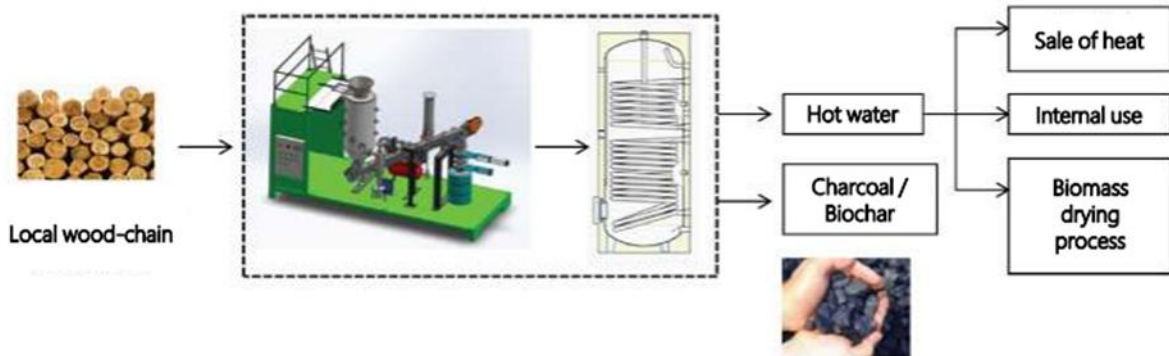
### A circular use of timber resources

Chestnut trees' wood has been largely used in the past in the Veneto region to produce poles, furniture, fixtures and handcrafts but global competition decreased its importance in the wood market. Foresters gathered in the [CAREGA project](#) (Certified charcoal for the active recovery of the economy and the environmental management of "Piccole Dolomiti Vicentine") want to revitalise marginalised territories through the creation of new business opportunities based on the sustainable exploitation of local wood.

MORE INFO



To improve wood mobilisation and foster the use of timber residues, foresters are developing a prototype plant to produce locally made charcoal. From large wood chips, the plant can produce 50kg of charcoal per hour through a process of biomass heating. The excess of hot water produced during the process will be an internal and external source of heating. Moreover, as many parcels are PEFC certified (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification) in the region, the objective is to use as much as possible timber residues from these forests. This would allow to sell PEFC certified charcoal and to put a new sustainable product on the regional market, while also promoting the sustainable management of woods.



Credits: CAREGA project

### A "kilometre zero" product to place on the market

Produced charcoal will be first provided to local stakeholders for an experimentation phase in order to get feedbacks on the product's quality. Retailers will communicate on the existence on this local product and propose customers to fill in an anonymous survey to assess to the product's appeal. A tour will also be organised with local operators to raise awareness on the local charcoal value chain and on the historic-natural context of Piccole Dolomiti. CAREGA partners will also identify potential purchasers and analyse the market opportunities and challenges, in particular the willingness from operators to pay for a locally produced charcoal.

### Innovative aspect

Using timber waste to produce charcoal at local level meets with the objectives of the circular economy. Not only the initiative will put a "kilometre zero" product on the regional market but will also create job opportunities in the forestry sector in the Piccole Dolomiti. The innovative plant prototype can also help other industries on the way towards sustainability.



Moreover, foresters want to reach out to a wider audience on the importance of forest management. 12 hours of forestry lessons will be scheduled in primary schools of the region to inform pupils about forests in their territory, raise awareness on natural heritage and environmental protection as well as to spread the idea of innovation among the younger generation.

The promotion approach chosen is an integrated strategy aiming at stressing the importance of the regional heritage, of sustainable forest management and of local consumption.

### Resources

The CAREGA project is led by the Associazione Forestale Vicentina and brings together forestry companies, researchers and non-profit organisations. The project is an EIP AGRI Local Operational Group fully funded under the Venetian Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 since 2018.

The overall budget of € 367,527.75 is mainly dedicated to the development of the prototype plant (€ 242,006.00), the market analysis (€ 29,917.95) and the dissemination and awareness-raising activities (€ 25,314.60).



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