

Natural resin sector faces key moment

Vila Real, March 18, 2024 – If changes are not made in the natural resin sector, it may become residual soon. Professionals believe that this is the key moment to decide whether to make a serious commitment to the sector or continue as it is. Professionals from the Natural Resin sector met this afternoon at a workshop of the RN21 Integrated Project, organised by CoLAB ForestWISE®, where concern was expressed for the future and various measures were pointed out to develop this area.

In the 1970s, Portugal became the world's second largest resin exporter. Since then, this activity has seen a drastic decline, and there are currently around 500 resin producers in the country, according to Marco Ribeiro, president of Resipinus - Association of Resin Distillers and Exploiters, one of the partners in this consortium.

This sector is struggling with various constraints, including the fact that production costs are higher than revenue, the lack of forestry management in Portugal, the disorganised growth of pine forests, the average age of resin growers, which is 60, and the lack of information on the number of resin hectares in Portugal.

With the RN21 Integrated Project, which for the first time brings together the entire value chain of the country's Natural Resin sector in an integrated and mobilising research and innovation consortium that promotes the modernisation and revitalisation of one of the most traditional sectors of the national economy, the conditions are in place to boost this sector.

"This is a key moment to decide on the future. Whether you want to invest in resin or not," emphasises Marco Ribeiro.

For the Resipinus chairman, the way forward involves improving genetics, training and professionalising the resin grower, mechanising the activity, creating adapted stimulant pastes, using closed containers, paying for positive externalities, traceability, certification, valuing the raw material and implementing a joint strategy.

Carlos Fonseca, CoLAB ForestWISE®'s Chief Technology Officer, believes that the RN21 Integrated Project is a "unique opportunity" to transform the Natural Resin sector in Portugal.

"The aim is for Natural Resin to once again play a central role in land management," he stresses, considering it necessary "for the sector to organise itself so that at the end of this process there will be a resin cluster that represents the sector and can



continue the momentum of the RN21 consortium and boost everything that this project brings to the country".

Natural resin is used in the composition of various products, including paints, varnishes, chewing gum, hot glue, rubber, and adhesive tapes, among others.

About CoLAB ForestWISE®

CoLAB ForestWISE® - Collaborative Laboratory for Integrated Forest and Fire Management is a private, non-profit organisation with legal personality. Its aim is to promote integrated forest and fire management through (co)research, innovation and the transfer of knowledge and technology with a view to contributing to more sustainable forest management in Portugal, increasing the value of forest products and services, reducing the negative consequences of major rural fires, increasing the competitiveness of the Portuguese forestry sector, boosting sustainable development in low-density areas and promoting scientific employment. CoLAB ForestWISE acts as a unifying element between industry, academia and public administration, leveraging existing knowledge in research centres and applying it to solve concrete, current and emerging problems in companies and in the forestry and fire domains, meeting the major societal challenges.

www.forestwise.pt/en

About RN21:

The RN21 Project - Innovation in the Natural Resin Sector to Strengthen the National Bioeconomy is supported by Component 12 - Sustainable Bioeconomy of the Recovery and Resilience Plan and aims to support the modernisation and consolidation of the industry through the creation of new value chains and greener industrial processes in the Natural Resin sector in Portugal, accelerating the production of high added value products from biological resources as an alternative to fossil-based materials.

The RN21 Integrated Project - Innovation in the Natural Resin Sector to Strengthen the National Bioeconomy, is co-financed by the Environmental Fund through Component 12 - Promotion of the Sustainable Bioeconomy (Investment TC-C12-i01 - Sustainable Bioeconomy No. 02/C12- i01/202), of the European funds allocated to Portugal by the Recovery and Resilience Plan (PRR), under the Recovery and Resilience Mechanism (RRM).

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