



Xyloforest Programme

"Winner of the Equipex call for projects, launched by the Ministry"

The president of the University of Pau and the Adour region (UPPA) Jean-Louis Gout, the president of the Adour region IUT (University Technology Institute) Christian Aubart, and the director of the Adour region IUT Vincent Lalanne, are pleased that the **Xyloforest** programme has been a winner in the Equipex (Equipment of Excellence) call for projects, a component of the government's *Grand Emprunt* (Big Loan) scheme, launched last June.

With a budget of more than 10 million euros, Xyloforest, coordinated by INRA (French National Institute for Agricultural Research), brings together more than forty research lecturers and researchers from 6 regions, two universities (UPPA and Bordeaux 1), three engineering schools (ENSTIB, ESB, and Arts and *Metiers* ParisTech Cluny) and two technical colleges, FCBA (Forest, cellulose, wood construction and furniture) and Cirad (Centre for international cooperation in agricultural research for development).

Backed by the Xylofutur competitiveness cluster, the aim of this programme is to provide research teams with access to new equipment enabling them to respond to the development needs of the French wood products sector. About 10% of the grant will be allocated to UPPA and to the Adour region IUT. The equipment purchased will reinforce research capability on the new generations of industrial adhesives made from natural resources (in Mont-de-Marsan), facilitate the production of latest-generation wood-plastic composites (in Pau) and help establish new capabilities for analysing wood surfaces and fibres (in Pau).

"Combine forces in order to be more efficient and respond to the economic and environmental challenges of the wood products sector"

Bertrand Charrier, a lecturer in the materials science and engineering department at the Adour region IUT and a researcher at IPREM, will coordinate Xylomat, one of the six technical platforms of Xyloforest. This will involve creating a national network uniting the best French research scientists with specialisms in wood and wood-based composites. The objective is simple: to combine forces in order to be more efficient and respond to the economic and environmental challenges of the wood products sector. In a global context, this sector needs to be innovative and to develop new products (panels, reconstituted wood and composites) that offer better performance and are environmentally friendly.

For UPPA and the Adour region IUT, this endowment recognises the continuing momentum begun by Jean-Marc Monteil (former chief education officer of Bordeaux Academy), who in 1998 declared his intention to create a university-based organisation, specialising in wood material, at the heart of the Landes. The actual story began in 2002 when the materials



science and engineering department (SGM), specialising in wood, opened on the Mont-de-Marsan IUT site. Less than one year later, June 2003 saw the creation of a research team, *Sylvadour*, specialising in the protection of wood and wood-based composites. Then in 2005, in coordination with the Haroun Tazieff Lycée at Saint-Paul-les-Dax, a technology transfer structure was set up: the technological platform *Aquitaine Bois*. That same year the SGM department started up a new course, the professional degree *Qualité et processus industriels dans les industries du bois* (Industrial quality and processes in the wood industry). A new professional degree in product design was due to be set up in around September 2011 with the Landes chamber of commerce and industry. The research team, comprising nearly 110 students, has been allocated about 2,500 m² of buildings devoted to higher education and research. The brand new premises have numerous pieces of equipment offering the means to carry out advanced level studies. It must be noted, as Vincent Lalanne explains: *"that where there is the will and the motivation, it is possible to develop education, high-level research and technology transfer in locations far removed from the big cities"*. The Landes General Council provided unwavering support in the development of education and research on the subject of wood in the Landes. It will now no doubt be pleased with the new dimension that the Xyloforest programme will bring to the IUT, UPPA and the Landes wood sector.