

NRA Sweden

The Swedish National Support Group

2020

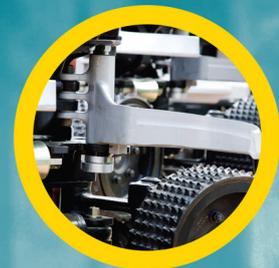
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A NATIONAL STRATEGIC RESEARCH AGENDA

for the forest-based industry in Sweden



Research for renewal

Let us envisage the situation in the middle of the 2000s. The conversion to a bio-based social economy has been implemented. Materials, products and energy from the forest play a key role. Crucial steps have been taken on the road to climate adaptation and sustainable utilisation of the earth's resources.

This is the vision of the Swedish forest-based sector. Research and innovation are key words in the development that will propel us forward. In the national strategic research agenda for the forest-based industry in Sweden, NRA 2020 (the National Research Agenda for 2020), this research is identified as the basis through which to achieve the vision. The agenda has been put together by the scientific community, the forest industry and public research financiers.

National strategic themes

NRA 2020 is based on 19 national strategic themes that describe the objectives, anticipated results up to 2020 and prioritised research and innovation activities. The strategic themes are distributed into four strategic target areas, namely Bio-economy, Raw materials, Processes and Products.

BIO-ECONOMY – The forest-based sector in the bio-based social economy

We require improved knowledge of how the forest-based sector can contribute to reducing carbon emissions and how our forests can be adapted to a changed climate. Future surveys and global market analyses are strategically crucial, as are scientifically based consequence analyses of political decisions that affect the forest industry.

RAW MATERIALS - Utilisation of forest resources

Raw material supply to the industry must be secured, while still being able to deliver the forest's other eco-system services. A prerequisite for the transition to a bio-based social economy is increased supply of biomass. Accordingly, for example, new tree-processing programmes are required, as are intelligent felling and logistics systems, as well as more efficient recycling systems for both products and bi-products.

PROCESSES – Industrial leadership

Efficient new energy and water-saving production processes are of vital importance to the industry's profitability. New business concepts for products and services have to be developed, including such services that are based on the soft values of the forest. Recreation and leisure activities will become more significant. Perhaps, the most exciting and challenging research area is the new concept for bio-refineries and the products that these could generate.

PRODUCTS – Consumer needs

The focus is on product development. For example, new concepts for wood building, furniture and design. New products and materials, of which several have not yet left the laboratory environment, will gain a prominent role in future research. Several traditional product groups, such as packaging, printed products and hygiene products, offer great development potential.



”Cooperation is essential to achieve decisive results”



Global competition and new challenges

Sweden is a leading, international producer and exporter of forest-industry products. Revenues from these exports represent a cornerstone in Sweden’s economy. The Swedish forest industry is now facing tough global competition, particularly from Asia and South America, with lower cost ratio.

Sweden’s competitiveness has been largely based on its technological lead and it is important that we try to maintain this advantage. However, technology development is rapid and new countries frequently occupy leading positions in several key areas.

The Swedish forest industry is facing a transition, characterised by threats but also major opportunities. To meet the challenges, new business concepts, new enterprise and new market areas are required. A higher degree of processing and efficient utilisation of all parts of the raw materials will become important features in the transition facing the industry.

Inspiration to innovation

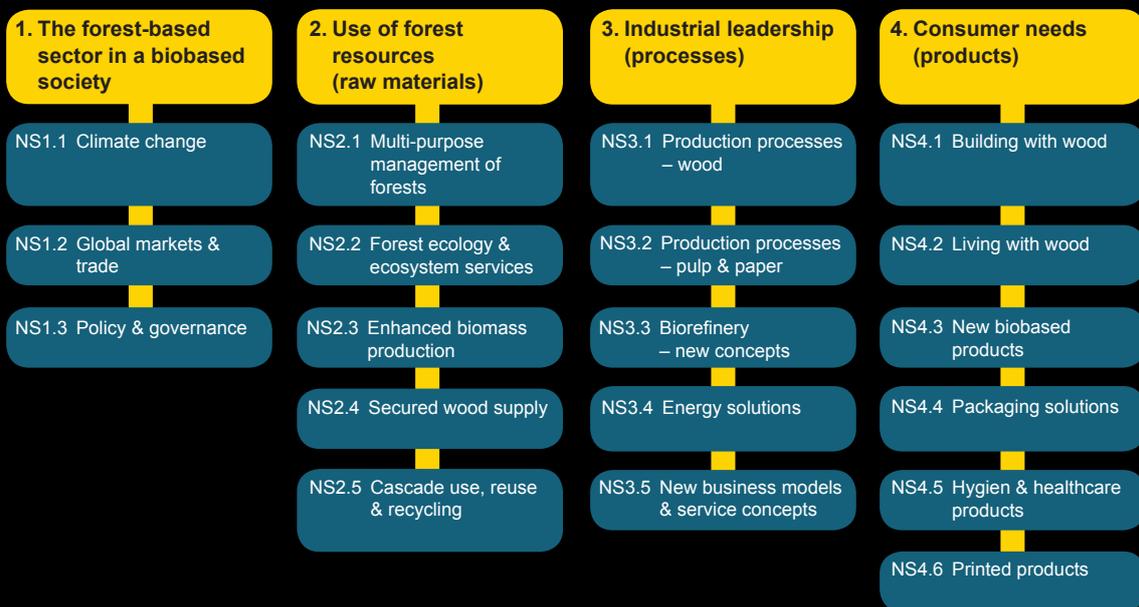
Continued focus on research and innovation is essential if Sweden is to preserve and develop its position in the global market. Our research is high-class in several areas, but competition is increasing from the new forest-industry countries.

For Sweden, this entails demands for renewal in terms of research, development and innovation. The areas where such investments have the greatest potential to succeed are being documented in the national research agenda. The agenda focuses on increasing value growth in the existing product areas, but also on creating completely new business opportunities.

The step from research and development to innovation, meaning new businesses, is not easy. One of the objectives of the forest-based sector’s strategic research agenda is to demonstrate the potential of the sector and to inspire development efforts. The Swedish forest industry will play a crucial role in the future bio-based social economy. A foundation for the success of the investments is that the scientific community, the forest industry and research financiers all support the new agenda.

”The forest, forestry and the forest industry’s products play a key role for the climate”

The national strategic research agenda for the forest-based industry in Sweden was prepared by the forest industry, the scientific community and the public research financiers jointly and coordinated by NRA Sweden (the Swedish National Support Group) under the leadership of the NRA Council.



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