



## Newsletter # 3 2021

Dear WOOLUME-friends,

### News from Anna Salachna and Damian Chmura, WP5 team

Spring was late this year but finally has come and we are preparing for botanical studies. On Ochodzita M.t, where we can meet “our” sheep, vegetation season is delayed due to local situation and montane character. However, the pastoral season has also started. In Beskid Mts and the whole Carpathians, the beginning of the pastoral season is celebrated. It is called “redyk” and is hard to translate into English because in other countries there is no equivalent of this event. The only similar traditional ceremonials are “Trailing of the Sheep” in the United States and “Almabtrieb” in Austria. But in contradistinction to redyk, there moving the flocks of the mountain to their winter grazing homes is celebrated. In redyk sheep are moved from their shelters to the grasslands in May where they usually stay till October. This spring redyk, organized by Maria and Piotr Kohut from the Center of Regional Produce in Koniaków due to the pandemic, was held in a simplified form. There was no ceremonial transfer of sheep from the stables to the pasture which is accompanied by a parade of shepherds and flocks. Fortunately, the traditional sheep mixing from various flocks in the Ochodzita pasture with accompanying rituals took place. The shepherds had a traditional dress, around the sheep pastoral dogs ran, a priest came in. There was also incense and singing. The tourists gathered, watched and took photos.



The participation in redyk was the occasion for searching botanical signs of spring. The grasslands are still covered the last year remnants of plants but spring plants try to break through the necromass and grow further. In scrub which is scattered on Ochodzita early spring forest herbs can be observed

likewise wood anemone *Anemone nemorosa*, ground ivy *Glechoma hederacea* and in open sites daisy *Bellis perennis*. We purchased GPS collars for sheep to observe their pasture routes and track sheep fading behaviour. It will let us examine the effects of grazing, trampling and faeces deposition (fertilization) on the condition of vegetation. Hopefully, we can find out about the relationships between fodder quality and the quality of wool. Who knows? The chosen sheep has put the collar aimed to test the battery, GPS range and monitoring. Ultimately, 40 sheep will be tracked throughout the season with our equipment.

#### **Local wool book sent to the publisher**

We have just sent the manuscript to Palgrave Macmillan for the book: **Local, Slow and Sustainable Fashion Fibres** - Wool as a fabric for change. We don't know exactly when we will hear back and how many changes they will ask for, so we'll just see and take things as they come along. Not much else we can do! But it is great to have such a delivery in the project!

**Report from SIFO WP 2: Mapping the market for acoustic and sound absorbing products made of wool** is just about to be published as a report, as the first deliverable from work package 2. The aim of the report has been to map the market for acoustic and sound absorbing products made of wool to examine the potential to introduce coarse wool as a material. This has been done through desktop research and interviews with a focus on the qualities of wool as a natural product. Findings show that though man-made materials dominate the market for acoustic products due to lower prices, wool is preferred as a material due to its natural properties as well as aesthetics. Producers using wool consider their products to be high-end, intended for people who want very good quality products and who are willing to pay a higher price to achieve this. However, few producers use coarse wool in these products, and many are made of pure Merino wool. Using Merino wool which is often considered of very fine quality due to the low micron-count does not correspond with the ideal of good utilisation of resources. Therefore, we are proposing to utilise coarse wool which today is discarded as a mere by-product to meat-production. In addition, we argue for the rawness and uniqueness of the look of coarse wool as positive in terms of aesthetics and as something that adds to the position of acoustic products made of wool as high-end. If you would like a copy of the report, please email [annasiga@oslomet.no](mailto:annasiga@oslomet.no). For deliverable 2.2, the intension was to look into the potentials of waste wool as a fertilizer agent. However, in the initial stages of researching the topic, a Norwegian project called VerdifULL was discovered doing exactly this. They will also conduct technical testing of the wool and interview stakeholders in Norway. Therefore, the scope of the WOOLUME report has been slightly altered and a collaboration with the VerdifULL project has been established. The WOOLUME report will instead deal with the newest innovations in wool utilization. Fertilizers such as wool pellets will still be included but also other products such as for personal hygiene and insulation packaging. The aim is to show the many potentials for using wool as a material, and what is happening in this area right now.

#### **Baltic Wool Conference 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> of September: Save the dates!**

Dalena White (Secretary General of the IWTO) is key note speaker day 1, and will talk about the over-consumption of fast fashion and the damage caused by textiles made from petroleum-based fibres on precious land and water resources, due to micro-fibre pollution. Wool textiles can support the urgent demand for a circular economy model and has an important role to play. It is up to us to unlock its true potential and increase its value. Tone Tobiasson is key note speaker day 2, and will follow up (and hopefully our local wool book will be ready to launch at the same time): If collaboration is key, what actually needs to be unlocked? In the current conundrum, which we can define as a *wicked* problem, we have actually burst the planetary boundaries big time. How do we then find a committing and resilient path that is regenerative and restoring for our planet? COULD it

be that wool holds a pivotal role; as research, businesses, NGOs, policy-makers and activists find a common 'yarn'? <https://balticwoolconference.com/>

### **EU Horizon application 2021**

*HORIZON-CL6-2021-GOVERNANCE-01-09: Revitalisation of European local communities with innovative bio-based business models and social innovation.* This seems the most relevant call in the Horizon program, and the one that most of our European wool-friends are interested in. The call is still not official. Which is a problem, because they have only moved the deadline till October. SIFO and Tone had a meeting last week to discuss this, and the plan is now the following: SIFO will put out a 'feeler' in the EU system to see if anyone else is looking at this specific call. They will also check with different actors in Norway that could possibly be interested. We will also use Facebook to try to find someone interested in taking the lead. There will be more calls up until 2027, and the themes seem to be in our favor (more in this vein), so there will be other chances coming up. If any of your institutions want to take the lead on this, please make this known. SIFO will be more than willing to be a Work-Package Leader, and back up the process of application.

### **Conferences....**

Here's a link to the report from the IWTO Congress:

<https://www.ecotextile.com/2021052627843/features/iwto-congress-let-s-talk-wool.html>

"Regenerative practices, local wool with provenance, and transparency; all were top of the agenda in a wide-ranging discussion that even spun its way into wool as a carbon sink. Not all things wool end up in textiles, increasingly some now end up in fertilising wool-pellets. Nothing added, by the way, but how does this new use impact wool's eco-credentials? And if wool is used as fertiliser, and thereby carbon-capturing its weight in gold, how will this affect the 'nature vs synthetic' debate? Having followed this seemingly endless discussion since 2009, when Made-By first launched their fibre tool that put wool in the dunce corner as the worst fibre for the environment, it is interesting to note how this space has become even noisier now that the Higg Index MSI has made similar comparisons and rankings. However, 12 years of hard work by the IWTO has paid off – somewhat, anyway – as wool no longer holds the highest scores. Higg later claimed they never meant for natural fibres to be compared to synthetics anyway, a claim that independent analyst and vocal Higg critic, Veronica Kassatly addressed in her talk on Day 4 of the congress." The report from Virtu-Wool conference hasn't been published yet, but if you want a copy, just email [tone.tobiasson@gmail.com](mailto:tone.tobiasson@gmail.com) and the text will be sent to you.

The ICNF2021, the 5th International Conference on Natural Fibres – Materials of the Future, was as usually focused on the latest scientific and technical developments in natural fibres and fibre-based materials. For the conference the great number of presentations were registered. All three days of the conference were overloaded with presentations, which focused mainly on nanocellulose based fibres and structures, fibres obtained from various plants, modification of jute and hemp and natural fibres composites. The issues related to cellulosic materials clearly dominated. Our two papers on application of coarse wool from mountain sheep and concentration of heavy metals belong to the few presentations about wool. It is a pity that the conference was held as an online event. If you would like the posters from these two presentations, we can send them. Use the same email as above!

### **WOOL-TV!**

Here's an instruction video from Selbu Spinning mill on how to sort the fleeces from the Norwegian sheep breeds. <https://youtu.be/irulvl7uSLY> It is very instructive and hope you enjoy it! Also, remember to check out our Facebook page! We will update it with the ongoing work there.