



Newsletter # 3 2022

Dear friends of WOOLUME,

We have just been together in Trøndelag, in Norway and some of you have been 'virtually' with us as well. Here you have a compilation of the latest news from the project.

Project status update

As mentioned, the WOOLUME project partners met in Klæbu, Norway at the end of October for an update meeting. The annual report, we were told, has been prepared and submitted, both the technical and financial part. The technical part has been approved and the financial part is being revised after comments from EEA Grants. The next report will start in January/February in order to submit in March. The project has asked for an extension of six months, as the project is supposed to end in August 2023. The hope is to extend until February 2024. We are still awaiting an answer.

All in all, the project has over-delivered on publications, but one issue has not landed: How we describe and summarize the knowledge exchange that has (or has not) taken place.

WP 1 finished in August, with characterization of Polish wool.

WP2 This is the WP with knowledge transfer, an issue that was hampered by the pandemic. Through a short discussion it was agreed that interviews will be done with the formal project partners and the workshop participants, which will be collected in a report, so that we can build on this in new projects. There is an agreement that there has been knowledge transfer from a 'high local wool use' country to a 'low local wool use' country. The interviews will be done via zoom next year, but the questions will be prepared in December. The report will also be a basis for a Polish paper.

This also developed into a discussion about what theme would be fit for an op ed in Polish. This will be discussed further and hopefully result in an op ed in a Polish newspaper that highlights the benefits of the project for local value creation.

WP5 New report on soil health and biodiversity: Salachna, A., Marcol, K., Broda, J., & Chmura, D. (2022). The Contribution of Environmental and Cultural Aspects of Pastoralism in the Provision of Ecosystem Services: The Case of the Silesian Beskid Mts (Southern Poland). *Sustainability*, 14(16), 10020. Here is an excerpt from the Abstract: Grazing has proven to be a successful management tool in terms of the maintenance and restoration of biodiversity. Sheep and pastoralism can provide a various set of ecosystem services, i.e., benefits for humans from the environment. The Silesian Beskids, the westernmost part of the Carpathian Mountains, is an area with a long tradition of

pastoralism. Since the 13th century, sheep have grazed clearings located in forests and in large areas of grasslands in mountains. In this study, we tried to identify all possible aspects of provisional, regulating and cultural services provided by sheep and the pasturage tradition bearing in mind the specificity of this region. The biodiversity maintenance and habitat creation due to grazing and the cultural values of pastoralism was illustrated using a literature review of data concerning cultural heritage, tourism and education and using our own phytosociological field studies performed in nine vegetation types within grazing sites. If you want a copy of the study, and are unable to find it online, contact us.

To fulfill the project deliverables, there needs to be held a final conference in Poland. Depending on when the project needs to end, this will take place either in May (if not prolonged) when the sheep are let out to pasture, or in the fall (if prolonged) when they return from pasture. The cultural activities that happen in conjunction with these traditions will be part of the conference.

Selbu conference: Hands on Day 1, Day 2 and Day 4



The international seminar on "*Use to conserve – the utilization of local wool from traditional sheep breeds in Europe*" was organized by Ingvild Svorkmo Espelien (Selbu spinning mill) and held in different locations in Trøndelag (Norway) on October 19th – 23rd. The seminar started on Wednesday (October 19th) with a study trip to the farm Nerklubben on Frøya island. The owners of the farm, Ola and Brit, showed us the coastal heathland dominated by *Calluna vulgaris* and told us about the specifics of sheep grazing in this type of vegetation. We found out that the sheep's main food is young, annual shoots of heather. Brit presented products made from yarn spun at Selbu Spinneri. In the afternoon we visited the fisherman's cottage at Titran, Kjervågsundet. There, during a short walk, we could see an Atlantic-type peatland with specific vegetation, dominated by bryophytes, heather, cranberry and juniper. At the end of the trip, we came to a beautiful place that we will remember forever.



On the second day of our seminar (Thursday, October 20) there was a workshop on yarn dyeing conducted by Nina Alsborn (Fibershed Nordenfjeldske). Each participant dyed a sample of wool yarn by themselves, using different dyes, keeping the appropriate temperature and pH during the dyeing

process. The results were amazing and surprising! The last day (Saturday, October 22) was also practical. The workshops were organized in parallel sections: wool sorting (led by Ingvild), spinning (led by Marte), felting and weaving. (Thank you to Anna Salachna for writing this report.)

The main conference day:

The main theme of the international conference was the use of local wool in several different countries and for different purposes, all depending on the quality of the wool. All wool can be a good quality – **for a specific use**. In the opening lecture Professor Ingun Grimstad Klepp and journalist Tone Skårdal Tobiasson talked about the book *Local, Slow and Sustainable Fashion: Wool as a Fabric for Change* (Palgrave Macmillan), and how the theme of the book ties in to the current debate around Lifecycle Analysis and the controversy where natural fibers are deemed less environmentally and climate friendly than synthetics.



This was followed by a presentation of Fibershed Nordenfjeldske by Nina Asborn and Årolilja Svedal Jørgensrud. Fibershed is also important in the new discourse around a more community-based and localized industry; where the local biological premises (as described in Anna Salachna's report) play an important part. The Estonian-Norwegian, the Polish-Norwegian, and finally the Portuguese-Norwegian projects then were all presented. Ave Matsin mainly informed about the technical results from spinning, felting, textile and fiber in relation to Estonian wool, while Eli Wendelbo and her team of students presented the waulking/fulling results. WOOLUME gave a very detailed presentation, as did hiWOOL from Portugal (online). These last two projects are funded by the EEA bilateral funding. All the projects were part of a physical exhibit in the meeting hall. As the conference wrapped up, Ingvild presented Selbu spinning mill's role in projects (see more about this below). There were almost as many online participants as in person, with Germany and Denmark represented.

Baltic Wool Conference

On 6th – 8th October 2022, representatives of the Polish Woolume team took part in Visby (Gotland) in the Baltic Wool Conference. The conference has gathered farmers, producers, researchers and designers involved in the wool value chain activities in several Baltic countries, with extra representatives from Norway, Iceland, Great Britain and Canada. In addition to interesting and inspiring presentations, the conference program has been enriched by an exhibition of wool products, visits to the craft shops and a study tour of sheep farms and scouring and spinning mills working in different places of Gotland. During the conference, the Woolume team presented the achievements and some products obtained by the project implementation and participated in several fruitful talks and discussions to share good practices, support bilateral initiatives and create a network of the wool community in the Baltic region. (Pictures on the next page.)



Future applications

We are looking at how to go beyond the current projects and submit applications for funding in the future. One option, which is rather immediate, is an open call for bilateral initiatives in the area of green transition between Poland and Norway, under the Fund for Bilateral Relations. This is funding that opens up for networking, and is limited to a year. This could be a stepping stone for the upcoming Horizon call on 'food, bioeconomy, natural resources and environment'.

https://rea.ec.europa.eu/funding-and-grants/horizon-europe-cluster-6-food-bioeconomy-natural-resources-agriculture-and-environment_en There will be a meeting in Norwegian on November 11th.

Selbu spinning mill's pivotal role in wool projects

12 years ago, Selbu spinning mill was established, focusing on wool from traditional, Norwegian heritage sheep breeds. From the beginning, cooperation in projects has been important. Let's do a deep dive! Why do Selbu work on projects? Well... Exchange of competence and skills, development of own competence and skills, new challenges for the employees and because project work is a part of their business plan. Check. So HOW do they work on projects? They need to be involved in the application process from the outset! Their competences are: Wool sorting and classifying, processing of wool for project partners, development of new products, testing of new methods in production and courses/workshops covering crafts and skills, as well as excursions to endangered seminatural landscapes, formed by grazing.

In Woolume: Selbu's role is to test production of a range of products made of wool from the Polish (Karpatian) milk sheep breeds, wool sorting workshop in the Koniakov mountain village, with the main challenge if the best use of coarse wool, exchange of knowledge: traditional farming in cultural landscapes.

In hiWool: Selbu's role is to look at traditional sheep breeds in Norway and Portugal, wool sorting and processes, exchange of competence, also for textile traditions and finally a knitting challenge with pattern development.

In the Estonia/Norway cooperation project, Selbu's role is about wool sorting from traditional sheep breeds in both countries, exchange of experiences and competence, spinning yarn for weaving twill textiles for fulling and feedback from the textile tests, and coordinating education in Estonia and Norway.

Nordenfjeldske Fibershed – Fibershed Norway is Selbu spinning mill's latest venture. This is a network and cooperation system based on local resources, craft, traditions and farms. This will be part of the development of Fibershed Europe and a chance to build a functional cooperation for sustainable production.