

The National Wood Energy Forum was held today

IN VERONA, INSTITUTIONS, ASSOCIATIONS, AND BUSINESSES TOGETHER FOR THE FUTURE OF RENEWABLE THERMAL ENERGY VIDEO MESSAGE FROM MINISTER PICHETTO FRATIN « WOOD, THE OLDEST BIOFUEL OF TOMORROW»

The event was organized by Veronafiere, Progetto Fuoco, and AIEL. The focus was on sustainable forest management, air quality, policies for revitalizing the forest-energy supply chain, and incentives supporting high-efficiency energy technologies

Verona, 28 March 2025 – «An ancient energy source that knows how to look to the future: wood is, in every respect, the oldest biofuel of tomorrow». With these words, Minister of Environment and Energy Security **Gilberto Pichetto Fratin**, who participated via video message, opened today at the Verona Congress Center the **“National Forum on Wood Energy – Policies, Incentives, Actions for the Future of Renewable Thermal Energy”**. The event was organized by **Veronafiere** and **Progetto Fuoco**, the leading trade fair for the wood-energy sector, in collaboration with **AIEL - Italian Association of Agroforestry Energies**. The event brought together more than **300 participants** in Verona, including representatives from institutions, associations, and businesses, key players in a sector called to contribute to the country's energy transition.

Italian forests have more than doubled in the past fifty years. This phenomenon, partly due to the abandonment of mountain and rural areas, presents new challenges: uncontrolled forest growth can lead to hydrogeological risks and land management issues. It is therefore essential to transform this resource into an opportunity.

«We must aim for sustainable development models capable of responsibly enhancing forest resources, integrating them into the national energy supply chain, and creating new economic and employment opportunities in the territories," added Minister Pichetto Fratin. "To achieve this, continuous collaboration between businesses, institutions, and local communities is essential. The Ministry stands and will always stand by this sector, ready to listen, engage, and support every initiative aimed at consolidating and promoting the wood-energy supply chain, within the framework of sustainability and environmental responsibility».

The Forum was precisely an opportunity to strengthen the dialogue between stakeholders in the forest-wood-energy supply chain and **institutional representatives** at the European, national, and regional levels, to develop a new programmatic platform capable of enhancing the sector.

Crucial and highly relevant topics for the entire industry were on the agenda during the event. From all the latest updates on **Conto Termico 3.0**, the key tool providing non-repayable grants to improve building energy efficiency and promote renewable energy sources, to system policies for improving air quality. And then, the prospects for revitalizing the forest-wood-energy supply chain, with economic and employment scenario data, and a focus on the role of biomass in the future of Italy and Europe.

«As Veronafiere, we strongly believe in this sector and in the trade fair that represents it, Progetto Fuoco» stated **Federico Bricolo**, President of Veronafiere. «We do not merely offer exhibitors a space but provide continuous and concrete support throughout the year, fostering the growth of the sector, creating visibility, networking, and development opportunities. We have already successfully done this in other strategic sectors for Made in Italy – I think of wine, marble – and we are doing so with even greater determination in the sector of domestic wood and pellet heating and all technologies revolving around the biomass supply chain. The support activities we put in place, from in-depth collateral events to editorial initiatives like PF Magazine and political and institutional engagement, are a distinctive element of our approach. They are the tangible sign of our commitment to creating a system, to generating value together with businesses, associations, and institutions».

«The National Forum on Wood Energy was born from the desire to offer a constructive and continuous discussion space for a sector with great potential, now more than ever in need of clear answers, effective tools, and stable dialogue with institutions» said **Adolfo Rebughini**, General Director of Veronafiere. «We also want to actively contribute to the sector's internationalization, listening to the market, interpreting the needs of businesses, and creating connections with new markets. Our role is to be close to the sector in every phase: in moments of success, but also in the more complex ones where it is necessary to join forces, promoting a shared vision».

«This event not only allowed us to engage with key institutional and political figures, but most importantly, it gave us the opportunity to build a shared vision for the future» stated **Domenico Brugnoli**, President of AIEL. «Biomass used in residential heating is already the main renewable energy source, utilized by over a quarter of Italian households, which has enabled the achievement of the 2020 renewable energy targets: we are talking about a sector that will inevitably remain a pillar of renewable policies for 2030 and decarbonization goals for 2050, as it is the only locally available, renewable, and programmable energy source closely linked to the territory».

«Today's Forum was an important moment to put the spotlight back on the entire biomass heating sector, a sector that is at the forefront in responding to the challenges of the energy transition and decarbonization» explained **Monica Pontarin**, Event Manager of Progetto Fuoco. «It was above all an opportunity to strengthen the dialogue between supply chain operators and institutions. Today's Forum also represents an important milestone for Veronafiere on the road to Progetto Fuoco, the leading international event and reference point for the entire supply chain, which will be held from February 25 to 28, 2026».

National Forum on Wood Energy:

The event opened with institutional greetings from **Adolfo Rebughini**, General Director of Veronafiere, **Domenico Brugnoli**, President of AIEL, **Gianpaolo Bottacin**, Regional Minister for Environment, Climate, Civil Protection, and Hydrogeological Risk of the Veneto Region, **Luigi D'Eramo**, Undersecretary for Agriculture, Food Sovereignty, and Forests, and **Gilberto Pichetto Fratin**, Minister of Environment and Energy Security.

Among the first topics addressed was the "National Action Plan for Air Quality Improvement" with **Stefania Crotta**, Director of the General Directorate for Programs and Financial Incentives at MASE, and **Fabio Romeo**, from the Air Pollution and Air Quality Directorate at MASE. Then, **Gian Luca Gurrieri**, Head of Climate, Emissions, and Physical Agents at the Lombardy Region, presented Lombardy's case study on "Incentives and New Regulations to Reduce Emissions from Wood Biomass Heating Systems". Another key topic was the "Conto Termico 3.0: The Incentive Supporting High-Efficiency and Low-Emission Technologies for a Renewable and Sustainable Future", discussed by **Enrico Bonacci**, from the Technical Secretariat of the Energy Department at MASE.

Next, **Emilio Gatto**, Director of the General Directorate for Mountain Economy and Forestry at MASAF, spoke on "National Policies for Revitalizing the Forest-Wood-Energy Supply Chain: Current Situation and Future Prospects." **Franco Cotana**, CEO of RSE SpA (Energy System Research), then provided an overview of the "Economic Impact and Employment Benefits of the Wood Biomass Sector in Local Territories".

Adolfo Rebughini General Director of Veronafiere, presented "Progetto Fuoco 2026: A Premier Showcase for Technological Innovations in the Biomass Heating Sector." Finally, a roundtable discussion was held with members of the Italian and European Parliament, titled "Autonomy, Sustainability, Decarbonization: The Role of Biomass in the Future of Italy and Europe." Moderated by **Annalisa Paniz**, General Director of AIEL, the debate featured **Matteo Favero**, Head of Environmental Policies and Infrastructure for the Veneto Democratic Party, **Sen. Luigi Spagnolli**, Secretary of the Permanent Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defense in the Senate and Deputy Vice President of the Autonomy Group in the Senate, **On. Luca Squeri**, Secretary of the Committee on Productive Activities, Trade, and Tourism in the Chamber of Deputies and Energy Representative for Forza Italia, and **On. Paolo Borchia**, Member of the European Parliament, Head of Delegation for Lega, and part of the "Patriots for Europe" group. The event concluded with a closing address by **Federico Bricolo**, President of Veronafiere.

Progetto Fuoco 2026

Progetto Fuoco is the world's most important event dedicated to heating appliances and energy production through biomass. Organized by Veronafiere, the event is held biennially and will return in 2026, **from February 25 to 28**. It will showcase innovative solutions for optimizing the use of natural resources, reducing CO₂ emissions, and

increasing energy efficiency. The event will also provide discussion spaces on policies and strategies to promote a sustainable energy future, with a focus on circular economy and reducing environmental impact.

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