Forests and wood: communication or representations?
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Ministry of Agriculture and Food
2017-2019 : a communication campaign (1)

- France Bois Forêt : communication campaign "For me, it's wood".
- Objectives : greater visibility to the sector, increase the volume of wood consumption, increase market shares for domestic production
- Costs : 10 millions € / 3 years
- 2020 : impact assessment on the wood sector
2017-2019: a communication campaign (2)

- 2019 > the wood sector focuses on 2 priorities:
  - construction/renovation
  - fitting out – wood-based packaging

- Partnerships with TV programs:
  La maison France 5
  Silence ça pousse!
Others communication ways...

- International forest day
- Portrays of foresters on TV programs
- Spots in movies
- Social media
Communication: is it enough?

- Complexity of forest issues linked to the evolution of the forestry sector: emergence of new policies related to sustainable management, multiple players, public and private owners, lobbyists, international organizations and institutions, environmental associations, or citizen movements.

- Each of this community seeks to gain visibility > to inform and to influence the opinion of the general public with strategies

- Their respective interests are often divergent

- The messages are numerous, sometimes contradictory

- Importance of involving NGOs in communication and message building to move towards a social consensus on cuts.
Role of the media in strengthening dominant representations

- Very significant increase in the symbolic value of the tree and the forest

  = refuge, immutability, timelessness, synonymous with eternity, connection with the heavens, emotional experiences...

- Passion for the forest that was for a long time limited to its role as a setting: tourist projects, best-sellers, movies, board games or even video games
Public awareness exists!

La petite forêt née d'un crowdfunding est menacée: "On m'avait parlé de lapins mais pas de chevreuils"

Pierre Fagnant, publié le 22 septembre 2018 à 08h54

La plantation de la forêt, en avril 2016.

"1000 arbres plantés au cœur d'un zoning industriel", "une forêt primitive à Péruwelz", "une zone tampon pour absorber le bruit"... Fin avril, la plantation annoncée de plusieurs centaines d'arbres dans une parcelle appartenant à l'intercommunale IDETA avait fait les gros titres de plusieurs médias. Tout le monde s'accordait pour saluer la portée écologique d'un projet novateur. Cinq mois plus tard, la forêt en croissance est devenue le garde-manger de chevreuils et si personne n'intervient, elle aura disparu avant la fin de l'année.

MINISTÈRE DE L'AGRICULTURE ET DE L'ALIMENTATION
Questions for thoughts

● Elements of the structure of the social representation of the forest that ensure its stability? What are the negotiable ones?
● Main communication vehicles for the social representation of the forest? Levers and drivers of their effectiveness?
● Mediation tools to develop? Recommendations in terms of public policy?

Ref. “Communicating to Support the Comprehension of Forest-Related Issues by Nonexpert Audiences”, Julie Matagne & Pierre Fastrez, in Forestry in the Midst of Global Changes
Thank you for your attention!

Any question?