



Mutual learning workshop: Maximizing collaboration among EC funded projects communicating about Bioeconomy

The first workshop to maximize collaboration among EC funded projects communicating about Bioeconomy took place on 28 March 2018. Representatives of 23 projects came together to present their projects' approach to promote bioeconomy and to discuss future common communication strategy actions and a common ACTION Plan. The workshop was organized by the EC in collaboration with the projects BIOWAYS and BIOVOICES.

Welcome address:

Waldemar Kütt, head of Unit, RTD-Dir F, Bioeconomy:

- Update of the Bioeconomy Strategy will happen this summer
 - Bioeconomy event in Brussels planned for the 22/10/18
 - Potential to link with other Bioeconomy events in the MS
- Gap in Bioeconomy in eastern MS

Susanna Albertini (BIOWAYS, BIOVOICES projects):

- Bioeconomy Village in Rome as example of a successful event with more than 130,000 visitors

How bioeconomy is communicated? – Individual projects' approach to promote bioeconomy:

Each project was asked to answer the following three questions within a five minute presentation:

1. Which methods to communicate bioeconomy and/or promote the uptake of bio-based products were used?
2. What was successful?
3. Which challenges did the projects face?
4. What could have been done differently?

Key Messages of the presentations:

- Engage the local community (field visits, showcase, hands-on activities, etc.).
- Children and schools can be used as multipliers.
- Increased involvement of consumers needed.
- Increase visibility by organising joint events.
- Develop attractive and innovate tools such as videos and games.
- Gaps/Main challenges:
 - Terminology should be unified.
 - Clear and consistent communication needed.
 - Need of a platform for projects to work together (improving knowledge circulation, increasing cooperation and enlarging the community).

A detailed table with each projects' approach can be found in the Annex.

Showcasing of a game on bioeconomy - What is the definition of bioeconomy and bio-based products?

A game, developed by the BIOWAYS/BIOVOICES projects, highlighted the need for a common definition of the Bioeconomy. Albeit their daily work with the Bioeconomy, the participants could not agree on major defining aspects of the Bioeconomy.

Towards the update of the Bioeconomy Strategy: key actions:

Elisabetta Balzi, Deputy head of unit, RTD-Dir F.4marine resources, presented the latest progress in the update of the EC Bioeconomy Strategy.

Initiate new collaboration and joint activities: how will your project accompany the adoption of the new Bioeconomy Communication:

Divided in three groups, the participants discussed about possible ways on how their projects can support the EC Bioeconomy Communication. Posters with the outcome of this discussion have been produced. The outcomes will be circulated by the BIOVOICES project.

Setting up of common communication strategy actions:

Results of the brainstorming session on common communication actions for the future:

Researchers:

- Learn to communicate research in an easy (and actionable by the other stakeholders) way
- Inspire younger generation
 - Give them something to touch and feel
 - Engage the youth as 'multipliers'

Act as testimonials, showing their research to the public (i.e during researcher's night and large scale exhibitions for citizens interested in science (Maker Faire, festivals, ect.)

- Business:
- Some business are already bio-based but don't realise it
 - Raise awareness
 - Increase cooperation and new value-chains
 - The same principle applies for SMEs and innovators
 - Need to share good practice and to scale up

Consumers and industry:

- Address their needs in a specific way

Policy makers:

- Engage at a local level
 - Be aware of regional bias
- Boost collaboration between regions, research and products

Procurement:

- Needs more work

Interfaces:

- Bottom-up with citizens

Citizens:

- Show them real world applications

- 'Touch and smell' products (literally)
- Engage at a local level
 - Exhibits, demos, etc.
- Show them the benefits of the bioeconomy – social, economic, etc.
- Showcase everyday's life application

Media:

- 60sec videos to explain the science
- Social media
 - Target researchers and consumers
- Promote success stories
- Make the content clear, simple, appealing – easy to understand

Raising awareness:

- BioLinX and ISAAC finish in June
 - Potential collaboration
- BBIJU information day
- Horizon event 16/07/18
- (National) brokerage events

Tools and videos:

- Databases
 - Contacts and products
- Toolkit
 - Instruction, training, webinars
- Platforms
 - Information and knowledge
- Games
 - Consumers
- Educational material for schools

Dissemination activities and cooperation events:

- Projects should summarise their main results, goals, etc. in a (clear, short and catching) factsheet or video
 - To be distributed to other projects
 - Share information,
- Share and collaborate on events and activities to increase impact and awareness
 - Contacts, experts, databases, etc.
 - Difficulty with GDPR
 - Possibility to share costs of the events, engage people, increase promotion: multiply impact, maximize investments

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Wrap up and closing of the session of the workshop:

- Synchronise actions to implement the Bioeconomy Strategy
 - Good potential
 - First complete outcome (in the short term) should be increased collaboration and sharing
- Plan for another workshop around this time next year in order to take stock
 - Maybe discuss a more detailed framework for communication if nothing has been set up
- One example of a potential action is the establishment of an internal space for the projects to share details on event planning, tools, etc.
 - Follow basic rules
 - Don't (unfairly) exploit others' work

- It should be win-win for the project participating
- Bioeconomy event on 22/10/18 is a big opportunity
 - Opportunity for collaboration and co-events in other MS

OUTCOMES

The participants agreed to cooperate together and define synergies for the so called "bioeconomy semester" in view of the coming updated Bioeconomy Strategy. A common action Plan with detailed actions will be planned. Need to communicate the concept of sustainable, circular bioeconomy. Raising awareness on the socio-environmental impact should 1) encourage the change of the public mind-set and 2) push consumers to buy bio-based products. Citizens should be aware of the bioeconomy impact at social, environmental and economic level in order, for example, to accept the transformation of an old industrial venue into a bio-refinery. Consumers should buy "better", by choosing bio-base products over others (also supported by the "labels" activity). Moreover, citizens should buy/consume "less" by pushing towards the focus of sustainable consumption.



Annex:

Click on the projects' names to access the presentations.

Project	Methods to communicate bioeconomy	Possible improvements	Challenges
BIOWAYS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hands on showcasing of 'real life' products is very important - Games and short videos (2mins) - Target younger audience - Adjust message to audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Know better what other projects are doing - Organise joint events - Share contents developed during the project and best practices to be presented at events organised by other projects (e.g. the survey of public perception of Bioeconomy, the Maker Faire success story, tips on public engagement to promote bioeconomy) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bioeconomy terminology is different depending on the MS - The maturity of the bioeconomy is different depending on the MS - There is a lack of 'real life' products for demonstrations
BIOVOICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Online social platform/app - Social networks, blogs, portals - More than 70 mutual learning workshops - Final conference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitate the launch of the Alliance4Bioeconomy initiative - Develop the platform to support the initiative - Co-organise Mutual Learning Events - Invite other projects to events 	The project just started
BLOOM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Build a community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At local level it is important to have little community hubs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take advantage of local knowledge - Build and improve on ideas for the national level - Focus on visuals, easy language (esp. for young people), short movies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Connect the material to everyday life - Focus on schools 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bioeconomy school box - Competition with pupils - Go from local hub to bigger community - Exchange experiences and different techniques 		
ISABEL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Direct interaction (face-to-face, roundtables, workshops) - Field visits - Adapt to the local community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal explanation of knowledge and experience (approach, tools, practices) - Increase collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maturity of biogas projects at national level differs greatly - Overall socio-economic environment at EU and national level
BioSTEP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This project is complete - Trigger public to think of the bioeconomy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exhibitions with 'real life' examples - Look at, and borrow from, successful national strategies - 'Living labs' at local level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exhibit in science centres - Develop brochures - Use surveys at workshops to identify topics of interest in the bioeconomy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adapt to local culture - Link workshops to national strategies
ISAAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meet with experts, schools and public administrators - Visit farmers and demonstrate 'real life' applications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase stakeholder involvement 	
BioCannDo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bring together people who are already communicating the bioeconomy - Videos - Webinars <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Present own work, provide platform for other projects to present their work 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need to keep the key messages quite general - It is very difficult to keep the topic of bioeconomy 'simple' and understandable
CommBeBiz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus on industry researchers (not necessarily bioeconomy-specific researchers) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support the 'ecosystem' around the researcher - Targeting is very important 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When communicating to the broader public, keep the information 'light' and primarily visual - Make sure researchers have sufficient time and budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adapt to feedback - Academia and funders need to increase their recognition of bioeconomy (research) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase the rewards - A built in recognition and reward system is required
BioLinX	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus on innovation actors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mass email is neither an efficient nor 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project will finish up in at the end of June 2018 and it is looking to pass on what it has learned, its contacts, etc. 	<p>an effective form of communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Personal approach works best - Tailored approach at the regional level at finance and brokerage events 	
BIOPEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BIOECONFIN 2017 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Event supported by other projects in Brussels - BIOECONFIN EAST <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 16/05/2018 in Bratislava 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Link events to other projects to avoid big overlaps - Speak the language of the target group, then explain the bioeconomy once the benefits are visible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - E.g. when talking to farmers, use terms familiar to them before launching into bioeconomy terminology 	
InnProBio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public procurement project, rather than communications - Tools and resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Online toolbox - Roadmap of tendering processes - Scientific content - Practitioners handbook 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of knowledge and dialogue - Public sector is risk averse - National bioeconomy strategies are not sufficiently linked to 'public procurement innovation' or 'green public procurement' - Policy gap – the benefits of bio-based products are still unclear - Niche market
BIOrescue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Short videos on LinkedIn to reach a professional audience - Project is open to partnership - Future actions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 3 end-user workshops 		
BIOSMART	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workshop on 6+7/12/2017 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approached different stakeholders during different stages of the product cycle - Open to partnership 		
PLATFORM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Forums - Mutual learning 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alignment in the bioeconomy is difficult to achieve

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Joint dissemination - Conferences - Policy briefs for researchers - Platform database of projects - Master classes 		
EMBRACED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project is just beginning - Open day (in Northern Italy) - A lot of participation 		
SuperBIO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Matchmaking - Allow companies to discuss synergies - Provide services to SMEs - 40 value chains reaching 110 companies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Online communication is not very effective - Direct contact is needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Getting SMEs involved to take the services and to realise the benefits
OPEN-BIO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workshops, website, presentations, product database, position paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conferences are not CSA tools - Database for product information is useful - No urgency to adopt draft standards - Combining events is a good idea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is ambiguity about the place of the bioeconomy in the circular economy - No single label for bioeconomy products - Unclear who is in charge of the bioeconomy strategy - Consumers lack understanding
STAR4BBI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Workshops, presentations (conferences), and association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BBIJU event (mutual events with stakeholders) good - Conference is not much good without results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No consistent lobby system
RoadToBio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stakeholder engagement - Focus groups - Development of an engagement guide 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EU chemicals industry must become sustainable while remaining competitive on a global level
BioHorizon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Website, social media, webinars - Brokerage events - Internal communications platform, mailing, newsletter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Twitter is good, better than internal communications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information chaos - Expectation of tailored information - Relevant approach to bioeconomy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The bioeconomy is happening now, not in ten years' time
STAR-ProBio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Targeting industry researchers, the public (as consumers [esp. with regard to labelling]), policy makers 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identifying a clear message (without it being overly simplistic) when multiple partners are involved in the project

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tool box to assess sustainability of bio-based products - Comparison between bio-based and fossil-based 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Toolbox is to be used by industry, but also by the end user - Reaching out to different audiences
Transition to Green Economy (T2gE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Over two years, T2gE became a trusted national reference point (Slovakia), despite starting from a very low knowledge base 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus on young audience - E.g. art competition for children
BIOBRIDGES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Connect public with brand owners and producers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Act locally - Involve regional actors and relevant stakeholders - Involve schools (competitions) and consumers - Demos and field visits are important - Combine events - Pass on knowledge 	