

# BIO east

## FORESIGHT CONFERENCE

**Climate-neutral future depends on sustainable bioeconomies**



*High-level foresight conference on positioning sustainable and circular bioeconomies in Central and Eastern Europe to achieve climate neutrality by 2050*

**27 September 2021**

**Hybrid event in Ljubljana, Slovenia**

## Concept Note



Under the auspices of the Slovenian EU Council Presidency and the Hungarian Visegrad Group Presidency the BIOEAST Initiative organizes a conference aiming to present the BIOEAST Foresight Report, to internalize the foresight experts' recommendations, to debate about priority issues, policy support and possible pathways.

Between April 2020 and May 2021 in line with the implementation of the BIOEAST Vision 2030 and with the funding of the Horizon 2020 coordination and support action (BIOEASTsUP) a macro regional foresight exercise was conducted to support the BIOEAST Member States in developing their sustainable bioeconomies. The aim was to build upon existing foresight reports and to deliver new insights about possible pathways for the deployment of bioeconomies in the macro-region. The main objective of the foresight exercise was to identify the specific macro-regional needs, challenges and potentials, and to provide advice to policy- and decision-makers as well as to contribute to the development of the BIOEAST Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda.

A [Foresight Expert Group](#) (FEG) of five independent experts was nominated to provide a better understanding of existing trends and to create scenarios of future bioeconomy developments. The BIOEAST Board invited the FEG to specifically focus on the following four areas:

- a) Sustainable natural resources, particularly soils and water
- b) Sharing economy in the context of sustainable food system
- c) Renewable carbon use and decarbonisation pathways
- d) Governance in the context of circular and sustainable pathways

The FEG worked under unprecedented circumstances, without physical meetings during the lockdowns caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. They prepared the Foresight Report in a truly participatory way by mobilizing more than 200 stakeholders in web-based national level workshops, international meetings between the FEG and BIOEAST ministries and specific experts to validate the scenarios and to define recommendations.

A successful transition to a more sustainable and carbon-neutral Europe is conditioned on the successful implementation of new bioeconomy policy initiatives. However, the later will very much depend on scientific advancements as well as on national and European investments in education, research and innovation. Thus, providing guidance and advice to policy-makers and other stakeholders in the field of bioeconomy in the BIOEAST macro-region is of great relevance.



The European bioeconomy is thriving, the BIOEAST countries' policy makers are preparing for the future, learning from countries where the bioeconomy policy is better placed. In the framework of a Mutual Learning Exercise (MLE) organised by the European Commission with the support of independent experts from September 2020 to July 2021, policy experts from 18 EU Member States in a series of virtual meetings exchanged opinions and best practices regarding different aspects of developing and implementing bioeconomy strategies and action plans. The final conclusions of the MLE could well serve the uptake of the foresight report recommendations. Moreover, the conference aims to bring further the findings of the Foresight Report and to debate about priorities in seven thematic areas: a) agroecology, b) food systems, c) forestry, d) fresh water, e) biochemical and biomaterials, f) bioenergy, and g) research, education and skills.

The conference will be held in English and is intended for policy-makers, experts and stakeholder representatives from BIOEAST countries and other EU Member States as well as EU institutions.

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