

Workshop

" Regions at work for the Bio-Economy:

How to help entrepreneurs convert bio-wastes into efficient fertilisers in a fair regulatory framework and a financially de-risked environment?"

7-9 July 2014, Rennes (France).

Kindly hosted by
The Regional Council of Brittany

**Co-organised by the European Commission
Directorate General Enterprise and Industry**

Registration: The event is free, but advance registration is required. Register by filling in the registration form provided with the programme and send it to ENTR-RENNES-WKSHP-2014@ec.europa.eu by 13 June 2014.

In Partnership with the “Zoopôle” of Ploufragan (Brittany, France)



The **objective of the workshop co-organised by the European Commission (DG ENTR) and the Brittany Region**, is to bring together stakeholders from different European Regions concerned with excess of biomass from various origins or involved in recycling activities of this bio-mass into fertilizing materials but facing difficulties to develop their activities or to place the resulting products on the EU market.

On Day 1 the Brittany Region has organised a number of illustrative visits to instigate an on-site discussion amongst the participants. These visits will allow participants to discover innovative approaches and be presented by experienced site managers, presenting the difficulties that they face and the accomplishments they reached at developing the so-called bio-economy in this highly regulated sector of wastes, in particular bio-wastes. The organisers are expecting fruitful exchanges of practical experiences between local entrepreneurs and stakeholders from the rest of the EU.

On Day 2 the Commission will organise 3 working groups where participants will be strongly encouraged to identify (1) the current regulatory challenges, (2) the research and innovation needs, (3) the financial support from various existing instruments which could be helpful or is absolutely needed to develop these business cases. The aim of these working groups is to elaborate, if found relevant and appropriate during the workshop, **the terms of reference of a future cross-regional project to be launched by the Commission services on the topic of recycling of bio-wastes into fertilizing materials.**

This workshop will provide a discussion forum for Regions that wish to further develop the bio-based economy in their territories, by capitalizing on existing clusters or by benchmarking existing ones in other Regions. The future cross-regional project will ease structural change and promote new forms of industrial cooperation across different sectors dealing with bio-wastes and bio-based products such as fertilizing materials. Representatives from the European Commission will share relevant European initiatives that may help in this respect.

Some background information can be found in the Annex to this invitation.

The working language will be English but a translation from and to French will be organised for the participants who need it.

The Workshop will:

- Offer the opportunity to observe cases of the bio-economy applied to several bio-wastes;
- Discuss the regulatory, the research and financial challenges and opportunities to elaborate inter-regional action dedicated to the conversion of biomass into fertilizing materials.

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Programme

July 7 Arrival of participants in **Rennes** (afternoon)

20.00 **Dinner**

Dinner offered by Region Bretagne (**Rennes**, place to be determined):

- Introductory speech by, Michel Morin, Vice-President Regional Council of Brittany (tbc)
- Setting the scene of the Workshop, Gwenole Cozigou, Director DG ENTR F

July 8 (Visits) Moderator: Sonja van Renssen

8.00 **Departure from Rennes**

Departure by bus from Rennes to the “Zoopole” (Plouflagran), our “basecamp” for the day

9.00-12.30 **Visits (part 1)**

Visit of sites combined with short presentations of case studies or points for further discussion from the participants

12.30-13.30 **Lunch break**

Lunch at the Zoopole, **Plouflagran**

14.00 - 17.30 **Visits (part 2)**

Visits continues, also combined with short presentations of case studies and discussion points

Return to Rennes by bus (evening: free).

July 9 (Working Groups discussion) (**Rennes, Agrocampus**) Moderator: Sonja van Renssen

8.30-9.30 **Plenary session**

Introduction by the moderator: wrap-up of Day1. Objectives of the working groups, presentation of the chairmen/-women, rapporteurs, instructions to participants

Distribution of the participants into 3 parallel working groups (please specify in the registration form which one you will be preferably attending – subject to arbitration to balance the 3 groups)

9.30-12.30 **Working Groups discussion**

- Working Group 1 – regulatory framework: existing European, national and regional Regulations related to bio-wastes, e.g. collection, transport, transformation, placing on the market, use, etc. Exchange of views on implementation (for ex. costs), difficulties as regards consistency, coordination, responsibilities, ...and ways forward for improvement where necessary.
- Working Group 2 – technological aspects: research and up-scaling needs in relation with cycling of nutrients from bio-wastes
- Working Group 3 – financial instruments : availability, accessibility, synergies between various instruments (CAP, COSME, HORIZON 2020, Regional Funds, ...)

12.30-14.00 **Lunch Break**

14.00-15.30 **Plenary session**

Introduction by the moderator. Chairs and rapporteurs of the 3 WGs present their conclusions and interact with the participants of the other working groups to supplement their conclusions.

15.45 **Concluding remarks**: Reinhard Buescher, Head of Unit – DG ENTR

16.00 **Close of the workshop**

REGISTRATION APPLICATION

Name:
E mail:

Organization:

Please provide us information of your interest to attend the workshop and how you would like to actively contribute (short presentation, discussion in the working group, posters):

Please provide us information of your preferred working group for July 9th:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="radio"/> WG1 : Regulatory aspects<input type="radio"/> WG2 : Technological aspects<input type="radio"/> WG3 : Financial instruments

Please provide us information of your expectations for the workshop:

Please: send the completed registration form to ENTR-RENNES-WKSHP-2014@ec.europa.eu by 13 June 2014.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

From Industrial Policy...

The Commission's industrial policy has been updated and reinforced. It is a fact that the success of its implementation will ultimately depend on a real and functioning partnership between the EU, Member States and their regional levels and industry. The Directorate-General Enterprise and Industry of the European Commission (DG Enterprise) would like to ally the bio-based industries by supporting public-private partnerships as key elements to support an effective implementation of the Industrial Policy Communication.

....to bio-based success stories

Bio-based industries use renewable resources and/or apply bio-based processes in their production processes. As far as the recycling of bio-wastes into fertilizing material is concerned, technologies such as composting or bio-digestion are already implemented on farm and at an industrial scale. High temperature treatment of human wastes or of sewage sludges is applied by a few companies that convert more risky bio-wastes into useful nutrient resources, such as phosphorus. Very innovative products deriving from research often conducted by spin-offs or SMEs that are reaching the market and are exploring sustainable ways to improve nutrient use by plants or enabling phosphorus mining from soil.

Hindering factors...

However despite very promising results that these success stories obtain, the lack of coordination across policies is still considered as a serious hindering factor towards the development of some areas of activity. This is illustrated by the difficulties that the bio-based sector is facing in certain Member States to access the Bio-mass (used for other means such as biofuels).

.... and different political attitudes

Member States and even certain Regions in one given Member State have shown diverging political approaches towards the use of several input materials (e.g. sewage sludges or non-sorted municipal wastes) in view of recycling them as fertilising materials. Political reluctance can also be explained by the fact that recycling activities can simplify the use of waste material (even after due processing and control) into fertilisers: these recycled products are eventually used on plants and by doing so re-enter the food chain. The use of manure which are animal by-products and nothing else than "waste" are relatively well accepted but not everywhere in particular when a region is a surplus producer. The same concern applies to several urban/industrial sewage sludges or to the organic part of household wastes; the recycling activities are often put aside as a matter of principle.

How to improve?

A better coordination and alignment of funding policies will also help improve investments in sectors such as key enabling technologies (KETs). The recent consultation on the sustainable use of the Phosphorus resource illustrates the paradox to which policy makers are confronted: everyone agrees to that there is the issue of scarcity of P-resource but very few policies are put forward simplifying our home-produced bio-wastes recycling activities. . On one hand farmers are producing surplus of manure and on the other are buying extremely expensive mineral fertilisers. Excluding input materials such as sewage sludge reveals the timid approach even though it would naturally contain a lot of P that would then be recycled.

Which promising policies are in sight?

Some support has already been initiated towards the bio-based products sector: creation of the Commission Expert Group for Bio-based Products, standardisation programme for bio-based products, communication strategy about the availability of standardisation documents, and information to public procurers, contribution to the establishment of public private partnerships (e.g. "BRIDGE" for bio-based industries) including especially demonstration activities, industrial clusters symbioses and set up of new value chains.

What could the Regions bring into the picture?

The aim of the workshop is to discuss with regional policy levels of ways to improve policy coherence as regards:

- the optimal collection and processing of bio-wastes,
- its supply as input materials at competitive prices for interested fertilisers industrial partners,
- and the possible revenues to be generated for the local economy.

One of the aim would be to make a real success story with cycling nutrients and to discuss how to proceed to turn into practice the principles of circular and bio-based economy for the sector of bio-wastes and fertilising materials.

This calls for new forms of cluster cooperation, both upstream and downstream, to have better access to bio-mass and to create new value chains with other industries to further promote bio-based chemicals.