

Press release

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## New European initiative launched to support and accelerate innovation in bioeconomy

**The transition to a circular bioeconomy and sustainable food systems has high potential to contribute to societal challenges such as climate change, substitution of fuel resources and to contribute to healthy food and diets, which is why innovation in the bioeconomy should be accelerated.**

Although there are significant political initiatives as well as R&D and industrial activities going on, which are designed to develop the bioeconomy sector, there are still challenges in relation to getting a wider uptake of the innovation generated in the sector.

One key barrier is that actors from different sectors, such as agriculture, food and chemistry still have limited exchange with each other, and that "sectoral silos" exist. Moreover, bioeconomy is not an own dedicated policy field – the public funding and regulation is therefore scattered and partly incoherent across ministries or geographical levels.

### Breaking down barriers with information and recommendations

To address these challenges a new EU-funded project called ShapingBio has been launched to provide concrete information and recommendations for better policy alignment and stakeholder actions to realize the cross-sectoral potential of the bioeconomy and to reduce the fragmentation across bio-based sectors and food system and policies across regions, domains and governmental levels.

“With this initiative we want to improve the information basis for different stakeholder groups about existing initiatives, activities and best practices and provide advice to enable cross-sectoral and cross-governmental exchange”, says Sven Wydra, Project Coordinator of ShapingBio and adds:

“For that purpose we aim to provide new ideas and many opportunities for the interaction of stakeholders in the bioeconomy”.

### Better financing opportunities

According to Sven Wydra the outcomes of ShapingBio will be beneficial to many stakeholders.

“For example, we aim to stimulate the industry’s cross-sectoral exchange and help them to find financing opportunities by providing them with a better overview and bringing them together with investors”.

The project was kicked off with a partner meeting on 12-13 September in Berlin and will run for 3 years. Behind the project are 11 organisations from 9 different countries:

Fraunhofer Institute for Systems and Innovation Research ISI (DE), Agency for the Promotion of the European Research (IT), Teagasc (IE), Agriculture Research, Ltd. Troubsko (CZ), Food & Bio Cluster Denmark (DK), SUBMARINER Network for Blue Growth EEIG (DE), Bio Base Europe Pilot Plant (BE), Spanish Bioindustry Association (ES), Tech Tour Europe (BE), Tech Tour Global EOOD (BG), VITAGORA (FR)

### **Facts about the bioeconomy**

According to a report prepared for the European Commission’s Knowledge Centre for Bioeconomy (KCB), the EU bioeconomy employed 17.5 million people in 2017 (EU-27), which represents 8.9% of the total labour force. It also created up to EUR 614 billion of value added, which represents 4.7% of GDP.

‘The European Commission supports bioeconomy research and innovation as a stronger development of the bioeconomy will help the EU accelerate progress towards a circular and low-carbon economy. Further it will help modernise and strengthen the EU industrial base, creating new value chains and greener, more cost-effective industrial processes, while protecting biodiversity and the environment.

### **Contact information**

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**Photo:** Group photo of the partners behind ShapingBio from the kick-off meeting on 12-13 September in Berlin