



# BIOEAST AS A DRIVING FORCE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE EUROPEAN GREEN DEAL



*High-level conference on deploying sustainable and circular bioeconomies in Central and Eastern Europe in the context of food, agriculture, natural resources and bioeconomy related policies*

**WHEN:** 21<sup>st</sup> February 2020, from 9:00 a.m.

**WHERE:** Permanent Representation of the Slovak Republic to the EU, Avenue de Cortenbergh 79, 1000 Brussels

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## FOOD SYSTEMS

### THEMATIC WORKING GROUP CONCEPT NOTE

*Pawel Chmieliński, chair*

There is a need to jointly develop and implement innovative solutions (also reinforce already existing ones) to improve the efficiency and sustainability of food systems in Central and Eastern European (CEE) Countries. Therefore, the purpose of cooperation within the BIOEAST Thematic Working Group on Food Systems is to increase participation and influence the policy-making process of research and innovation in the field of food systems in the macro-region, as well as to actively represent the CEE countries in debates on EU Research and Innovation (R&I) policy framework, including FOOD 2030 strategic plan.

A recent report of the Standing Committee on Agriculture Research (SCAR) on Food Systems research by European MSs has signalled that food systems are of particular interest in MS research policies. Currently, the EU and global food systems are affected by major challenges such as climate change, its migration, a growing world population, urbanisation and resource scarcity, in addition to the “triple burden” of malnutrition (undernutrition, obesity, and hidden hunger), ageing and food poverty. Research and innovation is key to developing high-impact solutions to future-proof our food systems. There is a need for policy narrative advocating a complex approach to research and innovation on food systems and connecting producers and consumers, engaging a wide diversity of actors to build innovative and integrated value chains concerning sustainable farming systems, environmental challenges and human health.

The objectives of the BIOEAST Food Systems Thematic Working Group are:

- To study and synthesize national agricultural research and innovation strategies to support the elaboration of SRIA,
- To catalyse future reflections and discussions at national and regional level regarding the need to work together to tackle food system transformations,
- To analyse pathways towards the sustainable increase of biomass production, to become competitive and leading, high quality, food and feed producers,



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- To advise on the development of a long-term national, European and global strategic approach to food systems transformation in MS,
- To collect good practises in an innovative approach to food systems in CEE,
- To provide existing knowledge with new ideas on the food systems to boost consumer trust, foster food safety and food quality; supporting the shift to more sustainable and healthy diets, incl. new insights in our food system's microbiome and provide ideas for cutting food system-related waste,
- To better understand social changes (e.g. climate change, consumer choices, migration, personalised nutrition) and how they drive changes in exposure patterns, and choices in diets that may constitute new hazards,
- To provide the background enabling better assessing the impact of new technologies on food production and circular economy (e.g. emissions, food waste).

The development of bioeconomy strategies at macroregional, national and regional/local level could provide the framework to respond to these challenges while ensuring food security for the increasing global population and contributing to more circular and sustainable production systems, thus providing new opportunities for growth and rural development.

The technical working groups session will provide the opportunity to the participants to share knowledge and engage in a dialogue with representatives of research, other MSs and EU high-level institutions on issues specific to their national and regional priorities in Central and Eastern Europe, with a focus on the role of food systems in bioeconomy development, the state of the Food systems partnerships, issues of Food waste and the circular economy as well as food safety and the Farm to Fork strategy.

The closed session of the working group members will give a chance to discuss, also with the outcomes of the whole conference in mind, the detailed objectives, terms of reference and planned actions of the Food Systems thematic working group in the future.

