



BIOEASTsUP achievements of the first 12 months

Policy involvement and stakeholder engagement in bioeconomy

The main driving force of the national platforms for bioeconomy development are two groups - the inter-ministerial group and the national stakeholder groups organised in the national BIOEAST HUBs. In the first year the BIOEASTsUP project supported the establishment of at least one of the two key groups. Concretely, in seven countries (HR, CZ, EE, HU, LV, SI, PL and RO) the inter-ministerial groups have been set up.

Concerning the national stakeholder groups, we experienced two different approaches: in Estonia there will be one group only, as the number of stakeholders is limited thus, they can be involved directly in the inter-ministerial group discussions. In the Czech Republic the national BIOEAST HUB CZ (www.bio-hub.cz) has been established as a tool to mobilize stakeholders from different bioeconomy related sectors. The BIOEAST HUB CZ supports the national bioeconomy strategy development and is foreseen as a long-lasting platform for support of the bioeconomy transition. In Bulgaria, mirror groups to the BIOEAST thematic working groups (www.bioeast.eu) have been created. Croatia, Hungary, Poland and Romania have reported that national stakeholder groups are in progress.

Guidelines of how to establish national BIOEAST HUBs were provided and are available on the web pages (www.bioeast.eu) to support stakeholder mobilisation and organisation of the national stakeholder groups in the BIOEAST region.



Eleven national BIOEASTsUP project virtual round tables “Indicators and statistical evidence for bioeconomy development” took place in October 2020

Focused at the *BIOEAST Macro-region* the virtual roundtables aimed at presenting country specific outcomes of the BIOEASTsUP task “*Indicators and statistical evidence for bioeconomy development*”.

Biljana KULIŠIĆ (EIHP, Croatia) gave a closer insight on how existing bioeconomy capacities of the current national economy for countries were identified followed by suggestions on what directions to take to achieve the transition from a fossil-based society towards a circular and sustainable bioeconomy. Markus LIER (Luke, Finland) presented a methodology on how to identify national bioeconomy objectives, indicators and statistical data for bioeconomy progress monitoring.

The information exchanged in the country specific virtual roundtables will feed into the national bioeconomy action plans and the BIOEAST Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA).

Over 220 participants gathered around the virtual roundtables, mostly Board Members, NCPs, BIOEAST Advisory Council members, BIOEAST Foresight Task Force members, national representatives in the TWGs, BAIMGs and NSGs (respectively BIOEAST Hubs) and BIOEASTsUP project partners.

Hungary was among the first countries where the National BIOEASTsUP project virtual round table „*Indicators and statistical evidence for bioeconomy development*” was held. “*In the process of preparing national bioeconomy strategy and action plan the BIOEASTsUP support is welcomed since it could provide methodological framework, helping to define national pathways and indicators.*” Barna Kovács, BIOEAST Secretary General said. The series was completed with a roundtable meeting in Poland on November 4, 2020.

Webinar series

Due to the COVID-19 situation, the plenary parts of the originally planned workshops were held virtually in the Czech Republic and Bulgaria. The main target of the webinar series was to describe in detail the progress of the BIOEASTsUP project, to provide a comprehensive overview of the knowledge accumulated on bioeconomy, to provide good examples for multi-actor projects. The webinar series revealed to the stakeholders how they can further develop with the help of the acquired knowledge and networking opportunities. The inter-ministerial groups and National stakeholder group (NSG) members were invited to the webinar series, but it was also open to all stakeholders interested in the content of the webinars and the activities of the BIOEAST Initiative and BIOEASTsUP project.

Webinar 1: Introduction to BIOEASTsUP activities

Date: May 21, 2020, 10:00 CET

Attendees: open to everyone

Webinar 2: National BIOEAST HUBs and national platforms for bioeconomy strategies development

Date: May 28, 2020, 13:00 CET

Attendees: open to BIOEAST NCPs, members of national BAIMG and Stakeholder Groups, TWG and BIOEASTsUP members

Webinar 3: Indicators and statistical evidence for bioeconomy development

Date: June 5, 2020, 10:00 CET

Attendees: open to BIOEAST NCPs, members of national BAIMG and Stakeholder Groups, TWG and BIOEASTsUP members



Webinar 4: Developing multi-stakeholder partnerships and co-creation for boosting the uptake of bioeconomy in CEE

Date: June 15, 2020, 10:00 CET

Attendees: open to everyone

Webinar 5: Planning sectoral analysis and exchange of good practices for bioeconomy value chains

Date: July 09, 2020, 10:00 CET

Attendees: open to everyone

All materials from the workshop (presentations and video) are available [here](#).

The feedback and number of registrations shows that the webinar series were very successful. The total number of registrations reached 166 in Webinar 1, 216 in Webinar 4 and 229 in Webinar 5. Despite having the lowest amount of registrations for webinar 1, it had the highest attendance, reaching the maximum of 100 participants.

Overall, between 60 and 100 participants took part in each webinar.

The webinars with hands-on training will continue in March 2021 for three target groups (researchers, industrial players, advisory – bioeconomy clusters), on three different topics (proposal writing, business making, networking cluster making). Due to COVID restrictions trainings will most likely take place online.

Technology transfer good practices

In September 2020 a specific project task was launched focusing on the improvement of the cooperation between SMEs and research organisations. Following the collection of good practices from the BIOEAST countries peer review discussions will be organized. The good practices and peer review reports will summarize information on barriers and suggestions for the improvement of the cooperation between research organisations and SMEs based on examination of concrete case studies.

BIOEAST Thematic Working Groups

Five thematic working groups have been initiated by the respective ministries to support the work of the BIOEAST Board. The kick-off meetings of all five Thematic Working Groups (TWG) took place and the leaders of each group were nominated. This process continues with the country nomination of the TWG members. TWG coordination is as follows:

- **Agroecology and Sustainable Yields TWG** was initiated by the Hungarian Ministry of Agriculture and is led by **Zsófia Kunya** from HuMA and **Dóra Drexler** from ÖMKI (HU)
- **Bioenergy and New Value-Added Products TWG** was initiated by the Croatian Ministry of Agriculture and is led by **Biljana Kulišić** from EIHP (HR)
- **Food Systems TWG** was initiated by the Polish Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development but it is led by **Paweł Chmieliński** from IERiGZ-PIB (PL)
- **Forestry TWG** was initiated by the Slovak Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and is led by **Rastislav Raši** from the NLC (SK) and **Jozef Turok** from MARD SR (SK)
- **Fresh Water Based Bioeconomy TWG** was initiated by the Czech Ministry of Agriculture and the TWG is led by **Zuzana Boukalová** from ART (CZ)

Four TWGs adopted their TORs and a draft TOR of the fifth TWG has been prepared for discussion and adoption. Out of the 10 planned face-to-face TWG meetings 7 face-to-face TWG meetings have been organized. The COVID-19 epidemic that broke out in the beginning of 2020 has prevented the



organization of further face-to-face meetings. Therefore, coordinators and leader of TWGs organized on-line meetings (one TWG organized two on-line meetings for their members) and used other web tools for on-line collaboration, mainly email communication.

All of the five planned thematic Strategic Research Agendas (SRIA)s are under development. TWGs have taken different approaches in developing the thematic SRIAs, however, a common framework for the development of the thematic SRIAs has been provided to TWGs in order to ensure that they follow common principles and guidelines in this process.

Foresight Exercise

A macro-regional BIOEAST Foresight Exercise is being conducted to support the BIOEAST member states in developing their sustainable bioeconomies. Five high-level independent CEE experts have been selected by the BIOEAST Board who officially started working in July 2020 in order to deliver a Foresight report by March 2021.

The Foresight Task Force (HuMA, MARD SR, BIOEAST Secretary) are following the work of the BIOEAST Foresight experts. The experts developed the methodology for the report in September which is now under revision by the Task Force. Foresight experts (or at least the Chair) will be invited to the planned joint meeting of TWG in Oct-Nov 2020.

BIOEAST SRIA

A framework was created that guides the development of BIOEAST SRIA as well as thematic SRIAs developed by TWGs. A desk study is being conducted to map the research and innovation policy as well as the state of the art of bioeconomy related research and innovation in all BIOEAST countries. In the coming months BIOEASTsUP partners in collaboration with NCPs will conduct a series of workshops in all BIOEAST countries to engage national interministerial groups and also national stakeholder groups in the analysis of strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities as well as gaps in bioeconomy related research and innovation.

Communication activities

The project activities are being implemented on time. The communication team is taking the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions as an opportunity to boost the on-line communication and the implementation on project activities in general.

To encourage the stakeholder engagement, to connect stakeholders and support the national dialogue and bioeconomy strategy development, Guidelines for the National BIOEAST HUB establishment were provided. This document and the good practice of the National BIOEAST HUB CZ might help developing the national stakeholder groups, the cooperation between BIOEAST NCP and Communication Experts and also enhance the interministerial dialogue.

The stakeholder web based searching engine is currently being tested and will be open to all stakeholders later this year.

