

ADVANCING THE CREATION OF REGIONAL BIOECONOMY CLUSTERS IN EUROPE

BIOEAST Initiative: a macro-regional vision
for helping the bioeconomy clusters building

Barna Kovacs PhD

BIOEAST Secretary General

Brussels, 14 March 2019



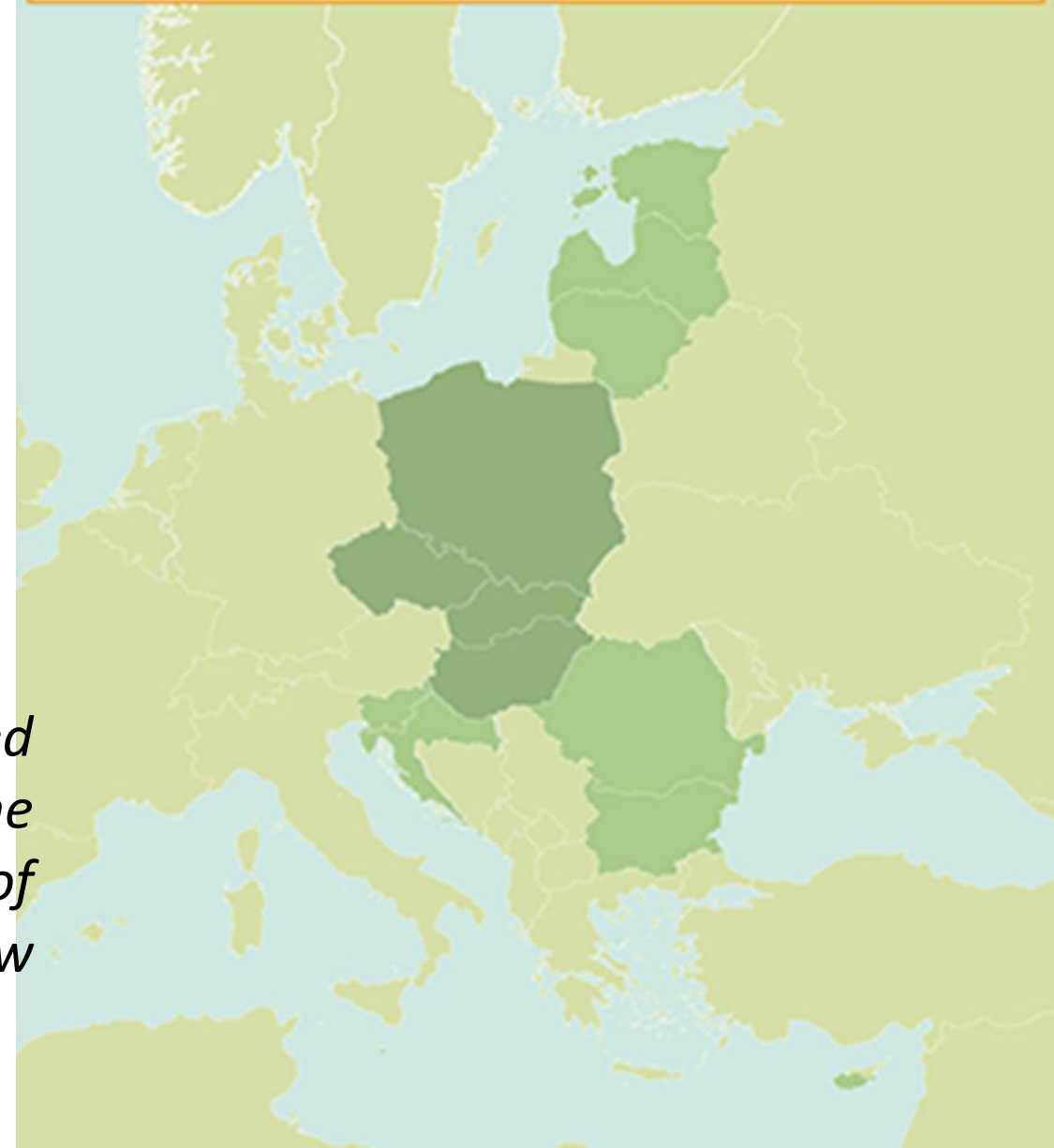
BIOEAST Initiative

Central-Eastern European Initiative for Knowledge-based Agriculture, Forestry and Aquaculture in the Bioeconomy

Shared strategic research and innovation framework for working towards the development of sustainable bioeconomies in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE).

Why BIOEAST: *Low performance of knowledge-based agriculture, aquaculture and forestry in the bioeconomy, significant internal disparities in terms of research and innovation performance, and low participation of CEE region in H2020.*

Focus of BIOEAST



The pushing factors (outside) are calling for: strategic thinking at national level

1. To solve „food first” issues
2. To ensure sustainable yields
3. To have cascading approach for biomass use
4. To secure circularity
5. To sustain the diversity of production systems

The (internal) national level factors not necessary pushing for complex strategic thinking

1. Lack of societal understanding and participation in addressing challenges
2. Traditional knowledge transfer process
3. Sector based, parallel processes (ex. Agriculture, food sector)
4. Often missing evidence based policy-making
5. Market driven economy (mostly profit driven, some times technology driven, but less on strategic governance)
6. Missing macro-regional approach for the sustainability (economic, environmental, societal)

OBJECTIVES of the macroregional BIOEAST Initiative:

1. **Initiate cooperation:** establish a multi-stakeholder network to facilitate joint actions;
2. **Provide an evidence base:** establish data-driven support for implementation of policies;
3. **Support strategies:** create the cross-sectorial approach for the development of a national circular and bioeconomy strategies;
4. **Focus on research:** map specific challenges for a Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda;
5. **Improve skills:** train a new generation of dedicated multi-stakeholder actors;
6. **Develop synergies:** promote regional, national, EU and international funding opportunities;
7. **Increase visibility:** draw attention to specific challenges of the CEE regions.

Three political agreements of the Agri Ministers

26. October 2016: VISEGRAD 4 Group + 3 Countries: on stronger inclusion into H2020

21. September 2017: VISEGRAD 4 Group + 4 Countries: on broadening the remit of the BIOEAST initiative beyond HORIZON 2020

13. June 2018: VISEGRAD 4 Group + 7 countries (V4: Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovenia): on the Vision for BIOEAST



Intervention logic of the BIOEAST Vision

Challenges What is hindering?	Scope Where to focus?	Goal What is the aim?	Level Where to act?	Objectives How to overcome?	Actions What to do?
<p>C1. Research and Innovation deadlock</p> <p>C2. Stalemate in the bio-based value chains</p> <p>C3. Governance impasse</p> <p>C4. Societal indifference</p> <p>C5. Financial barriers</p>	<p>S1. Strategic thinking in bioeconomy</p> <p>S 2. Quality Food and Feed for Europe and for the World</p> <p>S 3. Industrial boost for rural areas</p>	<p>G1. Productivity: Sustainable increase of biomass production;</p> <p>G2. Sustainability: Developing biodiversity and biosecurity;</p> <p>G3. Resource efficiency: Circular and value-added use of the available biomass;</p> <p>G 2.2. Rural development: Increasing the viability and attractiveness of rural areas and society</p>	<p>L1. Macro-regional</p> <p>L2. National</p> <p>L3. Regional and local</p>	<p>O 1. To develop strategies;</p> <p>O 2. To cooperate and develop evidence-based policies;</p> <p>O 3. To identify common challenges and validate common research areas;</p> <p>O 4. To provide an evidence base;</p> <p>O 5. To improve skills;</p> <p>O 6. To develop synergies;</p> <p>O 7. To increase visibility;</p>	<p>Further develop specific objectives</p> <p>Develop BIOEAST SRIA</p> <p>Start to implement the action plan of BIOEAST SRIA based on the objectives</p>

Next Steps

1. 8. November 2018 BIOEAST conference: <http://bioeast.eu/article/bioeast-bioeconomy-in-the-forefront-of-national-policies-conference>

3 Studies: available containing data and state of play of CEE bioeconomies

2. 8–10 May 2019: Visegrad 4 Group + 7 Agricultural Ministers Meeting on in Stará Lesná (High Tatras, Slovakia)

3. BIOEAST CSA under preparation (call in HORIZON 2020 WP2019)

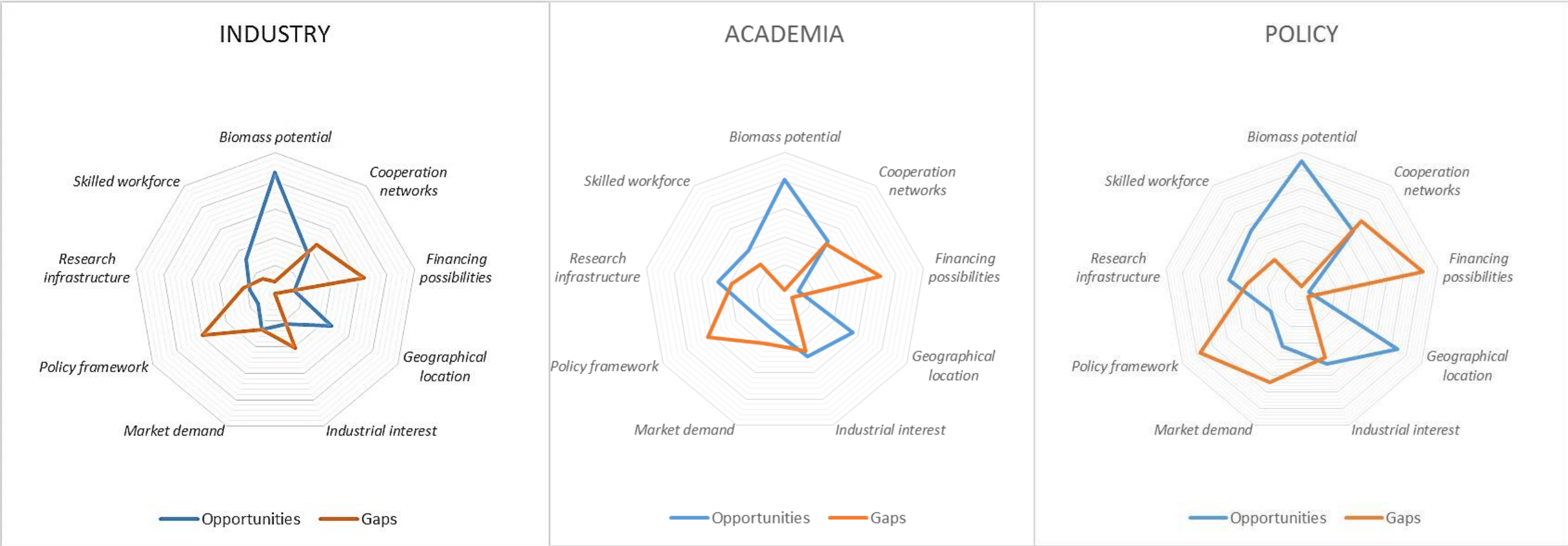
- 3. **Guidance on National Bioeconomy Strategy Development**
- 4. **Macro-regional Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA)**

3. Establishing **National BIOEAST HUBs** for the stakeholders engagement at national level

4. Five **Thematic Working Groups** for SRIA development at macro regional level:

- Forestry
- Sustainable yields and agro-ecological intensification
- Bioenergy and biomaterials
- Fresh water bioeconomy
- Food Systems

Opportunities versus gaps by stakeholders



Danube INCO-NET: Danubionet Position Paper, December 2016
– the closer to the bull’s-eye, the less stakeholders see a factor as an opportunity (blue) or gap (orange)

Conclusions from SCAR/BIOEAST study (2018), available www.bioeast.eu



Overall conclusions, needs and challenges



- 1) Increase productivity in agriculture,
- 2) Increase recovery rates of bio-based wastes
- 3) Identify regional strengths in types of biomasses,
- 4) Produce valued-added industrial products from biomass in the region instead of exporting raw materials,
- 5) Start thinking in bioeconomy clusters where regional feedstock supply, existing industrial infrastructure, know-how and innovation potential and public support are combined.

Characteristics of clusters in the BIOEAST countries

1. The already existing:

- Food/feed
- Energy/fuel

2. The potential:

- The bio-based products for material uses

GAP: lack of awareness of the potential value chains. To show the large number of possible value chains which could serve as a starting point for defining the scope of regional bioeconomy clusters.

Potential role of Clusters: innovative networks

1. National level cluster on bioeconomy: few examples Sweden, Italy with strong political commitment
2. Regional/local level clusters: with strong entrepreneurial commitment

GAP: lack of political commitment, administrative capacity, personal skills



Questions:

What would be the benefit?

Bottom-up or/and top-down initiative?

What form of political commitment? (strategy and action plan)

Who will initiate the network?

Sector based cluster (wood)?

Inter-sectorial (bioeconomy)?



Thank you for your attention!

www.bioeast.eu

Barna Kovacs PhD

Secretary General

barna.kovacs@mfa.gov.hu

