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## **Meeting notes of the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Collaborative Working Group Integrated Biorefineries**

February 27 2014, Ministère de la Recherche; 25, rue Sainte Geneviève, 75231 Paris

### **1 Welcome by the French host**

Elisabeth VERGÈS (Directeur scientifique du secteur environnement, planète-univers, espace) welcomed the CWG delegates at the Ministry of Research in Paris. She briefly explained her responsibilities within the Ministry and wished the participants a successful meeting and enjoyable stay in France.

### **2 Welcome by the coordinator**

Stefan RAUSCHEN welcomed the participants from BE, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, IE, IT, NL, PL (AT, NO, SE and UK could not be present at the meeting, some had sent in contributions for discussion) and thanked the French colleagues for organizing the meeting and the visit to the biorefinery to Pomacle-Bazancourt. He expressed his view that the back-to-back meetings with the SWG Sustainable bio-resources for a growing bioeconomy (held on 25 February) and the joint visit to Pomacle (on 26 February) were signs of the fruitful collaboration within SCAR. He presented the agenda and briefly explained the overall goal of the meeting. He also highlighted the presence of some new colleagues at this meeting and therefore proposed to have a tour de table.

### **3 Tour de table**

Bettina HEIMANN represented DK, which is now a new member to the group. Bruno GODIN and Jonathan GUÉVORTS joined the group as new representatives from BE (Wallony). Anne-Christine RITSCHKOFF from FI was present. The delegations from some Member States were reinforced by the presence of additional colleagues: Paloma MELGAREJO (Spain), Anna PITERINA (Ireland) and Eiman ABUBAKR (The Netherlands). Julien COLIN from the French Ministry of Agriculture was also present.

### **4 Short retrospection on the kick-off meeting and impressions from the visit to Pomacle-Bazancourt**

The coordinator made a brief summary of the key points discussed at the kick-off meeting on 13 November 2013, recalled the activities that had been undertaken since and the goals to be achieved in this meeting. He also reflected upon the visit to Pomacle-Bazancourt the day before and invited the members of the group to share their insights and views.

Points highlighted as especially interesting were the **integration** of agricultural industries, science institutions/installations and SMEs/innovators at a single site; the **size of the installation**, the **acreage** devoted to the production of biomass for it and the **large investment** undertaken; the fact that it was **farmers who took the lead** and invested their money; the **open innovation environment** at the plant, with **shared infrastructures** for research and scale-up.

It was also discussed whether the Pomacle-Bazancourt site could serve as a model, given its unique history and ownership structure, its large size (which is also needed from a pure economic perspective) and the overall agricultural structure and availability of bio-resources. One further point of discussion was the products from the biorefinery were competing on existing markets and served as a hedging of risks for

the agricultural producers, and there were not as yet new markets being opened with new products (which is however currently ongoing research and development at the site). It was generally felt that the visit had been very informative and inspiring.

## **5 Overview of probing survey on biorefineries in MS/AC**

The coordinator gave a brief presentation of the results from the biorefineries survey filled out by the delegations since the last meeting. While most had used the survey as provided, some had given information in a different format or also given additional information. This will make collation of the information challenging and the coordinator will explore different ways for that (e.g. matrix in EXCEL; ACCESS database).

The survey was felt to be useful for a **first exploration**. The additional information given by NL and the format for this was regarded as useful. NL agreed to provide the table used to the group, so that more information could be gathered along these lines. The implementation of a **map (interactive; web-based;** either administrated or open for data input by users) was discussed as a good way of gathering all these different kinds of data and also the better **categorize into commercial/pilot and demo/research facilities**. The coordinator will assess different options for this (since at FZJ/PtJ such maps have already been developed) and will also try different sources of funding to maintain this (Ministries, JRC Bioeconomy Observatory).

More generally, it was felt that **research needs** should be a stronger focus in the survey, meaning both **major achievements** but also **remaining bottlenecks** that make more research and development necessary. **“Dead ends”** in development should also be considered as to avoid funding of ideas and approaches that have already been shown by others not to work. Since these are not necessarily reported this would require a change in reporting style, however. Data should more generally cover lessons learnt, both good and bad.

## **6 Group work on biorefineries and research programmes/themes**

The members were split into three groups to discuss amongst themselves their experiences with the survey, its usefulness, ways of how it could be improved, as well as research programmes and instruments with relevance for the process chain/biomass use chain in a biorefinery (from biomass production, via pre/treatment and primary refining, to secondary refining and final products).

After a first round of group work, rapporteurs from the group were invited to briefly present the major points of discussion and the conclusions made.

The first group (NL, IT, DK, DE, IE) discussed that good examples were useful and that these should be highlighted and characterized in more detail. In terms of research programming, it was discussed that different instruments were used (such as thematic focus areas, procurement) and that it was difficult to assign these to certain steps of the process chains or to certain areas within them.

The second group (FR, FI, DE) presented that their research programmes were spanning whole value/process chains, but that the structures of the programmes and the way that they are administrated were quite different. This needed more exploration.

The third group (BE, NL, ES, PL, IE) gave details on their different programmes (e.g. no specific one for biorefining, but different national ones with relevance; regional programmes covering whole value chains; broad knowledge sectors, challenge driven programmes) and it needed further discussion to understand these programmes and see how they could be aligned.

A second phase of group work followed, in which groups were encouraged to deepen their reflection, take up ideas from other groups and also exchange ideas directly by “visiting” the other groups during their work.

Different aspects were discussed and brought together: it was deemed important to assess the MS priorities, and also to see where money was coming from (public hand vs. private sector; national/H2020/Interreg/structural funds) and which instruments are used in the programmes. There are multiple funding instruments (e.g. loans; subsidies; tax reductions; equity/risk finance; market support; research grants; commercialization and technology transfer projects; infrastructure support; demo plants; Public-Private Partnerships; clusters) that can be used, all using and leveraging different sources of money to different extends. The biorefining process chains (3 stages: raw materials; processes; products) differ substantially between MS/AC, with many different strategies and underlying motivations and drivers, and also different responsible ministries and agencies.

## **7 General discussion**

It became apparent that not all relevant information on funding programmes was available, nor were all responsible people present (since many different ministries/agencies are involved at MS/AC level, both nationally and regionally). Therefore, a more targeted overview of funding programmes, with regards to content and structure, the different financial instruments used, the sources of funding and the administration procedures would need some “homework” on the part of the delegations. A dedicated workshop was discussed as a useful option to deepen the discussion on potential future collaboration on biorefining programmes.

It was also discussed that a collaboration and an alignment between MS/AC activities would only be half of the story: with the JTI BBI setting the agenda for research, development and demonstration projects on biorefining within the context of Horizon 2020, it is important to also liaise with the JTI to assess whether an alignment of activities can be achieved here for the benefit of the successful implementation of the bioeconomy. The figurative question was asked: “What would we do if we could spent €1 billion on biorefineries research?”

The members agreed that the CWG could write a paper addressed to the JTI BBI/BIC consortium, stating that within SCAR MS/AC were discussing options for alignment and also future joint activities and that it would make sense to see whether a collaboration and/or alignment of activities would be possible and how this could work. It would be sensible to all pull together in order to overcome the many hurdles that lie before the bioeconomy.

## **8 Agreement on next steps/improvements**

The coordinator will prepare some documents in order to deepen the reflection about research programmes and funding instruments and gather more data on this. This could be done in an iterative process and be accompanied by a workshop of responsible funders to discuss and assess different options for alignment and collaboration.

The coordinator will further bring the issue of a letter to the JTI BBI/BIC consortium forward at the next SCAR WG meeting on 4 March 2014, since it would make a lot of sense to have other relevant SCAR groups (especially SWG SBGB, SWG Forestry, SWG FISH) on board. Such a letter should furthermore be discussed and adopted by the SCAR Plenary to give it more weight, if this was the course deemed most appropriate by MS/AC. This could be done already at the next Plenary meeting on 11 June 2014. The

coordinator will therefore go ahead swiftly with this and prepare a draft letter to be discussed within the CWG and to be shared with the other relevant SCAR groups as soon as possible.

Aside from preparing the minutes of the meetings, the coordinator will also prepare a more in depth description of the results of the survey and the discussions during the meeting, which will serve as a reference point for the future activities. The different possibilities for the implementation of a map will be assessed in the near future as well. A data exchange portal will be set up for the CWG as soon as possible (as is already implemented for the SWG), but this may take some more time because of technical reasons. Until then, files will be shared via email.

## **9 Closure of the meeting**

It was agreed that the next meeting should be held in the second half of 2014, so that in the meantime all the different activities could be brought forward in a meaningful way. The 17 and 18 September were agreed upon tentatively as the dates for the next meeting, which would be a 2 days meeting potentially at Wageningen, in combination with a visit to research facilities dedicated to biorefining. The colleagues from NL will make a proposal on this.

Stefan RAUSCHEN thanked the participants for the productive and open discussions and again the colleagues Michel BECKERT and Julien COLIN for organising the visit to the biorefinery and the meeting at the Ministry of Higher Education and Research. Both meetings were highly productive and brought the work of the CWG forward considerably.

**Annex 1. Participants in the kick-off meeting (Yellow: absent)**

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