
Meeting notes of the kick-off meeting of the Collaborative Working Group Integrated Biorefineries

November 13 2013, Science Atrium 14, Rue de la Science, Brussels

1 Welcome by the coordinators

Henk van Liempt welcomed the participants from ES, FR, IE, IT, NL, PL and the UK (AT, BE, FI, NO, SE could not be present at the meeting, some had sent in contributions for discussion).

2 Tour de table

A short round of introductions followed.

3 Vision for the CWG IB

Stefan Rauschen gave a presentation about the rationale and the scope of the CWG as detailed in the fiche adopted by the SCAR plenary on 6 June 2013. He went on to discuss the definition of “integrated biorefineries” based on the Biorefineries Roadmap published by the German Federal Government in May 2012 (http://www.bmbf.de/pub/roadmap_biorefineries.pdf) and the Star-COLIBRI project (<http://www.star-colibri.eu/publications/star-colibri-publications/>). Finally, he gave an overview of the draft work plan developed by the coordinators and raised the questions on a) the need for an expert group that could give ad-hoc scientific input and advice and b) the possibilities of combining meetings of the CWG with visits to existing biorefineries (pilot- and demonstrations plants as well as commercial plants) in the different participating MS/AC.

4 Roundtable: expectations of Members (short presentations)

The members in attendance gave short presentations elicited by some guiding questions provided in preparation of the meeting. Views were presented on what constitutes a biorefinery (an example from NL was presented being a “biorefinery in a container”), different concepts and views on “integrated” biorefineries (i.e. different kinds of integration; regional cluster vs. co-localized large scale plant), on already existing biorefinery plants and related R&D&I programmes and efforts.

5 General discussion

It became apparent that although different concepts and definitions exist for (integrated) biorefineries and their classification, some key issues and views are in common:

1. Sustainability is important, embodied in the idea of making best use of resources in the most efficient and sustainable manner, i.e. using bio-resources to the fullest extent possible for a multitude of most valuable products (food, feed, fibre, fuel, energy, other products).
2. The regional potential is important; looking at what bio-resources can be used in a region and developing biorefining concepts and value chains tailored to this potential.

3. The use of different available technologies and methods for the primary and secondary refining steps as well as pre-treatment and downstream processing is key to achieving the **sustainable use of bio-resources in the circular economy** which is at the heart of the bioeconomy.

It was agreed that based on these shared points a common view and understanding can be developed on which the different concepts for biorefining can be further jointly developed. The differences between the concepts hold an enormous potential for collaboration and discovering new pathways for the development and implementation of biorefining. MS/AC could learn from each other by sharing their views and experiences and by exploring ways of working collectively together.

6 Agreement on definitions and scope and alignment of a common work plan

The partners of the CWG agreed that the envisaged work plan would be feasible. For the next meeting data will be collected by the partners on the research programs currently ongoing in their countries with respect to (integrated) biorefineries and on already existing biorefineries (the coordinator will prepare and send around a template with some guidance to facilitate this process). This information will then be collated and mapped by the group to identify shared priorities, overlaps and gaps. Then the next steps will be decided, as well as the necessity for expert input on certain aspects.

The coordinator suggested setting up an online portal for easy exchange of files between the partners (an “austauschportal”) as it is already used in the Strategic Working Group “Sustainable Bio-resources for a Growing Bioeconomy” (SGBG).

7 Closure of the meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting should be held in the first quarter of 2014 in combination with a visit to an existing biorefinery. A back-to-back meeting with the SWG SGBG was proposed by its coordinator Jan van Esch (NL), since the group already planned a similar arrangement for February 2014. Michel Beckert (FR) suggested looking into a possible venue for the meeting and SWG and CWG will work together in planning the meetings.

Henk van Liempt thanked the participants for the productive and open discussions. The contributions by the members were enriching and opened up new perspectives.

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

GWG - Integrated Biorefineries				
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