

## Solutions through innovation – What role for bioeconomy in the next MFF?

**22 May 2018- European Parliament, Brussels**

This event was hosted by **MEP Miapetra Kumpula-Natri**, Vice-Chair of the EP Intergroup on “*Climate Change, Biodiversity, and Sustainable Development*”, and brought together key stakeholders in the role of bioeconomy in the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF). It was co-organised with the European Bioeconomy Alliance.

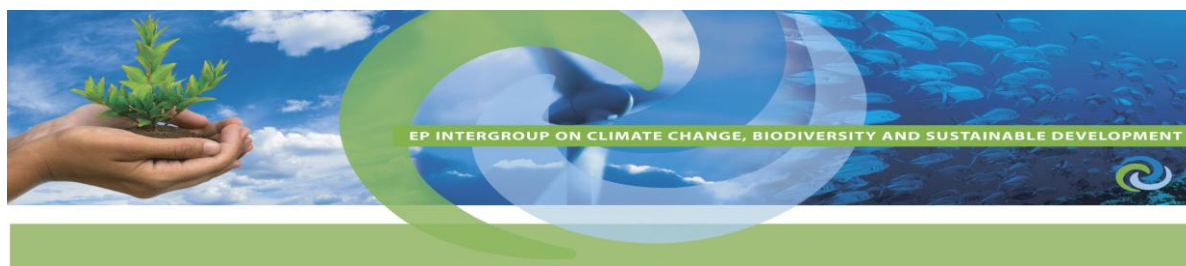
The panel also included:

- **Waldemar Kütt, DG Research and Innovation, Head of Strategy Unit, Bioeconomy Directorate, European Commission**
- **Sylvain Lhôte, CEPI, Director General, European Bioeconomy Alliance (EUBA)**



The European Union is at a crossroad. While it needs to define the allocation of its financial resources and overarching priorities beyond 2020, a number of undertakings initiated under the current term will also extend and develop over the next one. With the further development and expansion of the circular bioeconomy being one of them, this event focused on its position within the next MFF. Our meeting therefore gathered policy-makers and stakeholders, who provided input on how their organisations are involved in this process, underlining what is needed to further enhance the role of bioeconomy.

**MEP Miapetra Kumpula-Natri** opened the conference, welcoming the new MFF proposal, which reserves EUR 10 billion "to support research and innovation in food, agriculture, rural development and bioeconomy". Ms. Kumpula-Natri underlined that she is now looking forward to the proposal on the future research programme “Horizon Europe”, which will be published on 6 June. While ITRE will be then in charge of this topic, ENVI and AGRI Committees will contribute as well. From Ms. Kumpula-Natri’s point of view, "we need to align with targets related to agriculture, blue economy and circular economy". Moreover, as there are new bio-based innovations that can replace plastics, we need to raise awareness about bioeconomy’s role in the plastics strategy, as it also contributes to reducing pollution.



After that, **Waldemar Kütt** from DG Research and Innovation took the floor, mentioning that bioeconomy's value is currently underpinned by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement. While presenting the results of the 2012 Bioeconomy Strategy, Mr. Kütt highlighted that "EU managed to double funds allocated from FP7 to Horizon 2020, while almost all Member States have now created their national bioeconomy strategies". The pivotal role of more investments was stressed, as public-private cooperation remains key. In ensuring the transformation to a sustainable economy, synergies with structural funds and the CAP are needed, while this is also the focus of the new MFF proposal. Regarding the new Bioeconomy Strategy, it will aim at stronger linking the different sectors, providing a more systematic approach and investing in research and innovation. Within this context, scaling up investments is of significant importance. With reference to the Bio-Based Industries Joint Undertaking (BBI JU), its advantages were highlighted, as it provides a long-term vision for investments and at the same time an opportunity for bio-based industries to work with farmers and foresters, aiming at developing new value chains. As adaptation to current challenges is crucial, the role of the agricultural European Innovation Partnership (EIP-AGRI) was also mentioned. Finally, the audience was informed that the Commission will publish a partnerships' strategy, including elements about the future of BBI JU, in 2019.

Last but not least, **Sylvain Lhôte**, represented the European Bioeconomy Alliance (EUBA), mentioning that the Bioeconomy Strategy has worked very well so far and even has the resources to be world-leading. "Bioeconomy needs to be embedded in different policy areas", according to Mr. Lhôte, and plays a very important role in reaching the Paris Agreement goals. Within the R&I policies, the role of deployment needs to be safeguarded, making sure that the whole lifecycle is addressed properly; from research to putting products on the market. "As we currently face a radical industry transformation, Europe should not waste time" and lead by example.

The presentations were followed by a lively debate with the audience, which indicated the need to enhance the role of bioeconomy. During the debate session, the Commission stressed that EU is very good in creating synergies, but with regards to investments in biotechnology it has not yet taken the lead. The new "European Innovation Council" should support these investments and will be part of the future research programme proposal. Further, the mission-based research and innovation approach was discussed. According to Mr. Kütt, the Commission is currently undergoing a strategic programming exercise, while its proposal will be published in 18 months. The Commission is investigating how to align the different DGs, and how to integrate national activities in Member States. After summing up the discussions, **Ms. Kumpula-Natri** closed this meeting, thanking participants for their attendance and contribution, while mentioning that she is looking forward to the Commission's proposal on the future research programme "Horizon Europe", in June.

[The presentations and meeting documents are available here.](#)