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*Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety*

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## **DRAFT REPORT**

on innovating for sustainable growth: a bioeconomy for Europe  
(2012/2295(INI))

Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

Rapporteur: Paolo Bartolozzi

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## MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

### on innovating for sustainable growth: a bioeconomy for Europe (2012/2295(INI))

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the Commission communication entitled ‘Innovating for Sustainable Growth: a Bioeconomy for Europe (COM(2012)0060)’,
  - having regard to the Commission communication entitled ‘EU 2020: a European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth (COM(2010)2020)’,
  - having regard to its resolution of 24 May 2012 on a resource-efficient Europe,<sup>1</sup>
  - having regard to the Commission communication on 'Tackling the challenges in commodity markets and on raw materials' (COM(2011)0025) and its resolution concerning this communication,<sup>2</sup>
  - having regard to the Council Presidency Conclusions of the United Kingdom in 2005 ('The Knowledge-Based Bio-Economy in Europe'), of Germany in 2007 ('En route to the Knowledge Based Bio-Economy') and of Belgium in 2010 ('The Knowledge Based Economy in Europe: achievements and challenges'),
  - having regard to Rule 48 of its Rules of Procedure,
  - having regard to the report of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety and the opinions of the Committee on Development, the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy, the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs and the Committee on Regional Development (A7-0000/2013),
- A. whereas the world population will increase from 7 billion to more than 9 billion in 2050, resulting in a 70% increase in the demand for food;
- B. whereas the scarcity of natural reserves worldwide, the increasing pressure on renewable raw materials and the global effects of climate change require us to use resources efficiently;
- C. whereas an innovative and efficient approach will ensure not only greater sustainability but also support for rural development, a potential reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, greater sustainability of the production cycle in addition to the spread of industrial innovation along the entire value chain;
- D. whereas the transition to a sustainable economy will strengthen the competitiveness of European industry, increase economic growth and thus promote a significant increase in European employment levels;

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<sup>1</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2012)0223

<sup>2</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2011)0364

## **General comments**

1. Welcomes the Commission communication entitled 'Innovating for Sustainable Growth: a Bioeconomy for Europe' and the action plan for implementing the bioeconomy strategy set out therein;
2. Shares the view that the transition to a bioeconomy should be based not only on the production of resources with a low environmental impact, but also on a sustainable use of those resources from an environmental, economic and social point of view;
3. Is of the view that the bioeconomy may help to achieve the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy and, more specifically, of the initiatives 'The Innovation Union' and 'A resource-efficient Europe';
4. Supports the Commission proposal to create a task force and roadmap on bioindustries, in which to highlight the contribution made by renewable resources and biotechnology to sustainable development;
5. Takes the view that the transition to a bioeconomy will enable Europe to take some major steps forward in terms of innovation and competitiveness and will enhance its role on the international scene;

## **Investment in research, innovation and skills**

6. Encourages the Commission to continue its research and development coordination efforts across the borders of the Member States and across the various sectors;
7. Supports the establishment of a system based on a continuous exchange of knowledge between research institutes, companies, institutions and universities and the development of a legal framework to facilitate research and its applications;
8. Believes that multidisciplinary and cross-sectoral information and training programmes need to be established so that the findings of that research can become permanent and be put into practice and so that European consumers become more aware;
9. Welcomes the EUR 4.5 billion budget proposed by the Commission in its Framework Programme for Research 'Horizon 2020' and hopes that this budget will be made available to all sectors and instruments of the bioeconomy;
10. Is of the view that biorefineries are a key tool for implementing virtuous processes of conversion of disused plants and for revitalising crisis-stricken areas through innovative processes and investment, and hopes that this role will continue to be encouraged;

## **Reinforced policy interaction and stakeholder engagement**

11. Considers it necessary to ensure that an integrated and interdisciplinary approach is taken

to the bioeconomy and calls for the harmonisation of the different EU policies involved in its various sectors (Horizon 2020, cohesion policy, common agricultural policy, Renewable Energy Directive, Waste Framework Directive, Packaging Directive, specific measures on biowaste) and the establishment of a uniform and stable regulatory environment both at EU level and nationally;

12. Calls on the Commission to make provision for financial support instruments for industrial commercial and pre-commercial investments in the bioeconomy, for example through the use of the Structural Funds and European Investment Bank funds;
13. Calls for targeted and specific action to reduce the complexity and duration of the bureaucratic authorisation procedures that complicate biorefinery development processes and are likely to encourage the transfer of innovative, cutting-edge technologies outside the EU;
14. Approves the use of the public-private partnership (PPP) formula and, hoping to overcome the problems that emerged in previous applications of the same formula to other sectors, calls on the Commission to allocate adequate resources to fund the development and growth of such partnerships, in the belief that this is a key method for enabling new value chains to be created, for enhancing existing chains and facilitating investment in technologies and prototypes that can transfer the findings of the research to the market;
15. Agrees with the need for a multi-level approach and calls for increasing attention to be paid to the regional and local dimension of the bioeconomy; welcomes the establishment, at the regional, national and EU levels, of bioeconomy platforms that are able to measure the progress made in the sector and enable an exchange of know-how and best practices to take place, with a view to ensuring that the bioeconomy develops evenly throughout the EU; calls on the Commission also to involve experts in the sector and in all the subject areas concerned, in addition to representatives of consumers and citizens;

### **Enhancement of markets and competitiveness**

16. Hopes that all available financial instruments will be deployed to enable research findings to have a tangible impact on the market; calls also for adequate support for all those (SMEs, operators or companies) who intend to put those research findings into practice;
17. Takes the view that there are a number of excellent tools (public procurement, tax incentives, certification systems and specific labelling) that could create a strong market for bio-based products and hopes that reforms to the current law will go in that direction;
18. Is of the opinion that it is vital to involve and inform consumers on the choice of bio-based products and services; hopes, in this regard that such products will become standardised in the EU, considering that this would be a tool for promoting a profitable European market in these products;
19. Takes the view that the synergy between local producers of agricultural raw materials and biorefineries could help strengthen the competitiveness and increase the profitability of

rural regions; hopes, to that end, that an approach can be taken that takes into account the different segments of the so-called 'pyramid of biomass', strengthening it at its highest levels and thus sparking a trickle-down effect for this precious resource;

20. Hopes that the biological and biotechnological processes that are developed can be used in bio-based renewable resources from waste and non-food crops and also as components of existing agribusinesses;
21. Calls on the Commission to promote measures to increase the availability of biomass for industrial purposes, preventing incentives for the transformation of biomass into energy from creating market distortions and reducing its availability for producers;
22. Considers that, in keeping with the guidelines of the new European industrial policy strategy, the bioeconomy can make an important contribution to combating the process of de-industrialisation that is currently afflicting Europe and can help to reverse it by means of new strategies to stimulate the market and restore the competitiveness of the regional system;
23. Takes the view that the bioeconomy model that is developed within this strategy will solve the contingent critical issues and, in the longer term, may initiate patterns of production, consumption, development and lifestyles that are more sustainable and effective, by reactivating the process of European growth as a result of a new synthesis between the economy, environment and social quality;
24. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission.

## EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

### General background

Over the next 40 years Europe will have to address a number of social challenges. The constant increase in the world population, the rocketing growth of demand for food and energy and the scarcity of natural resources worldwide mean that Europe will have to reflect on the new approach to take in terms of production and consumption, in order to deal with these new requirements efficiently and sustainably.

The bioeconomy is a major opportunity to meet those challenges by ensuring not only greater sustainability but also support for rural development, a potential reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, improved sustainability of the production cycle and the spread of industrial innovation along the entire value chain

The bioeconomy strategy could be the solution to our dependence on fossil fuels and the road towards smart growth. If it is forward-looking, it could also provide the answer to food security, economic growth and the creation of new jobs.

### Rapporteur's position

Your rapporteur welcomes the Commission communication on a bioeconomy for Europe and the action plan for implementing the strategy set out therein, structured into three complementary parts: the promotion of research, innovation and skills, greater synergy between various policies and the strengthening of the markets and of competitiveness.

In your rapporteur's view, support for this sector is an investment in the future and Europe can and must play a leading role in achieving this objective. In order to do so, it has to lay the groundwork for a clear and stable regulatory environment and ensure the harmonisation of agricultural, industrial, environmental and research and innovation policies, which all play a part in the bioeconomy. Your rapporteur agrees with the need to encourage an interdisciplinary, cross-sectoral approach whilst ensuring an exchange of knowledge at regional, national and European levels to promote the even development of the bioeconomy throughout the EU.

Your rapporteur believes it is necessary to guarantee and develop research and innovation programmes that are coordinated and consistent, to provide tools to support industrial investment, to deploy financial resources and to ensure that the results achieved have the greatest possible impact on society and on the market. Technological infrastructure, scientific excellence, plants and bioindustries can all genuinely help Europe to take major steps forward in terms of innovation and competitiveness and will enhance its role internationally.

In this regard, new forms of partnership involving the joint contribution of public and private bodies can also contribute greatly to the development of this strategy. The establishment of a public-private partnership devoted to bioindustries could, in fact, support new projects, enable new products to be developed and ensure that they are actually placed on the market, reducing the risk that more favourable conditions overseas might encourage the migration of excellence

and innovative projects outside Europe.

For all these reasons, your rapporteur believes that increasing efforts should be focused on supporting further progress in this direction, in order to create patterns of production, consumption, development and lifestyles that are more sustainable and effective and – also due to a new synthesis between the economy, environment and social quality – to reactivate the process of European growth and reindustrialisation.