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 its resolution of 24 May 2012 on a resource-efficient Europe,¹

– having regard to the Commission communication entitled ‘Tackling the challenges in commodity markets and on raw materials’ (COM(2011)0025) and its resolution concerning this communication,²

– having regard to the Council Conclusions from the United Kingdom Presidency in 2005 (‘The Knowledge-Based Bio-Economy in Europe’), from the German Presidency in 2007 (‘En route to the Knowledge Based Bio-Economy’) and from the Belgian Presidency 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 Employment and Social Affairs, the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy and the Committee on Regional Development (A7-0201/2013),

A. whereas the world population is projected to increase from 7 billion to more than 9 billion in 2050, resulting in an estimated 70 % increase in the demand for food and putting strong pressure on water reserves;

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 a long-term, innovative and efficient approach will ensure not only greater sustainability but also support for rural and regional 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

² Texts adopted, P7_TA(2011)0364.
European industry and the agricultural sector, increase economic growth and thus promote a significant increase in European employment levels;

E. whereas a successful bioeconomy for Europe depends on the availability of sustainably managed and sourced food stocks (from agriculture, forestry and biodegradable waste);

F. whereas the EU bioeconomy has already a turnover of nearly EUR 2 trillion, and significant growth is expected from sustainable primary production, food processing, industrial biotechnology and biorefineries;

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. Considers that the bioeconomy makes it possible to produce industrial and consumer commodities at lower costs, using less energy and creating less environmental pollution;

3. Shares the view that the transition to a smart, sustainable and inclusive bioeconomy should be based not only on the production of renewable natural resources with a low environmental impact, but also on a sustainable use of those resources from an environmental, economic and social point of view, maintaining the use of biotic resources within the boundaries of ecosystem renewal;

4. Underlines the urgency of taking action now to support innovation and investment in new techniques and business models and to create the incentives that will bring long-term benefits for the economy; emphasises the key role of the private sector in delivering sustainable economic growth;

5. Is of the view that the bioeconomy is a prerequisite for achieving the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy and, more specifically, of the initiatives ‘The Innovation Union’ and ‘A resource-efficient Europe’;

6. Welcomes the Commission’s support for a radical change in the EU’s approach to the production, consumption, processing, storage, recycling and disposal of biological resources;

7. Points out that while 22 million people are already employed in the bioeconomy, accounting for 9 % of total employment in the EU, it has a strong potential to employ millions more;

8. Supports the Commission’s 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 and to encourage regions and operators to develop new innovations for the bioeconomy sector;

9. Calls on the Member States to develop national and regional bioeconomy action plans, and requests the Commission to present a bi-annual report to Parliament with regard to the
implementation of a bioeconomy;

10. Emphasises that the EU is a global leader in various fields of bioscience and biotechnologies; takes the view that the transition to a bioeconomy will enable Europe to take some major steps forward in terms of the low-carbon economy, innovation and competitiveness and will enhance its role on the international scene;

11. Underlines the importance and huge potential of resource and energy efficiency; stresses the need to ‘produce more with less’ so that the bioeconomy remains sustainable;

12. Takes the view that a bioeconomy for Europe should not merely substitute the current fossil-based economy or repeat current wasteful behaviour and consumption patterns but should evolve into a more efficient and sustainable model taking into account social and environmental stewardship throughout all bioeconomy-based value chains;

13. Welcomes the on-going revision of the Union’s biofuel legislation in order to mitigate the negative effects of indirect land-use change (ILUC), and to promote the market for, and development of, more advanced biofuels that should allow greater use to be made of non-food raw materials such as waste, residues and ligno-cellulosic and cellulosic materials;

14. Recalls that ILUC factors for biofuels and bioliquids, as well as binding sustainability criteria for the use of solid and gaseous biomass, should be included in the Renewable Energy Directive and the Fuel Quality Directive; calls on the Commission to propose a Biomass Framework Directive covering all applications of biomass (energy, fuels, materials and chemicals) and introducing a biomass hierarchy;

**Investment in research, innovation and skills**

15. Encourages the Commission to continue its research and development coordination efforts across the borders of the Member States and across the various sectors, and highlights in particular the need for research into the assessment of sustainability boundaries of biotic resources, taking into account ecosystem functions and natural food chains as well as human food demand;

16. Calls for more detailed research to establish the social and environmental opportunities, as well as the potential costs of the bioeconomy, given the diverse potential impacts and possible wrong methods of exploiting the bioeconomy, in terms of the use of scarce natural resources, the risk of damage to the environment and of biodiversity loss and the opportunity for conservation;

17. Supports the establishment of a Bioeconomy Panel of experts to help enhance synergies and coherence between policies and initiatives, and a Bioeconomy Observatory, in order to promote mutual learning, by securing a continuous exchange of knowledge and information between research institutes, companies, institutions, universities, regional operators, farmers and citizens in rural areas, and hasten the development of a legal framework to increase and facilitate research, its applications and the commercialisation of innovations;

18. Recalls the importance of the application of the precautionary principal in the use of
biotechnologies, especially in the areas of genetically manipulated organisms and synthetic biology;

19. Believes that multidisciplinary and cross-sectoral information and training programmes need to be established so that the findings of research are made accessible to stakeholders, including consumers, creating opportunities to increase awareness and involvement;

20. Calls for the elimination of existing obstacles to innovation along the value chain, notably by rapid and science-based EU approval procedures for biotechnological products and much faster market access;

21. Calls on the Commission to propose practical measures of regionally comprehensive scope to promote the production and consumption of bioeconomy products at regional level;

22. Stresses that the bioeconomy requires that new skills, new knowledge and new disciplines be developed and/or integrated further in order to tackle bioeconomy-related societal changes, promote competitiveness, growth and job creation, meet the needs of industry and ensure that skills and jobs are better matched;

23. Stresses that the bioeconomy needs first-rate know-how and a skilled workforce; maintains that it is necessary to provide for vocational training and higher education needs in the regions of the European Union, taking into account the regions’ specific characteristics; points out that wide-ranging education and training systems in the regions also foster business expansion;

24. 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 and for the purpose of further refining innovations, including research on the ecosystem boundaries, reuse and recycling of biomaterials;

25. Is of the view that biorefineries based on local sustainable biomaterial that does not displace food or other more valuable uses are a key tool for implementing virtuous processes of conversion of disused plants and for revitalising crisis-stricken areas through innovative processes and investment towards a circular economy, and hopes that this role will continue to be encouraged;

26. Emphasises that sufficient quantities of sustainable raw materials are needed for the successful operation of biorefineries in Europe; points out that this will also require improving infrastructures for storage and transport and developing the necessary logistics;

27. Points out that there are only a limited number of demonstration facilities in Europe and that increased investments are needed in order to maintain the leading role of European industries in the sector of biorefineries; calls on the Commission and the Member States to support pilot and demonstration activities for the up-scaling of products and processes;

28. Emphasises that bioeconomy policies must be better designed to ensure a cascading use of biomass; calls, in this respect, for the development of a legal instrument that will pave the
way for a more efficient and sustainable use of this precious resource; stresses that such an instrument should establish a cascading use principle in the ‘pyramid of biomass’, taking into account its different segments and strengthening it at its highest levels; points out that such an approach would lead to a hierarchical, smart and efficient use of biomass, to value-adding applications and to supporting measures such as coordination of research along the whole value chain;

**Reinforced policy interaction and stakeholder engagement**

29. Considers it necessary to ensure an integrated, coherent, cross-sectoral and interdisciplinary approach to bioeconomy, and calls for the harmonisation of the different EU policies involved and the related guiding principles – such as the precautionary principle – in the various sectors (the Resource Efficiency roadmap; the Innovation Union; the Raw Materials Initiative; Horizon 2020; the Environment Action Programme 2020; the Cohesion, Common Agricultural and Common Fisheries policies; the Renewable Energies, Water Framework, Waste Framework and Packaging directives; and specific measures on biowaste); considers it necessary, as well, to establish a uniform, long-term, stable, regulatory environment, both at EU-level and nationally, aiming at promoting and increasing investments for the bioeconomy in Europe;

30. Calls on the Commission to make provisions for financial instruments to support pre-commercial investments, turn research findings into commercial successes and enable innovative companies, especially SMEs, to find financial and other support instruments encouraging the development of the bioeconomy, for example through the use of Regional and Structural Funds and European Investment Bank risk sharing facilities, through increased coherence between different EU research and innovation funds, and through the establishment of a one-stop shop for information about all bio-based economy related initiatives, with a view to achieving the greatest possible impact; acknowledges the difficulty, and the financial risks, associated with commercialising bioeconomy innovations and placing them on the market;

31. Calls for the development of industrial infrastructure and optimised supply chains for bio-based products in rural and coastal areas with a view to creating new jobs in agriculture, forestry and aquaculture; calls for EU rural development funding to be made available for this purpose, and for this to be done in such a way as to reduce, rather than increase, damage to the environment and biodiversity loss;

32. 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;

33. Approves the use of the public-private partnership (PPP) formula, drawing adequate lessons from the problems that emerged in previous applications of the same formula to other sectors; calls on the Commission to allocate adequate resources for development and growth of such partnerships, in the belief that this is a key method for enabling new value chains to be created, enhancing existing chains and facilitating investment in technologies and prototypes that can transfer research findings to the market;
34. 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 and to bottom-up initiatives; welcomes the establishment, at regional, national and EU levels, of bioeconomy platforms that are able to measure the progress made in a given 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; points out that regional economies have a central role to play in achieving smart, sustainable and inclusive growth;

35. Believes that bottom-up initiatives are important in creating a bio-based society and that a business- and demand-driven approach, combined with a government-driven approach, is crucial; considers that adequate possibilities should be provided for regional initiatives; calls on the Commission to support such networks and clusters with a view to promoting the exchange of experiences.

**Enhancement of markets and competitiveness**

36. Calls on the Commission to focus financial support on innovation in line with the Innovation Union, including the Horizon 2020 priorities, stimulating research findings to prepare for marketing, bridging the so-called ‘valley of death’ of research in Europe;

37. Takes the view that there are a number of excellent tools (public procurement, standardisation, tax incentives, certification systems and specific labelling) that could secure a sufficient supply of sustainable and high-quality bio-based products as well as provide resource-efficient production systems; believes that reform of the current legislation is required; calls on the Commission to develop sustainability criteria for the use of biomass on which also market-creating tools should be based;

38. Stresses that a bio-based economy that relies on exploitation of biological resources instead of fossil energy must be guided by a sound political framework that takes into account not only economic viability but also social and ecological sustainability factors;

39. 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 based on sufficient sustainability criteria in the EU, considering that this would be a tool for promoting a profitable European market in these products;

40. Believes that the lifespan of the bio-based product may not be artificially shortened; the product should be constructed for the longest possible life-time;

41. Underlines that the bioeconomy will make a significant contribution to the development of rural and coastal areas; takes the view that synergy and close cooperation along the value chain, including local producers of agricultural and forestry raw materials and biorefineries, would help strengthen the competitiveness and increase the profitability of rural regions; stresses the need to develop a long-term bioeconomy strategy, taking due account of the need to ensure food security;

42. Requires 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 in existing agricultural and forest-based businesses;

43. Maintains that one of the bioeconomy’s guiding principles is to enhance resource efficiency and reduce dependence on imported raw materials, energy and non-renewable natural resources; points to the importance of the forest sector and other bio-based industries, and maintains that carbon-neutral renewable natural resources and raw materials, such as wood and wood fibre, can replace non-renewable fossil raw materials; points out that the bioeconomy industry produces many high added-value products, such as chemicals, medicines, plastics and other innovative new materials and that it creates jobs; highlights the potential of biotechnologies based on marine resources;

44. Calls on the Commission to promote measures to increase feedstock potentials in a sustainable manner, better mobilise such feedstocks, collect biodegradable waste – avoiding extensive transportation – and ensure that biomass use remains within ecological boundaries and does not reduce the carbon sink function; considers it urgent, in this context, to establish sustainability criteria for biomass energy use in order to ensure the availability of biomass for more resource-efficient purposes, preventing incentives for the transformation of biomass into energy from creating market distortions and reducing its availability for producers;

45. Considers it important to invest in bioeconomy supply chains so as to guarantee the availability of raw materials; maintains that bioeconomy strategies should encourage not only more efficient use of household and municipal waste, but also the recovery of agricultural and forestry by-product streams and residues; calls for better and enabling legislation providing legal certainty and strong support for sustainable use of bioeconomy resources and exploitation of raw materials, and for policy to be based, in every respect, on a flexible, long-term approach that promotes investments;

46. 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 reverse it by means of new strategies to stimulate the market and restore the competitiveness of the regional system;

47. Strongly urges the Commission to define environmentally harmful subsidies as ‘a result of a government action that confers an advantage on consumers or producers, in order to supplement their income or lower their costs, but in doing so, discriminates against sound environmental practices’\(^1\); calls on the Commission and Member States to adopt, without delay and by 2014, concrete plans, based on this definition, for progressively phasing out all environmentally harmful subsidies by 2020, including subsidies which incentivise inefficient use of renewable resources and subsidies on fossil fuels, and to report on progress through the National Reform Programmes; in this context, is concerned that subsidies for the use of biomaterials for energy are already undermining resource efficiency objectives;

\(^1\) Adapted from OECD (1998 and 2005) in IEEP et al. 2007, see http://ec.europa.eu/environment/enveco/taxation/index.htm
48. Notes with concern that rising demand for biomass, particularly wood, may spark widespread deforestation in developing countries, where greenhouse gas emissions are not accounted for under the Kyoto Protocol; points out that while this can impact on soil quality, water cycles and biodiversity, it increases strain on global agreements such as the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) and the UN Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (REDD); fears equally that, considering that land governance systems are weak in many developing countries, rising demand for wood products may trigger off illegal logging and in return weaken voluntary partnership agreements under the Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan;

49. Underlines that the transition to a bioeconomy will contribute to further integration of the Rio+20 outcomes into EU policies; believes that the EU should further intensify its contribution to initiatives that facilitate the transition towards an inclusive green economy at international level;

50. Calls for the EU to become an international research and innovation powerhouse in the area of bio-economy research; states that new products, processes and services based on renewable resources will enhance the competitiveness of European industry and make it an international front runner;

51. Deems it crucial to develop international legally binding sustainability standards for all sectors of biomass usage, as well as binding sustainable forest management criteria; urges the EU to pursue the adoption of multilateral agreements and provide, especially for LDCs, related institutional and technical support for ensuring the sustainable use of biomass.

52. 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, the environment and social quality;

53. 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.
28.5.2013

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON DEVELOPMENT

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

on Innovating for Sustainable Growth: A Bioeconomy for Europe
(2012/2295(INI))

Rapporteur: Isabella Lövin

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Development calls on the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Stresses that a bio-based economy, that relies on exploitation of biological resources instead of fossil energy, must be guided by a sound political framework that takes into account not only economic viability but also social and ecological sustainability factors;

2. Underlines that biodiversity and ecosystems deliver collective benefits and must be considered as common goods; recalls that, when properly managed and governed, biodiversity-based assets can yield significant economic benefits; laments, however, that many policy-makers see little economic gain from conserving or investing in biodiversity; stresses therefore the value of ‘ecosystem services’ and their contribution to economic and social development;

3. Stresses that no system for generating wealth can be sustainable if it degrades its resource base; underlines that, in parallel to its market-oriented functions, the bio-economy also sustains a wide range of public goods functions not currently rewarded by the market, that should be preserved, such as agricultural and forested landscape, farmland and forest biodiversity, water quality and availability, soil functionality, climate stability, air quality and resilience to flooding and fire;

4. Takes the view that the transition to a sustainable bio-based economy will only be successful if resource efficiency is made the pillar of the economy and if genetic engineering is not used as the driver of this economy;

5. Believes that any bio-economy strategy should adopt the guiding principle of a biomass hierarchy and support a ‘cascade utilisation’ of biomass, first directed to ensure basic
services not rewarded by the market and then to high value applications like materials (rather than bioenergy which has a lower value);

6. Stresses that a sustainable bio-based economy must be built on modal transport; in particular, underlines that, in order to assess whether a specific bio-based process or product is reducing direct and indirect greenhouse gases emissions, all the stages from the extraction of the raw material to the end-use-state should be considered; stresses that the EU and national policies should promote clean alternatives to fossil fuels, such as vehicles that run on renewable electricity as well as solar and wind energy, instead of stimulating the shift to biomass in sectors where lower value is added to it (like in the production of biofuels and other bioenergy);

7. Notes that the amount of sustainable biomass from EU sources will never be enough to meet current energy demands and increasing and competing uses of biomass, and that the EU will therefore be increasingly dependent on imports from developing countries, where biomass exploitation represents a major challenge in terms of governance, as in the case of forest conservation and sustainable management of forest resources, thereby making it difficult to fulfil EU sustainability criteria and measures for imported biomass or to check their implementation through monitoring and evaluation; stresses, in this regard, the importance of energy efficiency and saving measures to ensure that the EU does more with less, thereby reducing demand for biomass;

8. Insists that the EU has a duty to reduce its dependency on fish from developing countries for food, as well as for feed in aquaculture; stresses that, in the current reform of the CFP, priority should be given to measures that underpin an environmentally sustainable management of fisheries and the use of non-carnivorous species in aquaculture;

9. Notes with concern that rising demand for biomass, particularly wood, may spark widespread deforestation in developing countries, where greenhouse gas emissions are not accounted for under the Kyoto Protocol; points out that while this can impact on soil quality, water cycles and biodiversity, it increases strain on global agreements such as the CBD and UN REDD; fears equally that, considering that land governance systems are weak in many developing countries, rising demand for wood products may not only trigger off illegal logging and in return weaken Voluntary Partnership Agreements under FLEGT, but also increase the strain on global agreements such as the CBD and UN REDD;

10. Stresses the importance of mangrove, seagrass meadows, salt marshes and kelp forests as high-performing carbon sinks; warns of the rapid destruction of these coastal ecosystems due, *inter alia*, to increasing demand for seafood from aquaculture; calls for a marine equivalent of the REDD scheme to safeguard coastal and marine ecosystems as carbon sinks;

11. Calls for the EU to become an international research and innovation powerhouse in the area of bio-economy research; states that new products, processes and services based on renewable resources will enhance the competitiveness of European industry and make it an international front runner;

12. Recalls that ILUC factors for biofuels and bioliquids, as well as binding sustainability
criteria for the use of solid and gaseous biomass, should be included in the Renewable Energy Directive and the Fuel Quality Directive; calls on the Commission to propose a Biomass Framework Directive covering all applications of biomass (energy, fuels, materials, chemicals) and introducing a biomass hierarchy;

13. Recalls that the protection of biodiversity is a key component to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (including Goal 1 on Eradication of Extreme Poverty and Hunger and Goal 7 on Ensuring Environmental Sustainability); in particular, stresses the importance of healthy biodiversity and ecosystems for primary production like agriculture, forestry and fisheries; accordingly, deems that production of biomass shall be analysed with respect to its impact on ecosystem services;

14. Fears that growing demand for biomass exacerbates food insecurity in developing countries through diversion of crops and lands away from food production, deprivation of land-use rights and impoverishment as a result of land-grabs and exacerbation of food price volatility; points out that the demand for biofuels is already one of the drivers for land acquisitions in developing countries, in particular in Sub-Saharan Africa; recalls that, due to these land acquisitions, indigenous people lose their access to land, and thereby their access to food and water; also underlines that, while MDGs set a target of cutting by half the number of people without safe access to water by 2015, water-consuming bio-economy activities can aggravate water stress in developing countries and thereby contribute to widespread food scarcity; urges the EU to follow the recommendation of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food on agro-ecology in order to achieve food security, while addressing climate change;

15. Deems it crucial to develop international legally binding sustainability standards for all sectors of biomass usage, as well as binding sustainable forest management criteria; urges the EU to pursue the adoption of multilateral agreements and provide, especially for LDCs, related institutional and technical support for ensuring the sustainable use of biomass.
## RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

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<td><strong>Result of final vote</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Members present for the final vote</strong></td>
<td>Thijs Berman, Corina Crețu, Véronique De Keyser, Charles Goerens, Mikael Gustafsson, Eva Joly, Filip Kaczmarek, Miguel Angel Martínez Martínez, Gay Mitchell, Bill Newton Dunn, Andreas Pitsillides, Maurice Ponga, Jean Roatta, Alf Svensson, Keith Taylor, Ivo Vajgl, Anna Záborská, Iva Zanicchi</td>
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<td><strong>Substitute(s) present for the final vote</strong></td>
<td>Eric Andrieu, Kriton Arsenis, Philippe Boulland, Emer Costello, Isabella Lövin, Cristian Dan Preda</td>
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8.5.2013

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

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

on Innovating for Sustainable Growth: A Bioeconomy for Europe
(2012/2295(INI))

Rapporteur: Tamás Deutsch

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Employment and Social Affairs calls on the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

– having regard to the Europe 2020 strategy, which calls for smart and green growth and more employment opportunities,

A. whereas promoting the bioeconomy will lead to economic growth and create a significant number of jobs in rural, coastal and industrial areas;

B. whereas the bioeconomy will make us less dependent on mainly imported fossil fuels;

C. whereas the EU bioeconomy has already a turnover of nearly EUR 2 trillion, and significant growth is expected from sustainable primary production, food processing, industrial biotechnology and biorefineries;

D. whereas the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions recommends anticipating and managing the effects of greening of industries on the quantity and quality of jobs;

E. whereas a study by the International Labour Organisation\(^1\) stresses the need to promote health and safety at work in the green economy;

F. whereas a study from the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) on ‘Green skills and environmental awareness in vocational education and

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training calls for further research to identify the dynamics of occupational and internal labour-market change at sectoral level, in order to help assess the adequacy of labour supply and skills mismatch;

1. Calls for the development of a more innovative, resource-efficient and competitive society which can ensure that food security goes hand in hand with the sustainable use of renewable resources, and stresses that fuel should be derived primarily from those by-products from the food production chain, and from wood processing, for which, in keeping with the waste hierarchy, no more valuable use exists, and that, if crops are used which contain energy in a very concentrated form and which can also be processed into food products, the needs of adequate food production must be met, along with strict conditions to ensure the promotion of nature conservation and of biodiversity;

2. Underlines that research and innovation lay the foundation for a structural change from an oil-based to a bio-based industry that offers great opportunities for growth and employment, interdisciplinary work and cooperation internationally and within the EU, so as to accelerate transfer into practice thus establishing a knowledge-based economy;

3. Points out that anticipation of change, upgrading of knowledge and skills, and better matching of skills and jobs in a socially responsible way are key to the success of the bioeconomy strategy in delivering growth and new employment opportunities in Europe;

4. Points out that while 22 million people are already employed in the bioeconomy, accounting for 9 % of total employment in the EU, it has a strong potential to employ millions more;

5. Calls on the Commission to act proactively, using EU funds, know-how and exchanges of good practices on developing the bioeconomy sector – especially towards those Member States in Southern Europe that face financial difficulties – to create job opportunities for the young generation, which suffers from severe unemployment but the involvement of which is key to a successful transition to the bioeconomy; underlines that the Youth Guarantee schemes help promote good quality employment, training and apprenticeship for young people in this strategic field;

6. Highlights the importance of insuring decent jobs in the sector, in line with the ILO standards, notably through a strong social dimension for the strategy for a bioeconomy that includes worker involvement;

7. Draws attention to the fact that the bioeconomy can provide considerable additional income for primary producers in the farming, fishing and forestry sectors, particularly through the production of biomass, raw materials for composites and specialist oilseeds crops for industry, thereby creating diverse employment opportunities across a variety of related sectors;

8. Draws attention to the fact that the Commission has based its strategy for a bioeconomy

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for Europe on the scenario\textsuperscript{1}, which could create around 130 000 jobs in the bioeconomy; encourages all Member States to step up their bioeconomy assistance programmes; further underlines the importance of worker participation in R&\textsuperscript{d} activities, for instance through board membership;

9. Recalls its resolution of 15 December 2011 on the mid-term review of the European strategy 2007-2012 on health and safety at work\textsuperscript{2}, calling for an impact assessment of the potential risks from new technologies, harmful substances and risk factors, including work organisation in the workplace, and for legislative actions to ensure that nanomaterials are fully covered by EU’s current occupational health and safety regulations;

10. Calls on the Commission to develop participatory models that can be used to forge closer links between citizens, producers and end-users with a view to fostering a closer relationship between science, society and politics, and to point out the benefits of the bioeconomy and its importance for society, growth, jobs and social innovation;

11. Underlines the importance of social dialogue in the bioeconomy to ensure the availability of high-quality jobs and a just transition to the bioeconomy; points out the European sectoral social dialogue in the food and drink industry; calls on the Commission to make the European sectoral social dialogue a cornerstone of its strategy for the development of the bioeconomy;

12. Calls for more detailed research to establish the social and environmental opportunities, as well as the potential costs, of the bioeconomy, given the diverse potential impacts and possible wrong methods of exploiting the bioeconomy, in terms of: the use of scarce natural resources; the risk of damage to the environment and of biodiversity loss; the opportunity for conservation; and the role of EU and Member State funds, in particular with regard to the Common Agricultural Policy, all of which can result in net benefits to employment, biodiversity and the wider environment if managed within a responsible and holistic policy framework;

13. Stresses that the bioeconomy requires new skills, new knowledge and new disciplines to be developed and/or integrated further in order to tackle bioeconomy-related societial changes, promote competitiveness, growth and job creation, meet the needs of industry and ensure that skills and jobs are better matched;

14. Calls on the Member States to offer degree courses on the bioeconomy and to develop vocational training programmes to make it possible to attain in all respects, and to ensure, a pioneering, innovative and leading role for the EU in this field;

15. Notes the potential for delivering rural apprenticeships, in partnerships with local education providers and utilising funds such as the Rural Development Fund, in order to develop transferable skills amongst young people in rural areas, allowing them to better exploit the potential new employment opportunities arising from innovation in the bioeconomy and agriculture sectors; underlines the key role that the European Social Fund


\textsuperscript{2} Texts adopted, P7_TAs(2011)0589.
(ESF) could play in supporting life-long learning to up-skill and re-skill workers in the bioeconomy sector; recalls, therefore, its position in favour of a minimum overall share for the ESF of 25 % of the total budget allocated to the Cohesion Policy;

16. Calls for a substantial increase in bioeconomy research, and stresses that the EU must seek to improve its capacity to innovate by turning the results of research into commercial success, as it currently takes too long for the EU to transform research and innovation results into marketable products;

17. Considers that the bioeconomy makes it possible to produce industrial and consumer commodities at lower costs, using less energy and creating less environmental pollution;

18. Calls for the development of industrial infrastructure and optimised supply chains for bio-based products in rural and coastal areas with a view to creating new jobs in agriculture, forestry and aquaculture; calls for EU rural development funding to be made available for this purpose, and for this to be done in such a way as to reduce, rather than increase, damage to the environment and biodiversity loss.
## RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

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| **Members present for the final vote** | Regina Bastos, Edit Bauer, Heinz K. Becker, Phil Bennion, Pervenche Berès, Vilija Blinkevičiūtė, Philippe Boulland, Milan Cabrnoc, Alejandro Cercas, Ole Christensen, Marije Cornelissen, Emer Costello, Frédéric Daerden, Karima Delli, Sari Essayah, Richard Falbr, Marian Harkin, Nadja Hirsch, Stephen Hughes, Danuta Jazłowiecka, Martin Kastler, Ádám Kósa, Verónica Lope Fontagné, Olle Ludvigsson, Thomas Mann, Elisabeth Morin-Chartier, Csaba Öry, Síria Oviir, Sylvana Rapiti, Licia Ronzulli, Joanna Katarzyna Skrzypek, Justa Steinruck, Traian Ungureanu, Andrea Zanoni, Inês Cristina Zuber |
| **Substitute(s) present for the final vote** | Georges Bach, Malika Benarab-Attou, Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto, Jelko Kacin, Evelyn Regner, Csaba Sógor, Tatjana Ždanoka |
OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRY, RESEARCH AND ENERGY

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

on Innovating for Sustainable Growth: A Bioeconomy for Europe

(2012/2295(INI))

Rapporteur: Giles Chichester

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Industry, Research and Energy calls on the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

A. whereas it should be recalled that the bioeconomy is an important sector within the internal market offering significant benefits with regard to the low-carbon economy, climate change resiliency, sustainability, competitiveness, job creation and the reduction of import dependency in terms of both energy and raw materials;

B. whereas the bioeconomy has to cope with existing conflicts of goals, for instance as regards biomass, which is in demand simultaneously as a source of food, raw materials, and energy, and the expectations centred on it must, therefore, remain within realistic bounds;

C. whereas alongside cutting-edge biological research, the bioeconomy can also draw upon traditional knowledge and know-how;

1. Welcomes the Commission’s support for a radical change in the EU’s approach to the production, consumption, processing, storage, recycling and disposal of biological resources; believes that a bio-based economy in Europe can contribute to the competitiveness of European industry and provide jobs and business opportunities, in particular for rural and coastal development, but only if its activities are conducted within the parameters of resource efficiency and sustainability;

2. Believes that a lack of coordination has limited the exploitation of synergies and economies of scale with regard to the bioeconomy in the Union; stresses that the Union can add value by encouraging and facilitating cooperation through networks and funding programmes; considers that together with specific targets to increase the share of
renewable natural resources used in the production and consumption of goods the
bioeconomy will develop via an integrated approach across all levels, local, Member State
and Union;

3. Encourages the Commission to ensure the acceptability of biomass utilisation and biomass
availability in order to secure the operating conditions for existing bio-based industries,
which are the foundation of the future bioeconomy;

4. Welcomes, in this regard, the commission’s recent announcement of the launching of a
bioeconomy observatory to map regional, national and EU policies in this area, as well as
the setting-up of a permanent panel of bioeconomy experts to help enhance synergies and
coherence between policies, initiatives and economic sectors related to the bioeconomy at
EU level, linking with existing mechanisms;

5. Believes that at Union level greater synergies and complementarities must be supported
by other policy areas, such as those concerning raw materials, biofuels and waste, as well
as programmes, particularly Horizon 2020, the CAP and the Structural Funds; asks the
Commission to develop an integrated approach to the bioeconomy, contributing to the
development of strategies at regional, national and European levels; takes the view that
the EU should also promote the bioeconomy internationally, particularly in the Rio+20
and UNFCCC processes;

6. Highlights the importance of rural areas and the role they can play in the development of a
sustainable bioeconomy, especially with regard to the residues to feed bio-refineries
or/and (in cascade) biomass-to-gas conversion plants; suggests, in this context, that
Union-wide actions should be promoted for the remediation of polluted soils contributing
to the production of energy crops; recalls the importance of waste collection system
coordination for rural as well as urban areas;

7. Welcomes the intention to bridge the gap between research and innovation within Horizon
2020 and also to reduce barriers to interdisciplinary research and joint programmes, given
the wide range of end-products within the bioeconomy, i.e. energy and industrial products
and key technologies to be deployed;

8. Considers that for bioenergy sources to be successful in the longer term they must be
produced and used in a sustainable manner and should be able to compete on both price
and quality under normal market conditions; welcomes the ongoing revision of the
Union’s biofuel legislation in order to mitigate the negative effects of Indirect Land Use
Change (ILUC), and to promote the market for, and development of, more advanced
biofuels that should allow greater use to be made of non-food raw materials such as waste,
residues and ligno-cellulosic and cellulosic materials;

9. Underlines the importance and huge potential of resource and energy efficiency; stresses
the need to ‘produce more with less’ so that the bioeconomy remains sustainable;

10. Calls on industry to drive the development of a sustainable bioeconomy in the Union;
calls, therefore, for the creation of a more business-friendly environment, through such
measures as reducing time to market, aligning research and innovation policies with the
needs of specific sectors, improving access to risk finance, particularly for existing and
developing bio-based industries and SMEs, and encouraging entrepreneurship in the sector;

11. Is aware that further development of the bioeconomy will entail major scientific tasks extending beyond the confines of any given scientific field or any one country and will require new forms of cooperation between researchers and industrial partners to speed up translation into practice;

12. Considers that it is crucial to protect intellectual property for products and processes related to the bioeconomy if Europe wants to ensure its global competitiveness in the international market;

13. Believes that public finance has a role to play in leveraging capital from the private sector to support commercialisation within the biotech sector; supports the Commission’s intention to establish public-private partnership (PPP) for bio-based industries;

14. Believes that it is necessary to facilitate better access to finance for SMEs through investment in start-ups, venture capital and support for technology transfer, and less complex regulations and knowledge valorisation in the field of the bioeconomy; suggests that an SME panel should be set up to advise the Bioeconomy Panel and secure a business-driven approach; further emphasises the important role of public-private partnerships (PPPs) in accelerating the transition towards a bioeconomy; believes that SMEs play a crucial role in the translation of scientific research into applications and market introduction in the form of new products or techniques;

15. Believes that the action plan set out in the communication lacks practical measures and instruments to tackle the potential barriers or risks when shifting towards a bioeconomy; stresses that specific attention should be paid to overlapping or conflicting regulations and to the availability of venture capital;

16. Notes that few Member States have been conducting activities to support the development of the bioeconomy, and that strategies here are mainly developed by national governments, a good example being the crossborder regional bioeconomy strategy of the Bio-based Delta Europe (south-west Netherlands and Flanders); believes that we need to strengthen local and regional initiatives through the implementation of bioeconomy strategies, in the light of smart specialisation strategies, at all levels of cooperation (EU, national, regional, local) and the coordination of cross-sectoral activities;

17. Believes that bottom-up initiatives are important in creating a bio-based society and that a business- and demand-driven approach, combined with a government-driven approach, is crucial; considers that adequate possibilities should be provided for regional initiatives such as those in the Helsinki region (Finland), the south-west Netherlands, north-west France, North Rhine-Westphalia (Germany), Styria (Austria), etc.; calls on the Commission to support such networks and clusters with a view to promoting the exchange of experiences.
RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

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<td><strong>Substitute(s) present for the final vote</strong></td>
<td>Elisabetta Gardini, Jolanta Emilia Hibner, Seán Kelly, Eija-Riitta Korhola, Bernd Lange, Vladimir Remek, Algirdas Saudargas, Silvia-Adriana Ticău</td>
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24.4.2013

OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Innovating for Sustainable Growth: A Bioeconomy for Europe’
(2012/2295(INI))

Rapporteur: Riikka Manner

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Regional Development calls on the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

1. Emphasises that a bioeconomy, which has to be based on a coherent interdisciplinary, cross-sectoral approach within the EU, is a key element for smart green growth in Europe and stresses that regional development policy has a central role in the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy; notes that, out of the eleven regional policy objectives, seven relate directly or indirectly to the bioeconomy; points out that regional development policy is now a more potent means than ever of supporting smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth, given its strong thematic concentration; points out that the bioeconomy is having a significant impact on the regions and is promoting economic growth and creating jobs;

2. Maintains that, in the bioeconomy strategy and policy and in bioeconomy-related regulations and incentives, the guidelines and the degree of concentration need to be more clear cut; points to the need to improve coordination, create synergies and complementary links with the various policies and funds (Structural Funds, CAP, CFP, RES Directive, Waste Framework Directive and Horizon 2020) and open up possibilities for cross-funding; also points out that the transition to a bioeconomy is a lengthy process that will require legislative perseverance and strategies and investment extending over a long time-span in order to create a stable investment climate for the bioeconomy and an equal level playing field;

3. Stresses that a robust policy framework should be in place to fully exploit the potential of the bioeconomy and to facilitate the transition from a fossil-based economy to a bio-based economy, which should make best use of local and regional resources and capacities;
4. Points out that Europe’s outermost regions enjoy exceptional biodiversity and unique climates and geomorphological features; stresses that these regions therefore hold enormous potential for bioeconomy research and innovation and can play a pivotal role in nurturing ‘green’ growth at European level;

5. Stresses the importance of creating a Bioeconomy Observatory and Panel of Experts; insists that regular stakeholder conferences be organised for the main public and private sector stakeholders at national, regional and European level; calls for a roadmap to be drawn up which ensures the effective monitoring of bioeconomy initiatives and the smooth coordination of instruments and under which tangible way markers are set and progress reports published and forwarded to Parliament;

6. Points out that regional and local economies have a central role to play in achieving smart, sustainable and inclusive growth; maintains that the regions themselves have the knowledge and know-how necessary to mobilise actors according to their specific characteristics and embark on the transition to a bio-society and a post-oil economy, employing research and innovation as drivers of change; reiterates that it is vital to integrate and better coordinate innovation and sustainability plans at regional, national and European level; urges the regions and regional authorities, therefore, to become more actively involved in developing strong regional bioeconomy and research and innovation strategies that take each region’s profile into account and are aimed at smart specialisation; calls on the Commission to support European regional bio-based clusters and interregional cooperation and considers that solid growth in this area can only be achieved through substantial public and private investment; welcomes the proposal to establish public-private partnership (PPP) schemes for the bioeconomy sector;

7. Considers that the social and solidarity economy, which builds on people’s active involvement, common ownership and solidarity, should be allowed to play an important role in shaping and implementing bioeconomy strategies on the regional level;

8. Points to the importance of supporting and strengthening local and regional initiatives by implementing bioeconomy strategies at every level of cooperation; points out that bottom-up approaches are essential in order to tap the potential of all regions; stresses the crucial role of small and medium-sized enterprises in the bioeconomy and maintains that it is vital to provide SMEs with funding opportunities tailored to the local level; reiterates the need to foster research and innovation strategies aimed at smart specialisation by promoting funding instruments, and especially the networking and information-exchange possibilities they offer;

9. Maintains that one of the bioeconomy’s guiding principles is to enhance resource efficiency and reduce dependence on imported raw materials and energy and non-renewable natural resources; points to the importance of the forest sector and other bio-based industry and maintains that carbon-neutral renewable natural resources and raw materials, such as wood and wood fibre, can replace non-renewable fossil raw materials; points out that the bioeconomy industry produces many high added-value products, such as chemicals, medicines, plastics and other innovative new materials and that it creates jobs; highlights the potential of biotechnologies based on marine resources;

10. Stresses that the bioeconomy needs first-rate know-how and a skilled workforce;
maintains that provision for vocational training and higher education needs to be made in the regions, taking into account their specific characteristics; points out that wide-ranging education and training systems in the regions also foster sustainable business expansion; maintains that a high standard of know-how in the bioeconomy sector constitutes an asset for Europe when competing at global level and that this will enable Europe to be the leader in the field of bioeconomy; points out to the importance of enhanced cross-border mobility of researchers, with a view to the exchange of good practices and knowledge transfer in the field of the bioeconomy;

11. Believes that, in order for an efficient and sustainable bioeconomy to be developed, all types of infrastructure will need to be continually modernised, and that rural areas should not be excluded from that modernisation;

12. Considers it important to invest in bioeconomy supply chains, so as to guarantee the availability of raw materials; maintains that bioeconomy strategies should encourage not only more efficient use of household and municipal waste, but also the recovery of agricultural and forestry by-product streams and residues; calls for better and enabling legislation providing legal certainty and strong support for sustainable use of bioeconomy resources and the exploitation of raw materials and for policy to be based, in every respect, on a flexible long-term approach that promotes investments;

13. Points to the need for specific targets to increase the proportion of renewable natural resources used in the production and consumption of goods; calls on the Commission to propose practical measures of regionally comprehensive scope to promote the production and consumption of bioeconomy products at regional level;

14. Notes that it is important for consumers to be made aware of the content of the bioeconomy and, hence, considers that they should be informed of the advantages and better consumption choices it offers; considers that steps should be taken to promote the bioeconomy by raising consumer awareness of food safety, conservation and the other challenges to society, e.g. climate change and dependence on non-renewable resources; calls, therefore, for studies to be conducted into consumption patterns in the EU and for scientifically based approaches to be devised with a view to informing consumers about product characteristics and promoting a sustainable lifestyle.
RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

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| Substitute(s) present for the final vote | Joseph Cuschieri, Vasilica Viorica Dăncilă, Karima Delli, James Nicholson, Ivari Padar, Herbert Reul, Elisabeth Schroedter, Richard Seeber, Czesław Adam Siekierski, Patrice Tirolien, Giommaria Uggias, Manfred Weber |
RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

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