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*Committee on Industry, Research and Energy*

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**2012/2295(INI)**

07.5.2013

# **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

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## 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

<b>Date adopted</b>	25.4.2013
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 45 -: 5 0: 1
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Jean-Pierre Audy, Zigmantas Balčytis, Ivo Belet, Bendt Bendtsen, Fabrizio Bertot, Jan Březina, Reinhard Bütikofer, Maria Da Graça Carvalho, Pilar del Castillo Vera, Giles Chichester, Jürgen Creutzmann, Vicky Ford, Gaston Franco, Adam Gierek, Norbert Glante, Robert Goebbels, Fiona Hall, Jacky Hélin, Edit Herczog, Romana Jordan, Krišjānis Kariņš, Philippe Lamberts, Judith A. Merkies, Angelika Niebler, Jaroslav Paška, Aldo Patriciello, Vittorio Prodi, Teresa Riera Madurell, Michèle Rivasi, Jens Rohde, Paul Rübig, Amalia Sartori, Salvador Sedó i Alabart, Konrad Szymański, Britta Thomsen, Evžen Tošenovský, Catherine Trautmann, Ioannis A. Tsoukalas, Claude Turmes, Marita Ulvskog, Adina-Ioana Vălean, Kathleen Van Brempt, Alejo Vidal-Quadras
<b>Substitute(s) present for the final vote</b>	Elisabetta Gardini, Jolanta Emilia Hibner, Seán Kelly, Eija-Riitta Korhola, Bernd Lange, Vladimír Remek, Algirdas Saudargas, Silvia-Adriana Țicău