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Ref: Lárionad Acmhainní Nádúrtha – LAN Ctr Cill Ulta’s response to Bioeconomy Action Plan Consultation

Dated this the 20th/01/2023

A Chara,

Thank you for the opportunity to give feedback on behalf of LAN CTR – Cill Ulta. We are aware that this feedback is getting to later than the submission date, but we truly believe that the information in this submission is relevant to your questions. Please accept our apologies for this late submission.

We have answered the relevant questions to ourselves as a social enterprise with charitable status and centre for sustainability in this regard. As a future location for the Northwest Bioeconomy Hub, we are pleased to see the advancement of the Bioeconomy in Ireland and future progression is understandably welcomed. There is currently a real necessity to include the small holding farmers in the agriculture sector and we are currently active in a European Innovation Partnership program which encompasses the concept of biological farming, and environmentally conscious methods and practices that are sustainable and the promotion to move from a linear to a circular economy.

We hope that the information given in this questionnaire is of use to you when implementing a plan to further develop and promote the Bioeconomy on the island of Ireland and beyond.

Le dea-ghuí,

Oifigeach Forbartha agus Taighde
Research & Development Officer

Cill Ulta

Áitiúil • Blasta • Úr

1. Are you satisfied the outlined pillars represent the structure of the Bioeconomy?

The outline covers the aspects of the Bioeconomy, however we would greatly support a bottom up approach when promoting, communicating and illustrating the opportunities that the Bioeconomy has in rural areas such as our own area.

2. Are there specific key performance indicators and/or targets the Bioeconomy should be setting out to achieve to measure its implementation?

In general, the reductions in volumes of imported food is welcome especially with issues that affect the region in terms of food security, animal feed and agri chemical inputs and fossil fuels. Bio based materials, in terms of regional food security and agricultural advances that are bio based and sustainable are welcomed key performance indicators and targets. We have focused on these principles throughout our EIP – European Innovation Partnership and believe that this should continue with the principles and targets the Bioeconomy should be setting out to achieve to measure its implementation going forward.

3. What other key issues should the Governance Pillar deal with?

The importance of knowledge transfer is hugely important as there is a real lack of understanding surrounding this area for the public who are not involved in this advancement. A gap in information is very much still a key issue that requires further development and support focus groups that can communicate effectively the need to shift to a Bioeconomy that is circular.

4. What key issues should the Research, Development & Innovation Pillar deal with?

We are of the understanding that much of the focus of research, development and innovation is advancing and hitting milestones to achieve the Bioeconomy. Communication, education is key and how this can be transferred in an effective manner. Learning from other regions and having an insight in the research, development and innovation process is an element that will illuminate this entire area. It is only but our opinion that various calls should be well advertised and communicated to not only enhance this area but to allow sufficient time to look at various opportunities.



Údarás na
Gaeltachta

An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine



an rialtas ag tacú le pobail



seai
SUSTAINABLE
ENERGY AUTHORITY
OF IRELAND



Comhairle Contae
Dhún na nGall
Donegal County Council



eth
Bord Oideachais agus
Oiliúnaíochta na nGall
Donegal Education and
Training Board



Ciste Eorpach Talmhaíochta
um Fhorbairt Tuathas
Eoraip ag Infheistiú i Bliantaíú tuathas

Cill Ulta

Áitiúil • Blasta • Úr

5. How could the RD&I Bioeconomy approach be best structured to support the enhancement, application and scaling-up of biological knowledge and Bioeconomy solutions?

Research should be focused on those who are best placed to provide produce, be that feed stock or biobased fertilizers etc. The Bioeconomy should be focused on individuals who will have a further interest in its advancement such as, and this is only an example, the farmer, the fisherman etc. That combination with the science behind the development and innovation elements is extremely beneficial to advance the Bioeconomy in Ireland.

6. What key issues should the Nature, Climate & Circular Pillar deal with?

As stated this pillar will outline the actions aimed to ensure renewable energy and the Bioeconomy combined. This is greatly welcomed as many of those that we are involved with and working with on a daily basis are looking for other methods to improve their functionality and encompass environmentally friendly methods. There is a lack of understanding and this essentially comes down to further communication and education to the ordinary person with no background in the Bioeconomy. The bottom up approach is the best approach in one's own opinion and has proven to be very effective within the EIP- European Innovation Partnership Programs.

7. What key issues concerning consumption patterns used to be examined to close the gap between sustainable supply of biological resources and demand?

Food production and food waste is an issue that is currently in need of further discussion and effort to enhance biological efforts and bottom up approaches to utilize and solve food waste methods to enhance the Bioeconomy such as locally available processes.

8. What key issues should the Agriculture, Food & the Marine Pillar deal with?

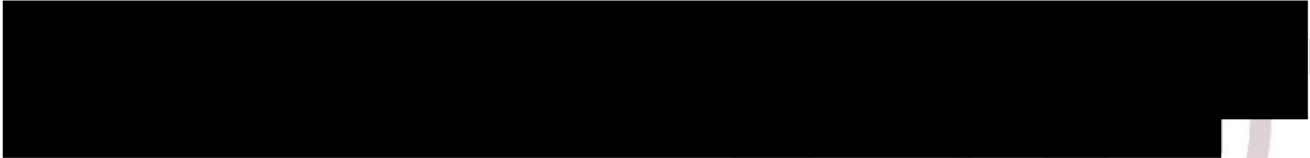
It is hugely advantageous that the farming community, food producers and fishermen are central to the Bioeconomy as their expertise is important to enhance the development of the Bioeconomy. This again should actively be communicated and feedback from these expertise is important. Methods that benefit their lifestyle is very important also.

9. What key issues should the Communities Pillar deal with?

The communities pillar will need a lot of attention with regards to communication and education. The opportunities in the Bioeconomy is important to envisage a future within the Bioeconomy for all sectors. Community enhancement is as important in the Bioeconomy as any other element. Effective, understandable ordinary language is especially important in areas such as our area in particular and that will need trust in

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14. What key issues should the knowledge and skills Pillar deal with?

As previously mentioned numerous times the importance of international support in terms of the knowledge and skills pillar will play a massive role in innovation and knowledge transfer. This is welcomed, but it should be supported 100% in terms of looking at what other countries are doing in this space and how have they developed processes to enhance a solid progression to the Bioeconomy. More focus on locally driven training courses, that will illustrate the real need and what benefits the public from a local bottom up approach. Small land holders should be further supported in terms of grants to utilize their lands etc to support a real development in this sector and the other sectors that will support the Bioeconomy. The EIP – European Innovation Partnership Program has demonstrated that a bottom up effective result based approach with clear and concise information on opportunities and benefits to the economy from the actors within the Bioeconomy will facilitate this further.

15. Can the regional skills and regional enterprise approach better support Bioeconomy development?

The real question here is are regional skills available and the reality is that yes but there is certainly not enough. A survey to gain information from all members of the public would be a good place to start to gain a valuable data into the areas that lack the understanding and the skills required for future development. Understandably this is a rigorous exercise but the insight would be invaluable to fill gaps in the whole process.

16. An important part of developing the Bioeconomy is to determine the most appropriate practices, treatments, technologies, logistics and business models to valorise ecosystem services, primary and secondary biomass resources. What role do advisory systems play in addressing this challenge?

It is imperative that the development of the Bioeconomy will take on board the appropriate practices and what works in communities. Business model advise session will enhance this area and create a culture that is inquisitive and want to learn about the possibilities and business opportunities available to those that are willing and passionate about promoting and developing the Bioeconomy in Ireland. Advisory systems will also support development however, we feel that this needs to be approached in a very simplified manner. Again, we will emphasise the massive importance of a bottom up approach and an introduction on how the Bioeconomy can support communities to make them more resilient and sustainable.

17. Are there any further pillars/issues which this action plan should approach?

We are of the belief that individual communities should have a central role in the development of the Bioeconomy in Ireland. Communities are difficult to guide and there should be more of a focus on working and supporting community groups that have built trust in their communities. Basic methods and language should be also central to this development. It is key that there is a clear communication element with communities that are best placed to develop the Bioeconomy on the island of Ireland. there also should be a real focus on

Cill Ulta

Áitiúil • Blasta • Úr

decreasing valuable talent leaving our country as a result of unemployment after they have finished college. A focus on employment in the Bioeconomy should be tailored to all areas and sectors if future development is envisaged.

18. Indicate what the top five priorities for action in the Bioeconomy over the next three years should be?

- A survey to gain knowledge of the level of understanding within communities is invaluable to gain insight how education, communication and training should further develop.
- Communication at a bottom up level and from a community cultural, linguistic and employment approach is top of our list, as an organisation that works closely with the public, we feel that the trust element in local organisations leaves us best placed to transfer knowledge. This should be carried out in very basic and relatable methods.
- Representation from the farming, fishing and food sector is hugely important. These are the people that have the knowledge of areas, and what works in the region.
- More focus on 100% support mechanisms and support to look at international regions that have already started to develop the Bioeconomy.
- Opportunities that are available in the Bioeconomy is important to gain an interest from an individual point of view, as well as illustrating to second level and third level students that this is an area that will support lifestyles and climate action. The youth of today expect sustainable methods and it is important to show that this is possible without leaving their country for employment.

