

Brussels, 7 December 2009

**Open letter from EuropaBio to President Barroso:  
Priorities for the 7 December Copenhagen Climate Change Summit**

Dear President Barroso,

As discussions open at the UN Conference in Copenhagen today we congratulate you on your leadership so far in the field of climate change. Under your last tenure, the EU led the way in recognising the scale and urgency of action needed and is now committed to revolutionising its economy in order to meet the global challenges that climate change will bring. As your next administration begins, we particularly welcome the creation of the roles of Commissioner for Climate Action and Chief Scientific Advisor to help continue vital work in this field.

However, in order to convince other nations to embark on a similar path, the EU must demonstrate that it is capable of delivering emissions reductions and adapting to the unavoidable effects of climate change, whilst also improving prosperity and well-being.

Biotechnology provides an essential toolbox of solutions in the task of mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change. Biotechnology allows to complement and possibly rethink traditional industrial and agricultural processes. By delivering competitive industrial and agricultural performance, biotechnology enhances economic growth and agricultural production, while at the same time saving water, energy, raw materials and reducing emissions and waste.

EuropaBio and its member companies encourage governments around the world to develop a policy framework that strongly supports the further development and deployment of these technologies.

Industrial or 'White' biotechnology offers the realistic prospect of substituting renewable raw materials for fossil fuels in selected applications with associated emissions reductions of between 1 and 2.5 billion tonnes annually by 2030 (See Annexe for WWF report: "Biotechnology - More than green fuel in a dirty economy?", September 2009).

Agricultural or 'Green' biotechnology enables agriculture to adapt to an unpredictable climate and ensures that production keeps up with rising demand across the world in an environmentally sustainable manner.

The EU and its Member States must ensure that its proposals for the current talks in Copenhagen enable the deployment of biotechnology to these ends.

Key to doing so are the following priorities:

- Strong domestic emission caps covering all major economies and all sectors of the economy. This will ensure that the carbon benefits of biotechnology are properly priced into deployment decisions by companies or governments considering using its applications;
- Offset markets should be developed to allow and encourage emission reductions through the application of biotechnology. This is particularly important in agriculture, where the huge mitigation opportunities can be captured more quickly, sustainably and economically than in many other areas;
- IPR for biotechnology and other low carbon technologies must be adequately protected in order for such essential innovations to be further developed;
- The developed world should provide an adaptation framework and funding mechanism to provide solutions to protect the developing world's most vulnerable populations from the effects of climate change.

As the Commission itself has already acknowledged, combining support for Key Enabling Technologies such as Biotechnology and efforts to tackle climate change would facilitate the financing of Europe's commitments under international climate change agreements.

In addition to putting in place an enabling regulatory environment for biotechnology, policy makers must also encourage investment in research and technology to ensure that innovation and creativity are adequately funded from discovery through to economic deployment.

It is critical that Europe continues to play a leading role to ensure that the outcome of this month's meeting in Copenhagen promotes and enables use of the full range of tools available, including the many solutions provided by biotechnology, in meeting global climate change goals. We look forward to working together with your new administration to harness the benefits and potential of biotechnology for Europe.

Yours sincerely,



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Secretary General, EuropaBio

Annexes:

1. [Biotechnology: A powerful, innovative technology to mitigate climate change](#)
2. [WWF Report: "Biotechnology – more than green fuel in a dirty economy?" Sept 2009](#)
3. [Factsheet "How industrial biotechnology can tackle climate change"](#)
4. [Factsheet "Green biotechnology and climate change"](#)