



PRESS RELEASE

Biotech industry offers enthusiastic, active support for new EU biofuels initiative

Brussels: 8 June 2006:

The European association for bioindustries - EuropaBio - welcomes the Commission's launch today of the Biofuels Technology Platform and is pleased to announce the setting up of a Biofuels Task Force within EuropaBio to coordinate the industry input. The new Biofuels Task Force mission is "to advocate coherently favorable policies, strategies, regulations and their implementation for research, finance, and market access of Biofuels as one of the pillars of the competitive and sustainable European Knowledge Based Bio-Economy, increasing the value of plants and renewable materials of agricultural and forestry origin".

The European Biofuels Technology Platform launched today is intended to provide and implement a common European vision and strategy for the production of biofuels, in particular for transport applications, and be compatible with present-day infrastructures. EuropaBio is a member of BIOFRAC, the Biofuels Research Advisory Council, which has developed the draft vision document for the Biofuels Technology Platform (1).

Biofuels represent the convergence of several existing sectors. Industrial biotechnology provides the conversion processes for biomass, crop biotechnology will increasingly contribute to the sustainable supply of sufficient biomass, and energy companies will provide the route to market. In this respect, we are particularly pleased that two major players in the energy sector – Total and BP – have joined the EuropaBio (2) Biofuels Task Force.

This Biofuels Technology Platform represents yet another key step in the integration of biotechnology into the infrastructure of the European economy and moves us further towards meeting the Lisbon goals. Johan Vanhemelrijck, EuropaBio's Secretary General said "I am delighted that the EuropaBio team and members now have this opportunity to contribute to an important new initiative. We have worked hard to establish excellent working relations with the Commission, and our close involvement with the new Technology Platform on Biofuels is one of the fruits of this. Biotechnology will help to meet Europe's carbon dioxide emission reduction targets, reduce our dependence on oil imports and provide another useful income stream for our farmers. The technology is right on time to help us fulfil the Kyoto targets."

In welcoming the formation of the new EuropaBio Task Force on Biofuels, Jack Huttner, Chair of EuropaBio's Industrial Biotechnology Council, said "Biotechnology has the potential to enable the sustainable production of the fuels and chemicals advanced economies need to prosper. But, policy sector support is essential for this progress to occur. We are competing with the petrochemical industry that has a 100 year head start on us. We need policy initiatives to level the playing field."

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Notes for Editors

(1) Biofuels in the European Union – A vision for 2030 and beyond

The BIOFRAC vision document

http://ec.europa.eu/research/energy/pdf/draft_vision_report_en.pdf

(2) About EuropaBio

EuropaBio is the European Association for Bioindustries, has 70 corporate and associate members operating worldwide and 24 national biotechnology associations representing some 1500 small and medium sized enterprises involved in research and development, testing, manufacturing and distribution of biotechnology products.

<http://www.europabio.org>

Useful links

About sustainable biofuels – a EuropaBio fact sheet

<http://www.europabio.org/documents/biofuel.pdf>

About the bio-based economy – www.bio-economy.net