



Press Release

Biotech industry welcomes EU support for Biorefineries

Brussels, October 20 2006

EuropaBio strongly supports the initiative taken by the European Commission in conjunction with the Finnish Presidency to promote the development of biorefineries (1) in Europe at the **European Conference on Biorefinery Research** which began yesterday in Helsinki.

Biorefineries are a key element of the **bio-based economy** (2) which is encompassing a future society no longer wholly dependent on fossil fuels for energy and industrial raw materials. There are many examples of **bio-based products** already on the market, such as biofuels (3), biopolymer fibres for household applications (e.g. carpeting, bedding and blankets, pillows, etc.), or bioplastics (4) to manufacture for instance plastic drink bottles and containers. Biotechnological processes also form the basis for the manufacture of some antibiotics, vitamins (5), amino acids and laundry detergents (6) which use enzymes that decrease the temperature of water without compromising cleanliness.

“Biorefineries use renewable raw materials to produce energy and a wide range of everyday products in an economically viable manner”, says Jack Huttner, Chairman of the Industrial Biotechnology Council of EuropaBio (the European Association for Bioindustries). “By working to decrease our dependency on fossil fuel reserves, biorefineries are seen as a promising route to keeping Europe prosperous while preserving the environment.”

In the next few weeks, EuropaBio will publish a full policy document to develop the knowledge based bio-economy in Europe, and biorefineries will be a key element. The 5 main recommendations are

- to establish a coherent European Policy Agenda for the Knowledge Based Bioeconomy (KBBE)
- to stimulate and support innovation in plant science and industrial biotechnology
- to promote production and use of bio-based products and processes
- to create awareness amongst all stakeholders (industry, academia, farmers, authorities, customers, investors)

- to improve investment in Industrial Biotech SMEs

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About EuropaBio

EuropaBio, 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>

For further information about the European Conference on Biorefinery

Research: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/energy>.

Fact sheets

- (1) Biorefineries – http://www.europabio.org/documents/biorefinery_161006pdf.pdf
- (2) About the bioeconomy - www.bio-economy.net
- (3) Biofuels - <http://www.europabio.org/documents/biofuel.pdf>
- (4) Bioplastics – http://www.europabio.org/documents/bioplastics_161006.pdf
- (5) Vitamins - <http://www.europabio.org/documents/vitamin.pdf>
- (6) Detergents - <http://www.europabio.org/documents/DETERGENTS.pdf>