

## Online Roundtable Report: An EU Vision For Life Science and Biotechnology for a Healthy and Sustainable EU

### EVENT REPORT

**Brussels, 16 April 2021** – EuropaBio and the Danish Permanent Representation to the EU invited policy makers and biotech community to discuss how the EU Vision for Life Science and Biotechnology for a Healthy and Sustainable EU should look like.

The online roundtable, moderated by Jacki Davis was kicked off by the welcoming speech of **Deputy Permanent Representative of Denmark Per Fabricious Andersen**. Ambassador Andersen stated that in order to rethink our economy in sustainable and healthy way, we need to have a more holistic and systematic approach how we produce, consume and discard goods. According to him, Life sciences and Biotech are the key enablers for a sustainable growth and Denmark has already committed to paving the path for a sustainable future.

The speech was followed by the intervention of **Dr Claire Skentelbery, Director General of EuropaBio**. She underlined that EuropaBio, which celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year, was founded on the vision that biotechnology could address existing and future challenges and bring novelties to society. Decades of the research has proved crucial in responding to the existing health crisis, and beyond that, multiple use of biotechnology i.e. detecting and treating diseases, production of sustainable products such as food, cosmetics, animal feed etc., deliver (sustainable) quality of life for European citizens.

**Pierre Delsaux, Deputy Director General, Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE)** stated that the pandemic showed biotechnology sector being fundamental, and, therefore, we need to build the proper conditions in terms of funding, human capital and skills. He called for concrete actions for equipping the biotechnology sector not only for Europe, but also for the rest of the world.

**Patrick Child Deputy Director-General, Implementation, Impact & Sustainable Investment Strategies (DG RTD)** underlined that research and technology play a central role not only in response to the pandemic, but also to bioeconomy. He also highlighted that the vaccines were a real and visible success story of long-term EU funding for innovation.

The interventions were followed by the presentations of industry representatives:



- **Philip Wood, SOBI** talked about challenges in making decisions about developing products, risks involved and costs to be foreseen. According to him, a healthy and more sustainable EU could be achieved by 1) Health data; we need to better capture health data to define, measure and achieve better outcomes, 2) Value-based initiatives; we need to rethink healthcare systems towards value-based procurement, 3) Incentives; to reflect the economic challenges of developing innovative treatments.
- **Peter Steen Mortensen, Novozymes** presented the activities of the company. He also underlined the existing challenges, like recycling PET plastic or the 8 years that it currently needs to approve sustainable alternatives to pesticides. According to him, it is important to reshape the regulatory framework, as a generational change from fossil-based to bio-based biobased solutions.
- **Juan Medina, Kaffe Bueno** presented the SME activities and the technology. He believes that we should first think about impact for the future of Europe and world, instead of money. According to him, we should not treat all these biological/natural products in the same way as petrochemical-derived products so that people see the added value of sustainably produced products.

The presentations were followed by the statement of **Deputy Permanent Representative of Ireland to the EU of Maeve Colling**. According to her, knowledge transfer and collaboration between universities, researchers, SMEs and government is needed. She believes that the existing EU policy frameworks allow the sector to maximize its contributions.

**Carsten Kjaer Joensen, Head of the Danish life science office** said that the Danish government is trying to take the biotech sector to a new level. According to him, a cooperation between public and private is key in this journey.

**Dr David Winickoff, Senior Policy Analyst and Secretary of the Working Party on Biotechnology, OECD**, shared that the OECD have been working for a while searching ways to foster innovation ecosystems. He also added that there is a need to better articulate what the relationship between circular and bioeconomy is.

**ENDS**

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### About EuropaBio

EuropaBio, the European Association for Bioindustries, promotes an innovative and dynamic European biotechnology industry. EuropaBio and its members are committed to the socially responsible use of biotechnology to improve quality of life, to prevent, diagnose, treat and cure diseases, to improve the quality and quantity of food and feedstuffs and to move towards a biobased and zero-waste economy. EuropaBio represents corporate and associate members across sectors, plus national and regional biotechnology associations which, in turn, represent over 1800 biotech SMEs. Read more about our work at [www.europabio.org](http://www.europabio.org).

