



Bio Innovation Growth megaCluster BIG-C launched in Düsseldorf

Düsseldorf, May 19th 2014 - This morning, 10 leading public-private organisations in biobased innovation of North Rhein Westphalia, The Netherlands and Flanders launched BIG-C as the integrating organisation for current and future biobased initiatives. The event was attended by over 150 industrialists, scientists and politicians from this region. Svenja Schulze, NRW Minister of Innovation, Science and Research spoke of 'an important initiative adding value for the whole region and bringing sustainable solutions a big step further'. The initiative was taken by CLIB2021 (NRW), BE-Basic (NL) and FISCH (Flanders).

Manfred Kirchner, CLIB2021, indicated how the chemical, fuels, energy, food and other industries contribute approximately 25% to the cumulative GDP of € 1780 bn per year, making North Western Europe one of the most prosperous areas worldwide. „A strong point is the connectivity between the individual industry clusters in the region by pipeline, river and road. To benefit from biobased opportunities, BIG-C will encourage and support the combination of regional resources. Together we will be much stronger to face the challenges in making an economical viable industry which actually fights climate change. Coordinated actions will provide an attractive environment for demonstration and pilot projects from the large EU innovation programs such as BBI and SPIRE¹.“

Developing the industry infrastructure in the region will require significant investments in new, emerging biobased value chains. Ludo Diels, one of the Flanders' initiators: „In order to capitalise on the biobased opportunities, we need to enhance the development of logistics and foster cross-border private and public investments and other funding possibilities“.

¹ Biobased Industries (BBI) and SPIRE are two Public Private Partnerships of the European Horizon2020 program.



The organisations that undersigned the agreement are well functioning public-private organisations that have now committed themselves to support BIG-C from their own resources. They will also make available their networks that include access to investors and other financial parties, especially to facilitate participation of small and medium sized companies. Luuk van der Wielen, President of BE-Basic: “Not only financial support - public or private- is significant but we need to make sure that the coming generations are aware of the biobased opportunities – so biobased economy need to be part of education. Knowledge, but also skills are important to which requires courses as well as initiatives such as design and business competitions. Combining the region’s efforts will help to implement a joint Human Capital Agenda. Given the international orientation of the BIG-C-region, this should reach out beyond the region – preferably also in a joint manner”.

BIG-C will use the feed-back of today’s meeting to develop its program and implement its objectives. They invite interested parties to submit term sheets for joint development in the coming two months.

About CLIB2021

CLIB2021 is an association with members from academia, industry, SME, investors and public organisations fostering industrial biotechnology in chemical and energy industries. The Ministry of Innovation, Education and Research of the state of Northrhine Westfalia supports a public private consortium R&D program in biotechnology. CLIB2021 works on developing and providing technologies for the bio-economy as outlined by the German Bio-economy Research and Technology Council.

About BE-Basic

BE-Basic is the Dutch Public Private Consortium on Biobased Economy composed of over 40 mainly Dutch universities, knowledge institutes and companies. Part of the BE-Basic funding comes from a research grant from the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs for executing the initial BE-Basic Program. The purpose of BE-Basic is to develop the required knowledge and technology to stimulate biotechnology based ecologically balanced sustainable industrial chemistry in the Netherlands and beyond.

More information about BE-Basic can be found: www.be-basic.org



About FISCH

FISCH is founded by the federation for the chemical industry and life sciences essenscia Flanders and VITO, in cooperation with various companies in the sector, all Flemish university associations and the Flemish government. FISCH is a Public Private Partnership which is supported by the Flemish Ministry of Science and Innovation as a „light structure“ fitting within both the Innovation Policy and the New Industrial Policy. The mission of FISCH is to identify, stimulate and catalyse innovations for sustainable chemistry in Flanders.



Symbolic 'signing' of a fruitful agreement by (left to right) Prof. L. van der Wielen, Dr. M. Kirchner, Prof. L. Diels

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