

NOTES overall

Workshop: Creating better links between the different bioeconomy sectors

Date: Wednesday, November 15th, 2023

Theme: Collaboration

organised by:



Karolina Granja from the Submariner Network presented the first results of the analysis on cross-sectoral collaboration of the different bioeconomy sectors in the Baltic Sea region as part of the ShapingBio project.

Tanel Ilmjärv from the Estonian start-up Vetik presented his work on developing sustainable seaweed for agricultural purposes (e.g., biostimulants). Tanel explained how the processing of seaweed changed from drying to processing in all kinds of materials, which requires the establishment of new markets. He emphasised the visibility of value creation through value chains as the main barrier in this process.

Jamileh Javidpour from the University of Southern Denmark introduced a theoretical model on the integration of the blue and green circular bio economies. Jamileh explained that currently the blue and green bioeconomies are addressed in two separate agendas (Green Deal and Mission Ocean). Therefore, we need a new approach to combine both.

Johan Johansen from the Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy Research (NIBIO) presented current status on research of seaweed-farming. Compared to the more developed bioeconomy sectors (forestry, agriculture) there are a lot of knowledge gaps in the “blue” sectors (e.g. seaweed). Johan pointed out the importance of interactions between the sectors as well as to close the knowledge gaps in the “blue”.

Niels Gøtke, Danish Agency for Science, Technology, and Innovation introduced the Danish initiatives and policies on cross-sectoral collaboration. Niels underlined the need for cross-sectoral collaboration. Relevant ministries, authorities and local governments must be involved in the mission implementation.

NOTES overall

Fredric Nilsson, the EUSBS Policy Area Bioeconomy Coordinator, from the Swedish board of agriculture gave a presentation on the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region. Fredric named several good practice examples of cross-sectoral collaboration (1) Baltic Sea Circular Bioeconomy Platform has helped to develop new partnerships between businesses and research institutions in the bioeconomy sectors (2) Baltic Sea Region Climate Change Adaptation Strategy has promoted cross-sectoral planning and management in the bioeconomy sectors (3) Baltic Sea Region Sustainable Coastal Development Strategy has promoted sustainable practices in the bioeconomy sectors (4) Baltic Sea Action Plan has helped to reduce pollution from the bioeconomy sectors.

In the discussion, the speakers discussed the barriers and opportunities regarding cross-sectoral collaboration. The main barriers were emphasized (1) EU regulation for novel food is hindrance (2) lack of novel markets (3) trust issues (4) food safety is out of date today. Among the opportunities, speakers highlighted thinking out of the profit maximising model - simple adjustments can create much more value for society. Speakers added that legislation should also facilitate the transition on both sides (on the “blue” as well as “green” sectors). It needs to be a balance between investment, policy, and facilitating to leverage production to a more regional level. Also, it is important that top-down vs bottom-up approaches are balanced. The speakers agreed on the need for overarching policies, the development of markets, and the adoption of legislation for innovation.

Key points from the workshop:

1. Policy needs to be updated along with the development.
2. Bring ecosystem services into the blue sector and develop the same regulation system across the region.
3. Apply a portfolio approach of initiatives in the EU Mission Ocean.