

Joint Masterplan on bioeconomy in the Alpine macro-region unveiled

AlpLinkBioEco Interreg project presents one of its main results.

An analysis of the economic performance, employment and social equality of the Alpine macro-region reveals that this territory encompasses some of the best performing regions in Europe. The macro-region consists of 7 countries (Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Liechtenstein, Slovenia and Switzerland) and 48 regions. In the Interreg Alpine Space project AlpLinkBioEco (2018-21), 9 regions (Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, Espace Mittelland, Lombardy, Slovenia, South Tyrol, Trentino and Upper Austria) have worked together to set up a methodology for creating novel value chains in the circular bio-based economy. The established cross-regional cooperation, which resulted in the set-up of the Value Chain Generator¹ as one of the main project outputs, should be mainstreamed through a common policy agenda. Thus, the Joint Masterplan, co-authored by BIOPRO Baden-Württemberg and Poly4ml/Anteja, aims at putting policy into action.



Map showing Alpine regions supported by the Interreg Alpine Space Programme and Alpine regions represented by the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP).

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The transition to the bioeconomy in the Alpine Space is facing challenges that are similar also at the European level. Issues like the lack of a common definition for bioeconomy, unified macro-economic indicators and proper cross-regional support funding schemes are among them and reflected on also in the Joint Masterplan². As the starting point for the document, good perspectives were already revealed in the AlpLinkBioEco Whitepaper "Benefits and opportunities of bio-based economy value chains" (2019), in which the sectors like wood, agriculture, bio-based packaging and chemistry were analyzed.

The data collected in the participating regions exposes indeed a booming sector with regional assets and high potential for cross-regional cooperation. The Alpine macro-region has sufficient biomass and relevant number of stakeholders to gain pace towards the transition to the bioeconomy. To make it more effective, the successful implementation of the existing regional bioeconomy strategies (i.e. Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria) and their better alignment with the EU Strategy for the Alpine Region (EUSALP) are needed.

The Joint Masterplan on the circular bio-based economy is driven by the following ambitious goals:

- Unleashing potential, turning regional assets into macro-regional opportunities;
- Strengthening the macro-regional identity;
- Empowering the digitalization for resilient bio-based value chains.

In order to reach the listed goals, the document builds upon the following actions:

1. Prioritization of the thematic fields for macro-regional cooperation;
2. Strengthening the transnational dialogue with regard to these fields;
3. Developing regional/national strategies;
4. Making bio-based value chains resilient through the digitalization.

The Alpine Policy Forum on the 16th of February 2021 revealed a certain degree of maturity to trigger a coordinated policy response towards the bioeconomy pathways. The recommendations proposed during the event were also included in the comprehensive Joint Masterplan. A further and more coordinated dialogue among the Alpine regions is necessary to keep on framing the Masterplan with specific milestones and timelines. A short-term Roadmap until the end of 2022 is prescribed. The AlpLinkBioEco community, currently composed of 70 clusters, 400 SMEs³ and more than 50 decision makers, should become larger and more robust if the recommendations and actions of the Masterplan are taken into practice.

Background

The Project AlpLinkBioEco runs for a period of three years, from April 2018 until April 2021. It is financed with 2.291.020 euros by the Regional Development Fund (ERDF) within the EUSALP framework. The project lead partner is the Plastics Innovation Competence Center (PICC) at the University of Fribourg, which is co-financed by the Swiss Confederation's New Regional Policy (NRP).

Further project partners are: Business Upper Austria - OÖ Wirtschaftsagentur GmbH (Austria); Association Club des Districts Industriels Français and France Clusters und Plastipolis (both - France); Centro di Studi Alpino di Pieve Tesino, Confindustria Lombardia, Fraunhofer Italia, Hub Innovazione Trentino and Lombardy Green Chemistry Association (all - Italy); Ministrstvo za izobraževanje, znanost in šport (Ministry of Education, Science and Sports) and Poly4Eml hosted by Anteja ECG d.o.o. (both - Slovenia); as well as BIOPRO Baden-Württemberg GmbH, Chemie Cluster Bayern GmbH and INNONET Kunststoff TZ Horb GmbH & Co. KG.

Literature

- 1) A software that allows to match actors from different sectors and regions to create novel bio-based value chains.
- 2) See also [Policy Memos](#), short, fact-based information sheets with guidelines for the implementation of an Alpine Space circular bio-based economy. They are devised to visualize the key AlpLinkBioEco results for decisions makers and other interested stakeholders.
- 3) Small and medium-sized enterprises.

Press release

01-Apr-2021

Source: BIOPRO Baden-Württemberg GmbH

Further information

BIOPRO Baden-Württemberg GmbH
Alexanderstraße 5
70184 Stuttgart

Thomas Meinert
Phone: +49 (0) 711 218185 12

E-mail: [meinert\(at\)bio-pro.de](mailto:meinert(at)bio-pro.de)

- ▶ Interreg Alpine Space
- ▶ AlpLinkBioEco
- ▶ EUSALP EU Strategy for the Alpine Region
- ▶ Joint Masterplan

Interreg Alpine Space



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