



PRESS RELEASE

High-level Policy-maker Conference on Biorefineries

Brussels, 7 October 2011

A High-level Policy-maker Conference on Biorefineries took place this Wednesday at the prestigious Solvay Library in Brussels, in what was the final event of the EU-funded Star-COLIBRI project. A panel of high-level speakers came together to discuss key policy priorities in the context of the upcoming bio-economy strategy. Special emphasis was given to the important role of biorefineries in achieving the ambitious goals set out in the strategy, such as resource-efficiency, sustainability and greenhouse gas reduction. One of the highlights of the event was the official publication of the Joint European Biorefinery Vision for 2030 and the Joint European Research Roadmap 2020.

The Star-COLIBRI project (*Strategic Research Targets for 2020 – Collaboration Initiative on Biorefineries*) is a 2-year Coordination and Support Action funded by the European Commission's 7th Framework Programme which will conclude at the end of the month. The project involves 5 European Technology Platforms and 5 major European Research organisations. Star-COLIBRI aims at overcoming fragmentation and promoting better cooperation in the area of biorefinery research. The project supports innovations by speeding up and facilitating industrial exploitation of research results in the biorefinery field, as well as promoting coordination in the field of future R&D funding and facilitating the creation of Public-Private Partnerships.

According to the Joint European Biorefinery Vision for 2030, the Biobased Economy is expected to grow significantly in Europe in the next 20 years. One of its core pillars is biorefining; the sustainable processing of biomass such as food, fuel and paper into a spectrum of marketable products and energy. In 2030, it is estimated that biorefineries will use a wider range of feedstocks and will produce an even greater variety of end-products than today. Achieving the goals set out in the report will require future biorefineries to be better integrated, more flexible and operating more sustainably. This will only be possible if crucial bottlenecks along the entire value-chain can be removed. To address these challenges, several strategic research areas must be addressed by 2020: biomass production and supply (including logistics), processing (both pre-treatment and conversion), programme integration (cross-sector, value-chain optimisation, process integration and overall sustainability assessments) and market development (from research to markets).

Speaking at the event, **Judith Merkies**, Member of the European Parliament said: *"Policy-makers in Europe have identified three key challenges that will affect Europe before the rest of the world. These are an ageing society, stability and equity in the economy and resource efficiency. Because our consumption grid is the highest per person in the world, it is our responsibility in Europe to turn these challenges into benefits. The issues and solutions identified through the Star-COLIBRI project are the kind of responses intended under the EU Innovation Partnerships and it is of major importance to resource efficiency in Europe and to the economy as a whole that we initiate these solutions as soon as possible"*

According to **Johan Elvnert**, coordinator of the project: *"The new reports on Biorefineries as well as the key strategic research areas discussed at Wednesday's conference have*



provided invaluable information and tools to enable policy-makers to build a framework for the development of a sustainable European bioeconomy, with a network of biorefineries playing an essential role. “

The Joint European Biorefinery Vision for 2030 and the European Biorefinery Joint Strategic Research Roadmap for 2020 are available at:

www.star-colibri.eu/publications

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