

OECD WORKSHOP ON BEST PRACTICES IN ASSESSING SUSTAINABILITY OF BIO-BASED PRODUCTS

To support Governments and industry in building a sustainable bio-based economy, the OECD Task Force on Industrial Biotechnology is developing International Best Practices for Assessing the Environmental and Economic Sustainability of Bio-based Products, which could pave the way for international standard in this area.

Purpose of the Workshop

A workshop hosted by Canada will be held on *July 23-24, 2009* in Montréal, Québec immediately after the 6th World Congress on Industrial Biotechnology and Bio-processing. The workshop will discuss progress over the past 5 years in the methodologies used for sustainability assessment of bio-based products. Participants will experts from industry, government, academia and international organisations policy makers. The workshop sessions will:

- i)* Take stock of existing national/international approaches for assessment of sustainability of bio-based products, such as bio-based chemicals, bio-based plastics, enzymes, bio-based materials, bio-fuels, etc.;
- ii)* consider what might constitutes a comprehensive sustainability assessment;
- iii)* Discuss what are the common and divergent approaches in existing assessment methodologies;
- iv)* Identify barriers to the use of such methodologies;
- v)* Discuss the key elements of possible best practices for assessment environmental and economic sustainability of bio-based products as well as how these might be further developed within the OECD.

Expected Outputs

Based on workshop discussions, the OECD will develop a report on emerging international best practices in assessing the sustainability of bio-based products. A draft of this report will be presented and discussed during an open OECD session at the European Forum for Industrial Biotechnology (Lisbon, 22 October 2009). The final report will help OECD Member countries in their deliberations about whether they should develop internationally agreed best practices for the evaluation of bio-based products, which could pave the way for international standards in this area.

What is OECD?

The OECD is an intergovernmental organisation which brings together 30 member countries committed to democracy and the market economy. It provides a Forum for countries to debate common economic and social concerns and possible policy responses. It produces a range of reports, best practices and soft law instruments.

The OECD Task Force on Industrial Biotechnology brings together policymakers and experts to discuss the barriers to and opportunities for the transition to a sustainable bioeconomy. It helps countries develop coherent policies for the bio-based economy including on: science and technology policy; supportive environments for efficient delivery of and access to innovations; appropriate policy responses to novel developments in science and technology; and the promotion and measurement of sustainability and eco-efficiency of industry. For more information see: www.oecd.org/biotechnology.

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