

BIO2REG: ENABLING REGIONS TO TRANSITION TOWARDS BIOECONOMY

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Presentation

Enabling the transition towards circular and systemic BIOeconomy model regions by a Regions-to-Regions approach (BIO2REG) is a three-year European project that aims to transform greenhouse gas-intensive regions into bioeconomy model regions. The project drives systemic change by guiding regional stakeholders towards concrete, region-tailored measures to unlock their unique bioeconomy potential. Supported by a consortium of nine partners, our mission is to foster interregional knowledge and practice exchange and local community building by actively engaging regional stakeholders and experts—public administration, private businesses, and clusters.

<https://bio2reg.eu/>, [CORDIS](#)

Abstract

Climate change and environmental degradation are existential threats to Europe and the world. To overcome these challenges, the European Green Deal aims to transform the EU into a modern, resource-efficient, competitive economy¹. The Green Deal will achieve the objective of climate neutrality by 2050 by reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in both primary and secondary production. However, the starting conditions in resources and infrastructure for many European regions are distributed unevenly². This is particularly true for the regions heavily reliant on GHG-intensive economies and disadvantaged regions with limited financial and human resources. Therefore, it is essential to address the specific challenges of these regions when setting up support instruments for the green transition.

A transition to a sustainable bioeconomy is a recognised pathway to achieving the ambitions of the European Green Deal by enabling sustainable development, reducing dependence on fossil resources, and creating new economic opportunities³. In particular, the approach of implementing bioeconomy at the regional level is considered especially promising⁴. Regional bioeconomy development refers to applying bioeconomy principles and strategies at the regional level, considering the specific economic, social, and environmental conditions of a given region. Despite the recognition of the bioeconomy in nearly 200 regional strategies, there is an evident lack of regional stakeholders' knowledge on how to implement the bioeconomy in practice⁵.

BIO2REG is a European project designed to aid the regions in transitioning from a high GHG-intensive economy structure into bioeconomy model regions. We define bioeconomy model regions as geographic areas where bioeconomy acts as a central transformative power, helping the region transition to a regionally adapted bioeconomy. The project's mission is to drive systemic change through practical, actionable steps tailored to the needs of each region. BIO2REG provides regions with personalised mentoring and a range of tools, including assessments of bioeconomy potential and a network of European regions to facilitate the exchange of regional stakeholders. A multi-criteria assessment framework

and guides will allow a self-assessment of the bioeconomy model region potential. A strong focus will be on interregional coordination, vital for sharing best practices, facilitating knowledge exchange, and effectively addressing regional differences⁴. Thus, BIO2REG will develop a network of regions that promotes direct stakeholder interaction and mutual learning and an interregional exchange programme that will foster partnerships, showcase experiences, and build capacities through mentoring and training services.

The project strongly emphasises education and capacity-building at the regional level, ensuring stakeholders are well-prepared to lead the bioeconomy transformation. BIO2REG actively engages regional stakeholders and experts – public administration, private businesses and clusters – to equip regional stakeholders with practical knowledge and tools to design and implement a transition into bioeconomy model regions. The concept of bioeconomy model regions being developed within the BIO2REG project addresses the challenges in GHG-intensive and disadvantaged regions by incorporating multiple tangible bioeconomy transition measures. Through their systemic approach, model regions draw on technological and societal innovations, link sectors, and contribute to sustainable economic, ecological, and social development. In model regions, bioeconomy is broadly integrated into society, economy, education sectors, and policies while at the same time ensuring healthy ecosystems within planetary boundaries, including the preservation of biodiversity. The model region approach recognises the interdependence of its various elements and actors within the system and seeks to identify leverage points of tangible transition measures for change.

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