

Improving the Public Acceptance of Bio-Based Products and Processes at Regional and Local Level

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This paper provides three recommendations to improve the public acceptance of bio-based products and processes:

1. Improve knowledge, education, and awareness on the bioeconomy. Even though bio-based products and processes generally are viewed positively, the public remains ill-informed on what they exactly constitute and what benefits they could offer. This lack of knowledge combined with high expectations on product performance could result in expectations not being met, and thus, disappointment. In turn, this could obstruct the market uptake of bio-based products.
2. Facilitate a transparent and credible participation of civil society in the development, implementation, and monitoring of bioeconomy strategies. Civil society, distinctively not guided by government or business interests, is a key bioeconomy stakeholder due to its commitment to social progress. In this light, consumers and citizens should play an active role as co-creators in innovation processes and strategy development related to the bioeconomy.
3. Strengthen the regional dimension of the bioeconomy. Over the years, regions have increasingly become acknowledged – including in EU policy – as key actors that are in a unique position to foster bioeconomy development. Regional bioeconomy clusters are essential for citizens and consumers to experience the economic, social and environmental benefits of the bioeconomy. However, it has turned out that a significant portion of European regions are not able to fully seize their bioeconomy potential.

These recommendations are accompanied by concrete actions and good practice examples, based on stakeholder feedback received during the BIOBRIDGES project (2018-2020), relevant results of other EU-funded projects, as well as the results of a targeted literature review.

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