

1. Does the broad definition outlined adequately encompass the opportunities presented by the bioeconomy? YES, but I think the Bioeconomy presents an opportunity for development outside of the main cities and towns and employment creation in regions such as the Midlands, West and Northwest, and in particular high value, high margin employment in small towns and villages. This regional opportunity hasn't been adequately captured in this section of the document, but it is very important.

2. How can a high-level policy statement on the bioeconomy assist in progressing the development of the priority value chains identified? A: it helps to create clarity of vision and a distinct direction.

3. What lessons can Ireland take from the European approach, including to the Circular Economy? The Cascading principle is probably the most important lesson, we really need to embrace this.

4. Given the cross-sector nature of the bioeconomy, how can a national policy statement best support development? It creates a consensus, e.g. around the application of the Cascading principle, and I think the Waste hierarchy should be enshrined in the policy statement as a very clear principle. Otherwise we have misguided investment in technologies that are a poor use of resources (e.g. Pot ale and spent grains from distilleries into Anaerobic digestion for energy generation)

5. Can we identify a common set of principles, including in particular the application of the cascading principle, which will assist in the development of both the bioeconomy and circular economy? YES – Food First and Cascading principle, and properly evaluated Environmental Sustainability should be considered as core principles.

6. How can a national policy statement support local and regional cooperation around the use of renewable biological resources? I think this should look to support bioeconomy developments in several places across the regions, maybe some with specialities, e.g. seaweed in a coastal area, animal feed in midlands. There would be scope for synergies- e.g. bioactive ingredients from seaweed could be used in animal feed, producing better output in meat/dairy and improved animal health with less medication.

7. How can waste policy, including an examination of the definition of waste, best support developments in the bio and wider circular economy? Waste is a resource in the wrong place- we need to think of it as such, we should talk not about a "Waste Policy" but a "Resource Policy"

8. How can we stimulate market demand for bioeconomy products? What is in it for the consumer?

Education, Education, Education. Start in Schools, target parents, target millennials. We need funded demonstration projects, competitions etc to stimulate interest and generate real products.

9. What is the most appropriate mechanism to coordinate development and monitor progress? I think a continuation of grouping assembled for BioEire events, along with input from other stakeholders in a series of events (quarterly?) to seek input, recalibrate direction, and promote and monitor progress. Also create LinkedIn Group and have someone actively curating discussions.

10. Are there any other issues to be addressed through a national policy statement? I think this needs to commit to funding demonstration projects within Ireland, in particular based outside of large cities and towns. There needs to be input from SMEs and a mechanism for funding SME companies to be involved in progressing Bioeconomy Initiatives (could be something like innovation vouchers, except for the purchase of time/services from SME companies who are on a register of approved providers.) It should not be driven solely by Academia and Public Bodies.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any queries on the above.

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