Bioeconomy Implementation Group

Meeting Minutes

IRISH BIOECONOMY
IMPLEMENTATION
GROUP

Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

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Minutes of the first meeting of the Bioeconomy Implementation Group

Location: DAFM, Agriculture House
Date: Thursday, 24 May 2018 (14.00-16.00)

In attendance:
Sinead McPhillips, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) (Co-chair)
Brian T. Carroll, Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE) (Co-chair)
Kate Flinter, Department of the Taoiseach
Andrew Moran, D/Taoiseach
Ian Hughes, Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation (DBEI)
Karen Hynes, DBEI
Martin Hehir, Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG)
Faye Carroll, Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport (DTTAS)
Cliona McDonnell, Department of Finance
Georgina Hughes Elders, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER)
Emma Lynch, DPER
Tim Cullinane, Department of Education and Skills (DES)
Nuala Ní Fhlarharta, Teagasc
Tom Ryan, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Alexa Toomey, Enterprise Ireland (EI)
Aoife Ryan, Science Foundation Ireland (SFI)
Joe Durkan, Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI)
Larry O'Connell, National Economic and Social Council (NESC)
Richard Howell, DAFM
Terry Dunne, DCCAE

Patrick Barrett, DAFM (Secretariat)
Tony Quinn, DAFM (Secretariat)
Dave Corcoran, DCCAE (Secretariat)
Miriam Tiernan, DCCAE (Secretariat)
Gary Jones, DCCAE (Secretariat)
Beatrix Aigner, DCCAE (Secretariat)

Apologies:
Colin Byrne, DHPLG
Ciaran O'Keefe, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG)
John Fitzgerald, DCHG
Brendan O'Connor, D/Finance
Maeve Henchion, Teagasc
Kenneth Jordan, Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD)
Aisling Penrose, DRCD
Michael Keatinge, Bord Iascaigh Mhara
George Burke, D/Taoiseach

1. Introduction

The Co-chairs formally opened the meeting and welcomed the members of the Bioeconomy Implementation Group (BIG). They pointed out that the main objective of the first meeting was to consider the most effective process to develop the seven key actions of the National Policy Statement on the Bioeconomy to meet reporting requirements to Government by the end of Q4, 2018.

They then invited attendees to introduce themselves and provide a brief background of their area of responsibility.

The agenda for the meeting was agreed and, following a brief presentation by DCCAE on the draft Operational Framework for the BIG, this was also adopted by the group.

2. National Bioeconomy Policy Statement

Patrick Barrett (DAFM) gave an introductory presentation on the Bioeconomy in general and developments at EU and global level and highlighted the strategic development in Ireland. He reiterated the key actions identified in the National Policy Statement (NPS) and pointed out that progress could be achieved by co-operation and collaboration between stakeholders in the public service, industry, the research institutes and the wider public.

The group noted the presentation.

3. Policy Statement Actions

Patrick Barrett (DAFM) then introduced draft Papers 1 to 3 on the NPS actions.

Paper 1 – Sectoral Coherence:
Attendees were asked to engage with stakeholders within their respective department/agency and to reflect on the existing strategies / opportunities relevant to the development of the Bioeconomy.
It was agreed that the document on the original scoping exercise would be circulated to attendees to assist in this process. It was indicated the BIG would reflect on EU bioeconomy policy development and determine what should be undertaken in the Irish context.

Action: Secretariat to circulate document and a template for reply.

Paper 2 – Network and Awareness Raising:
The aim of these actions is the establishment of an open and inclusive network comprising of representatives of commercial entities and relevant public bodies as well as increasing awareness among primary producers, the public and consumers.

Paper 3 – Research & Innovation:
It was proposed to address the actions on R&I through the establishment of an e-working stream, i.e. a sub-group of the BIG consisting of members from key departments/agencies who would actively engage through electronic means of communication and face-to-face meetings, as required.

The following members agreed to participate in the sub-group:

- Kate Flinter, D/Taoiseach
- Karen Hynes, DBEI
- Alexa Toomey, EI
- Aoife Ryan, SFI
- Maeve Henchion, Teagasc (proposed by Nuala Ní Fhlathárta)
- Larry O'Connell, NESC

Dave Corcoran (DCCAE) introduced Paper 4 on the NPS actions.

Paper 4 – Circular Bioeconomy:

The actions on this topic will also be addressed through an e-working stream with members from key departments/agencies. The primary aim of this group will be to address the NPS recommendation re the redesignation of waste.

The following members agreed to participate in the sub-group:

- Andrew Moran, D/Taoiseach
- Tom Ryan, EPA
- TBC, Teagasc (proposed by Nuala Ní Fhlathárta)
- Aoife Ryan, SFI
- Alexa Toomey, EI

Action: Papers 1-4 **-** Group members were asked to consider the draft papers and return observations and comments to the Secretariat by 7 June.

Action: The e-working groups will be set up once the minutes of this meeting have been published/agreed.

4. Communication Plan

Patrick Barrett presented the draft Communication Plan to the group and asked attendees to consider the proposal and provide input/ideas as appropriate.

5. AOB – Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the BIG will take place on Thursday 5 July at 11 am, in the National Emergency Co-ordination Centre, Agriculture House.

Action: The draft minutes of the 1st meeting will be circulated by the Secretariat by the end of next week (1 June).

BIG Secretariat
31 May 2018

Minutes of the second meeting of the Bioeconomy Implementation Group

Location: DAFM, Agriculture House
Date: Thursday, 5 July 2018 (11.00-13.00)

In attendance:
Sinead McPhillips, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) (Co-chair)
Terry Dunne, Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE) (Acting Co-chair)
Kate Flinter, Department of the Taoiseach
Andrew Moran, D/Taoiseach
Ian Hughes, Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation (DBEI)
David Barrett, DBEI
Colin Byrne, Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG)
Aisling Penrose, Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD)
Ciaran O'Keefe, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG)
Cliona McDonnell, Department of Finance
Emma Lynch, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER)
Maeve Henchion, Teagasc
Paul Connolly, Marine Institute
Tom Ryan, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Aoife Ryan, Science Foundation Ireland (SFI)
Larry O'Connell, National Economic and Social Council (NESC)
Phil Hemmingway, Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI)

Patrick Barrett, DAFM (Secretariat)
Tony Quinn, DAFM (Secretariat)
Dave Corcoran, DCCAE (Secretariat)
Miriam Tiernan, DCCAE (Secretariat)
Gary Jones, DCCAE (Secretariat)
Beatrix Aigner, DCCAE (Secretariat)

Apologies:
Brian T. Carroll, DCCAE (Co-chair)
Alexa Toomey, Enterprise Ireland

1. Introduction

a. The Co-chairs formally opened the meeting and welcomed the members of the Bioeconomy Implementation Group (BIG).
b. The meeting agenda was agreed and the group also signed off on the minutes of the previous meeting.
c. The draft Operational Framework for the BIG was adopted by the group.

2. Update on Policy Statement Actions

Paper 1 - Sectoral Coherence

Dave Corcoran (DCCAE) updated the group on Paper 1 with regard to progress on the Sectoral Coherence template. A number of replies have been received from Departments/Agencies on this template which was circulated after the first meeting to establish existing strategies relevant to bioeconomy development. Consolidation and evaluation of the comments is a work in progress as contributions are still being received.

Paul Connolly (Marine Institute) gave a short presentation on the Ocean Wealth event held in Galway from 28 June to 1 July. The "Our Ocean Wealth" Summit, which brought together national and international expert speakers, industry leaders, business development agencies and the Irish business and marine research community, was held over the first two days. This year's discussions focused on the overall theme of 'Investing in Marine Ireland. This was followed by the Seafest, Ireland's national maritime festival. Mr. Connolly emphasised the economic value of Ireland's ocean economy which now stands at €2billion or approximately 1% of GDP, and its strong links to the bioeconomy with regard to job creation and prosperity of coastal communities.

Paper 2 – Network and Awareness Raising:

Patrick Barrett (DAFM) gave an update on the progress of the actions for paper 2. He highlighted the launch of Lisheen by the Irish Bioeconomy Foundation in September as an opportunity to bring the network together and suggested the BIG held a meeting/workshop there to coincide with the event.

He also mentioned the Circular Economy Hotspot, a 3 day international event & trade mission showcasing progressive approaches to developing a circular economy. The event is being hosted by Zero Waste Scotland this year and IT Tralee (as the lead) is currently putting together a bid for Ireland to host it in 2019 or 2020.

With regard to integrating bioeconomy related awareness raising resources into the second and third level curriculum, he advised that a proposal is under consideration to prepare resource material for all science teachers in Irish 2nd level schools.

Paper 3 – Research & Innovation:

Patrick Barrett (DAFM) updated the group on Paper 3 with regard to progress on the Research and Innovation e-working stream. The volunteers for the sub-group have been contacted to kick-start this e-working stream.

Tony Quinn (DAFM) gave a presentation on the EI/DAFM forest based value chain initiative as a potential model example for alignment of the value chain (VC). This is a draft model for cross-sectorial discussion on how to stimulate activity and process the VC as other policy frameworks need to be considered as well.

The presentation will be circulated to the group.

Paper 4 – Circular Bioeconomy:

Dave Corcoran (DCCAE) gave an update on the progress of the actions for paper 4.
Discussions with internal and external stakeholders have commenced to get an understanding of the background to this NPS action. Regulatory provisions are being examined with regard to redesignation of what is currently considered waste as - depending on the nature of the waste or by-product - various different regulations apply and a number of Agencies are involved in the implementation and enforcement of those.

The volunteers for this e-working stream have also been contacted for a kick-off meeting where these issues will be further explored.

Following the updates, the group signed off on draft papers 1-4.

3. Communication Plan

The draft Communication Plan was adopted by the group.

4. AOB – Date of next meeting

Two options were put to the group with regard to the next meeting dates:

- Meeting of the BIG on Thursday 13 September, and network workshop at Lisheen launch on Friday 21/28 September; or
- Meeting of the BIG and network workshop at Lisheen launch on Friday 21/28 September.

Members were asked to indicate their preference/availability.

BIG Secretariat

Minutes of the third meeting of the Bioeconomy Implementation Group

Location: National Bioeconomy Campus (former Lisheen Mine), Killoran, Moyne E41 R622, Thurles, Co. Tipperary
Date: Friday, 18 October 2018 (9.30-10.15)

In attendance:
Sinead McPhillips, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) (Co-chair)
Terry Dunne, Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE) (Acting Co-chair)
Richard Howell, DAFM
George Burke, Department of the Taoiseach
Andrew Moran, D/Taoiseach
Ian Hughes, Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation (DBEI)
Seamus Whelan, Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG)
Alexa Toomey, Enterprise Ireland
Maeve Henchion, Teagasc
Paul Connolly, Marine Institute
Dr. Fiona Burke, Science Foundation Ireland (SFI)

Patrick Barrett, DAFM (Secretariat)
Tony Quinn, DAFM (Secretariat)
Miriam Tiernan, DCCAE (Secretariat)
Gary Jones, DCCAE (Secretariat)
Beatrix Aigner, DCCAE (Secretariat)

Apologies:
Brian T. Carroll, DCCAE (Co-chair)
Cliona McDonnell, Department of Finance
Larry O'Connell, National Economic and Social Council (NESC)
Aoife Ryan, Science Foundation Ireland (SFI)
Ciaran O'Keefe, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG)
Aisling Penrose, Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD)
Emma Lynch, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER)
Georgina Hughes-Elders, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER)
Martin Hehir, DHPLG
Colin Byrne, DHPLG
Matthew Clancy, Sustainable Energy Authority Ireland
Dave Corcoran, DCCAE

1. Introduction

a. The Co-chairs formally opened the meeting and welcomed the members of the Bioeconomy Implementation Group (BIG). The meeting agenda was agreed and the group also signed off on the minutes of the previous meeting.

2. Update on Policy Statement Actions

Paper 1 - Sectoral Coherence

Terry Dunne (DCCAE) thanked members who had submitted comments on this round of papers. He pointed out that feedback on the Sectoral Coherence template is outstanding for a number of members who have been asked to provide a submission to the sectoral coherence template to do so, or provide a nil return by October 31st to try and finalise on the submissions in preparation for the report to Government later this year.

Paper 2 – Network and Awareness Raising:

Patrick Barrett (DAFM) gave an update on the progress of the actions for paper 2. He highlighted that the Bioeconomy Ireland Day 2018 held in Lisheen will initiate a public-private bioeconomy network and forum.

He also mentioned that two projects, co-funded by SEAI and DAFM, were set up to progress value chain development.

With regard to integrating bioeconomy related awareness raising resources into the second and third level curriculum, he advised that Science & Technology in Action (AG Services) are currently preparing resource material for all science teachers in Irish 2nd level schools.

Paper 3 – Research & Innovation:

Patrick Barrett (DAFM) updated the group on Paper 3 with regard to progress on the Research and Innovation e-working stream. He mentioned the ongoing co-operation with DBEI, EI and SFI with regard to an increased strategic engagement on circular economy and bioeconomy. He also mentioned that, together with regional assemblies, feasibility studies would be carried out next year to explore the potential for developing the bioeconomy on a local level.

Paper 4 – Circular Bioeconomy:

Terry Dunne (DCCAE) gave an update on the progress of the actions for paper 4.

Discussions have taken place with key stakeholders in industry, academia and government departments, agencies and commercial semi-state agencies, e.g. DBEI within the framework of Innovation 2020, NPWS and EPA re Peatland's Engagement scheme and peat licensing respectively and Irish Water regarding biosolids and alternative uses of sewage sludge, and others.

He also drew the Groups attention to the capacity for exchange of ideas on the Future Jobs Initiative, involving DBEI and D/Taoiseach, and DCCAE considering an internal proposal for a Marine BioRepository operated by the Marine Institute.

Next steps – Report to Government:
It was agreed that the Secretariat would provide a draft of the Report to BIG members one week in advance of the next meeting for comments and sign-off before being submitted to Cabinet Committee A.

3. Communication Plan

The updated draft Communication Plan was agreed by the group.

4. AOB – Date of next meeting

The proposed date for the next meeting of the BIG is 27 November 2018 (pm).

BIG Secretariat
October 2018

Minutes of the fourth meeting of the Bioeconomy Implementation Group

Location: DAFM, Agriculture House
Date: Tuesday 27 November 2018 (14.30-16.00)

In attendance:
Sinead McPhillips, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) (Co-chair)
Terry Dunne, Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE) (Acting Co-chair)
Richard Howell, DAFM
Liam Flanagan, DAFM
Kate Flinter, D/Taoiseach
Andrew Moran, D/Taoiseach
Ian Hughes, Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation (DBEI)
David Barrett, DBEI
Seamus Whelan, Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG)
Maeve Henchion, Teagasc
Dr. Fiona Burke, Science Foundation Ireland (SFI)
Larry O'Connell, National Economic and Social Council (NESC)
Georgina Hughes-Elders, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER)
Janet Ball, Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD)

Patrick Barrett, DAFM (Secretariat)
Dave Corcoran, DCCAE (Secretariat)
Miriam Tiernan, DCCAE (Secretariat)
Gary Jones, DCCAE (Secretariat)
Beatrix Aigner, DCCAE (Secretariat)

Apologies:
Brian T. Carroll, DCCAE (Co-chair)
Cliona McDonnell, Department of Finance
Tony Quinn, DAFM
Aoife Ryan, Science Foundation Ireland (SFI)
Ciaran O'Keefe, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG)
Aisling Penrose, Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD)
Emma Lynch, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER)
George Burke, Department of the Taoiseach
Alexa Toomey, Enterprise Ireland
Martin Hehir, DHPLG
Colin Byrne, DHPLG
Matthew Clancy, Sustainable Energy Authority Ireland
Paul Connolly, Marine Institute

1. Introduction

a. The Co-chairs formally opened the meeting and welcomed the members of the Bioeconomy Implementation Group (BIG).
b. The meeting agenda was agreed and the minutes of the previous meeting were signed off on.

2. Report to Government

The draft Report to Government was prepared by the joint Secretariat and contains updates on the seven actions in the NPS, grouped into 4 thematic areas: Sectoral Coherence and Circular Bioeconomy (led by DCCAE); Research and Innovation and Network and Awareness Raising (led by DAFM). It also sets out recommendations for action in 2019 and future years which will form the template for a proposed draft Action Plan.

A copy of the draft Report was circulated to BIG members in advance of the meeting.

Patrick Barrett (DAFM) and Dave Corcoran (DCCAE) gave an overview of progress and proposed future actions for their respective thematic areas as outlined in the draft Report, and the Co-chairs then invited attendees to comment.

A full discussion ensued in which various amendments to the content and structure of the draft Report were suggested. To capture all the proposed changes, attendees were invited to put them into writing and forward them to the Secretariat by Friday 7 December.

No date for the next meeting of Cabinet Committee A has been confirmed yet. The Secretariat is to follow up on this with D/Taoiseach as appropriate.

3. AOB

A summary report from M.CO, the facilitators for the Bioeconomy Ireland Day on 19 October last, had also been circulated to members of the BIG for their consideration. Sinead McPhillips commended M.CO for their work on the day and the accessibility of their report. All agreed that the day had been a major success, with approximately 260 stakeholders in attendance, and that M.CO had provided an exceptional service in facilitating the day.

The Science & Technology in Action resource – What is the Bioeconomy? was distributed to the implementation group. This resource will be provided to all second level school sin Ireland and relates to the Leaving Certificate Geography, Biology, Business and Agricultural Science courses and it will be used for student activities including for project development.

BIG Secretariat
December 2018

Minutes of the fifth meeting of the Bioeconomy Implementation Group

Location: Agriculture House-Kildare Street- Dublin 2- D02 WK12
Date: Friday, 24th May 2019-11.00am

In attendance:
Bill Callanan, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) (Co-chair)
Dave Corcoran, Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE) (Acting Co-chair)
Larry O'Connell, National Economic and Social Council (NESC)
Andrew Moran, Department of the Taoiseach
Anthony Cummins, D/Taoiseach
Andrew Gray, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER)
Ian Hughes, Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation (DBEI)
Seamus Whelan, Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG)
Alexa Toomey, Enterprise Ireland
Maeve Henchion, Teagasc
Aisling Penrose, Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD)
Colm Roche, Department of Finance
Matthew McGann, D/Finance
Richard Curtin, Bord Iascaigh Mara
Mary Frances Rochford, EPA
Patrick Barrett, DAFM (Secretariat)
Tony Quinn, DAFM (Secretariat)
Miriam Tiernan, DCCAE (Secretariat)
Gary Jones, DCCAE (Secretariat)

Guest Speakers:
Mary Cronin, Roundtable Partner
Dermot Hanley, Roundtable Partner

Apologies:
Brian T. Carroll, DCCAE (Co-chair)
Terry Dunne, DCCAE
Richard Howell, DAFM
George Burke, D/Taoiseach
Cliona McDonnell, D/Finance
Ciaran O'Keefe, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG)
Georgina Hughes-Elders, DPER
Martin Hehir, DHPLG
Colin Byrne, DHPLG
Matthew Clancy, Sustainable Energy Authority Ireland
Paul Connolly, Marine Institute
Dr. Fiona Burke, Science Foundation Ireland (SFI)

1. Introduction

Bill Callanan (DAFM) has now replaced Sinead McPhillips as Co-chair of the Bioeconomy Implementation Group (BIG).

The Co-chairs formally opened the meeting and welcomed the members of the BIG.
The meeting agenda was agreed and the group also signed off on the minutes of the previous meeting.

2. Tour de Table

The DAFM co-chair invited those present to introduce themselves with a Tour de Table, for the benefit of new members.

3. Report to Government-Update by DAFM

DAFM gave an overview of progress to date. It was noted that even the description of the bioeconomy is an evolving space where the aim is to embed sustainability in the context of seeking out coherence among a myriad of different policies. At EU level, the Clean Planet Plan includes Bioeconomy as one of 7 transition pathways picked out for development. In terms of National progress the emphasis is on aligning actors, for example, the bioeconomy is specifically featured in various plans/policies such as the Climate plan, FJI, Project Ireland , various DBEI policies, the future Agri Food strategy etc. DAFM stressed the importance of strengthening the commercial aspect of the bioeconomy. Companies are already emerging to exploit, for example, the value of the marine sector. The BIG will work with leading companies to help them be game changers. It was noted that there is a lot of awareness raising activity ongoing with good progress in other areas like the national marine biorepository and the Bioeconomy Innovation Platform. The latter will make it easier for industry. In response to questions from the group, DAFM (Co Chair) set out the challenging time frame for presenting the Memo and Report before the summer recess.

Action: DAFM invited comments from BIG members back within the week to return comments.

4. Update on Policy Statement Actions

<u>Paper 1 - Sectoral Coherence</u>
Dave Corcoran (DCCAE) gave an update on progress on the Sectoral Coherence paper. This included an update on meetings with relevant agencies to develop a mutual understanding of the issue (including barriers) arising between policies. He also drew the Groups attention to progress in terms of inclusion of the bioeconomy in other policy documents such as the soon to be released Climate Action Plan. He also referenced the ongoing progress on the establishment of a Marine Biorepository operated by the Marine Institute.

<u>Paper 2 – Network and Awareness Raising:</u>
Patrick Barrett (DAFM) gave an update on the progress of the actions for Paper 2. Stressing the importance of getting the message out, he highlighted the recent All-Island Biobased Industries Promotion & Support event which took place in the University of Limerick on May which was well

attended. A number of important upcoming events were flagged including the EPA-funded conference 'Developing the Bioeconomy in Ireland – Identifying Barriers and Proposing Solutions' (UCD, 11th June), ICT Biochain Lisheen (Lisheen, 13th June), Farm Bioeconomy Demonstration Day (Bandon, Cork, 11th July), Bioeconomy Forum (Dublin, July), Bioeconomy Ireland Day 2019 (Monaghan, Q3 2019) and EU Bioeconomy Stakeholders Day (December 3rd-4th).

Other activities also included active involvement with DCCAE developing Green Public Procurement (GPP) programme as well as new educational initiatives like the new MSc in Circular Bioeconomy (Springboard +) and the new second level education resource available to some 700 second level schools in conjunction with the Science and Technology in Action (STA) programme. It was noted that there were significant potential under the Skillsnet programme which is well resourced to promote and facilitate workforce learning. Other networking/awareness activities included the Beacon Public Engagement Programme, the Teagasc Bioeconomy Working Group, engagement with DES, HEA &VPs of teaching and learning as well as liaising with CRE on compostable & biodegradable product labelling. Developments in bioeconomy in Northern Ireland were also noted as part of the modernisation of the agri sector.

Paper 3 – Research & Innovation:

Tony Quinn (DAFM) updated the group on Paper 3 with regard to progress on the Research and Innovation e-working stream referencing in particular a number of live/recent research calls. After setting the context for the DAFM research call 2019, a description of the call specification followed and it was noted that, while there was specific mention of the bioeconomy in A.3 (Rural Growth, Digitalisation & the Bioeconomy), it was also indirectly addressed under other call headings. It was noted that the process of evaluation of submissions is still ongoing.

The importance of ensuring that the bioeconomy was also in scope of other initiatives was discussed with positive examples like the live EPA Research Call 2019 and the DBEI Disruptive Technologies Fund. The EPA call has two explicitly bioeconomy related headings –a biobased plastics one (co funded by DAFM) and also an urban waste one. The DBEI Disruptive Technology fund call has biorefining explicitly in its scope.

The importance of bioeconomy being reflected in Project Ireland 2040 – specifically the Rural (DRCD), Urban (DHPLG) and Climate Action (DCCAE) Funds was discussed as well as the National Planning Framework.

With regard to Bioeconomy & Finance, reference was made to the NTMA, Climate KIC[1] (Carbon etc.) BBI (public private partnership) and the EIB. In particular, a major funding event took place on May 16th which saw some of the world's leading international financial institutions and asset managers in Dublin for a major conference on sustainable finance, entitled **Catalysing Global Savings to Advance our Sustainability Goals**. It was noted that with new complex value chains extracted from low value products we will need multi action financing-private/government/ European –providing an 'a la carte' menu that suits everyone.

[1] EIT Climate-KIC is a European knowledge and innovation community, working to accelerate the transition to a zero-carbon economy.

Paper 4 – Circular Bioeconomy:

Dave Corcoran (DCCAE) gave an update on the progress of the actions for Paper 4. He outlined the overlap between the Circular Economy and the Bioeconomy, stressing that it would be a great loss for the Bioeconomy to be misunderstood as merely part of the Circular Economy.

Dave went on to highlight various developments since the last meeting, including initial contact with 'Administrator European Economic and Social Committee' who are aware of Ireland developing a National Strategy on the Bioeconomy.

The Secretariat held 2 meetings in April, one with Irish Water re: potential for waste water side streams, and another discussion on End of Waste Protocols.

Dave also notified the Group that there is a possibility of an Irish City becoming involved in the EU's Bioeconomy City Hub which uses urban waste and wastewater as feedstock for new products.

Other important events and announcements included Europe's first Digital Innovation Hub for a Circular Bioeconomy will be launched Lisheen on 13th June 2019 as well as the Climate Action Plan which refers to recent developments at national level, restating the Project Ireland 2040 commitment to make Ireland a global leader in the Bioeconomy.

5. Realising the Opportunities for Enterprise in the Bioeconomy and Circular Economy in Ireland

DBEI (Ian Hughes) provided an overview of the draft report which aims to ensure DBEI is informed by clear evidence –based understanding of the potential enterprise opportunities in both the bio and circular economies. The paper is focussed on 4 main sectors-

- Food Forestry Marine
- Biomaterials and Biochemicals
- Bioenergy and Biofuels and
- Mechanical Circular Economy

DBEI noted that some are already more well established than other-contrasting the well-established Food Forestry Marine sector to the Biomaterials/Biochemicals sector which is more nascent like the Biofuels/Bioenergy sector which is also still in the relatively early stages of development. With regard to Circular economy DBEI noted the need to redesign the whole production cycle. Considering the question of where DBEI best fits in to the process of realising the opportunities for enterprise in these sectors, it was noted that Biomaterials and Biochemicals contained a small number of actors but with high value products which are very export friendly. Although still nascent, it was noted that it has the potential to be very disruptive to bigger more well established sectors e.g. farmers (should biorefining become more valuable that traditional activities) and also to pharma sector. This sector is developing globally and DBEI needs to be ready to catalyse lead disruptors. DAFM (Bill Callanan) noted that one

of the challenges in the policy statement was how we can work on developing financing to underpin development of the bioeconomy.

Action: The draft was made available to the BIG members for their input before publication in the near future.

6. Roundtable Presentation

Mary Cronin and Dermot Hanley (Roundtable) joined the meeting to share their perspective, in particular relating to the financing and capital requirements, of the future bioeconomy in Ireland.

They pointed out the need to identify the best way to solve the problem as today it takes too long to execute and commercialise products.

The importance of getting buy in from EU authorities in order to get seed capital was noted. It was indicated that the speakers will be approaching Europe looking to establish this Roundtable over the next six months. DAFM also noted that the EU is putting in place an EU Investment Platform –for introducing relevant people to each other.

DAFM concluded the discussion by summarising that there are serious bioeconomy opportunities but an absence of awareness, for the BIG the challenge is to identify how we can support and encourage the transition from carbon products. The implementation group needs to be thinking already what the Second BIG Report will look like.

7. AOB – Date of next meeting

The proposed date for the next two meetings of the BIG are Friday 20 September and Friday 22 November.

BIG Secretariat
June 2019

Minutes of the sixth meeting of the Bioeconomy Implementation Group

Location: Agriculture House-Kildare Street- Dublin 2- D02 WK12
Date: Friday, 20th September 2019-3pm to 4.30 pm

In attendance:
Bill Callanan, Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) (Co-chair)
Colin O'Hehir, Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCAE) (Acting Co-chair)
Anthony Cummins, D/Taoiseach
Ian Hughes, Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation (DBEI)
Maeve Henchion, Teagasc
Aisling Penrose, Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD)
Mary Frances Rochford, EPA
Graham McGovern, Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG)
Cathy Holohan, Enterprise Ireland
Patrick Barrett, DAFM (Secretariat)
Tony Quinn, DAFM (Secretariat)
Miriam Tiernan, DCCAE (Secretariat)

Apologies:
Brian T. Carroll, DCCAE (Co-chair)
Les Carberry, DCCAE
Colm Roche, Department of Finance
Matthew McGann, D/Finance
Richard Curtin, Bord Iascaigh Mara
Seamus Whelan, Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (DHPLG)
Andrew Gray, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER)
Alexa Toomey, Enterprise Ireland
Larry O'Connell, National Economic and Social Council (NESC)
Andrew Moran, Department of the Taoiseach
Richard Howell, DAFM
George Burke, D/Taoiseach
Cliona McDonnell, D/Finance
Ciaran O'Keefe, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (DCHG)
Georgina Hughes-Elders, DPER
Martin Hehir, DHPLG
Colin Byrne, DHPLG
Matthew Clancy, Sustainable Energy Authority Ireland
Paul Connolly, Marine Institute
Dr. Fiona Burke, Science Foundation Ireland (SFI)

1. Introduction

The Co-chairs formally opened the meeting and welcomed the members of the BIG.
The meeting agenda was agreed and the group also signed off on the minutes of the previous meeting.

2. Implementation Activities

The Secretariat gave a short presentation on ongoing activities including the launch of the Bioeconomy Report and the plans for Bioeconomy Ireland Week. Secretariat also highlighted a series of planned events this year including the BEACON Bioeconomy Research Centre signing an MOU with the THEA to bring the bioeconomy into the Institutes of Technology noting that the future bioeconomy would need skills across all levels of education up to PhD level and presenting at the Ploughing Championships. The Bioeconomy was also to be the subject of a break-out workshop at the Agri-Food 2030 Open Policy event on October 16th. Aside from Bioeconomy Week, the Secretariat highlighted a proposed Marine Bioeconomy event on 5 December involving several public and private bioeconomy stakeholders. Feedback was sought from Group members on respective implementation activities and the need to communicate these events to relevant stakeholders was noted. The Secretariat will contact Communications Teams across the various Departments to engage on communicating the bioeconomy message but the importance of a coordinated approach, flagging the key overarching role of the Implementation Group, was noted. It was noted that the Bioeconomy was referenced in the DRCD Rural Development Report. Teagasc through its TResearch communication had developed a Circular Bioeconomy infographic to further explain the bioeconomy

ACTION: BIG members to use their own organisations' communication structures to disseminate information about upcoming bioeconomy events, including Bioeconomy Ireland Week.

3. Bioeconomy Forum

A short introduction was given by the Secretariat together with an overview of the proposed operational framework of the Forum. The rationale for the Forum was set out with examples in other Member States including the Danish Bioeconomy Panel and the German Bioeconomy Council to help guide the discussion. It was noted that Bioeconomy Ireland Day 2018 event included a workshop to harvest common insights, themes and ideas expressed by stakeholders which has been summarised in the facilitators report. A discussion took place regarding the structure and composition of the proposed Forum and the way it will interact with the Implementation Group. Lessons from other Fora including the Working Group on Financial Services and the Horticulture Forum provide useful examples of how to ensure the design achieves the best outcomes. DBEI recommended that the TORs not be overly prescriptive and be open enough to include emerging areas like bioenergy and ensure cross-industry learning. DCCAE noted that scoping out the relevant stakeholders for the Forum was the key final piece in the jigsaw, along with the importance of having a structure where, going forward, new stakeholders could be identified and incorporated into the Forum structure. The

group were broadly in agreement with the operational framework of the Forum and it was suggested to harness the scientific expertise of the BEACON Bioeconomy Research Centre to guide the Forum.

ACTION : The draft TORs were made available to the BIG members for their input before the launch of the Forum.

4. Bioeconomy Report Recommendation & Future Jobs Ireland, Innovation 2020 and Enterprise 2025

DBEI provided a recap of the June 2019 paper, ***Realising the Opportunities for Enterprise in the Bioeconomy and Circular Economy in Ireland,*** *which* aims to ensure DBEI is informed by clear evidence–based understanding of the potential enterprise opportunities in both the bio and circular economies. Based on a framework from the University of Manchester, the paper asks key questions like who are the main actors, what innovation is required, what system transition is needed to make it happen and what the enterprise opportunities are. In trying to establish the key enterprise opportunities especially in terms of export potential, the paper focussed on 4 main sectors - Agri-Food, Forestry, Marine (focus of efficiency of current system); Biomaterials and Biochemicals (potential to be highly disruptive but needs to ensure circularity); Bioenergy and Biofuels (difficult to characterize the system and its actors); and Mechanical Circular Economy (may lead to potential costs in implementation). Following the recap DBEI opened the room to discussion and reflections and to establish if the Group is clear and agreed on the sectors of relevance to bioeconomy and circular economy. This body of work aims to provide guidance to strategically address the bioeconomy & circular economy opportunity and the high-level messages identified. The end point is to address the Future Jobs Ireland, Innovation 2020 and Enterprise 2025 commitments to bioeconomy and circular economy through examining current Irish practice, best international practice and to engage with the BIG members to develop thoughts and ideas. The resulting discussion touched on a wide range of issues including delivering sustainability, providing direction to innovation, Just Transition, using Beacon as a knowledge hub, linking bioeconomy with climate and brexit, the role of lead-disruptor companies and the evolution of relevant bioeconomy and circular economy sectors, the need for diffusion of technology, farmers as a 'solution', rural development, circularity within the bioeconomy and communicating the message to stakeholders. It was noted the role a carbon tax could play in generating a bioeconomy and a circular economy. The Secretariat stressed the importance of being mindful that Circular and Bioeconomy are not mutually exclusive.

An interactive session on the 2019 task in Future Jobs Ireland (5.3.iii) on scoping the development of a Bioeconomy Innovation Platform to examine the provision of specialised bioeconomy business support services with the aim to combine regulatory, technological and non-technological services to accelerate the deployment and diffusion of bioeconomy pathways, technologies and interconnect sectors, value chains and people. To direct the discussion, the Secretariat highlighted the activities of ZeroWaste Scotland who provide consultancy, development grants and investment funds. The Group considered what Irish examples already exist of a dedicated cross economy service that could support business to implement new business models, technologies, practices, products, lifecycle analysis or services which can embed circular bioeconomy principle and how the Bioeconomy Implementation Group could better interact with relevant Departments & Agencies to examine this matter.

ACTION: **The Secretariat will have bilateral meetings with relevant stakeholders (EPA/NWPP).**

5. AOB

Date of Next Meeting initially proposed for Friday 29th November 11am-1pm –but it was noted that this date did not suit all Group Members

ACTION : **Date to be confirmed by co-Chairs**

Minutes of the seventh meeting of the Bioeconomy Implementation Group

Location: DCCAE, 29-31 Adelaide Road, Dublin 2, D02 X285

Date: 30 January 2020, 14.00.

In attendance:

Brian Carroll, DCCAE (Co-chair)
Les Carberry, DCCAE
Colin O'Hehir, DCCAE
Sara Webb, DCCAE
Bill Callanan, DAFM (Co-chair)
Patrick Barrett, DAFM
Liam Finegan, DAFM
Richard Howell, DAFM
Anthony Cummins, Dept. Taoiseach
Andrew Moran, Dept. Taoiseach
Ian Hughes, DBEI
Aisling Penrose, DRCD
Graham McGovern, DHPLG
Andrew Gray, DPER
Georgina Hughes-Elders, DPER
Maeve Henchion, Teagasc
Luke Kelleher, BEACON
Peter Carpenter, Enterprise Ireland
Dr Fiona Burke, SFI
Richard Curtin, Bord Iascaigh Mhara

1. Introduction

The Co-chairs formally opened the seventh meeting and welcomed the members of the BIG. Round table introductions.

2. Minutes

The meeting agenda was agreed and the Group signed off on the minutes of the sixth meeting.

3. Updates

The Co-chairs gave an update on Network & Awareness Raising. This included:

- collaboration between BEACON and the University of Nottingham,
- the Irish Bioeconomy Foundation mapping of NI based bioeconomy contacts,
- the development of a Biotechnology Centre of Excellence by BioConnect,

- a bioeconomy-related development under construction by Parc Na Mara,

- support for bio-based fertilizers commercialisation opportunities by the Irish Nutrient Sustainability Platform, https://nutrientsustainability.ie/

- Research on the valorisation of marine bio resources by the Circular Bioeconomy Regional Cluster, funded by DBEI,

- the development of a digital bioeconomy platform by Bio-based Industries Consortium

The co-chairs updated the BIG on research innovation and investment. The European Circular Bioeconomy Fund, a €250m support for bioeconomy companies, will shortly be launched and an event will be held in Dublin in Q1 2020. The ECBF will be supported by the EU Research & Innovation Fund and the European Investment Bank. The BIG was also advised of funded projects under the EU Bio-based Industries Public-Private Partnership, two bioeconomy-related LIFE projects, and of the development of a Food & Bioeconomy fund. A number of research and education developments were also flagged, including a BioPlastics project, Bioeconomy & Cities, DAFM research projects, along with Erasmus+ and Springboard+ education opportunities relating to the bioeconomy.

The BIG also received information on regulatory coherence including end-of-waste definitions and follow-up engagement with companies operating in the bioeconomy. Additionally, Irish Manufacturing Research established a circular economy manufacturing platform which will incorporate the bioeconomy.

Across the wider Bioeconomy Implementation Group, a new all-Ireland network has been established on climate and biodiversity by SFI and the EU, while BEACON will now be known as BiOrbic.

The co-chairs outlined 2020 commitments under Future Jobs Ireland and the Climate Action Plan reporting, which may evolve following the outcomes of the general election.

4. Bioeconomy Forum

The BIG was updated on developments regarding the establishment of the Bioeconomy Forum, which will be finalised once a new government is in place. Strong engagement between the BIG and the Forum is envisaged.

5. Sectoral Coherence

The BIG received a presentation from BEACON Bioeconomy Research Centre on research being carried out on sectoral coherence. The outcomes of this research focus on assessing coherence in national policy documents which will prove useful going forward. Members of the BIG will be invited to participate in interviews to validate the findings of the research.

The co-chairs outlined work under way on improving sectoral policy coherence, which will comprise bilateral meetings between DCCAE & DAFM and the Implementation Group members, building on analysis by DCCAE in 2018 which identified policy areas which interact with the bioeconomy. This work will also inform the work programme of the Bioeconomy Forum.

There are a large range of areas and sectors that interact with the bioeconomy.

AOB

DCRD advised that the new Rural Policy under development is on hold ahead of the formation of a new government. This Policy will touch on the bioeconomy and circular economy.

A Marine Bioeconomy Day which had scheduled by the Marine Institute and BEACON in December 2019 in Galway was postponed but will take place later this year.

Proposed dates for next meetings – 21 May 2020 and 21 October 2020.

BIG Secretariat

Minutes of the eight meeting of the Bioeconomy Implementation Group

Location: Online- WebEx Hosted by DAFM

Date: Wednesday, 23rd June 2021 (2pm to 4.30pm)

In attendance:
Co-Chair: Bill Callanan (DAFM)
Acting Co-Chair: Noel Regan (DECC)

Departmental Group Members: Vivienne Ahern (DECC), Les Carberry (DECC), Andrew Moloney (DETE), Joseph Moore (DFHRIS), Graham McGovern (DHLGH), Andrew Gray (DPER), Laura Devaney (Dept of Taoiseach), Aoife O'Grady (Dept of Transport),

State Agencies Group Members: Larry O'Connell (National Economic and Social Council (NESC)), Nuala NiFhlatharta (Teagasc), Órlaith Ní Choncubhair (Teagasc), Mary Frances Rochford (EPA), Alexa Toomey (EI), Richard Curtin (BIM), Fiona Grant (MI), Majbritt.Bolton-Warberg (MI), Lea Chua Tan (SFI).

Secretariat: Patrick Barrett (DAFM), Noeleen McDonald (DAFM), Fionnuala Malone (DAFM), Rob Barnes (DECC) & Kellí Howard (DECC).

Guest Speakers:
Prof Kevin O'Connor, BioOrbic SFI Research Centre
Derek O'Brien, BioOrbic SFI Research Centre
Mr Stephen Napier, Irish Bioeconomy Foundation (IBF)
Ms Catriona Power, Circular Bioeconomy South West Cluster (CBCSW)
Dr James Gaffey, Circular Bioeconomy Research Group, Munster Technological University
Ms Etain Doherty, Irish Nutrient Sustainability Platform (INSP)
Mr David Macauley, Bioconnect Innovation Centre
Mr Peter Corcoran, CEO MBIO & Bioconnect
Dr Gaia Scalabrino, NatPro, TCD, Centre for Natural Products
Prof Helen Sheridan, NatPro, TCD, Centre for Natural Products
Dr Juan Valverde, NatPro, TCD, Centre for Natural Products

Apologies: Brian Carroll (Co-Chair & DECC), Richard Howell (DAFM), Tony Quinn (Secretariat & DAFM), Gareth Makim (DRCD), Georgina Hughes-Elders (DPER) & Maeve Henchion (Teagasc).

1. Introduction

Noel Regan acting co-chair from DECC formally welcomed the members of the BIG and outlined the structure of the meeting for the afternoon. There was a round table introduction of name and organisation by all attending, starting with the members of the BIG secretariat.

2. Overview (policy statement actions update)

I. The DAFM and DECC secretariat gave an update on the progress of sectoral coherence and the Bioeconomy integration with economy wide and sectoral policies.

a) Patrick Barrett (DAFM) presented a summary of identified sectoral coherence to date as per 1st report to government in 2018 and review by the BIG Secretariat (2019 to 2021). Highlighting key national vision documents, policies, strategies, vision documents, funded programmes, R&I funding and other national organisations where there is inclusion of the bioeconomy and where there is further scope for improvement, particular in relation to providing funding for innovation actions through Project Ireland 2040 funds. Robert Barnes (DECC) presented the next steps for the BIG members to update and capture information on policy coherence across sectors since last reported in the 1st report to government and provide clarity across the sectoral coherence. A scoping exercise was proposed with the circulation of a template to all members following this meeting. Requesting each department and agency to analyse and assess relevant sectoral strategies within their remit and outline existing mechanisms for further sectoral strategy coherence. Deadline for reply will be prior to the 9th BIG meeting proposed for the 2nd last week of July, where the BIG secretariat will collate and update the members.

b) Les Carberry (DECC) provided a brief update on developments of the circular economy strategy. A public consultation has been completed. Les noted that bioeconomy is referenced within the strategy, but suggested that integration of the bioeconomy as a core element within the circular economy is possible. Which Patrick Barrett (DAFM) welcomed. Expected publication date is September 2021. To integrate circular economy actions across sectors, the next steps are for the establishment of an interdepartmental stakeholder group, where actions may be examined on a thematic basis. The Circular economy bill is being put forward next week.

II. Patrick Barrett (DAFM) provided a brief update on establishment of the national bioeconomy forum. John Malone former secretary general of DAFM has been asked to chair the Forum and Prof Kevin O'Connor Director of the BiOrbic SFI research centre asked to chair the forum's expert advisory group. Twenty-nine various stakeholder groups have been invited to the forum, with a large number of positive responses. Similarly, there has been a strong response by number of academic experts who have been invited to join the expert advisory group. Expected to finalise the draft working plan in the next 2 weeks and present to the forums steering group.

III. Noeleen McDonald (DAFM) provided a brief update to the members on Bioeconomy Ireland week (BIW), which falls under the working paper 'Networking and Awareness Raising'. BIW is held every October. It is organised by the same core group comprising of the BIG Secretariat, BioOrbic and IBF. The 2020 events were held online due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. Summary of the type of core organiser and other stakeholder group events was provided, where content is still online to view. Organization for BIW 2021 is underway by same core organizers and new groups such as NRN and Circular Bioeconomy South West Cluster. Expected dates are 18th to 24th October and events expected to be announced on the bioecomomy.ie website next month. A brief update was also provided on the Bioeconomy Monitoring event co-organised with members of the BIG & the BioMonitor EU H2020 project lead by WUR held on the 25th May 2021.

3. EU Bioeconomy Developments

Guest Speakers enter meeting for Item 3 & 4.

Órlaith Ní Choncubhair (Teagasc), recently completed a 2-year secondment as Irelands national expert to DG RTD in the Bioeconomy & Food Systems unit. Órlaith provided a brief summary to the BIG members of the key EU bioeconomy strategies, the landscape of national & regional strategies of other EU member states and the coherence of the Bioeconomy in other European strategies e.g. Green deal, and the MS recovery and resilience plans. A number of key outputs (e.g. Bioeconomy foresight) and activities (e.g. European Bioeconomy Policy Forum) and platforms (e.g. EU Bioeconomy Monitoring System) that are addressing a number of the European Action plans were highlighted. Upcoming developments for 2021 and 2022: new policy initiatives e.g. COM: Algae sector and forestry strategy, LULUFC Revision and REDII Revision; the Youth Bioeconomy R&I Days, Connecting the EGD to our living spaces and the next progress report on the 2018 EU Bioeconomy strategy.

4. Bioeconomy Infrastructure & initiatives

Invited guest speakers from the main Infrastructure & initiatives each gave a 5 minute presentation to the BIG members. Each provided an outlined their Infrastructure and/or initiatives and its role within Ireland's bioeconomy landscape, key developments, findings, on-goings and outcomes to date; and highlighted what they see as the main barriers and challenges towards developing a strong bioeconomy in Ireland. Speakers and the order in which they presented were as follows:

a) BiOrbic Bioeconomy Research Centre- Speaker Prof Kevin O Connor, Director of BiOrbic

b) Irish Bioeconomy Foundation- Speaker Mr Stephen Napier, CEO of IBF

c) Circular Bioeconomy South West Cluster- Speaker Ms Catriona Power, Education & Outreach Manager of CBCSW at Munster Technological University

d) Circular Bioeconomy Research Group Munster Technological University- Speaker Dr James Gaffey Co-Director of the Circular Bioeconomy Research Group

e) Irish Nutrient Sustainability Platform (INSP)- Speaker Ms Etain Doherty, Programme Manager of the INSP

f) Bioconnect Innovation Centre- Speaker Mr David Macauley Director of Bioconnect & supported by Mr Peter Corcoran CEO MBIO

g) NatPro, TCD, Centre for Natural Products- Speaker Dr Gaia Scalabrino & supported by Prof Helen Sheridan , Co-Directors of the NatPro

In the Q&A sections that proceeded, the following was raised:

- The issue of how to improve clarity and consistency for raising awareness and understanding about the bioeconomy. Where invited speakers and members of the BIG agreed that many even who are central or part of the bioeconomy (i.e. policymakers, regulators & companies) struggle to understand where they fit into the bioeconomy and how they can support or be supported. Maintaining consistency with clear concise terminology using familiar existing (simple) terms applied across narratives. Need to articulate that bioeconomy is not a sector but rather a technology. Utilisation of demonstrations is important to help get the wide economy on board.

Need champions of Bioeconomy, with stories to tell, within the Irish Industry needs to be highlighted. Targeted awareness campaigns for the youth is needed, similar to the 2020/2021 year of science on Bioeconomy campaign been carried out by Germany.

- If the bioeconomy infrastructures and initiatives are measuring and can provide indictors of emission reductions by the bioeconomy. Where InterTrade Ireland, Biorefinery Glas, NatPro and BiOrbic's Farm Zero C project were noted as having associated projects that are trying to quantify and provide indictors of emission reductions.
- If the focus for Ireland's Bioeconomy is to spread to thin and if we should just focus on one aspect that can be scaled up within a faster time scale. Where, Kevin O Connor, of BiOrbic recommended focusing on the Agri-food sector, as there are opportunities to become a global leader in zero emissions and the utilisation of bio-based materials. David Macauley of BioConnet recommends that focus should be on precision fermentation. With agreement by Helen Sheridan.

As Noel Regan and Bill Callanan had to leave the meeting earlier, Patrick Barrett (DAFM) took over chairing duties and noted that speakers will be follow up with post meeting regarding sharing of the presentations to the BIG members and for potential follow up exercise to apply more context to the presentations (i.e. challenges and barriers).

5. AOB

Kelli Howard (DECC) presented a brief outline of the 2021 roadmap of the proposed meeting structures and dates for the forum and BIG. Proposing key focus points of each meetings agenda. The next meeting is proposed for the 21st of July 2021. Where the feedback from the update on sectoral coherence from BIG members will be presented and the focus will be on regulatory coherence. Proceeding meetings will focus on preparation of the 2nd progress report to government for the end of the year

BIG Secretariat

June 2021

Minutes of the ninth meeting of the Bioeconomy Implementation Group

Location: Online- WebEx Hosted by DAFM

Date: Wednesday, 21st July 2021 (2pm to 3pm)

In attendance:
Acting Co-Chair: Noel Regan (DECC)
Acting Co-Chair: Richard Howell (DAFM)

Departmental Group Members: Vivienne Ahern (DECC), Andrew Moloney (DETE), Laura Devaney (Dep of Taoiseach), Aoife O'Grady (Dep of Transport), Faye Carroll (Transport) Tony Quinn (DAFM).

State Agencies Group Members: Larry O'Connell (National Economic and Social Council (NESC)), Orlaith NiChoncubhair (Teagasc), Maeve Henchion (Teagasc), Mary Frances Rochford (EPA), Alexa Toomey (EI), Lea Chua Tan (SFI).

Secretariat: Rob Barnes (DECC), Kellí Howard (DECC), Patrick Barrett (DAFM) & Noeleen McDonald (DAFM).

Apologies: Brian Carroll (Co-Chair, DECC), Bill Callanan (Co-Chair, DAFM), Nuala Ní Fhlatharta (Teagasc) & Majbritt Bolton-Warberg (MI).

Agenda Item 1 – Introduction

Richard Howell acting co-chair from DAFM formally welcomed the members of the BIG and outlined the structure of the meeting for the afternoon. He told the Implementation Group members about the Bioeconomy Forum meeting that will be held on Friday the 23rd July and invited them to join for the first two Agenda items of the meeting.

Patrick Barrett explained that this is the first meeting of the Forum and that it is made up of 29 multidisciplinary members – including NGOs, County Council representatives and a variety of industrial and sectoral groups. The Forum will be chaired by John Malone and co-chaired by Professor Kevin O'Conner. Minister Ryan and Heyden will introduce the meeting.

Kellí Howard gave a brief overview of the EU Bioeconomy Policy Support Facility meetings that took place two weeks previously. Three meetings were held covering,

- The definition of the bioeconomy;
- Indicators;
- Monitoring;
- And Mapping policy measures.

She highlighted that Ireland has come across very well through bioeconomy programmes and initiatives that were used as examples throughout presentations. A more detailed report will be circulated in the future once minutes of these meetings are agreed. The next meeting will take place after the summer.

Noeleen McDonald discussed a working paper that covered analysis conducted on the 7 presentations from the previous meeting of the BIG. The presenters were asked to outline challenges and barriers they face in their bioeconomy work. The analysis discusses the barriers as

well as potential solutions that can be made available through short to medium term actions. Noeleen McDonald noted that three themes had emerged as challenges;

1. Networks and collaboration
2. Understanding, awareness, and harmonisation
3. Flexible funding opportunities for business, demonstrations, and up-skilling

She had asked the presenters if they could review the paper by early August and that this paper would be presented to the BIG at the next meeting

Agenda Item 2 – Sectoral Coherence

Noel Regan introduced Rob Barnes to discuss the Sectoral Coherence task and analysis.

Rob Barnes recapped the Sectoral Coherence task with the group and set a new deadline (13th August) for feedback to be provided. He noted that some group members have not contributed thus far, and the analysis will become increasingly rich as all the members submit. He noted that the Secretariat is available for one to ones with group members to help complete this task. Rob Barnes introduced Kellí Howard and the Sectoral Coherence Analysis presentation.

Kellí Howard gave a brief analysis of the feedback received covering; relevant sectoral strategies; budget flexibility, conflicts and necessary supports, the adaptability of these strategies and further guidance needed.

Noel Regan asked what was meant by 'cascading use'?

Laura Devaney explained that the Department of Taoiseach's viewed 'cascading' as a higher value product. EU Guidance[2] is available on cascading use and it is a principle of the policy stamen on the bioeconomy.

Maeve Henchion questioned the conflict between continuous cover forestry and harvesting forestry.

Tony Quinn said that we need to find a balance between forestry management systems such as continuous cover and clear fell harvesting.

Noel Regan summed up the Agenda Item by stressing the deeper analysis that can take place once all submissions are received and that the Item will be revisited in the next meeting for a deeper discussion.

Agenda Item 3 – Climate Action Plan Update

Rob Barnes gave a general overview of where current the focus from the Bioeconomy implementation group, the secretariat and the forum may likely fit into the Climate Action Plan, which it is still currently under preparation. More details will follow in future meetings when the text is published.

Main actions may include: **1**. Bioeconomy Action Plan; **2.** Ongoing BIG, Forum, Bioeconomy Ireland Week 2021 to feed into Action Plan; **3.** Funding Coherence; **4.** Education, Training & Skills; **5**. Circular Economy/Bioeconomy inter-related actions (e.g. green public procurement etc).

Agenda Item 4 – Regulatory Coherence

[2] Guidance on cascading use of biomass with selected good practice examples on woody biomass - Publications Office of the EU (europa.eu)

Patrick Barrett gave a brief overview of activities by the secretariat and the implementation group to date on Regulatory Coherence. One of the key areas mentioned was the meeting of secretariat with officials in DECC and the EPA on waste and specifically regulatory waste. Feedback was provided into an EPA guidance development on Article 27 & 28 of the waste framework directive.

The need for this exercise was highlighted by Patrick Barrett, as the consistent feedback from stakeholders, especially business, that regulatory requirements are hurdles for them progressing their bio-based activities/ business, in various areas such as planning for new facilities including bio-refineries, marketing of products and accessing resources that are designated 'end of waste'. There is no one size fits all way to consult bioeconomy type enterprises and regulatory bodies, as they vary and can span different sectors, and consultation is often a case by case basis.

Andrew Moloney said he would like to have a bilateral discussion with the secretariat to discuss how coherence could be achieved, giving an example of those in the construction sector. This request was welcomed by the secretariat to which they will follow up with after the meeting.

Rob Barnes outlined in brief the next steps of the secretariat and BIG on Regulatory Coherence, and provide more detail in the next meeting. Unlike the sectoral coherence analysis exercise, to achieve an appropriate regulatory system will need a lot of industry and expert Input, such as from members of the Forum. A request was made to members if a similar exercise had been carried out in their departments or agency, to share learning's and the best process to take.

Vivienne Ahern mentioned the similarities and parallels that the circularly economy has with Regulatory Coherence on end of waste and by products and that in her role as a technical advisor she is a member of EAU (environment advisory unit within the waste policy & circular economy unit) where she can share her leanings to secretariat and the implementation group.

Mary Francis Rochford, suggested that it would be worth identifying priority areas where Regulatory Coherence is needed mainly, carry out a few case studies with decision trees, e.g food and drink sector. It may help get a quicker return.

Vivienne Ahern mentioned that a similar exercise is happening at an EU level and therefore could use to align with the national exercise.

Laura Devaney mentioned how the BioEire project looked at the impact of regulation on feedstock's for the bioeconomy in 2017. It could be revisited as an area to prioritise and update.

Agenda Item 5 – AOB

Brief mention by Noeleen McDonald on invitations that had been circulated to the members to attend as observers to the first 2 sessions of the 1st Forum meeting on this Friday the 23rd July.

Noel Regan and Richard Howell thanked the group members for a productive session and commended the increased momentum and engagement of the group members.

Rob Barnes and Patrick Barrett reminded the group members that they are available for one to ones.

The Co-chairs closed the meeting.

Kellí Howard
Environmental and Sectoral Climate Policy
23/07/2021

Minutes of the tenth meeting of the Bioeconomy Implementation Group

Location: Online- WebEx Hosted by DAFM

Date: Wednesday, 22nd September 2021 (2pm to 4.30pm)

In attendance: Acting co-chairs (Secretariat) Rob Barnes (DECC) and Patrick Barrett (DAFM)

Departments: Joseph Moore (DFHERIS), Melissa Moloney (DRCD), Laura Devaney (Dept of Taoiseach), Andrew Moran (Dept of Taoiseach), Caoimhin O Chiaráin (Dept of Transport),

Agencies: Niamh Garvey (NESC), Maeve Henchion (Teagasc), Mary Frances Rochford (EPA), Alexa Toomey (EI), Fiona Grant (MI), Peter Clifford (SFI)

Secretariat: Tony Quinn (DAFM), Noeleen McDonald (DAFM), Nicola Shiels (DAFM), Kellí Howard (DECC).

Guest Speakers:
Charlie Coakley, Irish Water
Kenneth Joyce, Coillte
Ian Kilgallon, Gas Networks Ireland
John Mac Namara, Bord Na Móna

Apologies: Bill Callanan (Co-Chair & DAFM), Brian Carroll (Co-Chair & DECC), Richard Howell (DAFM), Noel Regan (DECC), Vivienne Ahern (DECC), Gareth Makim (DRCD), Andrew Moloney (DETE), Richard Curtin (BIM), Nuala Ni Fhlatharta (Teagasc), Órlaith Ní Choncubhair (Teagasc), Majbritt Bolton-Warberg (MI), Lea Chua Tan (SFI), Brian Murphy (SFI), Matthew Clancy (SEAI).

1. Introduction

Rob Barnes acting co-chair from DECC formally welcomed new members to the BIG:

Niamh Garvey the new representative for NESC replacing Larry O'Connell, Melissa Moloney DRCD, Caoimhin O Chiaráin Dept of Transport and Peter Clifford in attendance for SFI and speaking in item 5 of the agenda.

2. Update on Sectoral & Regulatory coherence analysis

Rob Barnes (DECC) provided a recap on the areas identified for regulatory coherence in the previous consultation processes for the development of the national policy statement of the bioeconomy. The Secretariat is currently exploring potential research to policy funding opportunities where significant progress on regulatory coherence analysis could be made. A request to the group for thoughts and suggestions on funding possibilities was made. Dept of Taoiseach recommended the fast track to funding by EPA. The Secretariat confirmed they would provide an update on this progress at a later date.

Kelli Howard (DECC) reminded the BIG that for those BIG members that have not done so already, there is still time to provide returns on policy coherence, and to contact members of the Secretariat to assist in this process. The importance of a return was stressed, as was the availability of bilaterals if requested.

Kelli provided an update on the approach that DECC is taking internally and with implementation group members on addressing sectoral coherence with a view to completing a paper on sectoral coherence toward the end of 2021.

3. Development of the Bioeconomy Action plan

Patrick Barrett (DAFM) presented a proposed roadmap plan from the Secretariat to the BIG and for the development of a national Bioeconomy Action plan in 2022. A Bioeconomy Action plan is already outlined as a government commitment in the Food Vision 2030 strategy and planned for in the soon to be published Climate Action Plan.

Within the roadmap key assessment consultation activities were flagged, some that have occurred to date and others that were proposed so that other stakeholders could input into the development of the action plan. Following this meeting the proposed roadmap document will be circulated among the group for comments and feedback from the BIG members. It was asked of members at the meeting if they had any comments or suggestions on a better process or reference to best practices, and to take this into account in the development of this action plan.

DFHERIS flagged the national recovery plan as an area where coherence could be sought and suggested some actions that could be addressed by future research calls, such as the SFI funding challenges programme

Teagasc flagged that the connection between circularity (circular economy) and bioeconomy and the need for stronger awareness across all departments and agencies especially with senior management and political figures.

Laura Devaney of Dept of Taoiseach commented that the roadmap proposed appeared to be a clear and inclusive process.

Patrick Barrett (DAFM) mentioned a recent Donegal Local Enterprise Office event that identified steps to include circular and the bioeconomy within their country areas. The event highlighted that 'bioeconomy 'and 'circular economy' was being identified as an opportunity to address key challenges within local authority areas. These steps were highlighted in a report entitled the 'Regional Action Plan for the Promotion and Development of Opportunities for Entrepreneurship in the Circular Economy in Donegal'. This report was commissioned by the Donegal LEO through its involvement the European Interreg project known as SinCE-AFC

Teagasc indicated that they will be working in Donegal on Protein-I developing new VCs and will seek to engage with the Donegal LEO.

4. Short working paper challenges and Barriers to develop Bioeconomy

Noeleen McDonald (DAFM) presented the findings from a working paper on the key challenges and barriers to the future of the Bioeconomy and proposed solutions outlined by the representatives of seven Bioeconomy Infrastructure & initiatives groups that presented at the 8th BIG meeting in June.

Challenges that were identified were classed into three themes:

1) Networks and collaboration,

2) Understanding, awareness and harmonisation and

3). Flexible funding opportunities for business, demonstrations and up-skilling.

The paper will be circulated post meeting for member's feedback.

Teagasc asked if the lack of funds is unique to the bioeconomy or is this a wider problem.

Patrick Barrett (DAFM) responded that there is an EU model used to support bioeconomy development. There is an apparent bottleneck that is EU wide with regards to innovation actions at both demonstration and pre-commercial level aligned with addressing the high cost of scaling up science technology & innovation in an operational setting. Pre-commercial industrial development in the bioeconomy is a challenge to align with funding opportunities. It was noted that DRCD through the Rural Regeneration Fund had offered an opportunity to bridge this gap in 2021. Funding from DETE from the disruptive technologies fund and DECC from the Climate Action Fund may also be appropriate sources for innovation funding for the bioeconomy.

It has also been noted that when you go beyond the initial Enterprise Ireland funding such as feasibility funding that piloting and demonstration funding is difficult to source. Further observing that it is a challenge to get bioeconomy actors to come together and that getting companies to bring technology from research centres into their own businesses is proving difficult. State aid guidelines and funding for primary producers, SMEs and multi-actors to work together is also considered a very significant challenge.

The Marine Institute commented that they have experience high demands in funding request in the Blue Bio co-fund, which had the largest call and pot of money but also the most demand nationally.

5. **Bioeconomy implementation by state agencies**

Invited guest speakers from four semi-state companies (a. to d.) joined the meeting and along with five of the state agencies BIG members (e. to i.) gave a 5 minute presentations. Each outlined what their company/agency has done to date to implement the National Policy Statement on the Bioeconomy where relevant to them, what their organisation plans to do next and what they see as the main challenges & barriers to advancing Ireland's Bioeconomy.

Speakers and the order in which they presented with Q&A and discussion were as follows:

h) Irish Water- *Charlie Coakley*

i) Coillte- *Kenneth Joyce*

j) Gas Networks Ireland- *Ian Kilgallon*

k) Bord Na Móna- *John Mac Namara*

Q&A Short 5 min break

l) Teagasc-*Maeve Henchion*

m) Marine Institute-*Fiona Grant*

n) Science Foundation Ireland- *Peter Clifford*

o) Enterprise Ireland- *Alexa Toomey*

p) EPA- *Mary Frances Rochford*

Q&A

The discussion that proceeded these presentations identified bioenergy and biofuels as initial opportunities with other higher value biobased products being viewed as future products. The influence of poor awareness and the high price of bio-based materials has on the limiting up take of bio-based fossil fuel alternatives was also highlighted.

The Secretariat to the BIG proposed that the main challenges and proposed solutions highlighted within the presentations and the following discussions would be synthesized into a working paper and presented at the next BIG meeting for further reflection and comment. Secretariat to the BIG proposed that the paper could be a considered input to guide the formulation of key recommendations and strategic actions for the development of a Bioeconomy Action Plan in 2022.

6. Bioeconomy Ireland Week 2021

Patrick Barrett (DAFM) informed the group that Bioeconomy Ireland Week 2021 is taking place on the 18th to the 24th October.

Events can be viewed and new events registered by the group at Upcoming Events – Bioeconomy Ireland (ucd.ie). It was flagged the many members of the BIG were already planning and engaging in events. One example included the DAFM & DECC organised bioeconomy skills event that will take place on the launch morning, noting involvement already from by DFHERIS, DETE and Teagasc.

7. AOB- None.

BIG Secretariat

September 2021

Minutes of the eleventh meeting of the Bioeconomy Implementation Group

Location; **Webex Hosted by DAFM**
Date; **Wednesday, 24th November 2021**

Attendees;
Acting co-chairs: (Secretariat) Rob Barnes (DECC) and Patrick Barrett (DAFM)

Departments:
Joseph Moore (DFHERIS), Laura Devaney (Dept of Taoiseach), Andrew Moran (Dept of Taoiseach), Andrea Lennon (Dept of Transport), Faye Carroll (Dept of Transport), Graham McGovern (DHLGH), Vivienne Ahern (DECC) Andrew Gray (DPER)

Agencies: Niamh Garvey (NESC), Maeve Henchion (Teagasc), Órlaith Ní Choncubhair (Teagasc), Alexa Toomey (EI), Fiona Grant (MI), Brain Murphy (SFI), Lea Chua Tan (SFI), Grainne Devine (BIM), PJ McLoughlin (SEAI).

Secretariat: Rob Barnes (DECC), Kellí Howard (DECC), Patrick Barrett (DAFM), Noeleen McDonald (DAFM), Tony Quinn (DAFM) and Fionnuala (DAFM).

Item 1 – Introduction
Rob Barnes welcomed the group to the meeting and gave a brief overview of the agenda for the meeting.
Grainne Devine from BIM, Brian Murphy from SFI and Andrea Lennon from the Department of Transport introduced themselves as the newest members of the group.

Item 2 – Update on Report to Government, Update on the EPA Fast Track to Policy: Circular Bioeconomy Outlook Study 2030-2050 and the Bioeconomy Forum

Patrick Barrett provided an outline on a proposed skeleton structure for a report to Government which will provide an update to the National Policy Statement on the Bioeconomy. Patrick noted that the presentation would be circulated to the members.

He outlined the structure of the report which will consider a description of the bioeconomy, the national strategic development of the bioeconomy and the monitoring of bioeconomy implementation.

Action:

- A first draft of the update to government will be provided to members for feedback, and by the next meeting , a 2nd draft will be prepared based on the feedback received.
- Before the next meeting Laura Devaney to identify which SOG (Senior Officials Group) the report should be presented to.
- Patrick to take on board M Henchion comment of incorporating international dimension under the various appropriate headings**.**

The EPA Fast Track to Policy study which has commenced as of November 2021 was outlined. The study will be complete by May 2022 and will provide clear recommendations to inform policy development for the Bioeconomy Action Plan. The study will produce a synthesis report.. There is also noted engagement to occur in the process of this study with international and national stakeholders', e.g., via the Bioeconomy Forum members.

Action:

- Órlaith Ní Choncubhair (Teagasc) will provide P Barrett, M Henchion and R Barnes, who are on the steering group, with information on the relevant EU reports that should be considered in this study, so they can be passed on to the project team.

P Barrett provided a brief update on the progress of the Bioeconomy Forum. He outlined structural developments; there has been two meetings to date, a third is planned for January 12th, three planned working groups will produce discussion papers, organize workshops and provide a report to the Bioeconomy Implementation Group by July 2022.

Item 3 – Update on Climate Action Plan 2021

R Barnes updated the group on the Climate Action Plan 2021, which was published 4 November 2021. Bioeconomy is located in "The Circular Economy" Chapter. DECC aim to publish the Annex of actions in the coming weeks.

R Barnes outlined to the group the actions which the Climate Action Plan 2021 commits for the Bioeconomy, including the production of a detailed action plan for the bioeconomy in 2022, exploring funding mechanisms, addressing skill gaps for the bioeconomy, and aligning with Circular Economy strategies where appropriate. R Barnes noted that the Whole of Government Circular Economy Strategy was due to be published before the end of the year.

The next steps for the Climate Action Plan will be the publication of a full Annex of actions, which will include details of the designated leading departments, timelines and stakeholders for each action and sub action.

Item 4 – Update on Sectoral Coherence Report and Internal Review

K Howard updated the group on the Sectoral Coherence Paper DECC are working on. The report has progressed and in the final stages of completion. Three departments and two agencies have provided feedback to date;

- Department of Taoiseach
- Department of Enterprise, Employment and Trade
- Department of Rural and Community Development
- Science Foundation Ireland
- Marine Institute

Furthermore, DECC have conducted internal surveys and held bilateral meetings with targeted divisions across the department. This exercise helped gather more information on Bioeconomy policy within the Department currently and set out where it potentially could develop in the future.

Overall, the exercise served its purpose well and increased the awareness of policy makers about the bioeconomy.

The report will outline findings and provide recommendations, which should be finalised by the next BIG meeting.

P Barrett highlighted that departments can still submit sectoral coherence feedback.

G Devine said that she hopes to engage bilaterally on the report.

R Barnes said that DECC will circulate the survey to all members of the group again.

Item 5 - SEAI Presentation

PJ Mcloughlin from SEAI gave a high-level presentation on the National Heat Study. It was agreed to circulate the slides and add appendices with further information, which have now been sent to the group.

R Barnes asked if the analysis examined what actions would be required to deliver on the needs outlined in the analysis – i.e. for biomethane, where we would we get the supply? PJ said that DAFM data was used to develop detailed analysis, and further details on the study would be available next year.

N Garvey asked if a report will be available. PJ said that there are 8 reports coming out in Q1 2022 and offered to return to the group to present on bioenergy at this time.

B Murphy asked if emerging technologies were used to derive the results from this assessment. PJ Mcloughlin said that novel technologies are not included explicitly, but the model centres on the least costly options. PJ noted again the reports would provide more information and that this modelling will be redone over time when such novel technologies are more available.

Item 6 – AOB

Next meeting to be confirmed will take place in early 2022.

Minutes of the twelfth meeting of the Bioeconomy Implementation Group

Location: Online- WebEx Hosted by DAFM

Date: 31st March 2022 (2pm to 4.30pm)

In attendance: Acting co-chairs (Secretariat) Marc Kierans (DECC) and Karl Walsh (DAFM)

Departments: Vivienne Ahern (DECC), Sinead Quinn (DRCD), Laura Devaney (Dept of Taoiseach), Andrew Moran (Dept of Taoiseach), Andrew Gray (DEPR), Cian Kearns (DETE)

Agencies: Niamh Garvey (NESC), Maeve Henchion (Teagasc), Órlaith Ní Choncubhair (Teagasc), Kathleen O' Regan (EI), Fiona Grant (MI), Rory Campbell (BIM), Lea Chua Tan (SFI)

Secretariat: Patrick Barrett, Tony Quinn, Noeleen McDonald, Fionnuala Malone (DAFM)

Apologies: Bill Callanan (Co-Chair & DAFM), Brian Carroll (Co-Chair & DECC), Joseph Moore (DFHERIS), Gareth Makim (DRCD), Grainne Lynch (BIM), Nuala Ni Fhlatharta (Teagasc) Brian Murphy (SFI)

1. Introduction

i. Welcomes

As it was their first BIG meeting, acting co-chairs Karl Wash and Marc Kierans introduced themselves to those in attendance. Both have been assigned heads of their respective divisions in their departments responsible for servicing the BIG secretariat. Karl Walsh replaces Richard Howell in DAFM, and Marc Kierans replaces Noel Reagan in DECC.

Introductions were also provided by Kathleen O'Regan the new representative for Enterprise Ireland replacing Alexa Toomey; Rory Campbell one of two new representatives for Bord Iascaigh Mara (BIM) and Sinead Quinn attending on behalf of Gareth Makim for DRCD.

ii. Feedback from BIG members

Órlaith NÍ Choncubhair (Teagasc) provided a brief presentation updating members on the status of the following EU & International Bioeconomy developments

- Progress report on 2018 EU Bioeconomy Strategy, which expected to be finalised this April/May.
- New EU report on guidelines for managing a healthy & resilient eco-system for the bioeconomy.
- New EU policy initiatives relevant to the bioeconomy on Sustainable Carbon Cycles and Sustainable Products.
- The structure and ongoing work of the International Bioeconomy Forum, where Teagasc's Ray Kelly provides representation as part of his membership of the EU MS Standing Committee on Agricultural Research (SCAR) Steering Group.
- The structure and the ongoing work of International Advisory Council on Global Bioeconomy, of which Órlaith NÍ Choncubhair joined as member in late 2021.

Actions:

- BIG Secretariat to circulate this presentation to members.

- Following a request from Laura Devaney (Dept of Taoiseach), Órlaith NÍ Choncubhair (Teagasc) to keep BIG members regularly updated on EU & International developments including in particular the paper on 'Bioeconomy & its importance for climate goals' being prepared by the International Advisory Council.

2. Bioeconomy Action Plan

i. Consultation with State Agencies & Semi State Commercial Companies - Draft Report

Noeleen McDonald (DAFM) outlined draft paper written by the Secretariat, aimed at summarizing the presentations given at the last two previous BIG meetings from State Agencies (SA) who are BIG members and four invited Semi-State Commercial Companies (SSCC) who are members of the Bioeconomy forum.

The draft paper captures:

- Progress made/plans being considered towards addressing the key actions outlined in the National Policy Statement (NPS) on the Bioeconomy.
- Challenges & barriers that exists among SA & SSCC in progressing Ireland's bioeconomy.
- Potential solutions to addressing these challenges and barriers.

Rory Campbell from BIM provided a presentation on BIM's feedback under the main themes of the draft paper.

Action: BIG Secretariat to incorporate BIM presentation and feedback from SA and SSCC presenters into its final draft for circulation to all BIG members for feedback.

ii. Sectoral Coherence Report

Marc Kierans (DECC) commented on the Sectoral Coherence Report, which was circulated to BIG members for feedback before the meeting. Identifying that from this exercise, the report has highlighted coherency differences and inconsistencies and that there may be unresolved policy conflicts. The report has recommended actions towards improving awareness and providing guidance, and access to expertise on bioeconomy for policy makers, to ensure a coherent policy approach across government and for integration of the bioeconomy policy across departments and agencies.

Fiona Grant (MI) commented that she had submitted minor edits and suggested that as the working group on developing the successor to the harnessing our ocean wealth strategy gets underway, key reports/documents should be made available to ensure bioeconomy is central and kept in mind.

Action: BIG Secretariat to incorporate the feedback and comments by the BIG members and finalize the report. It was noted that the report did not receive feedback from all Departments.

iii. Education, Training & Skills Report

Patrick Barrett (DAFM) gave a summarized update on the report produced by the DAFM Secretariat on the education and training skills workshop event held as part of the launch event for Bioeconomy Ireland week 2021. The report was circulated to the BIG members prior to the meeting for feedback/comment. The report relates to Action 438 in the Climate Action Plan 2021, i.e., Opportunities to increase skills in the bioeconomy will be explored. The event report covers presentations made, roundtable interviews, workshop outcomes and suggested issues to be addressed.

Action: BIG Secretariat to incorporate the feedback and comments by the BIG members and finalize the report, which will feed into the response to the Climate Action Plan 2021 Action 438 and the development of the Bioeconomy Action Plan in Q4 2022.

iv. Circular Bioeconomy Outlook Study 2030-2050

Patrick Barrett (DAFM) provided an update on the progress being made on the EPA Fast track to policy study. Patrick Barrett, Maeve Henchion (Teagasc) & Marc Kierans (DECC) are on the steering group of this project. The project is currently on track and is expected to be completed with a report prepared in time for input into the Bioeconomy Action plan. Publication is expected end of May- Early June. A presentation on the outcomes of the project will likely be given to the BIG group.

Action: BIG Secretariat to organize for the research leads of the project to present an update and or final outcomes at the next (13th) or 14th BIG meeting.

v. Bioeconomy Forum work programme final & update on activities

Patrick Barrett (DAFM) provided an update on the progress that the forum has made in accordance with its finalised work programme, which was circulated to the BIG members before the meeting. Upcoming planned activities include a site visit to the Shinagh Farm Zero C project on the June 23rd which members of the BIG may also wish to join.

Action: BIG Secretariat to expand the invite to the Shinagh Farm Zero C to the BIG members

vi. General comments from the BIG members

Andrew Moran (Dept of Taoiseach) asked about how the process in developing the action plan will ensure engagement with primary producers and industry not represented within the forum. To ensure their perspective in terms of the regulatory requirements and funding options is captured.

Laura Devaney (Dept of Taoiseach) commented on the need to consider better engagement with key departments i.e. Education, Finance, Housing, Local Government and Heritage, who will be important to the support and deliver of potential action.

Actions

- Based on their experiences developing the recent climate action the BIG Secretariat to discuss with the Dept Taoiseach members the procedural options towards delivering the action.
- BIG Secretariat to assess if key departments and agencies are missing from the BIG and follow up with those where engagement with the BIG needs to be enhanced.

3. Report to Government

Patrick Barrett (DAFM) provided an outline of the structure and content of the drafted BIG 2nd progress report to Government. The report was circulated to all members on the 29th of March by Noeleen McDonald (DAFM). The report is structured to provide transparency on implementation that supports the NPS actions and goes beyond these actions.

Actions:

- **All BIG members** to review the draft report and submit feedback to the BIG Secretariat by **COB the 22nd of April.**
- BIG Secretariat to revise draft based on feedback received. And prepare for submission to the SOG, with assistance/guidance from Dept Taoiseach members

4. Networking & Awareness Raising

Noeleen McDonald (DAFM) provided an updated the group on the

- Bioeconomy Innovation Student Challenge – Europe (BISC-E) 2022, which is currently in developments by DAFM and other Bioeconomy network members/partners.
- Bioeconomy Ireland Week 2022 which is proposed to be held on the 17th-23rd October 2022, in which planning for the week is expected to commence after Easter by the Bioeconomy network chaired by the BIG secretariat.

Action: BIG Secretariat will update members of ongoing developments.

5. AOB

The **next meeting** of the BIG is planned for the morning of the **28th of June** where Ms. Tuula Packalen, Director General, Department of Natural Resources, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Finland has agreed to join the meeting to outline the recently update Finnish bioeconomy strategy / action plan.

BIG Secretariat

April 2022

Minutes of the thirteenth meeting of the Bioeconomy Implementation Group

Location: Online- WebEx Hosted by DAFM

Date: 21st July 2022 (3.30pm to 5.00pm)

In attendance: Acting co-chairs (Secretariat) Marc Kierans (DECC) and Karl Walsh (DAFM)

Departments: Vivienne Ahern (DECC) Andrew Moran (Dept of Taoiseach), Gareth Makim (DRCD), Thomas Connolly (Dept of finance), Niall McCabe (DEPR), Andrew Moloney (DETE), Donal Cronin (DHPLG).

Agencies: Niamh Garvey (NESC), Maeve Henchion (Teagasc), Órlaith Ní Choncubhair (Teagasc), Kathleen O' Regan (EI), Fiona Grant (MI), Rory Campbell (BIM), Brian Murphy (SFI), Fiona McCoole (EPA).

Secretariat: Patrick Barrett, Tony Quinn, Noeleen McDonald, (DAFM) Rob Barnes (DECC)

Invited speaker: John Malone (Chair of the National Bioeconomy Forum)

Apologies: Bill Callanan (Co-Chair & DAFM), Brian Carroll (Co-Chair & DECC), Joseph Moore (DFHERIS), Melissa Moloney (DRCD), Grainne Lynch (BIM), Nuala Ni Fhlatharta (Teagasc) Fiona Burke (SFI), Averil Gannon (DHPLG), Laura Devaney (Dept of Taoiseach), Warren Phelan (EPA), Kelli Howard (DECC).

1. **Introduction**- Chaired by Karl Walsh (DAFM)

   Round table introduction to acknowledge the number of new representative members in attendance.

I. Feedback from BIG members

   Karl Walsh informed the members of some key bioeconomy projects that were recently awarded research funding, from DAFM's 2021 Call reserve list.

II. EU Bioeconomy Strategy Progress Report- published in May 2022, Órlaith NÍ Choncubhair (Teagasc) provided an overview to members of some of the key elements of the report:

- Acknowledges that Europe is generally moving towards the Strategy objectives, but environmental challenges persist
- Need for more policy coordination
- Need to transform & re-skill the workforce
- Going forward successful activates to date should be strengthened and additional focus in the implementation of the EU action plan; focusing on understanding further the trade-offs on land-use (via Biosphere Stewardship strategy) and contribute to a consumption-based bioeconomy (via a Consumption-based framework).

Órlaith NÍ Choncubhair also flagged the High-level EU Bioeconomy conference taking place in Brussels on the 6-7th October 2022. Where the report will be presented & livestreamed. With confirmed speakers Commissioner Gabriel, EVP Timmermans and Johan Rockström.

III. Noeleen McDonald (DAFM) updated the group on the following:

a. Bioeconomy Innovation Student Challenge – Europe (BISC-E) 2022, where following a call for applicants, one eligible team is proceeding to the virtual European finals in the Autumn (1st round the 26th Sep and 2nd round on 13th of Oct). A national competition was not required. The multidisciplinary team of LignoFUN is made up of five students from TCD, DCU and UCD with strong supervision from Prof Rameish Babu of TCD. The team's bio-based Innovative Idea is to generate cost-effective and bio-degradable and effective lignin-based flocculants to treat wastewater. The team are currently working on their business case.

b. Bioeconomy Ireland Week 2022 , (BIW 2022), where the date has been set for the 17th-23rd October 2022 and the theme this year is "All voices together". In addition to events, organizers are scoping out some campaign ideas targeted to areas such as supermarkets, museums, pubs, cafes, cinemas and schools. The date and theme are expected to be formally advertised at the end of August. Members of this group are asked to advertise now and encouraged to partake, e.g., run an event, publish material, present at another event.

Actions:

- Órlaith NÍ Choncubhair presentation to be shared with the group.
- BIG Secretariat will update members of ongoing developments of the BISC-E & BIW 2022
- Members to contact the BIG Secretariat if they intend to hold events/activates/materials during BIW 2022. Members to help publicize the week.

2. Bioeconomy Action Plan -Chaired by Marc Kierans (DECC)

I. Report to Government

Patrick Barrett (DAFM) provided a recap outlining the main structure and content of the BIG 2nd progress report to Government, that has incorporated feedback from the BIG following the last meeting. The report and its Executive summary were sent to members in advance of the 13th BIG meeting.

II. Fast Track to Policy Report

Patrick Barrett (DAFM) provided an update on the Circular Bioeconomy Outlook Study 2030-2050 in support of Climate Action & Sustainable Food & Biobased Systems. Assessing international best practice and how this could be applied within an Irish context. Recommendations will be used to inform policy development for the Bioeconomy Action Plan. Report expected to be finalised in September 2022.

III. Bioeconomy Forum Report

Introduction of the Forum provided by the Chair John Malone. Patrick Barrett (DAFM) gave a presentation summary of the main components of the report. Outlining approaches and activates that the forum engaged in, which contributed to identifying seven key elements to be developed and five cross-cutting areas to climate action and social, rural and regional development. The draft report was circulated to all members in advance of the 13th BIG meeting.

Actions:

- BIG Secretariat to summit BIG Progress report to SOG and Cabinet Committee
- Presentation to be circulated to all members containing slides on item 2.
- Forum Report is 90% complete and will be circulated soon for final feedback from the BIG. Following feedback report will be updated and submitted to the SOG.

3. Pre-Bioeconomy Action Plan Drafting-Chaired by Marc Kierans (DECC)

Rob Barnes (DECC) outlined the timeline towards the process and the timeline towards the drafting and publication of the Bioeconomy action plans. Which are broken down into two phases.

- Phase 1 Q3 2022: Evidence Gathering, Departmental Briefings.
- Phase 2 Q4 2022: Drafting Plan & Approval by BIG, Public Consultation and Finalising & Publication.

Plans outline for **Departmental Briefing,** where by the Secretariat will hold two meetings with relevant Departments and Agencies to discuss and identify their bioeconomy approaches and their potential role in delivering actions which align with the evidence base collected by the Secretariat date. 1st Meeting in August to set out some what the requirements are, 2nd in September to delve further into these themes and actions and will seek to broadly agree on a set of actions for the Department/Agency for inclusion in the Bioeconomy Action Plan. A guidance document for the meeting to be circulated to members in advance of these meetings.

Action: Guidance document to be circulate by DECC and feedback sought on if understanding is being achieved by the wider departmental members.

4. AOB-Chaired by Karl Walsh (DAFM

The **next meeting (14th)** of the BIG is planned the last week of September. This meeting is proposed to be person due to the number of changes to representatives on the BIG and the length of time since we last met in person. The capacity for a hybrid meeting to allow some video calls will be investigated. Suggestions to avoiding EU R&I days 28th and 29th Sept and the OECD Rural development conference also on 28th and 29th Sep, in which members are invited to attend. The 15th Meeting of the BIG is proposed for October.

Actions:

- Link to be circulated to the OECD conference. https://www.oecd.org/rural/rural-development-conference/
- Save the date meeting invite will be sent on the next few weeks by the BIG Secretariat

BIG Secretariat

July 2022

Minutes of the fourteenth meeting of the Bioeconomy Implementation Group

Location: **Department of Environment, Climate and Communications Head Office Adelaide Road and Teams**
Date: **3rd October 2022**

Attendees:
Chairs: Marc Kierans (DECC) & Karl Walsh (DAFM)

Secretariat: Rob Barnes (DECC), Kellí Howard (DECC), Patrick Barrett (DAFM), & Noeleen McDonald (DAFM).

Departments: James Cadden (DFHERIS), Laura Devaney (Dept of Taoiseach), Andrew Moran (Dept of Taoiseach), Leslie Carberry (DECC), Niall McCabe (DPER), Thomas Connolly (DFIN), Tony Quinn (DAFM) & Melissa Moloney (DRCD).

Agencies: Niamh Garvey (NESC), Maeve Henchion (Teagasc), Órlaith Ní Choncubhair (Teagasc), Kathleen O'Regan (EI), Fiona Grant (MI), Brain Murphy (SFI), Fiona Burke (SFI) & Conall Mahon (SEAI).

Guest Speakers: Tuula Packalen (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Finland) & Kevin O'Connor (BiOrbic).

Apologies: Mary Frances Rochford (EPA), Aoife O'Grady (Transport), Grainne Devine (BIM), Graham McGovern (DHLGH) & Andrew Gray (DPER).

Item 1: Introduction

M Kierans welcomed the Group to the first hybrid BIG meeting.

Item 2: Finland's Bioeconomy Strategy

Ms. Tuula Packalen, Director General, Department of Natural Resources, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Finland gave a comprehensive overview of the bioeconomy strategy in Finland.

P Barrett asked about the role of public funding and mechanisms in scaling up to industrial level. T Packalen mentioned the challenges in identifying the correct types of funding tools as well as EU restrictions. P Barrett suggested there is an opportunity for joined up thinking in this area across the EU.

L Devaney asked how the Finnish had achieved buy in from across their government Departments and Agencies. T Packalen said that the concept of the bioeconomy has widened in Finland in recent years from solely a transition from fossil fuels, to all sorts of cross-sectoral alternatives.

M Kierans asked about just transitions and consultations and how this was structured in Finland. T Packalen discussed the culture of workshops in Finland and the use of panels with a wide variety of participants. The hosting of such workshops and panels remotely was a great benefit as it enabled many participants who might not have been able to attend otherwise, therefore, obtaining a greater diversity at these events.

K Walsh asked what the biggest different between previous Action Plans and the Finnish's new Action Plan. T Packalen said that previous Plans focused on increasing and improving production of bioresources. Whereas this current Plan, makes better use of demonstrations, experiments and pilot plans.

R Barnes asked about Finland's motivating factors for bolstering their bioeconomy, and about the challenge of updating permitting and regulating systems. T Packalen said that climate change is the biggest driver for their domestic bioeconomy, and that noted that Finland had expedited permitting for certain biobased industries but also noted that, although necessary, Environmental Impact Assessments can complicate and slow down processes.

Item 3: Fast Track to Policy Report

Mr Kevin O'Connor, University College Dublin gave a detailed presentation on the Fast Track To Policy Report on the Circular Bioeconomy 2030-2050.

The Marine Bioeconomy Industry and investment in marine biorefineries was discussed.

K Walsh asked about the role that legumes could play in the future of agriculture. K O'Connor said that a Bandon Co-op were using legumes in 99% of Irish feed but questioned if Ireland will have the land mass dedicated to growing the mass of legumes that this will require. K Walsh suggested that perhaps alternative protein sources could come from the marine sector.

R Barnes asked about anaerobic digestion and biomethane production and what might be the best way to maximise value from feedstocks when designing future digesters and biorefineries. K O'Connor suggested the integration of biogas plants and grass biorefineries so that the optimum yield can be extracted from the vegetation and food waste inputs.

N Garvey asked about the just transition aspects. K O'Connor said that business models need to be fair. Farmers will not be attracted to biorefining or other aspects of the bioeconomy if they are asked to produce a cheap product that will go on to make large profits after it is processed.

O Ní Choncubhair asked about sustainable land uses and feedstocks and a discussion was held.

Item 4: Bioeconomy Action Plan Progress

R Barnes gave a whistlestop tour of the ongoing work on the Bioeconomy Action Plan. DECC have conducted primary bilateral meetings (16) with Departments and Agencies and most of these groups have returned the documents they have been asked to complete that include feedback and potential actions.

Those that have not returned these documents are asked to do so as soon as possible. The next step will be the combination of these documents and an analysis of the information received. DECC and DAFM will also consult with internal colleagues before a further round of bilateral meetings begin. The public consultation document will be distributed to the BIG for observations before it launches during Q4 2022 or Q1 2023.

K Walsh asked if the Action Plan will be focused or have many actions? R Barnes responded by saying that it will be focused with headline actions and possibly sub-actions. There is a possibility that multiple Agencies of Departments may feed into the same action.

L Devaney asked if we were beyond the scope of DAFM and DECC and if DETE should be stepping up their role in the bioeconomy. She also asked if the Action Plan would be aligning with the new Climate Action Plan.

R Barnes said that there would be alignment and that DECC will work with D/ Taoiseach on the reporting structure. R Barnes agreed that engagement with and action for industry was paramount. M Kierans said that the role of Governance will be considered in the Biomethane Action Plan.

Item 5: Updates

N McDonald gave comprehensive update on Bioeconomy Ireland Week, the events that would take place and the communications support that would be needed.

P Barrett said that the Forum's report will be put to the government as part of a memo of information shortly. He also indicated that year two of the Forum will include a workplan that includes site visits, events, workshops and bilateral meetings.

Item 6: AOB

The next meeting will take place in the 2nd or 3rd week of January.

Minutes of the fifteenth meeting of the Bioeconomy Implementation Group

Location: **Department of Environment, Climate and Communications Head Office Adelaide Road & Microsoft Teams**
Date: **12th January 2023**

Attendees:
Chairs: Marc Kierans (DECC) & Karl Walsh (DAFM)

Secretariat: Rob Barnes (DECC), Kellí Howard (DECC), Patrick Barrett (DAFM), & Noeleen McDonald (DAFM).

Departments: Cian Kearns (DETE), Andrea Lennon (Dep of Transport), Andrew Moran (Dept of Taoiseach), Leslie Carberry (DECC), Vivienne Ahern (DECC), Brian Quirke (DECC), Thomas Connolly (DFIN), Melissa Moloney (DRCD), Gareth Makim (DRCD), John Ryan (DRCD), Lorraine Caulfied (DFHERIS), & Donal Cronin (Dep of Housing).

Agencies: Niamh Garvey (NESC), Órlaith Ní Choncubhair (Teagasc), Kathleen O'Regan (EI), Fiona Grant (MI), Conall Mahon (SEAI), Odile Le Bollach (EPA), Ronan Cooney (BIM) & Grainne Devine (BIM).

Item 1: Introduction

M Kierans welcomed the Group and opened the floor for new members to introduce themselves.

Item 2: Bioeconomy Action Plan Update

P Barrett gave a detailed overview of tasks achieved on the Bioeconomy Action Plan since the last meeting. These included bilateral engagements between DECC, DAFM, and other Government Departments and Agencies regarding the inclusion of actions to be included in the plan. P Barrett also noted the consultation on the Action Plan which is due to close at the end of January. P Barrett noted that the finalised Action Plan will be launched by the end of Q1 2023. P Barrett also gave an overview of the bioeconomy timeline since the launch of the EU bioeconomy strategy.

Finally, P Barrett discussed the various evidence gathering approaches undertaken by the secretariat in order to inform this process.

A detailed overview of the seven pillars and the draft actions attributed to them were discussed by R Barnes and P Barrett. R Barnes noted that these actions are not finalised, and the secretariat is open to inputs and suggestions from the Group. Additionally, submissions are welcomed to the consultation available at gov.ie.

A Lennon noted the Department of Transport's eagerness to be involved in Biomethane Strategy announced in Climate Action Plan 2023 and asked if DECC colleagues were working across the Department on biomethane tasks.

L Carberry complimented the work and noted the need to formalise the role of the Circular Economy within the Action Plan. It was agreed he would meet with the Secretariat separately to discuss.

K Walsh noted that there was scope in the Communities Pillar for advisory services, training and awareness at a local level. He outlined that other Departments must lead out on actions to ensure ownership and intention. P Barrett responded to K Walsh's comments that the Action Plan will be looking to engage with local educators.

N Garvey highlighted natural capital accounting in the plan and noted that NESC are undertaking tasks on this issue which might feed in.

R Barnes reiterated that the actions discussed have not yet been finalised, and that the next step will be to await the outcome of the consultation, collect and redraft actions, and approach Departments and Agencies with specific asks. That will involve Departments and Agencies taking on new actions, and may involve aligning current actions across Government.

C Mahon said SEAI were very interested in flow analysis. O Ní Choncubhair questioned if we have adequate knowledge of the bioeconomy skillset within the workforce. P Barrett noted an EU study as well as reports prepared by the Implementation group and Bioeconomy Forum following stakeholder events that has been conducted.

The next steps were outlined, following the conclusion of the Consultation (27 January) the Secretariat will redraft the action plan with specific actions required of Departments and Agencies.

Item 3: Bioeconomy Forum Year 2 Approach

P Barrett gave an overview of the planned meetings for the Bioeconomy Forum as well as working groups and their agendas. P Barrett also outlined two trips the Forum will take, in Hungary (Clonbio) and Italy (Bioeconomy Cluster).

Item 4: AOB

N McDonald gave an update on the bioeconomy webpage on gov.ie (gov.ie - The Bioeconomy (www.gov.ie))

The Group were informed that the Bioeconomy Action Plan will be highlighted at an upcoming Senior Officials Group. Additionally, the next meetings will be held in February, May, September and November with exact dates to follow.

M Kierans highlighted that Climate Action Plan 23 was published shortly before Christmas and that bioeconomy can be found in the cross-cutting chapter.

L Carberry announced that Dublin will be hosting the Circular Economy Hotspot in May 2023 and requested that we highlight CirculÉire to the group.

K Walsh noted that the Memo to Government, which includes the second progress report, the Bioeconomy Forum Report and the Fast-Track-To-Policy Report will be brought to cabinet in the coming weeks with the aim for it to be published at gov.ie by the end of the month.

Land Use and Sectoral Policy
12/01/23

Minutes of the sixteenth meeting of the Bioeconomy Implementation Group

Location: **Department of Environment, Climate and Communications Head Office Adelaide Road & Microsoft Teams**
Date: **23rd Feb 2023**

Attendees:
Chair: Karl Walsh (DAFM)

Secretariat: Rob Barnes (DECC), Kellí Howard (DECC) & Patrick Barrett (DAFM).

Departments: Valerie Hughes (Dep of Transport), Andrew Moran, Conor O'Raghllaigh & Laura Devaney (Dept of Taoiseach), Vivienne Ahern (DECC), Thomas Connolly (DFIN).

Agencies: Niamh Garvey (NESC), Órlaith Ní Choncubhair (Teagasc), Joanne Sheahan & Kathleen O'Regan (EI), Conall Mahon (SEAI), Warren Phelan (EPA), Odie Le Bolloch (EPA), Grainne Devine (BIM) Niall McEvoy (SFI).

Item 1: Introduction

K Walsh welcomed the group and opened the floor for new members to introduce themselves.

Item 2: Bioeconomy Action Plan Consultation

K Howard presented an overview of the consultation process, the responses received and provided an analysis of the findings.

V Hughes highlighted D/Transport interest in the consultation process and sought further engagement between the secretariat and D/Transport.

R Barnes agreed this could be facilitated.

K Walsh asked for the submissions to be made available to the wider group.

R Barnes said that all submissions would be available on the gov.ie website in time, but that the secretariat can ascertain if they can be circulated within the group beforehand.

L Devaney was enthused to see climate action throughout the Action Plan Consultation and asked if respondents provided any further details on how Key Performance Indicators could be captured and analysed.

K Howard said that the respondents provided high-level KPIs only. The secretariat will examine the KPIs during the later stages of the Action Plan Planning.

P Barrett noted that there are emerging activities within the EU[3] other EU MS in tracking progress and noted the Informbio project. P Barrett suggested that the group should discuss KPIs and a tracking timeframe when the action plan is at an advanced stage.

[3] EU Bioeconomy Monitoring System | Knowledge for policy (europa.eu)

L Devaney was happy to hear that the EU are monitoring the bioeconomy and suggested linking with the Climate Action Plan KPIs.

K Walsh noted that KPIs may highlight trends and the difficulty in tracking macro KPIs, such as economic growth and employment.

R Barnes noted the importance of ensuring that KPIs are understandable and informative to all relevant parties including the public.

P Barrett noted other trends in the consultation such as fostering investment to move from research to industrial development as well as the push for a local/regional approaches.

Item 3: Bioeconomy Action Plan Progress

P Barrett gave an overview of the progress to date of the progress of the Action Plan. This included bilateral engagements between DECC, DAFM, and other Government Departments and Agencies regarding the inclusion of actions to be included in the plan. P Barrett also gave an overview of the bioeconomy timeline since the launch of the EU bioeconomy strategy. Finally, P Barrett provided a detailed overview of the draft actions for the Bioeconomy Action Plan.

K Walsh congratulated the secretariat on the work done on the draft so far. He noted that himself and M Kierans will have to sign off the draft before the circulation of the document to the broader group for their thoughts. K Walsh also noted the need for further bilateral engagements with other Government Departments to agree actions at an appropriate level

G Devine asked if the SEA screening process had taken place.

G Devine said that the SEA process will be a good opportunity for other Departments to engage.

R Barnes outlined that when the structure of the Plan is finalised, an SEA screening will take place.

K Walsh noted that if a full SEA needs to take place the Action Plan will not be released by Q1 2023. He also noted the need for strong engagement from partner Departments.

Item 4: AOB

K Walsh noted that a Memorandum for Information containing an update on Bioeconomy implementation progress, and two bioeconomy reports would be available on eCabinet shortly. He also reiterated the importance of other Departments feedback, particularly in written form.

Finally, he noted the new Swedish presidency and how the bioeconomy is a key priority for their tenure.

BIG Secretariat
27/02/23

Minutes of the seventeenth meeting of the Bioeconomy Implementation Group

Location: **Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine & Microsoft Teams**
Date: **18th May 2023**

Attendees:
Chair: Karl Walsh (DAFM) & Marc Kierans (DECC)

Secretariat: Rob Barnes (DECC), Kellí Howard (DECC) & Patrick Barrett (DAFM)

Departments: DRCD, DHLGH, DEd, DFHERIS, DETE, DoT, DFIN, DTransport

Agencies: NESC, Marine Institute, Teagasc, EPA, BIM, SFI, EI

Apologies: SEAI, DPERNDP

Item 1: Bioeconomy Reports to Government

K Walsh outlined that the Cabinet had been informed of a series of bioeconomy reports (Report to Government on bioeconomy policy implementation, Bioeconomy stakeholder forum report, EPA Bioeconomy evidence synthesis report) which were subsequently published in a press release gov.ie - Ministers publish series of bioeconomy reports (www.gov.ie)

Item 2: Promoting a more sustainable, competitive and resilient Europe and boosting rural areas: Council approves conclusions on the opportunities of the bioeconomy

K Walsh outlined several points from the EU Agri Fish Council approving conclusions on the opportunities of the bioeconomy[4]. Ireland had strongly endorsed the conclusions.

The EU Commission are planning to prepare an updated EU Bioeconomy Strategy.

The EU Commission are planning to reflect on how the bioeconomy has been considered in respective to EU Member States CAP Strategic Plans due to a specific bioeconomy objective being part of the CAP objectives.

The conclusions reflected the need for holistic and coordinated national bioeconomy policy approaches.

Item 3: BIG members feedback on the Bioeconomy Action Plan

The BIG members were thanked for their engagement with a May 31st deadline set for the end of the feedback process.

It was noted that it would be beneficial to provide more specific timelines and to provide numbering for actions to improve the reporting process.

[4] Promoting a more sustainable, competitive and resilient Europe and boosting rural areas: Council approves conclusions on the opportunities of the bioeconomy - Consilium (europa.eu)

Several Departments (e.g., DETE) will come back with final observations as soon as possible.

Other Departments (DRCD) were happy with the version as it stood.

It was noted that the Bioeconomy Action Plan 2023 (and its narrative) should be aligned with the Climate Action Plans.

DFHERIS were engaging with their Education, Training & Skills colleagues. They also identified that actions related to third-level education needed to respect the autonomy of the third level institutions.

Item 4: Bioeconomy Implementation & Development Group (BIDG) Terms of Reference

It has been proposed to update the Terms of Reference and the group's title.

The draft updated Terms of Reference offers each Department an opportunity to reflect on their membership.

The Terms of Reference will also house the contact names for the group.

The updated Terms of Reference objectives were presented and an overview of the enhanced role and responsibilities for the Departments and their agencies are outlined.

The Terms of Reference will be finalised and approved at the next BIDG meeting.

Item 5: Bioeconomy Infrastructure & Funding

Updates were provided on developments on the Pilot Biorefinery in Lisheen, the BioConnect Centre in Monaghan and the Northwest Bioeconomy Hub in Donegal.

Updates were provided on the Bioeconomy Demonstration Initiative (pilot and demonstration) funding through both the EU Just Transition Fund and the Shared Island Initiative and its fund.

Item 6: AOB

NESC will host a Just Transition in Agriculture/ and use event in Dublin on June 30th.

Some upcoming international bioeconomy activities include;

- Canada will host an online Global Bioeconomy Summit
- The HOME - IACBG (iacgb.net) will be preparing a report in Q3 2023 to reflect on the EU Bioeconomy Council conclusions.

Next dates on the BIDG to be confirmed in early August.