Circular Bio-based Europe Joint Undertaking

THE FUTURE OF EUROPE'S BIO-BASED ECONOMY: SHIFTING FROM FOSSIL FUEL DEPENDENCE TO RENEWABLE RESOURCES

Brussels, 28 January 2026

PRESS RELEASE

Mark your calendars: on 24 March 2026, more than 400 representatives from the bio-based sector will convene in Brussels to explore how Europe's high-potential bio-based innovations can be scaled up into industrial solutions, strengthening Europe's competitiveness and strategic autonomy. The discussion is particularly timely, as the EU prepares to launch the Biotech II Act and the Circular Economy Act, and roll out the updated Bioeconomy Strategy.

About the forum

The forum will include **panel discussions** on scaling up solutions and overcoming policy challenges, an **exhibition of more than 40 bio-based products**, and structured networking opportunities. Industry leaders, policymakers, researchers, primary producers, and regional representatives will exchange insights from successful initiatives and discuss the most urgent priorities for advancing a thriving circular economy in Europe. Journalists will have the opportunity to arrange interviews with CEOs and C-suite executives of leading European bio-based companies, alongside researchers and policymakers.

Nicoló Giacomuzzi-Moore, CBE JU Executive Director says:
"The circular bio-based sector is of tremendous strategic importance for the European Union. By reducing dependence on fossil imports, it strengthens Europe's strategic autonomy. By fostering innovation and market opportunities, it boosts economic competitiveness across regions. And by supporting the transition to sustainable growth, it contributes to the EU's climate goals. I look forward to the discussions with Europe's leading voices on the critical challenge ahead: turning high-potential bio-based innovations into large-scale industrial solutions."

- Consult the forum's programme and speakers.
- Discover European bio-based solutions to be showcased at the forum.
- Watch the CBE JU Executive Director's take on the event.

About European bio-based industries

Bio-based industries are helping Europe transition **from a fossil fuel-dependent economic model to sustainable production and consumption**. By converting renewable resources - primarily waste and residues from other production processes - into higher-value materials and products, they create both environmental and economic benefits.

Europe is a global leader in bio-based innovation, delivering sustainable solutions for key sectors of the economy, including chemicals, textiles and packaging. However, significant financial and regulatory barriers remain, limiting the large-scale deployment of bio-based production across regions.

Key facts and figures

The forum is organised by the **Circular Bio-based Europe Joint Undertaking (CBE JU)**, the EU's leading funding body with a mission to scale up bio-based technologies, de-risk investments and create new value chains in the sector.

This partnership between the European Union and the Bio-based Industries Consortium (BIC) funds research and industrial deployment projects via annual calls for project proposals. Since 2014, it has invested a total of **€1.3 billion** in the sector, with every euro of public funding attracting **€3.5 in private investment**. The programme has helped small and medium-sized enterprises reduce the risks associated with investing in cutting-edge technologies. By supplying biomass to the projects, primary producers – farmers, fishermen and foresters – have found alternative income sources and new business opportunities.

- CBE JU funded projects have delivered **100 bio-based products** and **250 new materials**. Examples include sound-insulation panels made from waste and fungi, asphalt made of wood residues and a swimsuit made of sugar beet, wood and straw waste. *(Photos available on request).*
- CBE JU has funded **19 biorefineries** and **150 demonstration plants** with high replication potential across Europe, including:
    - **Italy:** the *EMBRACED* project developed a technology to transform absorbent hygiene items, such as baby diapers and menstrual products, into valuable bio-based materials, fertilisers and bioplastic. The model has triggered **€109 million** in Italian government investment for the building of 11 new plants nationwide.
    - **France:** the *AFTERBIOCHEM* flagship biorefinery converts sugar beet residues into organic acids used in food and cosmetics, while also producing a potassium-rich fertiliser. The biorefinery has created close to 300 direct and indirect jobs and is a driver for regional growth.
- The circular bio-based sector already employs **17.1 million people**, representing around **8% of total EU employment**.

Practical information

Date:	24 March 2026
Time:	09:30-19:30 Brussels time
Location:	The Square, Mont des Arts, 1000 Brussels
Registration:	https://www.cbesf26.eu/registration-form/

Media contact:
For more information or interview requests, please contact:
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