NEW BBI JU & SCAR REPORT: "LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEVELOPING CLUSTERS IN THE BIOECONOMY"

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On 14 March 2019, [Bio-based Industries Joint Undertaking](https://www.bbi-europe.eu/)(BBI JU) States Representatives Group (SRG) and the [SCAR Bioeconomy Strategic Working Group](https://scar-europe.org/index.php/news-display/4-scar-bioeconomy-strategic-working-group)(BSW) organised a joint workshop to exchange best practices for the creation of regional thematic clusters; to identify drivers for creation of clusters and to share experiences on successful Bioeconomy related clusters from around Europe.

The BBI JU widening participation strategy intends to increase the participation of member states, associated countries, regions and stakeholders in the initiative to leverage the full EU bio-based potential. The study “Bioeconomy development in EU Regions” published by the European Commission (DG RTD), demonstrates the direct link between the high participation of a certain country in the BBI JU and the presence of clusters. Clusters are closer to territories and can make the necessary link between the regions and the bioeconomy / the BBI JU initiative. Moreover, clusters are instrumental to leverage the participation of SMEs in the Bioeconomy.

The SCAR BSW aims at facilitating informal exchanges between MSs on regional, national and European activities; at implementing strategies and on encouraging research and innovation (e.g. needs, hurdles, challenges, organisational matters etc.) in the broad area of the Bioeconomy. BSW’s ambition is to be the central platform in Europe overseeing different initiatives at national and European level and to translate this into conclusions on actions.

The specific **objective** of the workshop was to stimulate interest in creating regional bioeconomy clusters in regions and countries which are less active in the bioeconomy and bio-based sectors via an exchange of knowledge and experiences in developing such clusters. The **final aim** of the workshop was to foster support for the bioeconomy in general and for increased participation in the BBI JU Initiative of underrepresented countries, including SMEs.

The workshop brought together 83 experts and representatives of bioeconomy related clusters, SRG delegates, SCAR BSW members, BIOEAST2 members and policy makers at national and regional level to discuss the key elements for cluster development and their role in supporting the bioeconomy. Participants included a relevant participation of representatives from countries which are currently less active.

**As a follow-up action of the workshop, a brief report has been produced and can be consulted**[**here**](https://www.bbi-europe.eu/sites/default/files/workshop_report-lessons_learned_and_recommendations_for_developing_clusters_in_the_bioeconomy.pdf)**.**