

Perspectives on Sustainable Bioeconomy in the Baltic Sea Region

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Abstract : ‘Bioeconomy’ is a complex concept that cuts across many sectors and covers several policy areas. To achieve an overall understanding and support a successful bioeconomy, a cross-sectorial approach is necessary. In practice, due to the concept’s wide scope and varying international approaches, fully understanding bioeconomy is challenging on policy level. This paper provides a background of the topic through an analysis of bioeconomy strategies in the Baltic Sea region. Expert interviews and a small survey were conducted to discover the current and intended focuses of these countries’ bioeconomy sectors. The research shows that supporting sustainability is one of the keys in developing the future bioeconomy. The results highlighted that the bioeconomy has to be sustainable and based on circular economy principles. Currently, traditional bioeconomy sectors like food, wood, fish & waters as well as fuel & energy, which are in the core of national bioeconomy strategies, are best known and are considered more relevant than other bioeconomy industries. However, there is increasing potential for novel sectors, such as textiles and pharmaceuticals. The present research indicates that the opportunities presented by these bioeconomy sectors should be recognised and promoted. Education, research and innovation can play key roles in developing transformative and sustainable improvements in primary production and renewable resources. Furthermore, cooperation between businesses and educators is important.

Keywords : bioeconomy, circular economy, policy, strategy

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