

# Unlock the potential of bio-based and biodegradable plastics: challenges to be addressed

3rd November 2022 – 9.00-12.00 CET (online)

<p><b>Context</b></p>	<p>In the last years, the EC is funding several projects and initiatives to investigate under which conditions biodegradable and bio-based plastics can contribute to reduce pollution in our ecosystems.</p> <p>These projects can also play a role in providing policy recommendations and supporting policy makers with data, research outcomes and the identification of gaps that should be addressed to actively support the EU's plastics strategy.</p> <p>Nevertheless, there is an <b>urgent need to encourage a holistic, collaborative debate, shortening the gap between research projects and decision-makers.</b></p> <p>To respond to these needs, a collaboration among <a href="#">Glaukos project</a>, <a href="#">Bio-Plastics Europe</a>, <a href="#">European Bioplastics Research Network</a>, <a href="#">European Bioeconomy Network</a> led to the organisation of this workshop, that paves the way to the incoming 7th EBRN Event (23th November 2022).</p> <p>These events build on the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Glaukos Stakeholder Labs workshop "Tackling microplastics pollution: can biodegradable textile and coating be a solution?"</a> - 20 June 2022</li> <li>• 6th EBRN EVENT <a href="#">"Insights from 10 Horizon projects: EU policy for bio-based and biodegradable plastics"</a> - 22nd June 2022.</li> <li>• <a href="#">Shared online document</a> collecting Questions &amp; Answers from Policy Officers and Projects with regards to important policy and research questions</li> </ul>
<p><b>Objectives</b></p>	<p>The objective of the workshop is to involve the most relevant projects related to bio-based plastics, to discuss the most urgent challenges to be addressed to unlock the potential of bio-based and biodegradable plastic, in light of providing policy recommendations to be shared with EC Policy Officers in the context of the incoming 7th EBRN Event (23th November 2022).</p> <p>The discussion will be structured along the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• System perspective: LCA of Bio-based vs conventional plastics</li> <li>• End-of-Life options (biodegradability, ecotoxicity, recyclability, leakage, etc.)</li> <li>• Raising awareness, stakeholder engagement, collaboration and coordination</li> <li>• Projects' contribution to EU policies</li> </ul>
<p><b>Expected outcomes</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate mutual learning and cross-fertilisation of experiences among projects</li> <li>• Facilitate the communication between the EU Policy Officers and projects</li> <li>• Provide policy recommendations in light of incoming EU initiatives and policies</li> </ul>
<p><b>Target participants</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EU funded projects</li> <li>• Relevant initiatives</li> </ul>
<p><b>Organisers</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Glaukos project</a> aims to develop innovative bio-based textiles and coatings to significantly reduce the carbon and plastic footprint of clothing and fishing gear</li> <li>• <a href="#">Bio-Plastics Europe</a> project aims at delivering sustainable strategies and solutions for bio-based plastics supporting the EU-Plastic Strategy and promote circularity in the economy</li> <li>• <a href="#">European Bioplastics Research Network (EBRN)</a>, an active community of representatives from universities, research institutions and enterprises interested in bio-based and biodegradable plastics research</li> <li>• <a href="#">European Bioeconomy Network (EuBioNet)</a>, a proactive alliance of more than 112 EU funded projects and initiatives in the bioeconomy, aiming at increasing knowledge sharing, networking and mutual learning.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Registration</b></p>	<p>The workshop is free of charge. To participate, please register at: <a href="https://bit.ly/3SkLoKD">https://bit.ly/3SkLoKD</a></p>

**For more information:**

FVA - Glaukos project communication partner  
 Selenia Marinelli – [marinelli@fvaweb.it](mailto:marinelli@fvaweb.it)

<b>9:00 - 9:15</b>	Opening and overview of the projects from Glaukos coordinator and Bio-Plastics Europe coordinator	Zsófia Kádár – Glaukos project Jelena Barbir – Bio-Plastics Europe and EBRN
<b>9:15 - 9:30</b>	Objectives of the workshop, expected outcomes and follow-ups	Susanna Albertini – Glaukos project and EuBioNet Jelena Barbir – Bio-Plastics Europe and EBRN
<b>Open discussions (all projects contributing)</b>		
<b>9:30 – 10:00</b>	Discussion topic 1: System perspective: LCA of Bio-based vs conventional plastics	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment of bio-based plastics vs conventional ones</li> <li>• Ensure feedstock sustainability for bio-based plastics</li> <li>• Compostable and biodegradable plastics vs. conventional ones</li> <li>• Impacts on society (e.g. health) and environment along the life cycle</li> </ul>	
<b>10:00 - 10:30</b>	Discussion topic 2: End-of-Life options (biodegradability, ecotoxicity, recyclability, leakage, etc.)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complexity of the biodegradation processes in open environment (e.g. marine environment)</li> <li>• Measurements, metrics and standards for the biodegradation in the open environment</li> <li>• Safety / toxicity issues (including use of additives in biodegradable plastics)</li> <li>• Recyclability of bio-based plastics (e.g. creation of value chain, market volumes)</li> </ul>	
<b>10:30 - 10:40</b>	<b>Coffee Break</b>	
<b>10:40 - 11:10</b>	Discussion topic 3: Raising awareness, stakeholder engagement, collaboration and coordination	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scientific knowledge transfer to relevant actors (policymakers, industry and society)</li> <li>• Connect initiatives at local, national, and EU level</li> <li>• Mobilize citizens and society for the scale-up of solutions (from niche to norm)</li> <li>• End-users' behaviour and impacts of bio-based and biodegradable plastics (e.g. awareness, acceptance, unintentional and mismanaged disposal)</li> </ul>	
<b>11:10 - 11:40</b>	Discussion topic 4: Projects' contribution to EU policies	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limit the use of biodegradable plastics in the open environment to specific applications for which reduction, reuse, and recycling are not feasible<sup>1</sup>. Projects' point of view.</li> <li>• What role for biobased and biodegradable plastics in reaching the 2030 targets of the EU Zero Pollution Action Plan<sup>2</sup></li> <li>• Recommendations and research data from projects to support EU policies</li> <li>• How to shorten the gap between projects' outcomes and policies?</li> </ul>	
<b>11:40 - 11:50</b>	Questions from projects to policy officers	
	<i>Collection of questions to be addressed to policy officers on the 23 of November workshop</i>	
<b>11:50 - 12:00</b>	<b>Wrap-up, conclusions, next steps + Q&amp;A</b>	

<sup>1</sup> See EU Science Advisory Mechanism Opinion on Biodegradable Plastics (2020)

<sup>2</sup> Reduce by at least 50% plastic litter at sea, Reduce by at least 30% microplastics released into the environment.