



UNIVERSITÄT
HOHENHEIM



**european
bioeconomy
university**

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JOINT PRESS RELEASE

from the Universities of Hohenheim, Bologna, and Eastern Finland, AgroParisTech, BOKU Vienna, and Wageningen University and Research Centre

Contract Signed:

European universities join forces to create a new generation of experts

3 July 2019: Six EU universities agree on an ambitious goal: Research, teaching, and innovation for a smart, climate-friendly, and sustainable European bioeconomy

In a bid to educate a new generation of experts, six European universities combine their strengths. The official start of the cooperation was the signing ceremony of a Memorandum of Understanding in Brussels. Under the name "European Bioeconomy University", the consortium aims to promote the necessary transformation of the economy and society in Europe. The founding members are AgroParisTech (France), the Universities of Bologna (Italy), Eastern Finland (Finland), and Hohenheim (Germany), the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Vienna (Austria), and the Wageningen University and Research Centre (Netherlands). See www.european-bioeconomy-university.eu.

Instead of non-renewable resources, the bioeconomy relies on biological resources from plants, animals, and micro-organisms including waste and residual materials. This has an enormous potential: Bioeconomy "will drive the renewal of our industries, the modernisation of our primary production systems, the protection of the environment and will enhance biodiversity" predicted the EU in its Circular Economy Action Plan of the EC (2019).

To be successful, the European bioeconomy needs to have sustainability and circularity at its heart. To this end, six universities, each of which is a leader in its own country in the field of bioeconomy, have now joined forces.

The partners share the vision of the EU. They are convinced that specific skills are needed to fully benefit from the opportunities offered by bioeconomy. Building on complementarities and thriving pre-existing collaborations, the six universities decided to deepen their collaboration by forming an alliance. They are jointly addressing the key challenges of bioeconomy in Europe and thereby achieving a greater impact.

Experts and innovations for the transfer of knowledge

The cooperation is intended to create a framework for excellent, interdisciplinary, and transnational research. Together, the six founding partners aim to educate the best minds to create a new generation of European experts. Technical as well as social innovations are to push the transfer of knowledge from research into business and society.

In order to prevent the climate being overburdened and planetary boundaries being further overstepped, fossil-based and other non-renewable raw materials will need to be replaced by bio-based and/or biodegradable ones. “Our global intellectual leadership is our strongest asset in meeting the expectations and legitimate claims of future generations,” announced the leaders of the six partner universities in their mission statement at the signing ceremony in Brussels.

More Information

- European Bioeconomy University: www.european-bioeconomy-university.eu
- Circular Economy Action Plan of the EC (2019): <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1551871195772&uri=CELEX:52019DC0190>
- Updated Bioeconomy Strategy (EC 2018): https://ec.europa.eu/research/bioeconomy/pdf/ec_bioeconomy_strategy_2018.pdf

BACKGROUND on the Participating Universities (in alphabetical order)

AgroParisTech (Paris Institute of Technology for Life, Food and Environmental Sciences)

AgroParisTech encompasses the multiple dimensions of bioeconomy from agricultural production, management of land and natural resources, forestry, sustainable and healthy food systems, biotechnologies to related socio-economic sciences, implementing this vision through its research, innovation and education activities, supporting both excellence and multidisciplinaryity.

As the French leading graduate school in this field, AgroParisTech offers MSc in Engineering,

Master as well as PhD programmes and executive education covering bioeconomy topics in an integrative approach.

AgroParisTech is a founding member of Université Paris-Saclay and has a long-standing strategic partnership with INRA (French National Institute for Agricultural Research) for research activities.

Homepage: <http://www2.agroparistech.fr/>

University of Bologna

Through its 32 departments the University of Bologna invests in a multidisciplinary cross-cultural approach to bioeconomy thanks to the inseparable connection between research and teaching, the promotion of international networking and young researchers' mobilization. The University of Bologna has dedicated a growing attention to the bioeconomy R&I and is currently committed in 35 H2020 projects with a total EU contribution of over 12M€.

Moreover, the University of Bologna can count also on a considerable experience in bioeconomy education among which are worth citing: the first European Master in Bioeconomy in the circular economy, Erasmus Mundus Joint doctorate in Sustainable Industrial Chemistry, Erasmus Mundus Master Course in Chemical Innovation and Regulation and an upcoming international Master in Low Carbon Technologies And Sustainable Chemistry.

Homepage: <https://www.unibo.it/en>

University of Eastern Finland

The strategic focus of the University of Eastern Finland relating to the bioeconomy is on forests, wood and land use. The diverse expertise covers the whole value network ranging from forests and customers to all uses, functions and services of forest ecosystems. Research and education in this domain focus on product and service innovations, and on the use of novel forest-, non-wood and wood-based material solutions, while also addressing their ecological and social implications. These include the sufficiency and governance of natural resources and the acceptability and responsibility of their use.

UEF has several Master's degree programmes related to the forest-based bioeconomy, including European Forestry, Wood Materials Science, and Tourism Marketing and Management programmes. The Doctoral Programme in Forests and Bioresources, too, focuses on the forest-based bioeconomy. More than half of the students in these programmes are international students.

Homepage: <http://www.uef.fi/en/web/biotalous>

University of Hohenheim

Bioeconomy is the leading research topic at the University of Hohenheim. At the three faculties

(Agricultural Sciences, Natural Sciences, and Business, Economics and Social Sciences), agricultural, nutritional, and food scientists work hand in hand with physicists, biologists, biotechnologists, economists, and social scientists. They cover everything from plant and animal production to new technical processes and the necessary change processes in the economy and society.

The University of Hohenheim offers several Bachelor's and Master's programs in the area of the bioeconomy, including the cross-faculty Master's program Bioeconomy.

Homepage: www.uni-hohenheim.de/en

University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU)

Founded in 1872, BOKU does research and teaching in managing natural resources by combining natural, technical, social and economic sciences. With this setting BOKU addresses most of the 17 SDGs defined by the United Nations covering conservation, sustainable management of agriculture, forestry and fisheries, food security, wood-processing and biotechnology. BOKU's trans- and interdisciplinary philosophy tackles the multiple challenges and is strongly application-oriented. BOKU's key vision is sustainable development by contributing to the transformation processes towards a bio-based green economy for Europe.

Homepage: <http://www.boku.ac.at>

Wageningen University and Research

Wageningen University and Research (WUR) is one of the world's leading education and research centres in the plant, animal, environmental, agro-technological, food and social sciences, and for two consecutive years the best Agriculture University worldwide. Bioeconomy is a core area for research, education and innovation at Wageningen University and Research.

WUR counts several Educational programs in this area and this year a new MSc program Biobased Sciences has been initiated that explores the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinarity of a Circular Bioeconomy.

Homepage: <https://www.wur.nl/>

Moreover, WUR offers several Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC's) on different aspects of Bioeconomy

<https://www.wur.nl/en/Research-Results/Themes/theme-biobased-economy.htm>

<https://www.wur.nl/en/Education-Programmes/master/MSc-programmes/MSc-Biobased-Sciences.htm>

<https://www.edx.org/school/wageningenx>



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