

Report on the
**SCANBALT BIOECONOMY WORKING GROUP
KICK-OFF CONFERENCE**

21 October 2020



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Authors	Jennifer Nitzschke (editor), Valerie Sartorius, Agency for Renewable Resources, Germany Beate Cuypers, University of Greifswald, Germany Johanna Lund, Research Institutes of Sweden (RISE), Sweden Rasmus Nør Hansen, Roskilde University, Denmark Paweł Dąbrowski, Gdańsk University of Technology, Poland
Project title	Bioeconomy in the South Baltic Area: Biomass-based Innovation and Green Growth For information on the project please check https://biobigg.ruc.dk/
Project acronym	BioBIGG
Work Package	WP6 – Building a cross-border sustainable bioeconomy network in the South Baltic Area
Deliverable	D6.1 – Establishment and promotion of the South Baltic Network (SBBN)
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1. Summary

The establishment of a South Baltic Bioeconomy Network (SBBN) is part of the WP 6 – *Building a cross-border sustainable bioeconomy network in the South Baltic Area* of the BioBIGG project. At the project workshop ‘Legal Framework Conditions for the Development of a Sustainable Bioeconomy’ in November 2019, the following results regarding the SBBN were noted:

- The ScanBalt network poses an existing structure in which a bioeconomy working group could be established. ScanBalt is Northern Europe’s leading accelerator for inter-regional cooperation regarding health in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR).
- The ScanBalt network needs to be contacted through the BioBIGG consortium to promote the creation of a bioeconomy working-group as part of the network.
- BioBIGG members should consider actively joining the ScanBalt network to advance the creation of a bioeconomy working group.

In continuation to that recommendation the group was initiated. On 21 October 2020 the Agency for Renewable Resources (FNR), the University of Greifswald and ScanBalt organised the Kick-off Event for a Bioeconomy Working Group within the ScanBalt Network. 52 people participated of which 15 belonged to the team organising the event or giving presentations.

The Working Group within the ScanBalt Network addresses topics related to the bioeconomy in the Baltic Sea Region and should facilitate cooperation among companies, regions and clusters. The Working Group (WG) aims to give the opportunity to exchange and discuss ideas and problems and provide the chance to become involved with a wide variety of different professionals that specialise in the field of bioeconomy.

The BioBIGG project opened the virtual event with findings on the assessment of legal and administrative bioeconomy related frameworks. The project partners FNR, University of Greifswald, Gdansk University of Technology, Roskilde University, Research Institute of Sweden and the Swedish University of Agriculture and Science presented results of a desk study and interviews carried out. Each country interviewed stakeholders with expertise in the national/regional bioeconomy and related frameworks.

The second part of the meeting was dedicated to the activities of ScanBalt and the establishment of the Bioeconomy Working Group. Gudrun Mernitz, WITENO GmbH Greifswald, Germany, is managing the group. Together with Christian Theel, University of Greifswald, they talked about their approach and objectives for the Working Group. Sven Parkel, Secretary General of ScanBalt, gave insights about current activities and services of the network. Frank Graage, Steinbeis Team Northeast, Rostock, Germany gave a short overview of funding opportunities, which might be relevant for the group.

At the end of the meeting participants had the chance to express their ideas and wishes for the Bioeconomy WG. In a survey, the participants rated their expectations for the group, with finding project partners as well as turning ideas into practice and rising influence on politics being the most mentioned ones.

2. Interview results of each country

Detailed results and findings will be available in report D6.2 of the BioBIGG project. Thus, at this point, only a short summary will be given for each country.

2.1. Sweden

The law on sustainability criteria for biofuels and liquid biofuels was the law that most interviewees discussed during the Swedish interviews. One topic was that the regulation on max. 7% of biofuels from food crops gives great restrictions on what we can grow on the arable land in Sweden where there are large areas of set-aside land that could be used for cultivation of biomass for both food, feed and fuel. On the forest side almost all parts of the Forestry Act were found to be beneficial for the bioeconomy, assuring export of sustainable products. The law (2014:1009) on trade in timber and timber products benefits the bioeconomy in a positive way as it regulates the illegal import to EU from non-EU countries.

Examples of methods and systems that could be utilized to push the development of the bioeconomy market forward is public procurement and certification. The bioeconomy would also benefit from laws and regulations that are set so that large companies, authorities as well as SMEs can apply them in a meaningful manner. Authorities should facilitate the utilization of arable land and forest land for biobased purposes, where economic or technical stimulation measures are needed for sustainable development.

In order to improve the relatively low trans-border cooperation between neighbouring countries, revitalizing measures within strategic infrastructure for renewable fuels as well as organisation of a common approach from stakeholder companies regarding legislative work is needed.

2.2. Denmark

One of the key findings related to the interviews was the lack of national initiative dedicated to the development of a coherent regulatory framework for collection and utilisation of biological resources for biogas production and nutrient circulation. Existing regulatory frameworks are not adaptive towards new biological resources, especially in relation to seasonal by-products and residual resources of smaller amounts and heterogeneity from the industry sector. This creates unnecessary costs and administrative burdens for municipalities and biogas-plants, subsequently decreasing the willingness to use new biological resources for biogas. Similar regulatory tendencies, or lack thereof, was found in relation to the utilisation of household bio-waste as fodder.

2.3. Germany

A desk-study and nine interviews with regional and national bioeconomy related stakeholders were conducted at this point by project partners FNR and UG and one more scheduled for after the conference. The interview partners were representatives from the science and business field, regional governments and different umbrella organizations. The most important findings, suggestions for enabling frameworks and recommendations to inform policy makers were presented. Currently biogas plants are a big subject for discussions in Germany. A second important issue is the optimization of incentives and remuneration of ecosystem services in different agricultural sectors. Different points of view were collected by FNR and UG to prepare a set of suggestions for the administrative institutions. In order to make the German economy more sustainable, a more diverse and comprehensive approach of the bioeconomy concept has to be implemented. At the moment, laws of different sections are interfering with each other, impeding innovations and growth. In particular, nature conservation laws often contradict the sustainable, economic use of biomass - a challenging problem that is very difficult to solve.

In total, Germany has a good basic research, but the transfer of research into practical applications is still poor and often takes place outside of Germany. Attractive framework conditions and increased risk-taking is therefore required to bring research into practice.

2.4. Poland

A literature survey of the national legal framework of bioeconomy in Poland and five interviews with stakeholders were prepared by project partners from GUT. The interviewees were selected in such a way as to represent the entire spectrum of stakeholders from various sectors, i.e. administration representatives at the national and regional level, stakeholders from the business sector and scientists. Most of the interviewees agreed that the biggest problem in Poland is the lack of legal acts related to bioeconomy. Another thing that should be changed in Poland is to increase the awareness of the bioeconomy potential. Moreover, there is no single Ministry dedicated to bioeconomy issues, which makes communication with the state authorities difficult. Similarly, the lack of precisely responsible ministry for the implementation and promotion of bioeconomy impedes the clarifications of the bioeconomy related issues. The biggest difference between opinions was at the national and regional level of administration. Administrative officials at higher level did not see the law as the main barrier. In turn, local officials consider complicated legal procedures and the lack of certain standards to be a key barrier to the development of the bioeconomy.

3. Conference Part 2: ScanBalt Bioeconomy Working Group

3.1. Sven Parkel: Northern Europe as one Market, Test and Development Site

Sven Parkel is Secretary General at ScanBalt. He talked about the idea behind ScanBalt, the shared (macro-regional) innovation infra-structure between BSR regions. Insights to the activities and services were given.

3.2. Frank Graage: EU Funding Overview for the ScanBalt Bioeconomy Group

Frank Graage from Steinbeis Team Northeast presented some funding possibilities for the coming years for the bioeconomy area, naming Interreg Baltic Sea Region, Horizon Europe and the successor organisation to the successor organisation to the BBI JU.

3.3. Gudrun Mernitz and Christian Theel: Working Group Kick-Off

Gudrun Mernitz from WITENO GmbH is leading the efforts of establishing the bioeconomy working group at ScanBalt. Together with Christian Theel from the University of Greifswald she explained how they approached setting up the group. A duplication or repetition of initiatives has to be avoided. The first step is to make an assessment of the needs and expectations of all interested participants. An online survey was conducted beforehand as well as during the conference. The expectations of the interviewees to the Working Group are:

- To be a podium for the exchange of experience and knowledge
- A network where to find project partners to apply for common projects
- A matching platform of research and entrepreneurship to develop new bioeconomic products in a cross-border approach
- A network which has political influence

3.4. Survey

A survey was prepared with the tool 'mentimeter'. The voting was conducted during the event and results were followed live by all participants through the shared screen of the presenter. Out of the 52 total conference participants, 31 participated in the live survey. See graph results in appendix C. In a question about the most interesting topics for the group, nine suggested answers were given. Mostly

selected were: ‘Circular economy’ followed by ‘Waste: How can we avoid waste? How can we optimise its use?’ Another question, which stated nine possible answers, asked the participants about the reason why they want to be part of the Bioeconomy Working Group. The four most popular answers were: ‘Finding project partners’, ‘Turning ideas into practice’, ‘Influence on politics’ and ‘Improvement of the environment/sustainability’. Very interesting results brought the open question ‘Describe your ideas for the bioeconomy group’. One of the answers was ‘Connect research to practice and vice versa’. This is especially interesting for the German team because the issue was identified in the interviews as one of the current main problems for the assessment of legal and administrative bioeconomy related frameworks.

4. Conclusions and Outlook

4.1. Conclusions from the Conference

The aim of the Activity 6.2 of the BioBIGG project was to establish and promote a cross-border South Baltic Bioeconomy Network. The kick-off conference established a basis which can be referred to by the managing group when implementing ideas. The survey results will give directions for the next meeting.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the conference had to be prepared as online event. This is not a very good condition for networking as mingling during coffee breaks is known to be the most fruitful part of face-to-face events. As soon as the pandemic situation allows we would recommend a physical networking event for the working group as well as other interested parties.

4.2. Outlook

By combining the existing ScanBalt Network with bioeconomy-interested stakeholders a long-lasting outcome can be hoped for. All BioBIGG partners are now members of ScanBalt and will continue promoting the network after the end of the project.

The next bioeconomy working group meeting is planned for end of November/first week of December 2020. Technical details about the group as well as the survey results will be discussed.

5. Appendices

5.1. Appendix A - Conference program

ScanBalt Bioeconomy Working Group Kick-off Event



1. Opening & introduction
2. Project BioBIGG – Building a cross-border sustainable bioeconomy in the South Baltic Area
 - 2.1 Findings on the assessment of legal and administrative bioeconomy related frameworks and development of solutions for enabling frameworks in the BSR
3. Promoting the establishment of the Working Group
 - 3.1 Introduction ScanBalt and the Working Group
 - 3.2 ScanBalt presents its latest projects and news within the BSR
4. The Working Group within ScanBalt
 - 4.1 FNR and ScanBalt will present ways to use the Working Group
 - 4.2 Collecting ideas and comments of conference participants on the Working Group
5. Wrap-up

21 October 2020

2:00 – 4:00 PM (CEST)

BioBIGG uses resources from the European Regional Development Fund.

5.2. Appendix B - List of participants

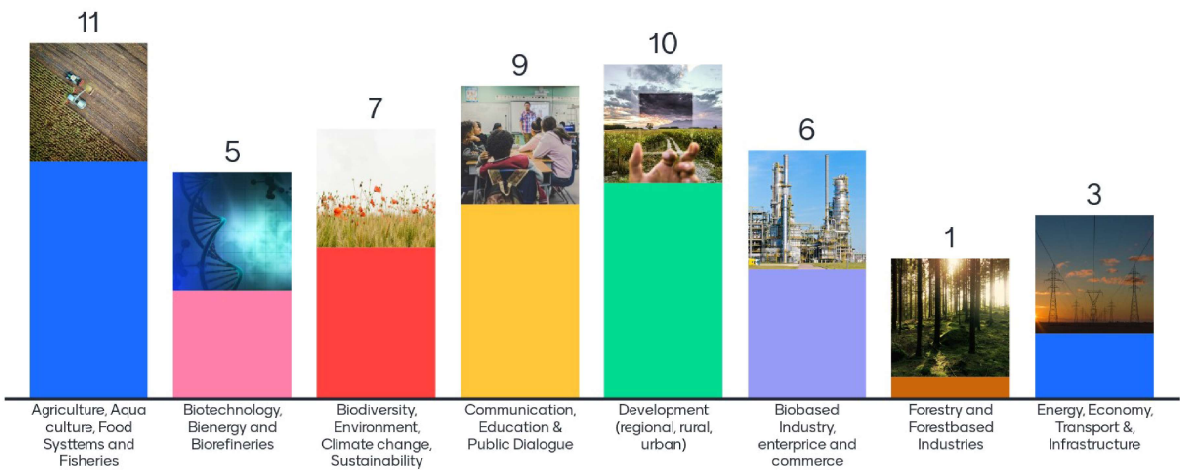
3N Kompetenzzentrum Niedersachsen Netzwerk Nachwachsende Rohstoffe und Bioökonomie e. V.	Hansjörg	Wieland
BioConValley GmbH	Erik	Lohse
Caszyme	Monika	Baškytė
enviMV e. V.	Silvia	Kohlmann
Estonian University of Life Sciences	Katrin	Kepp
Fachagentur Nachwachsende Rohstoffe e.V.	Lena	Huck
Fachagentur Nachwachsende Rohstoffe e.V.	Jennifer	Nitzschke
Fachagentur Nachwachsende Rohstoffe e.V.	Martin	Behrens
Fachagentur Nachwachsende Rohstoffe e.V.	Valerie	Sartorius
Fachagentur Nachwachsende Rohstoffe e.V.	Birger	Kerckow
Gdansk University of Technology	Dariusz	Mikielewicz
Gdansk University of Technology	Roksana	Bochniak
Gdansk University of Technology	Aleksandra	Gołąbek
Gdańsk University of Technology	Paweł	Dąbrowski
Greifswald University	Lena	Stock
Greifswald University	Christian	Theel
Greifswald University	Max	Mittenzwei
Greifswald University	Beate	Cuypers
Greifswald University	Stefan	Seiberling
IHK Neubrandenburg für das östliche Mecklenburg- Vorpommern	Dagmar	Enste
Konso Ltd	Irīna	Kulitāne
Latvia University of Life sciences and Technologies	Arnis	Lenerts
Lithuanian Biotechnology Association	Virginija	Kargytė
Lithuanian Biotechnology Association	Inga	Matijosyte
Lunds kommun	Markus	Paulsson
Ministry of the Interior and for Europe Mecklenburg- Vorpommern	Wolf	Born
Nelson Seed Development AB	Ali Hafeez	Malik
Projektträger Jülich	Veronika	Jablonowski
RISE	Johanna	Lund
Roskilde University	Magnus	Skøt
Roskilde University	Tyge	Kjær
Roskilde University	Rasmus	Nør Hansen
Rostock University	Abdallah	Nassour
ScanBalt	Triin	Vakker
Skurups kommun	Lena	Johansson
Steinbeis Transfer GmbH	Frank	Graage
Sustainable Business Hub	Per	Flink
Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences	William	Newson
Tartu Biotechnology Park	Sven	Parkel
Turku Business Region	Tero	Piispanen

Turku Science Park	Reeta	Huhtinen
Unit „Baltic Sea Cooperation“ / Ministry of the Interior and for Europe Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	Daniela	Kober
Universität Rostock - Lehrstuhl Abfall- und Stoffstromwirtschaft	Sebastian	Foth
Wetland Products Foundation	Aldert	van Weeren
WITENO Gmbh; ScanBalt	Gudrun	Mernitz

Please write "bioeconomy" in your language!



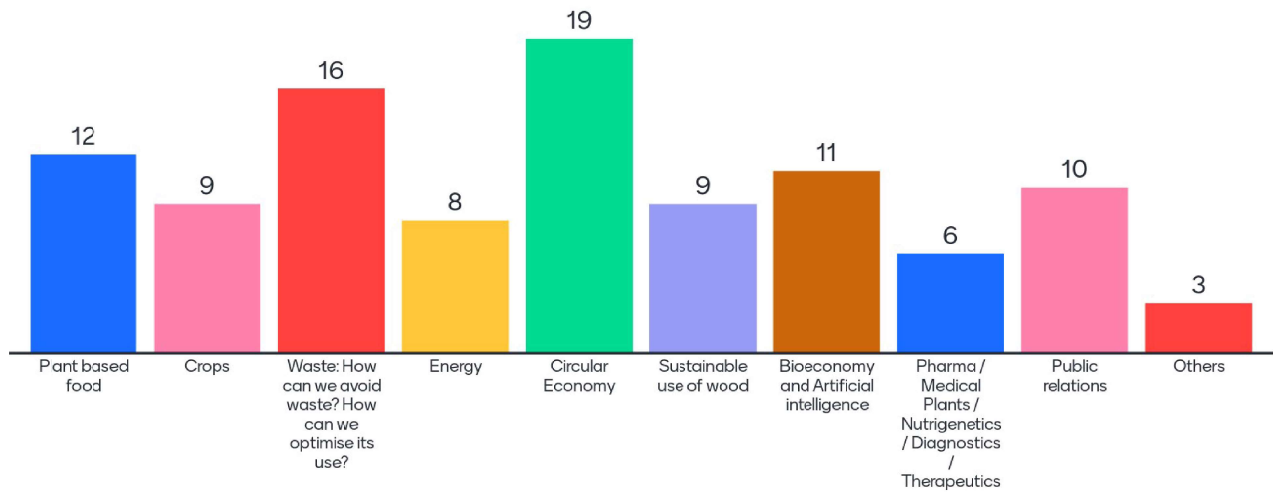
In which field are you working?



Pictures: <https://unsplash.com/>

Which topics are you interested in for the bioeconomy working group?

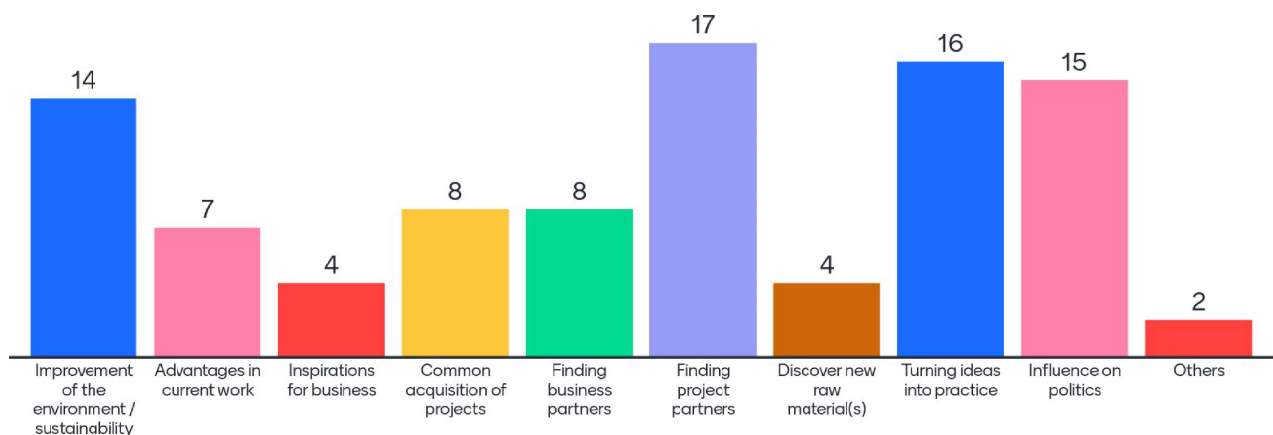
Mentimeter



26

What will be the aim of your participation?

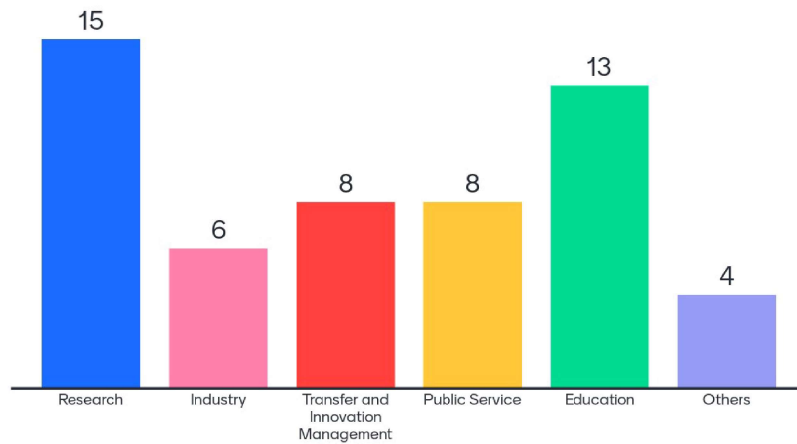
Mentimeter



25

Which competencies could you add to the group?

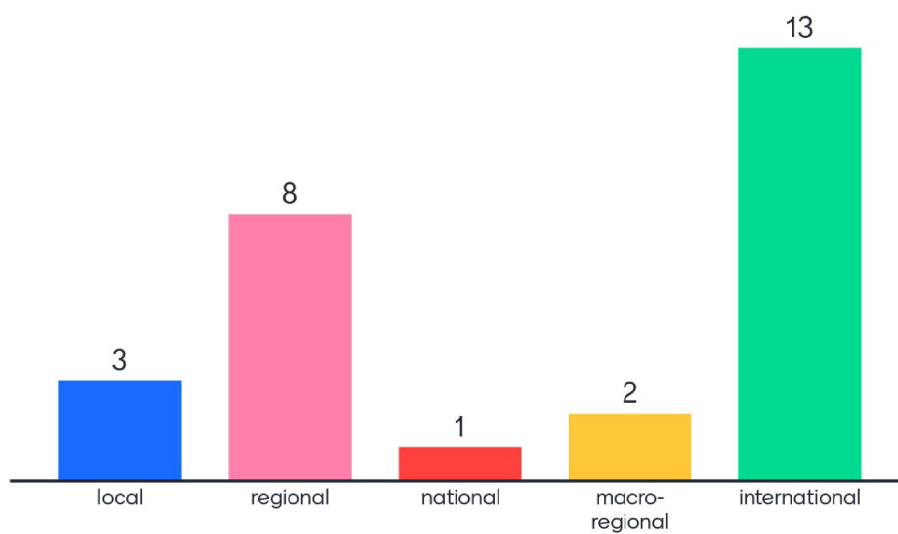
Mentimeter



26

Please specify your focus

Mentimeter



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Are your part of other bioeconomy groups? If yes, which ones?

Mentimeter

No

no

No

No

no

Yes Skåne Bioeconomy group

Scanbalt

Regional initiative

No

20

Are your part of other bioeconomy groups? If yes, which ones?

Mentimeter

None

Scanbalt

no

No

Regional network

Biobordeu network.

BSR Bioeconomy Council; regional project Plant3

SCAR Bioeconomy Working Group

Beubio

20

Are you part of other bioeconomy groups? If yes, which ones?

Mentimeter

BioBIGG, COASTAL BIOGAS, Solrød municipality local action plan,

Newsletters

20

Describe your ideas for the bioeconomy group

Mentimeter

A more practical approach

Product Development

Exchange on Best Practices

Involve different stakeholders

Joint projects

See our presentation

Connect research to practice and vice versa

Learning from each other

International Projects

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Describe your ideas for the bioeconomy group

Knowledge exchange

Engage youth and joint projects

Others opinions

Definition of bioeconomy e. g only land based, not blue biotech

Leading policy and innovation group in EU (and globally)

Regional strategies/ approaches to develop bioeconomy;
Regulatory questions/ policies – analysis/ evaluation of the
framework conditions for the industrial use of bio-based
raw materials

use of biomass in coastal rewetted peatland areas as to
make use of the ecosystem services which come with the
peatland rewetting

Finding Partners

Bridging investors and ideas

Describe your ideas for the bioeconomy group

Algae

Cross regional cooperation

Testing, piloting on transnational level

Initiatives aimed to promote biobased product/technology
development.

Public awareness

Match activities

legislation and innovation

Small and local solutions

Public awareness

Describe your ideas for the bioeconomy group

 Mentimeter

Result oriented actions.

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Which topics are crucial to make the bioeconomy transition in the BSR a success?

 Mentimeter

Communication

Innovation

Innovative tenders

Closing the circular loop

Public awareness, waste management

Innovation, standardisation, common framework conditions

Smart use of our Resources

Cooperation

cooperation and good fitting policy

16

Which topics are crucial to make the bioeconomy transition in the BSR a success?

Collaboration

Interdisciplinary approach including
diverse industries

Framework conditions in the region

Public and Policy awareness

Transnational testing

Alternative Proteins, circular
Economy, regulatory

Involve SMEs