



2nd KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE AND CAPACITY BUILDING SEMINAR FOR PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS –OIP COVASNA, CENTRAL REGION, ROMANIA

Overview	
Date	24 July 2020
Location	European Center for Studies ARCUS-Sfantu Gheorghe Covasna County
Aim of the event	Exchange of information and capacity building regarding the draft of the Bio-economy strategy/roadmap in the OIP Covasna region with focus on business models in the bio-economy, structures and participatory approaches needed for the elaboration and effective implementation of the strategy

Short summary:

The seminar was organized by the Association of Romanian Clusters (CLUSTERO) and the Institute of Economic Forecasting (IPE) of the Romanian Academy at the European Center for Studies ARCUS-Sfantu Gheorghe-Covasna-Center Region, within the BE RURAL project at Objectives 4.3 and 4.4. on seminars with public sector institutions. The purpose of this seminar is the exchange of information and institutional capacity regarding the draft of the BioEconomy Strategy/Roadmap in the OIP Covasna with a focus on business models in the bioeconomy and technological options; opportunities and risks; structures and participatory approaches needed for the elaboration and implementation of the effective strategy and synergies with the activities of the BE RURAL project.

This seminar was attended by 44 people (according to the attached list) representing the County Council, City Halls, Regional Development Agency; universities, clusters, professional associations, companies, Underwater Research Center, Directorate for Food Safety, bio-economy consultants.

CLUSTERO-Romanian Clusters Association in collaboration with the Institute for Economic Forecasting (IPE) of the Romanian Academy prepared the agenda of this seminar. The participants were presented, and the representative of the Centru Regional Development Agency reviewed the project portfolio and presented the stage of revision of the Regional Smart Specialization Strategy 2021-2027.

The bioeconomy has been identified within the process of entrepreneurial discovery, as a horizontal sector of the smart specialization in the Central region and present in various forms in all other sectors. At the same time, it requested a presentation sheet of the BE – RURAL project in order to identify niches not yet explored at regional level in the bio-economy and to create synergies between the BE RURAL, BIO WILL, BIO FORECO, STRING projects and RIS 3 and to produce thematic solutions (Green bio-economy-sustainable forest exploitation, biomass growth, services and business etc; Blue bio-economy-water recycling, sustainable use of water eco-systems; new value-added solutions; tourist services-balneo etc; Foodchain-circular economy within a food system, digital technologies in the food value chain etc). At the same time, the BE-RURAL team was asked to demonstrate how it influences the RIS 3 project.

The Romanian BE-RURAL team presented the project and the activities carried out in Covasna county, the Handbook on regional and local bio-economies developed within the project, with focus on small-scale business models, as well as future events for the active promotion of the BE RURAL project. The team also presented the European funding opportunities for the bioeconomy and the best practices in the Covasna region.

The representative of Covasna County Council stressed the need to move to a new development model by introducing elements of the circular economy, increasing resource productivity, reducing food and waste by reducing generation of consumption at all levels; recycling and re-use; encouraging companies to adopt sustainable public procurement practices; raising public awareness of what a lifestyle in harmony with nature means. In Covasna county, an active involvement of clusters was observed in this new model of sustainable development, both in rural and urban areas.

The mayors of Reci, Brates, Bretcu and Lemnia stressed the need to change the mentality through education, change consumer behaviour and develop financial mechanisms to support the transition to new business models in rural areas. At the same time, local product systems must be promoted within regional events but also online platforms.

The clusters represented at the seminar expressed their interest in participating in the development of a strategy/roadmap on the bio-economy but a template would be needed, given that there is already a strategy in bio energy that does not address some specific



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issues related to the environment and socio-economic sustainability, food security, green economy, industrial transition, organic products etc). The impact of the bio-economy strategy would consist in offering innovative solutions to some challenges of sustainable development in the rural environment from Covasna county.

Finally, the participants at the seminar discussed about the coordination of the activities of the Centru Regional Development Agency with those of Covasna County, taking into account the local economic realities, the tendencies according to the BE-Rural WP2 results having in mind the necessity of elaboration of the bioeconomy strategy/roadmap.

They agreed that discussions would continue in September in order to develop a draft of the strategy/roadmap for the bio-economy with the involvement of all stakeholders in the regions (local public administration, research entities, businesses, civil society, catalysts).

Agenda	
9:30-10:00	Registration Presentation of participants; briefing on current projects in the Central Region / Covasna County
10:00-11:00	Support for the bioeconomy: European funding opportunities Questions from the audience
11:00-11:30	Small-scale business models and technology options in BE-Rural project
11:30-12:30	Debate on the actual context of elaborating the bioeconomy strategy / roadmap in Central Region / Covasna County
12:30-13:00	Networking Lunch

