

PRESS RELEASE

RECORD ATTENDANCE AND INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS AT THE 13TH EUROPEAN BIOPLASTICS CONFERENCE

Berlin, 7 December 2018 – The 13th European Bioplastics Conference, which took place on 4/5 December 2018 in Berlin, put bioplastics in the spotlight for over 400 senior executives from across the bioplastics value chain, including brands, policy makers, academia, and NGOs, by meeting the demand for more sustainable, resource-efficient, and functional solutions. The sold-out event once again confirmed its status as the leading business and networking platform in driving the growth and innovation of the global bioplastics industry.

In his opening speech, François de Bie, Chairman of European Bioplastics (EUBP) highlighted some of the major achievements of the bioplastics industry in the past year: “The joint efforts of the European Member States and the European institutions to create a circular plastics economy has sparked increased innovative activities within the bioplastics community. The intense debate about the future of plastics in general has created many opportunities for bioplastics to facilitate the transition to a circular economy. Environmental assessments, rethinking product design, sound and diverse end of life solutions – bioplastics are more than simple substitution, they provide creative, evolving influence at different steps of the value chain. Our bioplastics industry is well positioned to offer additional end of life options that help reduce litter and CO2 emissions.”

Michiel De Smet from the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Research and Innovation opened the conference programme discussing policy-making and innovation towards a circular economy in Europe, including the role of bio-based feedstock for plastic production. “The EU initiatives of the past years aim to promote the circular economy through innovation and to rethink the current plastics system to harness its benefits while overcoming its drawbacks, such as marine pollution. In connection with the updated Bioeconomy Strategy and the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the EU is supporting the transition from fossil feedstock towards renewable alternatives”. Adding to this, Philippe Mengal from the Bio-based Industries Joint Undertaking (BBI JU) said “bioplastics are a priority for the BBI JU. Thirty percent of our projects relate directly or indirectly to bioplastics”.

Are there any tools in future that might help drive and evaluate sustainability other than life cycle assessment (LCA)? This question was the starting point for a panel with the experts Rana Pant (European Commission’s Joint Research Centre, JRC), who also gave a keynote presentation on LCA, Meadhbh Bolger (Friends of the Earth Europe), Nikolay Minkov (Technische Universität Berlin), and Annamari Enström (Neste Corporation). The discussion elaborated on the current limitations of LCA as a tool to compare bio-based and fossil-based plastics. Rana Pant presented the ongoing JRC project that develops a methodology to be used for a comparative LCA of ten selected plastic products, which aims to create a level playing field for environmental sustainability comparisons of fossil-and bio-based plastics, but also recycled and CO2-based plastics.

The recent policy developments have also drawn attention to biodegradability in the marine environment. Miriam Weber from HYDRA Marine Sciences gave an overview of the currently available test results and standards of biodegradability under marine conditions and which gaps should be filled. “We need a reliable framework for an environmentally relevant test scheme, to prove and control the claim of ‘biodegradability in the marine environment’. This test scheme is an instrument, but it should be the society deciding if and how marine biodegradability should be supported.”

Another highly anticipated session was the presentation of the 2018 market data shared by Has-

so von Pogrell, Managing Director of EUBP: “The global production capacities of bioplastics are set to grow by 25 percent in the next five years”, said von Pogrell. Manufacturers confirmed this development with the announcement of new products and services. Carbiolice took the stage to officially launch Evanesto, a unique enzymatic technology that could make PLA home compostable. NatureWorks presented on how their Ingeo biopolymers support the energy efficiency of electrical appliances. Also, Organic Waste Systems (OWS), which celebrated its 30th anniversary at the conference, gave an update on the EU standard for home compostable carrier bags.

420 participants from 255 companies and 45 countries worldwide attended the European Bioplastics Conference, connecting and catching up on the latest developments and trends in the bioplastics industry. 41 companies showcased a diversity of the new products, materials, and applications at the exhibition. European Bioplastics extends a special thank you to the sponsors of this year’s conference: BASF, OWS, Total Corbion PLA, BIOTEC, NatureWorks, Futerro, PTTMCC, Sulzer and TechnipFMC, for their support.

Photos and impressions of the 13 European Bioplastics Conference 2018 are available on the EUBP website: <https://www.european-bioplastics.org/news/multimedia-pictures-videos/> (© European Bioplastics)

More information on the market data update 2018 is also available on the website: <https://www.european-bioplastics.org/market/>

Speakers at the 13th European Bioplastics Conference 2018:

Bistra Andersen (LEGO Group), Clémentine Arnault (Carbiolice), Meadhbh Bolger (Friends of the Earth Europe), Daniel Borenstein (Anellotech) Lars Börger (Neste), Mathilde Crêpy (European Environmental Citizen’s Organisation for Standardisation), Jarno Dakhorst (NEN), François de Bie (Total Corbion PLA), Sam Deconinck (OWS), Francesco Degli Innocenti (Novamont), Michiel De Smet (European Commission), Philippe Diercxsens (Danone), Annamari Enström (Neste Corporation), Maria Gustafsson (SIS), Cameron Hibbert (Genomatica), Constance Ißbrücker (EUBP), Thomas Köppl (HEXPOLTPE), Kristy-Barbara Lange (EUBP), Sophie Macedo (Carbiolice), Philippe Mengal (Bio-based Industries Joint Undertaking), Nikolay Minkov (Technische Universität Berlin), Jan Noordegraaf (BEWi Synbra RAW), Osei Owuso (NatureWorks LLC), Rana Pant (European Commission), Holger Preibisch (German Coffee Association), René Saint-Loup (Roquette), Sandra Usching (Compost & Biogas Association Austria), Hasso von Pogrell (EUBP), Miriam Weber (HYDRA Marine Sciences, Stephen Wetmore (WWF South Africa), Willemijn Witteveen (Avantium), Marcos Yanini Badenas (AIMPLAS).

Exhibitors at the 13th European Bioplastics Conference 2018:

ABM Composite, ADBIOCOMPOSITES, AIMPLAS, BASF, Biofiber Tech Sweden, Biologi Q, Bio-MatLCA project/Technische Universität Berlin, BIOTEC, DIN CERTCO, ECHO, ecoplus. Niederösterreichs Wirtschaftsagentur, EuropaBio, FKUR Kunststoff, HEXPOL TPE, HYDRA Marine Sciences, IfBB, IKT – Institut für Kunststofftechnik (Universität Stuttgart), Indochine Bio Plastiques, Institute of Nuclear Energy Research, Atomic Energy Council, ITENE, JINDAN New Biomaterials, J. Rettenmeier & Söhne (JRS), Kompuestos, NatureWorks, Nova Institute, Novamont, OWS, Planet, PolyBioSkin, Polymerization Shared Facility, PTTMCC Biochem Co., Reverdia, Roundtable on Sustainable Biomaterials (RSB), TECNARO, thinkstep, Total Corbion PLA, TÜV AUSTRIA, Università degli Studi di Napoli “Federico II”, Verbund Kompostierbare Produkte.

European Bioplastics:

European Bioplastics ist die Interessenvertretung der europäischen Biokunststoffindustrie. Zu ihren Mitgliedern zählen Unternehmen der gesamten Wertschöpfungskette. Die Mitglieder produzieren, verarbeiten und vertreiben Kunststoffe, die aus nachwachsenden Rohstoffen bestehen, biologisch abbaubar sind, oder beide Eigenschaften in sich vereinen. Weitere Informationen finden Sie unter: www.european-bioplastics.org.

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