

# Regional initiatives in support of bioeconomy development – regional case *Wallonie* –



ECRN event- “Realising the bioeconomy potential in the regions”  
Brussels, 26 June 2019



# Policy framework and impulses for the transition to a bioeconomy

- ▶ European strategy for the development of the biobased economy
- ▶ Belgian legislation for biofuels
- ▶ Walloon plan for waste-resources adopted in 2018
- ▶ Competitiveness clusters (GreenWin, BioWin, Wagralim, ...)
- ▶ Clusters (Ecoconstruction, Tweed, ...)

# Policy framework and impulses for the transition to a bioeconomy

« Coq vert » : towards a bio-based economy in Wallonia



# « Coq vert » : a public–private partnership in Wallonia for the bio–based economy

- ▶ Started in 2013
- ▶ Partners : Awex, Essenscia Wallonie, GreenWin, ValBiom
- ▶ Why ?

Develop a strong and competitive bio–based economy in Wallonia

Need to adopt a strategic coordinated approach to contribute to the development of a competitive biobased economy in Wallonia in accordance with the European bioeconomy

# Identified routes for the utilization of the regional resources

24/06/2019

8

## Vision of the biobased economy in Wallonia



# Identified routes for the utilization of the regional resources

- ▶ biotech,
- ▶ chemistry &
- ▶ renewable biomolecules and biomaterials

are the strengths of Wallonia in the Bioeconomy sector

# Availability of skilled work force

## Advantages of Wallonia

- ✓ Skilled workforce
- ✓ Industrial environment: chemistry, agro-food, ...
- ✓ Academic R & D Expertise
- ✓ Existence of a study program in the field chemical applications of biomass
- ✓ Organization by public authorities of courses and training in the field of biochemistry
- ✓ Companies already active in the biobased sector

## Challenges:

- ✓ Static training system
- ✓ Low rate of researchers involved in Innovation process
- ✓ High labor cost, ranked in the top 3 of the EU



# Public funding and projects supported

## Public funding:

- ▶ Marshall Plan 4.0
- ▶ Competitiveness clusters (GreenWin, BioWin, WagrALIM, ...) and clusters (Ecoconstruction, Tweed, ...)
- ▶ AWEX
- ▶ NEXT program
- ▶ ValBiom
- ▶ The Green Rooster

- ▶ Technose
- ▶ Chanvre Wallon ASBL:

*Objective: "Towards 1000 hectares of hemp grown and processed in Wallonia in 2020"*

- ▶ Innovation support policies (various and extended)



# Public funding and projects supported

## ► Easy'green

awareness and support for small businesses / SMEs managed by **NOVALLIA** (Sowalfin group).

Local "**circular** economy referents" accompanying in the detection of circular economy potential to discover all the implementable solutions

# Public funding and projects supported

## NEXT program

### 3 pillars:

Industry

Training / teaching

International network

### 3 main roles:

Specialized support via the operational team

Project financing

Identification of promising sectors and means of valorization for the region

# Public funding and projects supported

## Projects– some examples

- ▶ Collaborative Platform for the Ecocircularity of Polymers for Industrial Transition (PEPIT) – April 2018

supported by Greenwin (green chemistry and sustainable materials) and MecaTech (mechanical engineering) Poles and Plastiwin (plastic) cluster has enabled active players in the field of the Plastic value chain to interact, coordinate their activities and facilitate the development of research and development projects to enable the transition to a new plastic industry

...

# Public funding and projects supported

## Projects

- ▶ VERDIR (Valorisation of the environment through sustainable rehabilitation and responsible innovation),

a project of the University of Liège (ERDF project)

Converting industrial wastelands into urban farming and aquaponics zones (fish farming), producing food closer to urban centers, taking advantage of the nearby waterways to transport this production, is the concept of VERDIR.

In addition to food production, the infrastructure also allows the cultivation of plants for the pharmaceutical industry.

# Inter-regional/cross-border cooperation



*6 Model  
Regions*



# Inter-regional/cross-border cooperation

- ▶ Involvement of Wallonia in the Vanguard Initiative and ECRN, interregional collaboration networks
- ▶ Bio-based Industries Joint Undertaking (BBI-JU) Consortium (BIC)
- ▶ Selection of Wallonia as one of the "6 Model Demonstrator Regions" to pave the way for a sustainable chemical industry (2016)
- ▶ Selection of Wallonia in the trans-regional partnership on the bio-economy and as a pilot region for the industrial transition (2017)
- ▶ 2017: Selection of Wallonia in the S3chem project
- ▶ H2020 and Interreg projects,....
- ▶ ....

# Public tools to boost market demand

## ► Green deals

A Green Deal on circular purchases will soon be launched in Wallonia. It aims to promote the transition to a circular economy through the purchasing policy of public and private buyers. The parties will sign the "Green Deal" as buyers or facilitators. Buyers will commit to implementing at least two pilot circular purchasing projects over a period of 3 years.

► ...



# Challenges and barriers

## Public policies:

- ✓ Lack of a coordinated vision on the biobased economy between the departments in charge
- ✓ Policies focused on bioenergy

## Raw materials:

- ✓ Agricultural sector not yet sufficiently informed about non-food applications of crops
- ✓ Size of the territory: limited agricultural areas
- ✓ Focus on bioenergy production
- ✓ Biomass leak abroad

# Challenges and barriers

## Infrastructure

- ✓ Cost of energy
- ✓ Waste systems, residues and raw materials not enough developed for innovative biobased products

## R&D:

- ✓ R & D too fragmented
- ✓ gap between business needs and R&D thematics
- ✓ Difficulty for technologies to get out of laboratory

# Challenges and barriers

## Market :

- ✓ Low visibility as "region of biobased economy "compared to other neighboring regions
- ✓ No stable biobased market yet
- ✓ Low demand for biobased products

## Enterprises:

- ✓ No structured collaboration between sectors, difficulty to integrate "biobased" into other industrial sectors
- ✓ Sector weakly structured

# Thank you for your attention!

*Daniel Collet Inspecteur général  
Département de la Compétitivité et de  
l'innovation  
Service Public de Wallonie  
Daniel.collet@spw.wallonie.be*