

CONCEPT NOTE



ANNUAL BIOEAST BIOECONOMY CONFERENCE

The role of national HUBs in national and macro-regional bioeconomy policies and R&I priorities in the BIOEAST countries

6th -7th MARCH 2024

**Research Centre for Natural
Sciences,
Budapest, Hungary**



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In response to the European Green Deal priorities, the EU's climate ambition for 2030 and 2050 and the EU bioeconomy strategy, the BIOEAST Initiative with its 11 Central and Eastern European member states play a key role in helping the macro-region in its transition to an economic system that acts within environmental and social boundaries. To this end, the BIOEAST Initiative developed its Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) and 11 Bioeconomy Concept Papers in 2023 that lay down the most essential research priorities of the macro-region. Still, the BIOEAST countries are in different stages of preparedness to develop their national bioeconomy strategy and action plans, but the ambition is for all eleven countries to have a dedicated bioeconomy action plan supported through action programmes and validated by public administrations by 2027. This process requires new strategic thinking and the continuous engagement of stakeholders from all sectors of the bioeconomy. The BIOEAST Initiative, therefore, puts into focus the **development of national networks and communities of bioeconomy (BIOEAST HUBs)** to boost the participation – from public, private, academia and business sectors – in national decision-making processes. The backbone of realising this ambition is a new, three-year long Horizon Europe project called BOOST4BIOEAST (follow-up of the BIOEASTsUP project), launched in January 2024. The project aims to mobilise and connect bioeconomy stakeholders with policymakers through national BIOEAST HUBs to strengthen their engagement in bioeconomy policy, research, and innovation environments and to set-up long-lasting structures for cooperation and networking at national and macro-regional levels. In the next three years, the HUBs are envisaged to take on important roles: 1) At national level, they will engage in the **development of national bioeconomy action plans** validated by public administrations and **foster the national bioeconomy innovation ecosystems** through cross-sectoral collaboration, capacity building and facilitating access to knowledge and networks to all bioeconomy stakeholders. 2) At macro-regional level, they will contribute to the specific strategic areas of the BIOEAST Thematic Working Groups in **updating the BIOEAST SRIA of 2022**.

To support the establishment and strengthening of the national BIOEAST HUBs, the BOOST4BIOEAST project organises the **Annual BIOEAST Bioeconomy Conference on 6-7 March 2024 in Budapest, Hungary**. The conference aims to bring together stakeholders from the BIOEAST macro-region across all bioeconomy related fields from research, public administration, primary sector, and industry to inform them about latest updates from the BIOEAST Initiative in the context of ongoing European and upcoming EU presidency priorities, to provide practical knowledge in order to kick-start and facilitate collaboration, operate science-policy interface and present opportunities in joint programming initiatives. Besides plenary presentations, the conference will also engage participants through interactive workshops dedicated to the creation

of national HUBs and parallel meetings of the seven BIOEAST Thematic Working Groups focusing on more operative concerns of the groups. The event will close with a field trip to an institute with bioeconomy related activity.

The conference is part of a series of events, organized **back-to-back with the BIOEAST Board, Thematic Working Groups Coordination and BOOST4BIOEAST Kick-off meetings between 4-6 March** which will focus on the BIOEAST plans for the upcoming 4 years.

The BIOEAST Board, Thematic Working Groups, national networks, and communities of bioeconomy (BIOEAST HUBs, mirror groups, etc.), research and innovation funders, Horizon Europe Programme Committee members and National Contact Points of the BIOEAST countries are all invited to take part in the conference and its side-events.

The conference is primarily dedicated to the bioeconomy stakeholders of the BIOEAST macro-region, but it welcomes any interested parties from all EU countries.