



DELIVERABLE D.T1.1.2 “NATIONAL WORKSHOPS ON VALUE CHAIN MAPPING WITH STAKEHOLDERS”

Prepared by: LP

GENERAL INFORMATION

COUNTRY: Slovenia

Title of the workshop in English: Mapping for a practical challenge in sustainable paper/plastic packaging

Location: National Institute of Chemistry, Pregl Research Center, Hajdrihova 19, Ljubljana

Date: 25th May, 2018

N° of participants : 36

SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE WORKSHOP

The workshop took place in Ljubljana at the National institute of Chemistry premises and it was co-organized with DanuBioValNet project. The workshop was organized as a back-to-back (day 2) event with the program on day 1 with the working title Bioeconomy – from niche to norm.

The workshop started with three presentations by BIOCOMPACT-CE partners – the coordinator A Kržan and workpackage T3 and T2 leaders G. Ganczewski and Z.Kereszturi.

A. Kržan gave a presentation of the project topic and main goals. Emphasis was given on presenting the value chain, different stakeholders and the involvement of companies, especially SMEs. He also presented the goal of the workshop in terms of understanding the stakeholders and their position.

G. Ganczewski gave an overview of the biocomposite packaging issue with an emphasis on the challenge, opportunities and technical/practical aspects that were thus far developed /analyzed by the BIOCOMPACT-CE project.

Z. Kereszturi gave a presentation of the outcomes from recent stakeholder analyses carried out in Hungary and business-oriented aspects as they appear after the initial analyses performed in the BCP project.

The presentations were designed to present the challenge and give perspectives from different aspects that are relevant to stakeholders. The idea was to give a solid introduction and background for the discussion.

KEY FEEDBACKS GATHERED FROM STAKEHOLDERS

The discussion started with a question to all participants as to their opinion on how interesting the proposed biocomposite packaging is for implementation?

Participants agreed that we need to address gaps in our material utilization and waste management if we wish to reduce the negative impacts of our practices on the environment and overall sustainability. Still there is a feeling that we have serious forces that do not wish changes – foremost the general economic emphasis on growth and ever faster consumption that does not consider materials as source of a burdens and is not trying to optimize. Packaging is a typical example and is very visible to the general public.

Policy representatives mentioned that they are working on implementation of European-level regulation but they are limited in what they can implement outside of this immediate frame. The sustainability issue is

also closely linked to bioeconomy promotion and should be considered integrated with other aspects. Industrial development, environment, jobs, sustainability, regional cooperation, entrepreneurship etc. are just different facets of the same issue.

Rok Počivavšek, Amba commented that in times when it is so easy to buy and throw things away we need to change our social approach and try to change the behavior of people.

More specifically, Matic Ceglar, Žito d.o.o explained the attempt in the company to develop more sustainable biocomposite packaging for their eco product line which unfortunately finished without a viable solution. The attempt was not successful as no suitable technical solution alternative was found. A major consideration was the price and the durability in terms of product storage time which would be reduced compared to conventional solutions.

The lack of incentives at any level was exposed a major shortcoming. This means that any development depends only on internal policies and interests of companies. As companies must deal with many more urgent tasks sustainability can quickly be less important and delayed.

Another key aspect is information. For example on compostability or biobased content. Smaller companies do not have the capacity to be able to follow these rather complex questions. R&D should give better support in this aspect. Dr. Krzan explained about some of the limitations, especially in financing, R&D actors have. "We are trying to link with companies and their needs since this also helps us to formulate our future work".

Representatives of the Pulp and paper institute is conducting research in the use of biobased and biodegradable plastics such as PLA for pulp composites. The research has not yet been applied in practice.

The discussion showed that companies are open to new solutions if they can be offered (assuming that they are competitive with conventional solutions).

There was also discussion on who can lead the development and define future development.

- **Producers** just follow the orders, but they do not decide. Dr. Krzan and Z. Kereszturi however pointed out that they must follow development and also offer prototype solutions as soon as they identify potential for market development or needs for products that do not yet exist. Their contact and information from value chains can be invaluable for defining policies and next steps.
- All agreed that **retailers** are the driving force, however they operate at very low margins that are often geared to the cheapest solution and "cut-throat" conditions – not in line with following sustainability goals. This however depends on their sustainability goals and is not always the case.
- **Big groups** like Nestle, McDonalds have great influence on the development of markets so it is most interesting to try to penetrate this sector.
- The key factor are **consumers**. On one side they buy products and "vote" with their money. On the other, they are extremely important in defining trends and interests and also define political pressure for policy makers and market actors. Especially with the advent of social media consumers have gained power. Consumer opinion is strongly shaped by **media** and independent organizations such as **NGOs** so good contacts with these actors should not be forgotten or underestimated.