International Bioeconomy Forum

multilateral platform for cooperation on global bioeconomy research and innovation

Outcome Document

On the occasion of Global Bioeconomy Summit 2026 in Dublin, October 2026

What is the International Bioeconomy Forum?

The International Bioeconomy Forum is a multilateral, co-owned platform that convenes global governmental expertise on research and innovation (R&I) for the bioeconomy and facilitates cooperation to guide international R&I for a sustainable global bioeconomy. Its activities aim to support **government-led research and innovation strategies** and the **scaling-up of bioeconomy innovations** through international collaboration.

The Forum enables collaboration between governmental R&I experts through:

1. **Working Groups (WGs):** The Working Groups enable collaboration and exchanges on forward looking research and innovation topics of common interest. Currently there are 4 Working Groups[1] on: 1) Forest Bioeconomy, 2) Microbiomes, 3) Biorefineries, and 4) Indicators, Metrics and Standards for the Bioeconomy.

2. **International Bioeconomy Solutions Library (IBSoL)**: Development of a digital repository that showcases emerging bioeconomy solutions that are in the public interest; a demo version of IBSoL is launched at the Global Bioeconomy Summit in Dublin.

The Forum is convened by its **Co-Chairs** - currently South Africa (Department of Science, Technology and Innovation) and the European Commission (Directorate General for Research and Innovation) - and operates flexibly and without binding obligation. This allows participating governments and their delegated representatives to exchange with international partners about cutting-edge bioeconomy innovation policy and science diplomacy. The Forum works on consensus-based collaboration that is agile to explore concrete bioeconomy research and innovation topics of shared significance and to complement ongoing bioeconomy work of various international initiatives (e.g. G20 High-Level Principles on Bioeconomy, COP30 Bioeconomy Challenge, FAO BEST Partnership, IACGB Partnership for Global Bioeconomy and Global Bioeconomy Summit).

Research experts from the following **countries and international organisations** are part of the IBF: Argentina, Australia, Canada, China, European Union, Ghana, India, Japan, Namibia, Malaysia, South Africa, South Korea, United Kingdom, and BIOEAST Initiative, FAO, SCAR.

Why does the Forum exist?

The Forum's distinguishing feature is its **focus on government-led bioeconomy R&I and associated strategies**. It connects and leverages the bioeconomy R&I effort that governments already sponsor. It complements the academic and industry-led fora that also serve the global bioeconomy. It offers governments and their experts the opportunity to **extend the impact** of their R&I effort beyond their geographical remit and to **connect and leverage** their R&I work within the wider landscape of international

[1] Previously, Working Groups on Plant Health and Food Systems were active but have paused their work.

bioeconomy initiatives. Its distinctive value lies in **cooperation, connectivity, and complementarity** rather than duplication; this defines both its niche and its value-added proposition.

The IBF's Working Groups: where common interests meet

IBF's current four Working Groups are not a comprehensive map of the current prime topics of bioeconomy R&I; they reflect where IBF's members have chosen to focus shared R&I efforts at present. Each Working Group has set out its time-bound objectives and activities in a concise R&I policy brief addressed to governments and further interested stakeholders. As a Working Group's mandate is met, it concludes, and new ones may form. The current Working Groups are:

- **Forest Bioeconomy.** The Forest WG focuses on the innovative bioeconomy forest value chain - from monitoring and sustainable supply through engineered wood products - and the R&I that underpins it, framed around efficiency, innovation, and sustainability.
- **Microbiomes.** The Microbiomes WG focuses on the role of microbial communities in the bioeconomy, in primary production, circularity, and climate resilience, organised around the "One Health" approach and the governance of digital sequence information (DSI).
- **Biorefineries.** The Biorefineries WG focuses on the conversion of biomass into bio-based materials, chemicals, and higher-value products, with emphasis on technology transfer, international cooperation, and small-scale and rural solutions.
- **Indicators, Metrics and Standards.** This WG develops the shared measurement and standards that allow bioeconomy domains to be compared, verified, and combined – opening markets. Working through selected value-chain case studies, it provides the value-chain-level analysis that complements national-level monitoring - most directly the FAO-led metrics work of the COP30 Bioeconomy Challenge.

The International Bioeconomy Solutions Library: a key feature

The Bioeconomy Solutions Library is a novel and key feature of the Forum that could become an important tool for replicating and scaling successful bioeconomy solutions. It aims to be an open digital repository of bioeconomy solutions and good practices (technical, social, and environmental, starting with publicly funded ones) from around the globe. Spearheaded by the European Commission Joint Research Centre, its pilot is launched at the Global Bioeconomy Summit 2026 in Dublin, Ireland. The library will be scaled up in collaboration with international partners and eventually handed over to a broader organisation.

In closing

The bioeconomy will not become circular, resilient, and carbon-negative through capability alone. Those outcomes are products of cooperation and coordination which is scarce - both within bioeconomy systems and among the institutions that work on them. The positive reactions to the Forum as well as its advances have demonstrated the need for a flexible platform where governments connect and leverage their forward-looking bioeconomy R&I efforts in an international context. The International Bioeconomy Solutions Library, the results of the Working Groups as well as the participation of a growing number of governments and experts show the value of this approach.

More information

For more information on the Forum and its activities: https://bio-economy-forum.org/