



FINAL COMMUNIQUE (2)

CEI Ministerial Conference on Renewable Energy in a Bio-based Economy: the Option of Next Generation Biofuels (Trieste, September 20, 2012)

Ministers, State Secretaries, Deputy Ministers and/or their Representatives from Member States of the Central European Initiative (*), institutionally competent for Science and Technology, Energy, Environment, Agriculture, Economic Development, together with High Officials from the European Commission and Stakeholders from Industry, Universities and other Research Institutions, attended in Trieste, at the headquarters of the International Centre of Theoretical Physics (UNESCO/IAEA) under the chairmanship of the CEI Ukrainian Presidency, the CEI Ministerial Conference on “Renewable Energy in a Bio-based Economy: The Option of Next Generation Biofuels”.

The Ministers and other participants recognized the challenge represented by Next Generation Biofuels as a multi-faceted and priority option for any eco-friendly strategy in the field of renewable energy, with contributions from different angles of institutional competence and disciplinary experience, as well as considering the concrete results coming from pilot, demonstration or industrial/commercial projects already in operation.

Broad and open discussions were based also on the conceptual background offered by the Bloomberg - New Energy Finance Report on the perspective on Next Generation Biofuels and other Bio-products for the CEI Region, commissioned by the CEI Secretariat and published last March.

Indeed, this strategic challenge was thoroughly analyzed in the interventions by the Ministers and other participants in two working sessions: one focused on the state-of-the-art in Research and Technology; the other on the contribution to Rural Development, as well as to the Economy at large, which can be provided by Next Generation Biofuels and by other added value by-products.

A final Round Table discussed a possible road map for the development of Next Generation Biofuels in the CEI region, having as a reference point the broader Bio-based Economy and the EU 2020 targets in terms of potential/expected benefits such as job creation, innovation and economic growth, energy security (fuel sufficiency in transport) and environmental protection.

The Ministers and other participants expressed their full satisfaction for the activities implemented in this context by the CEI Secretariat during last year, fully endorsing the projects it intends to submit, in cooperation with prime European partners, to the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development, and with a longer term view focused on the Programme Horizon 2020.

(*) Albania, Austria, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Italy, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Ukraine.

More specifically three project-proposals were considered:

- First, a project with the objective to contribute to the technological shift that will allow to achieve EU 2020 goals through the promotion of bio-based economy value chains and optimized utilization of non-food biomass for energy purposes: starting from existing technologies, which do not require specific incentives, and focusing on the development of local, regional and pan-European schemes for the mobilization of non-food biomass feedstock. The overall objective is to ensure a sustainable market through a reliable biomass supply, taking actions that will allow to streamline feedstock flows. To this end, the project will develop a computerized decision support tool to assist local, regional and national authorities and other stakeholders in relevant policy-making processes coherent with a sustainable strategy. Since the project has a pan-European scope, the contribution by the CEI will be devoted specifically (but not exclusively) to project implementation in CEI Member States, owing to their strong potential in this field.
- Second, a project meant to provide support to the European Biofuels Technology Platform in activities which are of interest for the biofuel community, for decision makers and for the general public. In particular, the project will support communication between research and industry actors, thus facilitating the exploitation of research results and the deployment of advanced, sustainable biofuel technologies all over Europe. Here again, the contribution by the CEI will consist in ensuring most appropriate communication channels on technology, regulatory and financial matters among governments, public agencies and stakeholders in Member States.
- Third, a project aimed at establishing a Danube Research and Innovation Cooperation Network (Danube Region INCO-NET) by supporting policy dialogue on Research and Innovation, with specific focus on Renewable Energy in a Bio-based Economy. The activities carried out by the CEI as a strategic partner will focus on the promotion of innovative activities in Member States by addressing a number of societal challenges such as energy efficiency, bio-economy and sustainable transport.

The Ministers and other participants expressed a strong wish that the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the World Bank may take a proactive attitude towards the strategic priority action represented by Advanced Biofuels.

Finally, the Ministers and other participants strongly endorsed the recommendation, adopted on the previous day by the Ministerial Meeting on Science and Technology, to establish an *ad hoc* trust fund to support the activities of the CEI Secretariat in this field. They also recommended to establish an interdisciplinary task force on Next Generation Biofuels and the Bio-based Economy, enhancing the activities of relevant CEI focal points and of the SEDRI Group (Sustainable Energy Development Regional Initiative, jointly managed with the Regional Cooperation Council RCC), which could effectively operate through a dedicated teleconferencing network.

Furthermore, the Ministers and other participants unanimously invited Hungary to continue next year this debate in the context of the Green Growth and Rural Development in the CEI region.