



Interview

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How can consumers' everyday choices help to shape the EU bioeconomy?

Consumers typically let their buying decisions be steered by aspects such as price, availability, convenience, matching their lifestyle etc. By also taking sustainability into consideration when buying daily or durable products, consumers can help the market for

such products to grow. Bio-based products and thus the bioeconomy at large, can benefit from this growth when they represent a sustainable option. Informing consumers in a smart manner about more sustainable choices is at the essence of the 3-CO project.

Could you briefly explain the concepts of social innovation and innovation governance?

Social innovation describes the entire process by which new responses to social needs are developed to deliver better social outcomes. Compared to mainstream

innovations, social innovations are critically driven by an extra motive: a social mission, and the value they create is necessarily shared value, at once economic and social.



Innovative governance is a related concept that refers to the adoption of novel approaches, strategies, and practices within governance frameworks to address

complex challenges, enhance decision-making processes, and improve outcomes.

Can you sketch what work will be done in 3-CO on social innovation?

3-CO will collect inspirational examples on social measures and social innovations, from within and beyond the bio-based economy, that support consumers, industry, and public bodies to switch towards socially and environmentally responsible

behaviour. 3-CO will also provide policy recommendations on how to deploy social measures and establish innovative governance models contributing to reduced resource consumption and increased innovation capacity of all actors.

What other 3-CO activities are aimed at engaging policy makers and public bodies?

Policy makers have come to realise that building a sustainable bioeconomy can boost economic growth within environmental policy goals. Therefore, the European Commission, as well as an increasing number of EU Member States, have put bioeconomy policies into place. One of the 14 key actions identified in the EC Bioeconomy Strategy Action Plan (2018) is the promotion of good practices to operate the bioeconomy within safe ecological limits. Instruments

such as labels and certification schemes are among good practices that enable and support consumers, industry, and public bodies alike to make more sustainable buying choices. The 3-CO project will create guidelines for the design of labels and certification schemes for bio-based products for owners of environmental labelling and information systems, public authorities, and industry designers.