Press Release #1

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The project

A new European research and innovation project, **BIOSCALES**, has officially launched with the ambition of helping bioeconomy innovation ecosystems navigate sustainability trade-offs and identify pathways towards more sustainable, circular and resilient development.

Funded by the **European Union through Horizon Europe** and coordinated by the **University of Graz, Austria**, BIOSCALES will bring together partners from across Europe for a four-year programme running from **September 2026 to August 2030**. The project has received an EU contribution of **€3,999,597.31** under Horizon Europe Grant Agreement **No. 101296173**.

Addressing complex sustainability trade-offs

The European bioeconomy can play an important role in the transition towards a more sustainable economy. However, decisions about the production and use of bio-based resources and products can involve complex interactions and trade-offs across environmental, economic and social dimensions.

BIOSCALES will address these challenges by focusing on three complementary pathways: **substitution, circularity and longevity**.

The project will investigate how these approaches can be combined and optimised to support bioeconomy innovation while avoiding unintended sustainability trade-offs. Rather than considering individual technologies or value chains in isolation, BIOSCALES will take a **systemic and place-based approach**, recognising the interconnections between different actors, resources, technologies and policy choices.

Five European regions at the centre of the project

BIOSCALES will work with stakeholders through five case studies in **Austria, the Netherlands, Spain, Romania and Sweden**. These case studies will provide diverse regional contexts in which the project can examine how bioeconomy innovation ecosystems can develop sustainable pathways that reflect local conditions and stakeholder needs.

Through a process of **co-design, co-creation and co-validation**, BIOSCALES will work with stakeholders to develop and assess **sustainability-optimised target states** for these innovation ecosystems.

The project will bring together perspectives from research, business, government, civil society and other relevant actors, with the aim of connecting scientific evidence with practical experience and regional priorities.

Combining data, modelling and sustainability assessment

To understand the potential impacts and feasibility of different transformation pathways, BIOSCALES will integrate a range of complementary analytical methods.

These include the**, Life Cycle Sustainability Assessment, multi-criteria mapping, multi-objective optimisation, real options analysis, system dynamics modelling and technoeconomic assessment**.

Together, these methods will enable the project to explore environmental, economic and social implications, assess alternative development pathways and investigate the conditions under which different strategies may be viable.

From European case studies to tools for wider use

A key ambition of BIOSCALES is to ensure that its results can extend beyond the project's five case-study regions.

The project will develop resources that can support other bioeconomy innovation ecosystems in assessing their own sustainability challenges and exploring potential pathways for transformation. These will include a **self-assessment tool, online learning modules and exploitation resources**.

By combining scientific knowledge, modelling tools and stakeholder participation, BIOSCALES aims to generate knowledge and practical approaches that can contribute to more informed decision-making across Europe's evolving bioeconomy landscape.

A European collaboration for the future of the bioeconomy

Over the next four years, the BIOSCALES consortium will work collaboratively to better understand how bioeconomy innovation ecosystems can balance competing sustainability objectives while creating opportunities for circularity, substitution and longer-lasting use of bio-based products.

The project represents a collaborative effort to connect research and innovation with regional realities and stakeholder perspectives, supporting the development of evidence-based pathways for a more sustainable European bioeconomy.

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