



The European Commission's Knowledge Centre for Bioeconomy



Bio-based textiles

Expert workshop on latest research findings, market trends and policy needs

26 June 2024

9.30 -16.30 CET (Including lunch)

Venue: European Commission - DG Research & Innovation - Orban building, room 03/78
Sq. Frère-Orban 8, 1000 Bruxelles, Belgium

Programme

Background

The European consumers' demand for textiles is growing together with their attention to sustainability aspects. Making use of alternative fibres, based on renewable (bio-based) resources, is one of the strategies the textile sector may adopt to satisfy this demand.

In May 2021, the European Commission updated its Industrial Strategy, identifying textiles as a key product value chain with a urgent need and a strong potential for the transition to sustainable and circular production, consumption and business models. It thus proposed the co-creation of transition pathways across relevant industrial ecosystems. The 'Transition Pathway for the Textiles Ecosystem' underlines that the production and uptake of new bio-based, recycled and renewable fibres is one of the areas where investments are most needed. It also acknowledges the importance of research and innovation, remarking the medium Technology Readiness Level (TRL) of key technologies such as post-consumer recycling by adding cellulose-based fibres, chemical recycling, bio-based raw materials.

The EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles, launched in March 2022, supports the reduction of the textile industry's dependence on fossil sources with bio-based innovation. The Strategy lays out a forward-looking set of actions, which includes setting ecodesign requirements for textiles under the Regulation on Ecodesign for Sustainable Products (ESPR) framework. To provide scientific evidence for the future development of ecodesign requirements, Green Public Procurement requirements and a revision of the EU Ecolabel criteria for textiles, the Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) has undertaken a preparatory study. In parallel, the Commission proposed to introduce mandatory and harmonised Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) schemes for textiles in all EU Member States.

The [Knowledge Centre for Bioeconomy](#) (KCB) is a European Commission initiative on improved knowledge management for bioeconomy-related policymaking. It aims at developing a common and robust knowledge base for a sustainable and circular bioeconomy.

The increasing importance of the bio-based textiles and the opportunity for innovation they bring in the European industrial landscape supported the KCB's decision to enrich its web platform with a new deep dive on this subject, including a knowledge for policy brief and further information material. To realise it, the KCB cooperates with two recognised experts in the bio-based textile field, Dr. Paulien Harmsen, Senior Scientist Sustainable Textiles & Biorefinery at Wageningen University and Research, and Dr. Mikael Skrifvars, Professor of Polymer technology at University of Borås.

Description

The workshop will take place in hybrid modality. It will include seven interventions in the morning session and an interactive afternoon session, where the in-presence audience will split in two working groups.

The morning session will start with a focus on the policy landscape: representatives of the European Commission will explain how the European policy is stimulating the greening of the textile industry and what the specific role of the bio-based textiles within this framework is. Next, the Circular Bio-based Europe Joint Undertaking (CBE JU) will present its projects portfolio on bio-based textiles. The morning session will conclude with a presentation of the draft results of the industrial outlook and knowledge gap analysis for the bio-based textiles the experts carried out. The workshop will continue in the afternoon as in-presence working table discussions, focusing on the industrial outlook and the knowledge gap analysis. The workshop participants are invited to share views and knowledge on these topics, to inform the preparation of the policy brief.

Expected outcomes

This workshop will gather academics, practitioners and policymakers to engage in brainstorming the potential pathways for bio-based textile industry development and to discuss the latest research findings, market trends and policy needs of this strategic sector. Its outcomes will inform a knowledge for policy brief by the KCB.

9.30-10.00	0. Registration
PART 1	Chaired by Valeria Magnolfi, Knowledge Management Officer – JRC.D.1 - Forests and Bio-Economy
10.00-10.10	1. Welcome address
	Peter Wehrheim, Head of Unit - DG RTD B.2 - Bioeconomy & Food Systems
10:10-10:20	2. Introduction to the KCB deep dive on bio-based textiles
	Valeria Magnolfi, Knowledge Management Officer - JRC.D.1 - Forests and Bio-Economy
10:20-10:35	3. The bio-based textiles within the EU industrial policy
	Cornelia Mohor, Policy Assistant - DG GROW G.1 - Tourism, Textiles
10:35-10:50	4. The bio-based textiles within the EU environmental policy
	Paola Migliorini, Deputy Head of Unit - DG ENV B.1 - Circular Economy, Sustainable Production & Consumption
10:50-11:05	5. Ecodesign Sustainable Product Regulation (ESPR)
	Carsten Wentink, Policy Officer - DG ENV.B.4 - Sustainable Products
11:05-11:20	6. Break
11:20-11:35	7. Industrial innovation in the bio-based textile field
	Simone Maccaferri, Project Officer - CBE-JU
11:35-11:55	8. Bio-based textile sector: state of the art and potential role in the EU bioeconomy
	Paulien Harmsen, Senior Scientist Sustainable Textiles & Biorefinery - WUR
11:55-12:15	9. Knowledge gaps and opportunities for R&D in the bio-based textile sector
	Mikael Skrifvars, Professor of Polymer technology - University of Borås
12:15-13:15	10. Networking lunch
PART 2	
13:15-15:45	11. Parallel sessions
	Working table on the potential role of the bio-based textile sector within the EU bioeconomy, chaired by Paulien Harmsen, Senior Scientist Sustainable Textiles & Biorefinery, WUR Working table on knowledge gaps and opportunities for R&D in the bio-based textile sector, chaired by Mikael Skrifvars, Professor of Polymer technology, University of Borås
15.45-16.15	12. Wrap-up
	Paulien Harmsen, Senior Scientist Sustainable Textiles & Biorefinery - WUR Mikael Skrifvars, Professor of Polymer technology - University of Borås
16.15-16.30	13. Conclusions and next steps
	Valeria Magnolfi, Knowledge Management Officer – JRC.D.1 - Forests and Bio-Economy