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## Stakeholder Engagement Plan – initial version

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- ☐ **DEM** Demonstrator, pilot, prototype
- ☐ **DEC** Websites, patent fillings, videos, etc.
- ☐ **Other**

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- ☒ **PU** Public
- ☐ **CO** Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)

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## List of abbreviations

Abbreviation	Description
AB	Advisory Board
ABM	Advisory Board Member
BBEPP	Bio Base Europe Pilot Plant VZW
BBI JU	Bio-based Industries Joint Undertaking
BTG	BTG Biomass Technology Group BV
CCU	Carbon Capture and Utilisation
D	Deliverable
EC	European Commission
GA	Grant Agreement
NOVA	nova-Institut für politische und ökologische Innovation GmbH
PCC	Project Coordinating Committee
RC	Renewable Carbon
RCI	Renewable Carbon Initiative
SH	Stakeholder
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
TP	Testing Panel
WP	Work Package

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## **Publishable executive summary**

Tech4Biowaste is characterised by a high level of interaction with stakeholders. Stakeholders will be engaged at all stages of the project, right from the project start.

A main pillar of the Tech4Biowaste project are the stakeholders who shall help filling the database with content. The aim of the project is to provide stakeholders with a knowledge platform to help advance the valorisation of bio-waste. Both, filling the database and using it to advance bio-waste valorisation technologies, is based on stakeholder involvement.

This initial version report provides an overview of the formats and mechanisms that will be used to engage the different categories of stakeholders. It provides a plan of how to involve and interact with the specific stakeholder groups: the Advisory Board, the Testing Panel, the external contributors to the database and other relevant stakeholders.

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## **1 Introduction**

The main objective of Tech4Biowaste Work Package 1 (WP1) Stakeholder Management is to implement the best possible interaction with the different relevant stakeholder groups, to validate the project scope, to assess the needs/interests/priorities of stakeholders and to consult them on the database requirements.

Within this WP task 1.3 concerns the selection and definition of appropriate mechanisms for the engagement of different categories of stakeholders. Various formats will be applied. The formats are documented in this deliverable. The task will support all WPs on how to get the most out of different categories of stakeholder groups and will be aligned with the Communication and Dissemination planning in WP5.

At project start, a mapping of relevant stakeholder categories was performed (see D1.1). Initially ten relevant stakeholder categories were determined, covering the entire value chain from bio-waste producers to the users of bio-waste derived products. In the light of an optimal interaction with these different stakeholder categories, as well as with the two external advisory bodies Advisory Board (AB) and Testing Panel (TP), D1.3 explains which engagement mechanisms will be proposed per stakeholder group and in which format this will be carried out.

## **2 Stakeholder engagement**

The WP1 leader will be the main responsible for the mapping of European stakeholders that are to be engaged in project activities, for the selection and definition of appropriate mechanisms for the engagement of different categories of stakeholders, and for implementing interaction with stakeholders.

A five-step approach to stakeholder engagement will be applied.

Step 1: Engagement Strategy: Set vision and level of ambition for future engagement, and review past engagements.

Step 2: Stakeholder Mapping: Define criteria for identifying and prioritising stakeholders and select engagement mechanisms.

Step 3: Preparation: Focus on long-term goals to drive the approach, determine logistics for the engagement, and set the rules.

Step 4: Engagement: Conduct the engagement itself, ensuring equitable stakeholder contribution and mitigating tension while remaining focused on priorities.

Step 5: Action Plan: Identify opportunities from feedback and determine actions, revisit goals, and plan next steps for follow-up and future engagement.

### **2.1 Engagement strategy**

The consortium of Tech4Biowaste consists of 3 partners working uniquely on the bioeconomy and having a long track record working on EU projects in general and on BBI JU supported projects. All 3 partners have experience working for private and public organisations, ranging from micro-enterprises to multinationals and from municipalities to EC Directorates. As a result, they have distinct experience in determining the right engagement strategy. This experience manifests itself not on a local or regional, but on a European level, stimulating cooperation between stakeholders from different countries and cultures.

They know from experience exactly how best to approach certain stakeholders within the framework of a certain ambition.

Two project partners, NOVA and BBEPP, are managing a successful community of stakeholders that they built from an engagement strategy.

BBEPP manages the European platform Pilots4U of open access facilities for multipurpose pilot and demo activities in the bio-economy. The stakeholder engagement strategy has led to this community being considered today as the European reference of shared facilities.



NOVA started the promotional campaign around the Renewable Carbon (RC) community in the autumn of 2020. This platform unites all stakeholders interested in using alternative carbon sources to produce chemicals, materials, and fuels for the substitution of fossil resources to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Here, as well, a well-thought-out engagement strategy has led to a rapid short-term expansion of the stakeholder network at the European level.

## **2.2 Different Stakeholder Engagement Mechanisms**

Tech4Biowaste is characterised by a high level of interaction with stakeholders. Stakeholders will be engaged at all stages of the project, right from the project start.

Table 1 presents a preliminary overview of various mechanisms that may be used for the engagement of stakeholders.

Table 1: Suitable stakeholder engagement formats

SH category	Approach	Type	How
1	Individual	E-mail	E-mail message
2	Group	E-mail	Mailing
3	Individual	Dialogue	Phone/Teams call
4	Individual	Interview	Phone/Teams call
5	Individual	Survey	Questionnaire
6	Group	Poll	Multiple choice questions
7	Individual	Database	Uploading activity
8	Individual	Database	Search activity
9	Group	Workshop	Meeting
10	Group	Training session	Meeting
11	Group	Exhibition	Booth
12	Group	Conference	Presentation
13	Group	Website	Internet
14	Group	Video	Internet
15	Group	Social media	Internet
16	Group	Press	Press release

Further details on stakeholder engagement activities and arrangements are presented in the WP1 description in the GA.

Based on the foreseen planning of tasks and activities within the project, the Project Coordinating Committee of Tech4Biowaste (PCC) made a choice of stakeholder engagement mechanism in the first two months. Here is an overview of the choices made for engagement of the different stakeholder groups.

### 2.2.1 Advisory Board Engagement Plan

D1.1 describes the 5-step process of assembling the AB. In this phase, the following engagement mechanisms were applied:

- Individual invitation to participate as an AB member by e-mail
- Telephone follow-up by the stakeholder relations manager with additional explanation about the ambitions of the project
- Individual invitation for participation in the first AB meeting on 17 June 2021 by e-mail
- Organisation of a digital AB meeting with the confirmed AB members on 17 June 2021.
- Delivery of the minutes, slides and recording of the meeting by e-mail

Already at the start of the AB engagement, the role of the AB members was clearly elaborated and explained as shown in Figure 1.

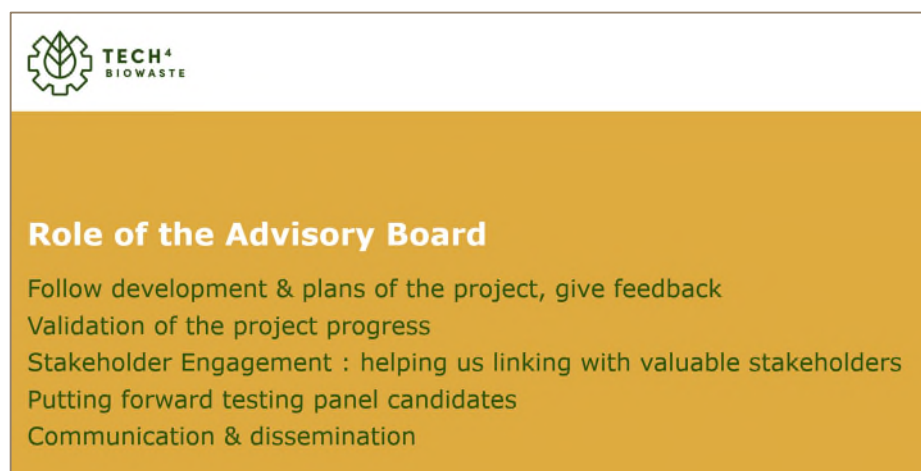


Figure 1: Role of the Advisory Board as presented during the first AB meeting on June 17<sup>th</sup> 2021

The AB will therefore have an important role in building the Tech4Biowaste stakeholder community, precisely because interaction with relevant contributors and users of the Tech4Biowaste database is crucial to its success.

It is also the reason why the project partners have decided to make the AB quite extensive and to include minimum 2 representatives from each stakeholder category. The AB will be consulted every 3 months, for about 1.5 hours. **Meetings** will be held virtually using **teleconferencing tools**. The first AB meeting was scheduled for 17 June 2021. At that moment already 14 members confirmed their engagement, as shown in table 2, and 11 members attended the first AB meeting. A second AB meeting is scheduled for 7 October 2021.

Table 2: Composition of the AB status 17 June 2021

AB	Stakeholder Group	Company name	Country
<b>AB</b>	<b>STAKEHOLDER GROUPS</b>	<b>COMPANY NAME</b>	<b>COUNTRY</b>
AB1	bio-waste producer	Mondelēz International	UK
AB2	bio-waste collector/processor	Renewi	Belgium
AB3	bio-waste collector/processor	Twence	Netherlands
AB4	technology developer	CH Four Biogas	Canada
AB5	technology developer	Novamont	Italy
AB6	technology transfer organisation	TCBB Resource	Ireland
AB7	manufacturer of bio-waste derived products	Cosun Beet Company	Netherlands
AB8	manufacturer of bio-waste derived products	Borregaard	Norway
AB9	user of bio-waste derived products	Mi-Plast	Croatia
AB10	network organisation/industry cluster	Southern Region Waste Management Office	Ireland
AB11	network organisation/industry cluster	Dutch Association of Biowaste Processors	Netherlands
AB12	network organisation/industry cluster	European Compost Network	Germany
AB13	network organisation/industry cluster	Cluster Industrial Biotechnology	Germany
AB14	public authority/government agency	FNR Agency for Renewable Resources	Germany

An exception to the rule of 2 representatives per stakeholder category is made for the network organisations and industry clusters. This way, we connect the activities of the Tech4Biowaste project to larger target groups with the same interests.

The intensive linking to these industry clusters will also help to make the platform known within the bioeconomy ecosystem and thus support the WP's actions on communication and dissemination.



Figure 2: Agenda of the Advisory Board Meeting held on 17 June 2021

During the first meeting of the AB, project partners took the opportunity to explain the current project progress status and the planned activities in the short term. The AB members were presented with a preview of the data platform and were given the opportunity to provide **extensive feedback**.

This feedback is very valuable, because it confirms the elements that these experts consider as important as the project partners.

Question	Answer
how data will be entered on the platform	hybrid model, project partners, volunteers, pods, Artificial Intelligence
will the proportion of text be limited	different users have different background and knowledge, so different needs; text parts will be limited
how to convince companies to share info with so many platforms already existing	offer them a network of platforms interconnected; interconnection between Tech4Biowaste and other platforms e.g. Pilots4U
will the platform provide an opportunity to start connecting with people	yes, connection features will be added, tags on profiles
how ensure that only proven technologies will be put on the platform	quality check for data entries by professionals before publishing data
do you consider a small section on how the technology will/can be used, interface for users	examples how technology can be utilised can be added and linked to other pages e.g. spaghetti food waste
will the composition of bio-waste be part of the database	typical composition of different bio-waste streams will be provided
will post-treatment technologies included	these technologies will be integrated, e.g. separation technologies
what about technology providers that have adopted the technology	technology developers will be included
will the comparison of technologies be possible	yes, a comparison tool will be provided, this can even be organised in a "use case" try out
reality check for technologies is crucial, with internal auditors =OK but looking at the limitations of knowledge, perhaps using the expertise of industry associations which are technology neutral	thanks for your suggestion

be careful with language use, use a common language as much as possible	thanks for your suggestion
all types of bio-waste; will the platform cover bio-waste in full extend	no, focus on 3 streams of bio-waste as presented by the Coordinator
can I search for polymers and then for technologies	technologies can be listed where polymers are an output we can use your input as a "use case"
as potential end user of bio-waste derived materials, are we considering to also include sustainability specifications	thanks for your suggestion

Table 3: Feedback from the AB members during the AB meeting of 17 June 2021

For instance, concerns about data quality control were strongly voiced and there were many questions about the definition of the term 'bio-waste'.

There was also immediate commitment from the AB members to actively participate in testing, such as for the technology comparison tool that will be provided.

### 2.2.2 Testing Panel Engagement Plan

It was foreseen to create the **Testing Panel** (TP) at the same time as the AB, at the start of the project. However, on 17 May 2021 it was decided to postpone the TP creation until there is (sufficient) Tech4Biowaste output available for testing the database. It is considered to recruit about 20 volunteers for the TP, which are expected to yield at least 10 active testers (e.g. 5 intended database users and 5 intended database contributors).

The **approach** to potential **candidate participants** will be **similar** to the approach used for the creation of the **AB**. This is described in D1.1 and the engagement mechanisms that will be used are the same as described in section 2.2.1.

TP members will be actively involved in the implementation of task T3.8 as defined in the GA. A process of Beta testing will be started, and this will take place during one or more dedicated **testing workshops**.

### 2.2.3 Stakeholder engagement for the T4B feasibility study

It is key to make sure that the technology database and matching tool matches expectations of the intended users. Using different formats, stakeholders from the bio-waste sector will be consulted about their desires and needs in terms of scope and content of the Tech4Biowaste database.

For the preparation and feasibility, Tech4Biowaste wants to involve the targeted database users and contributors. It shall develop an understanding of the needs and interest of the intended users, and of the willingness of intended contributors to voluntarily provide information. A representative sample of different stakeholders from different categories will be surveyed, both individually (interviews) and group wise, to determine their needs and requirements. Expressed needs will be quantified.

It was decided within the PCC that the various engagement formats planned for the feasibility study could be combined within the organisation of a physical (not digital) pitching, matchmaking, and networking event.

It will be a joint event of 3 European platforms:

- [Pilots4U](#), an existing **platform** of shared pilot & demo **facilities** for the bio-economy
- [BioeconomyVentures](#) (started May 2021), where a **platform** will be created to help start-ups to **finance**
- [Tech4Biowaste](#) (started April 2021), where a **platform** will be created of existing and emerging **technologies** for bio-waste

Timing                      Tuesday 28 September 2021 start at 10h CET, end at 17h CET

Location                    Sheraton Brussels Airport Hotel

Target groups bio-waste producers/collectors/processors, SME's, start-ups, scale-ups, technology developers/owners, open access pilot & demo facility owners, large companies/corporates, investors, clusters, other interesting communities to get linked to

The survey technique towards the stakeholders involved will be a 1-on-1 interview, using a semi-structured questionnaire. The implementation will be combined within the structure of the above-mentioned event.

The ambition is to have 100-150 stakeholders from different categories present at this event so that the feasibility study can be done efficiently.

A plenary survey can be carried out there using an automated question tool such as Mentimeter. In addition, interviews can easily be scheduled via the matchmaking tool. The Tech4Biowaste project also provides a booth where additional interviews can be conducted during the networking part of the event.

In order to get a representative picture on the elements of the feasibility study, the target of 30 surveys was set. The results will be processed in D2.1.

#### **2.2.4 Stakeholder engagement plan for external contributions to the database**

Once a basic version of the database has been developed, an initial **promotional campaign** will be carried out to involve specific stakeholders. A large share of the database content will originate from the **external contributors**, coached, and guided by the core publishers' team. A community of volunteers within the platform and the stakeholder groups, gaining significant experience.

Making use of the campaign material developed in WP 5, a campaign will start during the abovementioned joint event in Brussels on 28 September 2021 to recruit volunteers that will serve as external contributors of content for the database. The main candidates to

become such volunteers are staff from technology developers/suppliers/promoters, or from their representative/cluster organisations.

As it offers a range of benefits to be included in the database, in particular when the technology is not fully commercial yet, the project consortium expects significant interest to become a volunteer. Given the large proportion of such stakeholders present at the pitching, matchmaking and networking event in Brussels, their attention will be drawn to developing a **use case pitch**.

At the same time, the **booth space** of the Tech4Biowaste project will serve as a registration spot for potential external contributors.

### **2.3 Plan for stakeholder engagement**

At least four **stakeholder workshops** will be organised.

The first stakeholder workshop will be organised by BBEPP on 28 September 2021 in connection with the annual meeting of Pilots4U network of existing open access pilot and multipurpose demo infrastructures for the bio-economy. Within this event, several elements of T1.4 are contained as described in sections 2.2.3 and 2.2.4.

NOVA will lead organising a stakeholder workshop in connection with the annual International Conference on Renewable Carbon that is focused on circular economy, renewable carbon, chemical recycling, biorefineries, etc.

These two offline project workshops will also serve as a business meeting opportunity and as a platform to match and interact, therefore part A substantial part of the workshop programme will be devoted to introducing each other.

BTG will lead organising two online stakeholder workshops.

Further elements of the Tech4Biowaste **promotion campaign** are described in section 3.7 of D5.1 Dissemination and Communication Plan.

The Tech4Biowaste platform will provide for **knowledge transfer and interaction** of stakeholders from well beyond the bio-waste sector, also targeting stakeholders active within the area of (other) biomass utilisation, carbon capture and utilisation (CCU) and circular economy with closed (chemical and mechanical) recycling systems.

A further highly relevant source of initiatives that Tech4Biowaste will collaborate with, and build on, includes **trade associations** and **technology platforms**, from the international via European to national and regional and even local level.

At the end of the project, the second stage of the promotional campaign will be implemented. Here the aim is to **inform stakeholders** (already engaged ones as well as new ones) and the **media** on the availability of the key **project outcome**: the technology database.

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Project partners target integration of the Tech4Biowaste platform into the (parallel developed) Renewable Carbon Initiative platform and community. The project team will gauge the interest and priorities of the **RCI stakeholder community** and determine if and how to expand the scope of the database. Interested stakeholders can continue to contribute (further) to it and intended users will continue to find up-to-date information in it.