

D6.4

Network of Interest and project activities and events

WHITE

May 2025



PROJECT INFORMATION

PROGRAMME	Horizon Europe
TOPIC	HORIZON-CL6-2021-ZEROPOLLUTION-01-07
TYPE OF ACTION	HORIZON-CSA
PROJECT NUMBER	101059785
START DAY	1 June 2022
DURATION	36 months

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

TITLE	Network of Interest and project activities and events
WORK PACKAGE	WP6 Dissemination, exploitation and communication
TASK	T6.2 Stakeholder engagement and interaction boosting
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DATE	31 May 2025

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Classified S-UE/EU-S	EU SECRET under the Commission Decision No2015/444	

DOCUMENT HISTORY

Version	Date	Changes	Responsible partner
0.1	04/04/2025	First draft ready for internal review	WHITE
0.2	19/5/2025	Second draft integrating consortium input	WR (WFBR)
1.0	26/5/2025	First version as sent to the coordinator	WHITE
1.0	30/5/2025	1st version of the document as it was released by the PC	WR

SUSTCERT4BIOBASED methodology (GA No. 101059785) for the project's Network of Interest builds on existing expertise, tools and templates developed internally by White Research while also taking into account European Commission guidelines and best practices available in literature. Part of the standard methodology adopted has already been developed in previous research projects where White Research was a beneficiary, such as the ROSETTA (GA. 101136427) project. This approach ensures optimal resource allocation and adherence to project requirements. Ad hoc and tailored modifications were integrated to the methodology used by SUSTCERT4BIOBASED to comply with GA conditions, EU recommendations and project specificities. This report presents the adjusted methodology as it was further developed and applied within SUSTCERT4BIOBASED.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BMT	BIOBASEDCERT Monitoring Tool
CIRCE	Centro de Investigación de Recursos y Consumos Energéticos
CSLs	Certification schemes and labels
CU	Control Union Certifications Germany GmbH
D&C	Dissemination and Communication
EC	European Commission
ECOS	Environmental Coalition on Standards
EU	European Union
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
GA	Grant Agreement
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
GEN	Global Ecolabelling Network
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
NoI	Network of Interest
PO	Project Officer
PAB	Project Advisory Board
PC	Project Coordinator
SMA's	Social Media Accounts
WEcR	Wageningen Economic Research
WFBR	Wageningen Food and Biobased Research
WHITE	White Research SRL
WP	Work Package
WPL	Work Package Leader
WR	Wageningen Research

Executive Summary

The SUSTCERT4BIOBASED project has underlined the importance of supporting continuous engagement with a diverse array of stakeholders and is committed to establishing and maintaining robust relationships with industrial partners, scheme owners, certification bodies, and policymakers. By widely disseminating and effectively communicating our activities and results, we aimed to promote the adoption of best practices and recommendations within the biobased economy and promote strong collaborations and knowledge exchange with our actions but mainly with our events.

The SUSTCERT4BIOBASED project's engagement strategy and actions include a wide range of activities. One of the main assets of the project's engagement strategy was to develop a Network of Interest (NoI) an inclusive community that brings together stakeholders from across the industrial biobased value chain and the sustainability system community.

Through our events and NoI meetings, stakeholders were able to learn project updates and ongoing collaboration was strongly encouraged. To enhance outreach and stimulate engagement, the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED project was committed to raising awareness of the sustainability certification topic and engaging stakeholders for future exploitation to create maximised impact. In this deliverable, we present our overall NoI and project activities and events organised by the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED team to engage stakeholders and upgrade the sustainability certification for the bio-based systems landscape.

The deliverable is structured as follows:

Chapter 1: This section presents how we perform engagement and interaction-boosting activities through our NoI.

Chapter 2: This chapter presents the objectives before establishing our NoI.

Chapter 3: The online registration process is presented in this section.

Chapter 4: The methodology used for the recruitment of members and the dissemination of the NoI is described in this chapter.

Chapter 5: The composition of the NoI in terms of gender, country, and type of stakeholder is presented in this chapter.

Chapter 6: The structure and governance of the NoI is further described.

Chapter 7: This section includes an indicative list of actions where the NoI members could participate throughout the project.

Chapter 8: The activities which the NoI has already participated are described in this section.

Chapter 9: This section presents SUSTCERT4BIOBASED's engagement events.

Chapter 10: This section presents SUSTCERT4BIOBASED's workshops.

Chapter 11: This section presents our engagement strategy beyond the end of the project.

Annexes:

Annex I, Annex II: These annexes present the documents that are used for the online registration for the NoI.

Annex III: An indicative invitation letter used by the consortium to invite people from their network to join the Network of Interest.

Annex IV: The guidelines document by WR.

1. Introduction

1.1 Engagement and interaction boosting through our Nol

Engagement is a core element for the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED project and its pivotal component is the establishment of the Network of Interest (Nol), a network that connects stakeholders around the core notions of the project. Each individual who subscribes to the Network has the opportunity to interact, receive project updates, publicise recent advancements and trends and share their knowledge and views on bioeconomy certification-related aspects, triggering a cross-disciplinary dialogue. Partners could pool the Nol expertise on an ad-hoc basis, based on the project needs.

Our Nol's goals are to support networking, facilitate dialogue, and promote knowledge exchange among individuals interested in bioeconomy certifications. For this reason, the stakeholders engaged by the project and our Nol members have participated in several activities throughout the project including our Nol meetings, surveys, as well as website interviews and have been invited to all events and workshops organised by the project.

Throughout the project's duration, five bi-annual online meetings with a different thematic focus have been held to gather all Nol members, present the project's progress, and discuss new developments in the sustainability certification sector. Additional project activities and events have been organised to boost interaction and engagement in the area of sustainability certification for bio-based products.

1.2 Operationalisation of the Nol

The SUSTCERT4BIOBASED project developed an easy online registration form (accessible through the project's website [here](#)), and 93 participants have registered. A recruitment strategy has been put in place since the beginning of the project which worked horizontally until the project's completion to attract stakeholders from the consortium network, synergy projects, and through open calls in our SMAs. As a result, our Nol includes a diverse range of participants, including policy officers, label owners, standardisation bodies, certification bodies, biomass producers and sustainability stakeholders.

The overall target was to engage 50 members, a number which was surpassed, as overall the project has gathered 93 Nol members. Starting from M12 (when the core of the Nol was established), the participants were invited to biannual online meetings to get updated about the project's progress, provide feedback and discuss related developments in the sustainability certification sector. More information on the format of the Nol meetings and their outcomes will follow in the next chapters.

2. The Objectives

Below are the main objectives behind establishing our Network of Interest and deploying engagement events:

- Participate in bi-annual NoI meetings and support collaboration and networking
- Engage NoI members to exploit their expertise and experiences by providing targeted ad hoc input.
- Disseminate and promote the project's results, including deliverables and promotional materials to maximise impact.
- Support the post-project's exploitation of results.
- Disseminate the project's events and workshops while inviting all NoI members to them.
- Spread regular updates on the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED project, including the latest advancements in the sustainability certification sector, research findings, and emerging trends.
- Share expertise and ask for ad-hoc feedback on the project's activities.
- Facilitate knowledge sharing.

3. Setting up the Network of Interest

3.1 Methodology and Templates

Early in the project, WHITE initiated the strategy for establishing the Network of Interest. Several templates were circulated to determine the Network's structure and recruitment strategy. The strategy defined the structure and goals of the NoI, as well as engagement methods. After the creation of the website and the finalisation of the online registration, WHITE invited all consortium members to find members for our Network. All consortium partners supported these actions.



Steps for setting up the Nol

A strategy was set up by WHITE to define the structure and goals of the Network of Interest, as well as the recruitment strategy and engagement methods. All consortium partners supported these actions.

5+
Potential members
Each consortium organisation was tasked to identify at least 5 potential candidates for the Nol.

90+
New members
More than 90 members are currently part of the Nol.



Figure 1. Steps for setting up the Nol

Below are the shared templates along with brief explanations:

•**Identification of stakeholder groups:** This template identifies the stakeholder groups participating in the Nol, their importance to the project, and potential activities for their participation.

SUSCERT4BIOBASED - Stakeholder groups for the NoI (network of interest)_identification template				
Group	Sub-group	Notes	Influence	Impact
Sustainability system actors	Scheme/label owners	Review of the factsheets made about their schemes; Provide feedback on the monitoring system; Engage with them throughout so that they will be more open to implement the improvement options presented to them later on	H	H
	Standardization bodies (international, EU, national)	Provide feedback with linkage to the existing standards; Continuous engagement so that they are open to update standards with findings from the project; Feedback on the replicability of the framework proposed into CEN or ISO standards and work items	M	L
	Certification bodies	Provide feedback on the practical applicability of the monitoring system; Data collection on the extent of certification of biobased value chains	H	M

Influence is the capacity of each stakeholder group to affect the successful implementation project.

Impact refers to the effect the project has specific sub-group of stakeholders.

Figure 2. Identification of stakeholder groups (1)

SUSCERT4BIOBASED Network of Interest				
Main groups	1. Sustainability system actors	2. Policy	3. Industry	4. Regional bioeconomy actors
Subgroups (stakeholders that are included in the main groups)	a. Scheme/label owners b. Standardization bodies (international, EU, national) c. Certification bodies d. Academia	a. Policy makers b. Policy advisors c. Governments d. NGOs e. Policy officers	a. Industrial biobased value chain actors b. Biomass producers c. Industrial operators and traders	a. Local authorities b. Farmers c. Unions d. Civil society e. Entrepreneurs

Note: Please everyone add here more sub-groups that you think that is important to include in our Network of interest.

Figure 3. Identification of stakeholder groups (2)

•**Preliminary activities identification:** This template identifies the main activities where the NoI members can participate.

Preliminary first identification of activities where the NoI can participate				
1. Validation of task results in ad hoc basis				
2. Participation in workshops and events (WP1- WP5)				
3. Participation in our 2 dissemination events (T6.2)				
4. Participation in bi-annual meetings				
5. Support us in the dissemination of activities/results (followers in our social media, disseminate the project in their networks)				
6. Reach them in order to be speakers in our events or to write articles in our website				
7. Subscribers to our Newsletter				
8.- Open suggestions to the ongoing work				

Please everyone, add different activities in the framework of the project where the NoI can participate. This is an initial identification. A more detailed identification per task level will also take place in the second brainstorming round.

Figure 4. Preliminary activities identification

•**NoI candidate identification and monitoring:** This template is used by the consortium to list potential NoI members.

After registration, the consent forms and personal details are sent to the Nol manager (WHITE). These details are maintained according to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The Nol manager tracks member participation and contacts them to engage them in project activities.

The Registration documents:

The registration documents follow the methodology outlined in the project's Data Management Plan. These documents include:

- **Privacy policy:** Describes the data policy governing the project (Annex I).
- **Declaration of Acceptance:** Outlines the terms that members need to accept (Annex II).
- **Terms of Reference:** Provides detailed information about the Nol, its activities, responsibilities, and governance (Annex II).
- **Information Sheet and Informed Consent Document:** Contains project details, participant requirements, data usage and sharing policies, and instructions for withdrawing consent (Annex II).

» Step 1 » Step 2 » Step 3

I, the undersigned,

certify that I have read and agree to abide by the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED [Network of Interest Terms of Reference](#).

I pledge that I will participate in the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED Nol in my individual capacity and as such, I may not delegate another person to carry out the work or be replaced by any other person without prior written agreement with the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED consortium.

I undertake not to divulge any information given in the context of the work of the Nol, unless the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED consortium agrees to release me from this obligation, and to respect the confidentiality requirements.

I declare to accept entirely and with no reservations my appointment as a SUSTCERT4BIOBASED Nol member as described in the Terms of Reference.

I consent that any input or contribution I provide as a member of the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED Nol may be used by the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED consortium for reporting purposes or to align the project's activities with the needs of the relevant stakeholders.

I consent to the processing of my personal data needed for my participation in the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED Nol.

AGREE

Figure 7. STEP 1_Declaration of Acceptance

» Step 1 » Step 2 » Step 3

1. SUSTCERT4BIOBASED Introduction

We would like to invite you to take part in an activity being carried out by the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED project, a 3-year project funded by the European Union within the framework of the Horizon Europe program. Take some time to read this information sheet and if you have questions feel free to reach us.

1.1 What is the SUSTCERTBIOBASED project about?

Biobased products play a prominent role in the transition from a fossil-based economy to a circular economy at an EU and global level. According to an assessment done by the European Commission, biobased products can contribute to a more sustainable economy and could represent approximately €57 billion in annual income and involve 300.000 jobs. But what exactly are biobased products? Biobased products are wholly or partially made from materials of biological origin. Even though they could help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and offer other advantages such as lower levels of toxicity or novel product characteristics (e.g. biodegradability), it is still very important to ensure their sustainability on environmental, social and economic dimensions.

There are plenty of sustainability certification schemes and business-to-business labels that have been developed to track the sustainability impacts of biobased products. However, given the fact that there is no harmonization of these certification schemes yet, the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED project

Figure 8. STEP 2_Information Sheet

» Step 1 » Step 2 » Step 3

5. Informed Consent Form

I confirm that I understand that by ticking each box below I am consenting to this element of the study. I understand that it will be assumed that unticked boxes mean that I DO NOT consent to that part of the study. I also understand that by not giving consent for any of the elements, I may be deemed ineligible for participating in this project's activity.

Required fields are marked with an asterisk (*)

Name*

Lastname*

E-mail*

Figure 9. STEP 3_ Consent form and Registration

4. Recruitment of Nol members and dissemination

The successful dissemination and the recruitment of members are essential for the growth and operation of our Nol. To achieve these goals, we have developed a strategy exploiting several recruitment channels:

First Channel: Leveraging our networks

Our consortium partners have exploited their networks to attract and invite members. Through personal invitations, they have contacted stakeholders who are experts in the topic and interested in sustainability certification. This initial pool has expanded with individuals identified during our engagement events, workshops and ongoing research tasks.

Second Channel: Synergies with other projects and networks

Throughout the project's duration, synergies have been established with other relevant projects and networks. This approach has allowed us to invite members from these networks to join our Nol.

Third Channel: Social media and open-call campaigns

Due to the high interest observed on our social media platforms from the beginning of the project, we launched targeted open-call campaigns. These campaigns launched across our social media channels and our project website, aimed to attract individuals beyond our immediate networks.

Fourth Channel: Engagement through project activities and events

Throughout the project, various activities and events have taken place where participants were invited to participate in our Nol, allowing us to create a further community interested in sustainability certification topics.

On our website, website visitors can browse through the Nol members list ([can be found here](#)) and explore the Nol members and which of them fall under the respective Network of Interest groups (Policy, Sustainability system actors, Industry and Regional bioeconomy actors).



Figure 10. Open call _ poster



Figure 11. Open Call to invite more members to participate in our activities

5. Our Nol's composition and dynamics

Our aim was to build a strong Network with experts and interested stakeholders around the topic of sustainability certification. During the first year, with the efforts of all consortium partners, an initial pool of experts was secured. Currently, **93 people** are registered in the Nol. Below is some information about the synthesis and composition of the community.

Since the beginning of the project, various groups have been identified and invited to participate. These diverse backgrounds will also support us in exploiting our results after the end of the project in different parts of the sustainability certification, as well as in various sectors such as industry, academia, and bioeconomy in general.

Below, you can find the current synthesis of the Network of Interest.

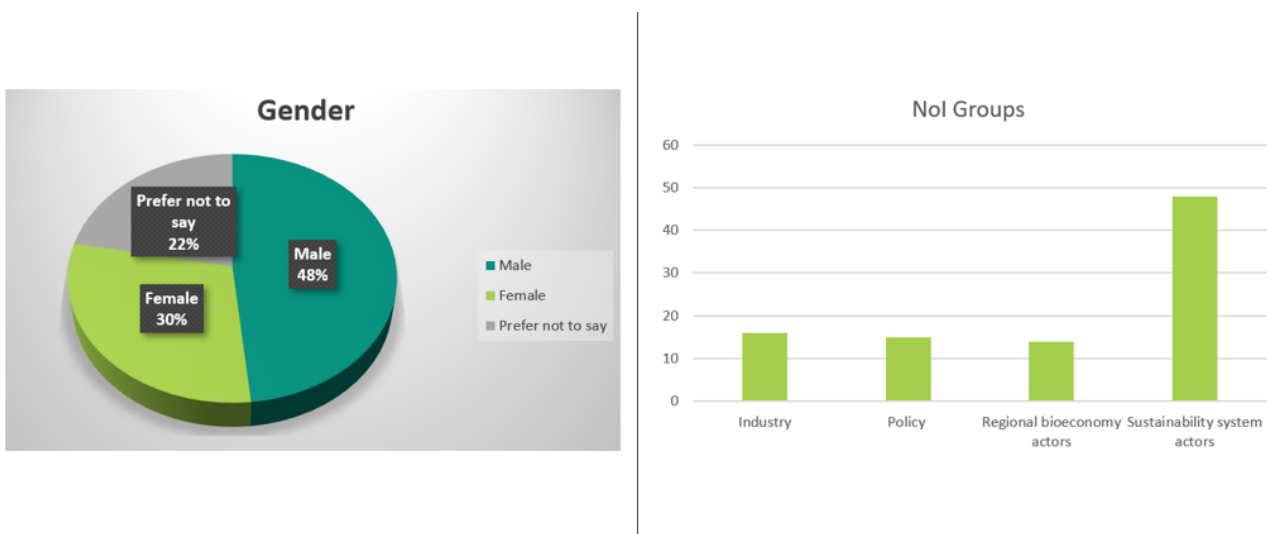


Figure 12. Nol Composition (1)

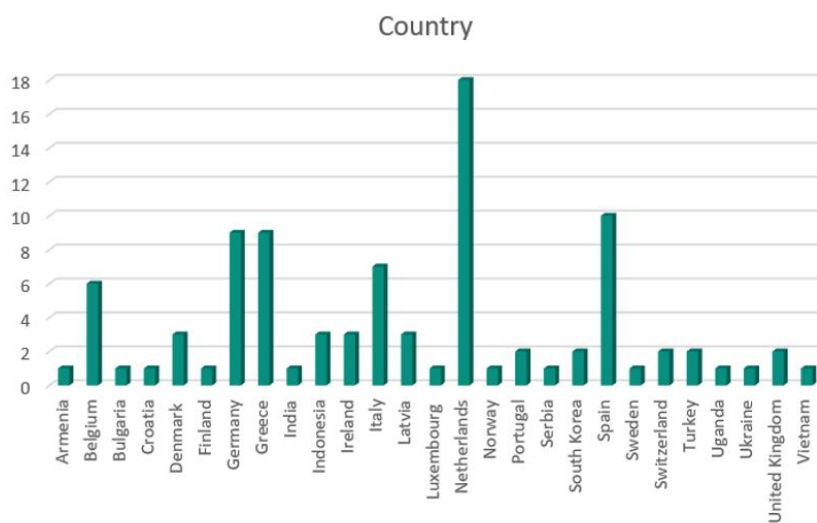


Figure 13. Nol Composition (2)

The network brings together 93 members from a diverse range of countries and stakeholder groups. Representation spans four main areas of interest, with the highest concentration in sustainability system actors. The geographic spread demonstrates strong European involvement, supporting the project's collaborative and cross-border approach. Regarding gender, the network includes a mix of male and female participants, along with a notable share who chose not to disclose this information—reflecting an inclusive and voluntary approach to data collection.

6. Nol's Governance

Strategy development: WHITE is responsible for planning and managing the overall strategy for the Nol. This includes setting goals, defining objectives, and outlining how the Nol members have been involved in the project.

Membership management: WHITE keeps track of Nol members. This involves maintaining a database/list of members and tracking their participation.

Consortium partners' role: The consortium partners had specific responsibilities. In addition to inviting individuals to participate within their networks, they also engaged them in the project's research activities.

7. Nol members' involvement strategy

The participation of Nol members in our project activities has taken place voluntarily. A list of different activities identified from the early stages of the project can be found below.

- **Engagement in bi-annual online Nol meetings:** Nol members had the opportunity to participate in bi-annual online meetings with diverse thematic focus, for in-depth discussions and knowledge sharing. Some of them were engaged by delivering presentations during the Nol meetings and elaborating on topics of their expertise.
- **Participation in project workshops and events:** Nol members were invited to participate in workshops and events organised by the project. This involvement provided opportunities for networking, knowledge exchange and providing feedback.
- **Participation in interviews:** Nol members were invited to participate in our **Network of Interest Interview Series**, offering valuable insights and their opinions on sustainability certification-related topics.
- **Participation in research results on an ad hoc basis:** Nol members were asked on an ad-hoc basis to provide their input in project's survey's or participate in research activities
- **Support in dissemination activities and results:** Nol members supported the dissemination of project activities and results by leveraging their social media followers and networks.
- **Speakers at our events:** Nol members were invited to speak at our engagement events and workshops. Their experiences and expertise enriched the discussions.
- **Subscription to project Newsletter:** Nol members were invited to voluntarily subscribe to our Newsletter and were encouraged to promote it through their networks. This helped to keep the members informed and engaged with project updates.

8. Nol engagement actions

8.1 Objectives behind our Nol meetings

The Network of Interest meetings for SUSTCERT4BIOBASED serve as a platform for stakeholders to engage, share knowledge, and discuss relevant topics. The key objectives include:

Knowledge Exchange: Facilitate dialogue among diverse participants to share insights and best practices related to sustainability certification schemes.

Project Updates: Provide updates on the progress and developments of the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED project, ensuring that all stakeholders are informed about ongoing actions and findings.

Expert Discussions: Host presentations from experts in the field, specifically from certification labels that have been used for our testing such as the FSC and individuals who are experts in the area to deepen understanding of sustainability certification practices and their updates.

Networking Opportunities: Create a platform for stakeholders to connect, supporting potential collaborations that can enhance the effectiveness of sustainability certifications within the biobased economy.

Feedback and Collaboration: Encourage participants to provide feedback on project developments and engage in collaborative discussions that contribute to the overall goals of promoting robust sustainability certifications for bio-based systems.

8.2 Structure and organisation plan

The structure of these meetings is focused on project updates, discussions, and diverse thematic presentations that enhance understanding of current developments and practices in sustainability certification.

Format and Participation: The meetings are conducted online in the Microsoft Teams platform, allowing for broader participation from various stakeholders from our Nol members.

Indicative Agenda Components:

- Welcome Note
- Project Updates
- Presentations
- Open Q&A Session

Networking Opportunities:

The Nol emphasises networking among participants. Members are encouraged to share their insights and engage with one another during these meetings to foster collaboration and knowledge transfer within the community.

Future Initiatives:

The meetings also serve as platforms for discussing future initiatives and workshops that aim to further enhance stakeholder engagement in sustainability certification practices. Participants are informed about upcoming events and opportunities to contribute to ongoing projects.

Promotion process:

The promotion process for the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED NoI meetings is designed to engage a diverse range of stakeholders in the sustainability certification sector. Each NoI meeting is promoted at least 20 days before the meeting on our website, SMAs and online pages such as the EuBioNet. Dedicated posts are shared on our SMAs each highlighting a different aspect of the upcoming meeting. Initially, we unveil the agenda, followed by announcements of the guest speaker. As the meeting date approaches, we post reminders encouraging all interested stakeholders to register for our NoI. Once registered, participants will receive a personalised invitation to the meeting.

Overall, the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED NoI meetings are structured to promote active participation, knowledge sharing, and collaboration among diverse stakeholders involved in sustainability certification for biobased systems. In the next subchapters, we will present the NoI meetings organised within our project thoroughly.

8.3 Network of Interest meetings

1st NoI meeting / 12.06.2023

Thematic focus: The Green Claim Regulation and the significance of voluntary certification schemes

Invited speakers: Jenny Walther Thoss (Berndt+Partner Consultants) | Iris Vural Gursel - project coordinator (WR)

Event Overview:

The 1st bi-annual SUSTCERT4BIOBASED Network of Interest meeting was held online on 12th June 2023, and it proved to be a successful event. With 25 participants, the meeting covered essential aspects related to the project's development, the sustainability certification sector, the Green Claim Regulation, and the Role of Voluntary Certification Schemes. The event also featured an engaging Q&A session.

Highlights:

- **Opening Remarks:** The meeting commenced with a presentation by the coordinator, who revealed the aim and approach of SUSTCERT4BIOBASED. This provided attendees with valuable insights into the project's objectives and strategies.
- **Project Updates:** the Dissemination Manager of SUSTCERT4BIOBASED, shared an update on the project's current developments. This update kept the audience informed about the project's progress and recent achievements.
- **Invited Speaker:** our invited speaker, addressed the role of the new Directive of the European Parliament concerning already existing Voluntary Certification Schemes. The talk initiated multiple discussions and questions from the audience, indicating its relevance and significance. The talk was uploaded to the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED YouTube channel, providing interested stakeholders with a chance to explore the topic further and stay informed about key developments in the sustainability certification sector.
- **Open discussion:** A Q&A session provided the project's consortium partners with the opportunity to receive targeted feedback from experts who participated by asking questions relevant to the project's development.

Indicative Q&A Questions discussed during the meeting

Questions	In your opinion, what are the most important environmental factors to think about when assessing sustainability labels and certifications? (WR)	In your opinion, what are the most important aspects of circularity to take into account when assessing sustainability labels and certifications? (WR)
Answer 1	GHG emissions/climate change	Renewable resource use (replace non-renewable resources)
Answer 2	Protection and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems	Cascading use (replacing virgin input at each subsequent use)
Answer 3	Air quality	Mechanical/chemical recyclability (ability to keep the products in the economy)
Answer 4	Water use and quality	Resource use efficiency (minimize waste, reduce input)
Answer 5	Soil quality	Secondary raw material utilization (input of recycled materials, substituting virgin)
Answer 6	Renewability (maintaining long term productivity)	Lifetime extension (maximizing value, utility and durability of products)
Answer 7	Use of agrochemicals (fertilizers, pesticides)	-

Figure 14. Questions from the open discussion

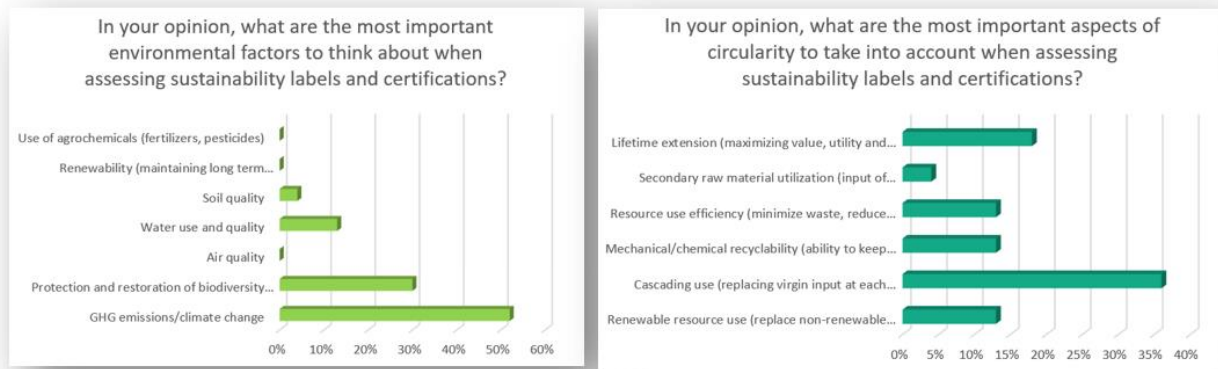


Figure 15. Results from the 1st NoI meeting

SUST CERT 4 BIOBASED
SUSTAINABILITY CERTIFICATION FOR BIOBASED SYSTEMS

1st Network of Interest meeting

12 JUNE 2023, 09:30 - 10:30 CET

- 9:30 am** Welcoming note
White Research
- 9:35 am** Get to Know SUSTCERT4BIOBASED: An Introduction
Iris Vural Gursesel
- 9:45 am** What's Trending: Green Claim Regulation and the role of voluntary certification schemes (+5min Q&A)
Jenny Walther-Thoß
- 10:05 am** Keeping You in the Loop: SUSTCERT4BIOBASED Updates You Don't Want to Miss
White Research
- 10:10 am** Let's Talk About It: Open Discussion and Q&A
White Research

www.sustcert4biobased.eu

Powered by the European Union

Figure 16. 1st Network of Interest Agenda

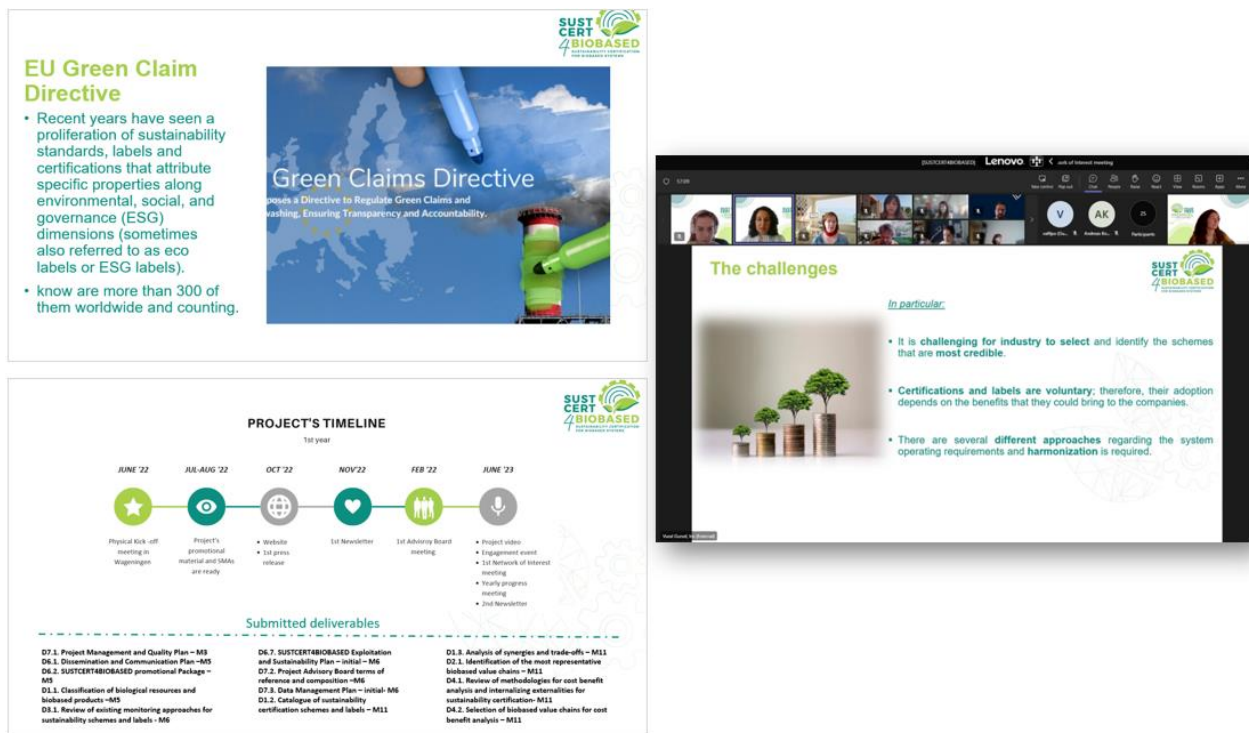


Figure 17. Screenshot from our 1st Noi meeting.

2nd Noi meeting / 04.12.2023

Thematic focus: The certification process and how it works

Invited speakers: Iris Vural Gursel - project coordinator (WR) | Loek Verwijst – Managing director Peterson project GmbH (CU)

The second bi-annual SUSTCERT4BIOBASED Network of Interest meeting was successfully conducted online on December 4, 2023, with 21 participants in attendance. The meeting featured updates on the project's progress, insights into the BiobasedCert group, and details about the development of the BIOBASEDCERT Monitoring Tool. Additionally, there was an engaging presentation on the certification process and its operational aspects (the recording is available on our YouTube channel [here](#)). The event concluded with a Q&A session that allowed participants to delve deeper into the topics discussed.

Highlights:

- **Opening Remarks:** the Dissemination Manager, welcomed attendees, setting a positive tone for the meeting.
- **Project Updates:** WHITE provided key updates on the project's progress over the past six months, highlighting developments in sustainability certification and BIOBASEDCERT's activities introduction.
- **BiobasedCert Insights:** the project coordinator from Wageningen Research, discussed the aims of BiobasedCert and introduced the structure of the BIOBASEDCERT Monitoring Tool being developed to enhance transparency and evaluation of certification schemes.
- **Certification Process Presentation:** Our partner (CU) delivered a brief presentation on the certification process, explaining its mechanisms and significance in sustainability efforts.

- **Interactive Q&A Session:** The meeting concluded with an engaging Q&A session, where participants posed various questions that initiated thoughtful discussions about sustainability certification practices.




Certifying Sustainability 2nd Network of Interest meeting	
Monday, December 4, 2023 10.30 AM - 11.30 AM (CET)	
Welcoming note	time 5 min
Short introduction and welcoming to the 2nd Noi meeting.	
Keeping you in the loop: Updates you don't want to miss <i>White Research</i>	time 10 min
Present important project updates and achievements.	
Joint Monitoring System: Unveiling BiobasedCert's Insights and short Q&A <i>Wageningen University Research</i>	time 15 min
Introduce BiobasedCert group's joint framework to evaluate certification schemes, labels, and standards.	
Navigating Certification: From Start to Finish - How the certification process works <i>Control Union</i>	time 15 min
Explain the certification process from beginning to end.	
Open discussion	time 15 min
Dedicated time for Questions & Answers.	





BiobasedCert group: Financing Sustainability, Certification Schemes and Labels for Bio-based products

Figure 18. 2nd Noi meeting agenda

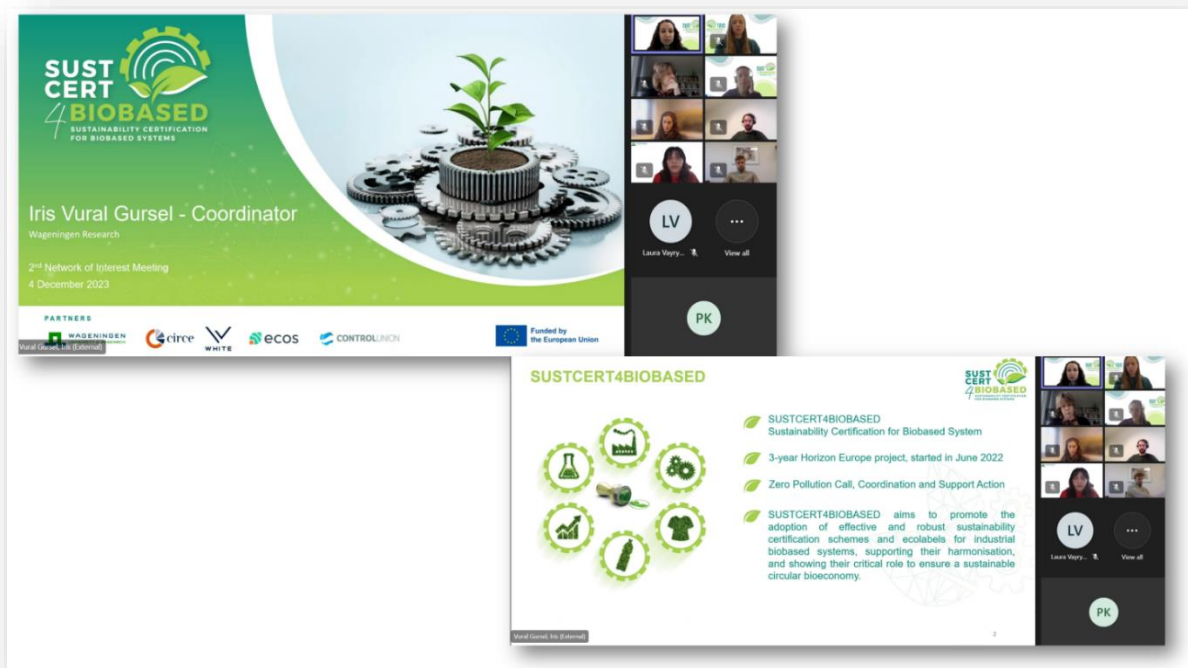


Figure 19. Screenshot from our 2nd Noi meeting. (1)

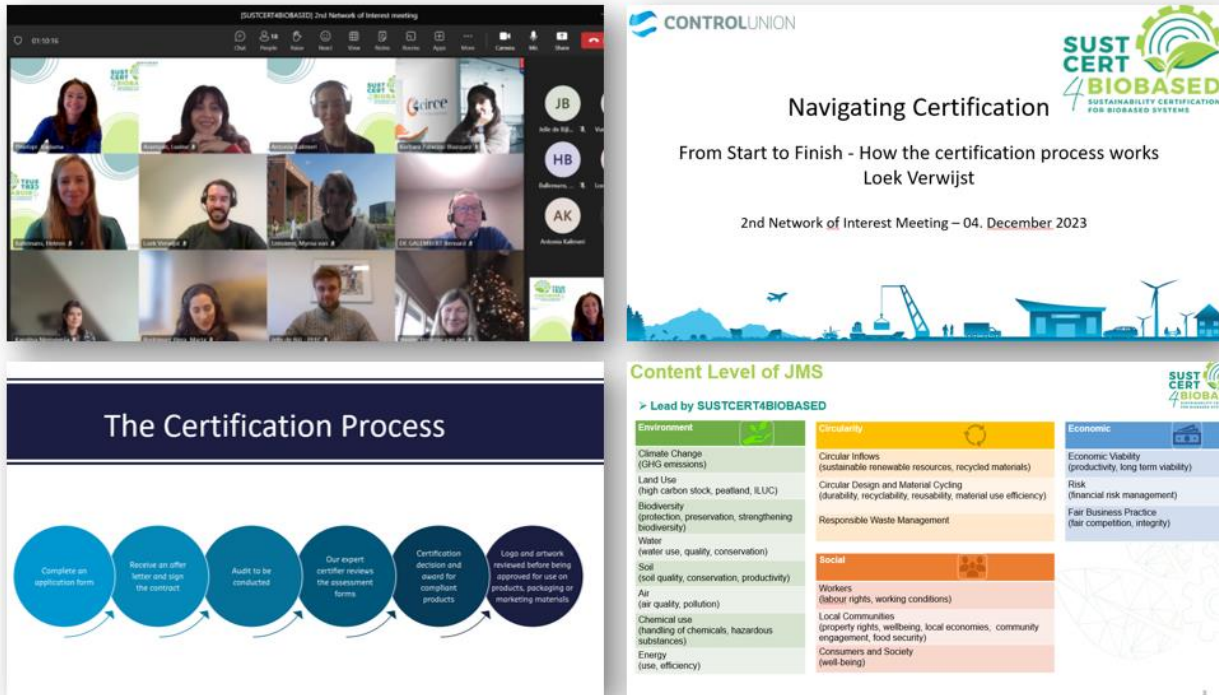


Figure 20. Screenshot from our 2nd Noi meeting. (2)

3rd Noi meeting / 30.05.2024

Thematic focus: Sustainable Forestry and Certification

Invited speakers: Matteo Francesco Mascolo and Terry Campbell (FSC)

The third bi-annual SUSTCERT4BIOBASED Network of Interest meeting was held online on May 30, 2024, from 9:00 to 10:00 AM CET, focusing on the theme of “**Sustainable Forestry and Certification**” with 17 participants.

During the meeting, members had the chance to receive updates on the progress of SUSTCERT4BIOBASED and gain insights into the **Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)** certification scheme, presented by FSC experts (the recording is available on our YouTube channel [here](#)). Participants asked questions and shared their views on advancements in the certification sector and its relation with sustainable forestry.

Highlights:

- **Welcome Address:** the **Dissemination Manager**, opened the meeting by welcoming attendees and focusing on the importance of collaboration among stakeholders in advancing sustainability certification for biobased products. She encouraged active participation and knowledge sharing throughout the session.
- **Project Progress Updates:** Key updates on the project's advancements were presented, highlighting significant milestones achieved since the last Noi meeting.
- **Focus on Certification Frameworks:** This time's thematic discussion was the certification scheme on Sustainable Forestry, **Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)**, which was explained by two FSC experts.
- **Interactive Discussions:** The meeting included an interactive session where participants engaged in discussions about sustainable forestry challenges and opportunities. The Q&A

session initiated an interesting dialogue on how FSC touches base in ensuring sustainable management in world's forests. Attendees showed very big interest in the topic and the 3rd Nol meeting proved to foster knowledge sharing to the maximum.




Sustainable Forestry and Certification 3rd Network of Interest meeting

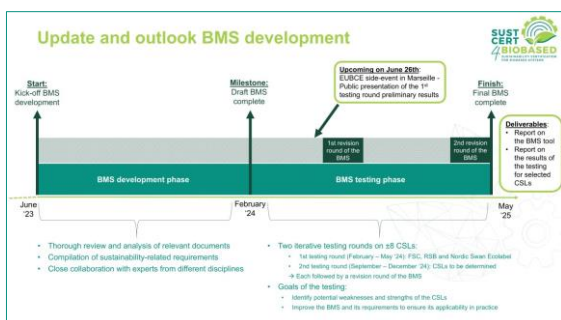
Thursday, May 30, 2024
9.00 AM - 10.00 AM (CET)



Welcoming note	9.00 - 9.05
Antonia Areti Kalimeri - White Research	
Keeping you in the loop: Updates about SUSTCERT4BIOBASED you don't want to miss	9.05 - 9.10
Pinelopi Kaslama - White Research	
FSC - The pioneer scheme on Sustainable Forestry	9.10 - 9.30
Matteo Francesco Mascolo & Terry Campbell - Forest Stewardship Council	
The various FSC standards and their connection on the forest road	9.30 - 9.45
Florian Thiem - Control Union	
Open discussion	9.45 - 10.00
Open Q&A session	


BIOBASEDCERT
Join our group's mission!

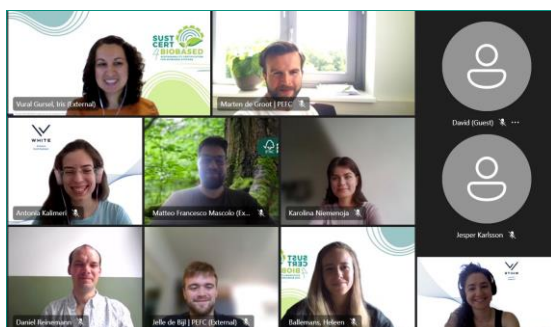

Figure 21. 3rd Nol meeting agenda




FSC: THE PIONEER OF FOREST CERTIFICATION SCHEME

Matteo Mascolo, FSC's Lead EU Affairs & Engagement
Terry Campbell, FSC's Senior Expert Chain of Custody

30 05 2024

Three labels. One mission.

You'll find these on millions of products worldwide. Here's what they mean:



100%
From well-managed forests
FSC® C000000

The world's strongest sustainability label for forest products

All the forest-based materials used in a product were sourced from FSC-certified forests.



RECYCLED
Made from recycled material
FSC® C000000

A trusted label to reduce pressure on the world's forests

All forest-based materials used to make the product are recycled.



MIX
Supporting responsible forestry
FSC® C000000

Making responsible sourcing more accessible while upholding FSC rigor

The product is made with a mixture of materials from:

- FSC-certified forests
- Recycled sources
- FSC Controlled Wood

FSC LABELS EXPLAINER VIDEO

Figure 22. Screenshots of our 3rd Nol meeting

4th Nol meeting / 11.12.2024

Thematic focus: Sustainable Textiles: The Bio-based shift

Invited speakers: Daniele Spinelli and Matteo Maccanti (BIORADAR), Luca Boniolo (ECOS)

The fourth bi-annual SUSTCERT4BIOBASED Network of Interest meeting was held on December 11th online from 10:00 to 11:00 AM CET, with a focus on sustainable textiles. The meeting gathered **19 participants**.

During this meeting, we focused on sharing insights from our sister project, BIORADAR and providing a policy talk which focused on the recent EU developments in the textile industry. Both presentations are recorded and you can find them [here](#).

Highlights:

- **Welcome Address:** the **Dissemination Manager** welcomed the participants to the 4th Nol meeting and provided details on the synthesis of the Nol group
- **Project Progress Updates:** News and updates of the project were presented with special focus on the testing of the BMT.
- **Sustainable textiles and the pilot of the BIORADAR project:** Under the leadership of Next Technology Tecnotessile, the BIORADAR project aims to evaluate the environmental sustainability and circularity of textile products. Daniele Spinelli and Matteo Maccanti talked about their research work on assessing circular economy principles that focus on waste treatment and recyclability. Dr Daniele Spinelli provided an overview of bio-based polymers used in the textile industry and their technical applications. He also talked about natural fibres and how the theoretical approach Life Cycle Thinking, emphasises the assessment and minimisation of environmental impacts at all stages of a product's life.
- **Policy talk:** On the policy side, Luca Boniolo, Programme Manager for Sustainable Textiles at ECOS, explained the impact of EU legislation on bio-based textiles which is particularly noteworthy, as textile regulations are generally horizontal and not specific to individual materials
- **Interactive Discussions:** Engaging questions were posed by the audience and the discussion concluded with remarks that highlight the impact of EU legislation in Sustainable Textiles.



SUST CERT
4 **BIOBASED**
SUSTAINABILITY CERTIFICATION
FOR BIOBASED SYSTEMS

Sustainable Textiles: The Bio-Based Shift

4th Network of Interest meeting

Wednesday, December 11, 2024
10.00 AM - 11.00 AM (CET)



Welcoming note **10.00 - 10.05 AM**

Antonia Areti Kalimeri - White Research

Project updates **10.05 - 10.10AM**

Pinelopi Kaslama - White Research

BIORADAR project: **10.10 - 10.25AM**

Monitoring system of the environmental and social sustainability and circularity of industrial bio-based systems

Daniele Spinelli & Matteo Maccanti - NTT

Policy talk: **10.25 - 10.45 AM**

Policy talk & insights for a sustainable textile sector

Luca Boniolo - Environmental Coalition on Standards

Open discussion **10.45 - 11.00 AM**

Q&A session



Funded by the European Union

Figure 23. 4th Network of Interest meeting Agenda

Ecodesign for Sustainable Product Regulation

ESPR focuses on enhancing product sustainability across the EU. It requires producers to integrate ecological considerations from design to disposal and mandatory product disclosures.

- Framework applicable across all product groups → **apparel is the first group. Home textiles and footwear likely to be prioritised**
- Ecodesign requirements for more sustainable products: **durability, absence of substances of concern, microplastics, mandatory resource use and recycled content...**
- Digital product passport** to share important information across the value chain - inform sustainability-relevant decision-making.



ESPR timeline and milestones



Credits: European Commission

BIORADAR

MONITORING SYSTEM OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CIRCULARITY OF INDUSTRIAL BIO-BASED SYSTEMS

Dr Daniele Spinelli




Bio-based polymers in technical textiles applications

Bio-based fibers can be used in different technical textiles productions

A PHA gauze weave used as mesh for tendon repair.



Various types of natural fibers nets used in soil reinforcement



W. G. Street, A. E. P. & B. A. B. et al., "Sustainable Soil-Bedding Controls Implementation Using Natural Polymer-Like Synthetic Microfibrates—A Review," *Polymers*, vol. 14, no. 478, pp. 1-20, 2022. doi: 10.3390/polym14040788. URL: https://doi.org/10.3390/polym14040788. A new generation of recycled medical devices for tissue repair and regeneration - Biomater News, pp. 1-16, 2023.

Figure 24. 4th Nol meeting Highlights

5th Nol meeting / 02.05.2025

Thematic Focus: The future of sustainability certifications, views from international organisations

Invited speakers: Maira Devischer (ISEAL), S. Karthikeyan (GEN)

Time: 11:00 – 12:00 CET (Online)

The fifth bi-annual SUSTCERT4BIOBASED Network of Interest meeting took place online on May 2nd, 2025, gathering participants from across the project community to discuss evolving perspectives on sustainability certifications. This session brought forward views from international organizations and reflected on the role of voluntary standards and ecolabels in accelerating sustainable markets. The meeting gathered 15 participants. Both presentations are recorded and you can find them [here](#) and [here](#).

Highlights:

- **Welcome Address:** White Research opened the meeting with a brief overview and welcomed participants to the fifth gathering of the Nol group.
- **Network Outlook:** White Research shared updates on recent developments within the project and presented ideas for network's future direction.
- **Expert Talk – Voluntary Systems & Circular Bioeconomy:** Maira Devischer (ISEAL) delivered an insightful presentation on the role of voluntary sustainability standards in driving the transition toward a circular bioeconomy, highlighting practical pathways and current trends.
- **Expert Talk – Power of Ecolabels: S. Karthikeyan (Chair, GEN)** explored how ecolabels contribute to shaping responsible consumer markets and creating meaningful sustainability signals across sectors.
- **Interactive Discussion:** The meeting concluded with an open discussion and Q&A session, providing space for reflection and dialogue among participants on the future of certification systems in bio-based value chains.

SUST CERT 4 BIOBASED
SUSTAINABILITY CERTIFICATION FOR BIOBASED SYSTEMS

The Future of Sustainability Certifications
5th Network of Interest meeting
Perspectives from leading international organization

Friday, May 02, 2025
11.00 AM - 12.00 AM (CET)

Welcoming note 11.00 - 11.05 AM
Antonia Areti Kalimeri - White Research

What's Next for our Network? 11.05 - 11.15 AM
Pinelopi Kaslama - White Research

Voluntary sustainability systems and the transition to a circular bio economy 11.15 - 11.30 AM
Maira Devisscher, Innovations Manager - ISEAL

The Power of Ecolabels: Shaping a Sustainable Market 11.30 - 11.45 AM
S Karthikeyan, Chair Board - GEN

Open discussion 11.45 - 12.00 AM
Q&A session

Funded by the European Union

Figure 25. 5th Noi meeting Agenda

Keeping our Noi members engaged!

Want to stay further engaged?
Join our jointly developed LinkedIn group!
[Certification and Labelling Schemes for the EU Bioeconomy](#)

There you can find:

- ✓ Upcoming sustainability-certification-related events;
- ✓ Horizon Europe projects news;
- ✓ Synergy opportunities with experts in the sector;
- ✓ .. And many more!

Scan here!

1. Defining sustainable practices

Example: Sustainable Biomass Program

"Over the last decade, national governments have adopted biomass as an alternative, renewable energy source in pursuit of decarbonisation of the energy mix. And as it became essential to ensure that all biomass was legally and sustainably sourced, Governments implemented the uptake of biomass for energy through subsidy frameworks that mandated compliance with sustainability requirements." QSE Strategy 2023-2029

Development of the SSP Standards

Figure 26. 5th Noi meeting highlights and further engagement beyond the project

8.4 Network of Interest Interview Series

Through our Network of Interest Interview Series, we aimed to further engage our Noi members and disseminate their expertise and knowledge on sustainability certification topics to a broader audience via the website and SMAs.

The Network of Interest Interview Series offered valuable insights into the perspectives of our Noi members and gave them the opportunity to further communicate the expertise of our members.

Table 1. Interviews' summary

Interviewees	Description	Link
Nol member and scientific Associate at CERTH	The sustainability certification potential of biofuels	here
Nol member and Managing Director in Peterson Project GmbH	The process of sustainability certification and its steps	here
Nol member and SUSTCERT4BIOBASED coordinator	Insights on the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED idea and the adoption of sustainability certification schemes and labels	here
Nol member and STAR4BBS coordinator	The effectiveness of certification schemes and labels and standardisation needs	here
Nol member and Expert at Bioenergy Association of Ukraine	Discusses biofuels, sustainability certifications, and various aspects of Ukraine's future development.	here
Nol member and RSB's EU lead	Experience in the fields of bioenergy, climate change, sustainable development, currently working on developing the RSB EU RED certification system.	here
Representatives from MainstreamBio project.	Address key bioeconomy questions by reflecting on actions undertaken through the EU-funded sister project.	here



Figure 27. Interviews' covers

8.5 Network of Interest Webinars

Aiming to extend knowledge exchange during our Network of Interest meetings beyond our project's door and attract more participants to our community, we recorded a series of webinars from these meetings and promoted them through various channels. The SUSTCERT4BIOBASED webinars aim to disseminate knowledge beyond our Nol meetings, communicate the thematic topics around them and generally spread the knowledge about sustainability certification processes in the biobased sector to the general public.

After asking the consent from all attendees during all Nol meetings, we recorded each expert presentation and uploaded it on our YouTube channel [here](#).

Table 2. Webinar's overview

No	Title	Description	Link
Webinar #1	The Green Claim Regulation and the Role of Voluntary Certification Schemes	Our invited speaker who is a Senior Sustainability Consultant Sustainability at Berndt+Partner Consultants delivered a very interesting talk about the Role of Voluntary Certification Schemes and the updates of the Green Claim Regulation.	here
Webinar #2	How the certification process works	Cost and Benefit Analysis leader (WP4), explains from the perspective of a Certification Body how the certification process works and elaborates on the steps of it.	here
Webinar #3	The BIOBASEDCERT Monitoring Tool	SUSTCERT4BIOBASED's coordinator, presented the structure, aim and the timeline for the launch of the BIOBASEDCERT Monitoring Tool (BMT) being developed by the BiobasedCert cluster group (SUSTCERT4BIOBASED, HARMONITOR, STAR4BBS).	here
Webinar #4	FSC – The scheme on Sustainable Forestry	Experts explain how the Forest Stewardship Council - FSC scheme contributes to increasing and certifying Sustainable Forestry practices.	here
Webinar #5	Policy talk: Insights from the sustainable textile industry	Programme Manager for Sustainable Textiles at ECOS talked about the most recent EU policy developments in the sustainable textile sector.	here

Webinar #6	BIORADAR project and the Life Cycle Thinking approach	Next Technology Tecnotessile talked about BIORADAR Project: Monitoring system of the environmental and social sustainability and circularity of industrial bio-based systems	here
Webinar #7	Can Certification Systems Accelerate the Bioeconomy Revolution? Voluntary Standards Explained	Expert from ISEAL delivered an insightful presentation on the role of voluntary sustainability standards in driving the transition toward a circular bioeconomy	here
Webinar #8	The Power of Ecolables and the Green building movement in India Shaping a sustainable market	Expert (chair of Global Ecolabelling Network - GEN) explained how ecolabels contribute to shaping responsible consumer markets and creating meaningful sustainability signals across sectors.	here

These webinars are instrumental in promoting open science and disseminating SUSTCERT4BIOBASED knowledge and collaboration among stakeholders committed to advancing communication of sustainability certification practices for biobased products.

8.6 Invitations to project events & workshops

Inviting Nol members to project events and workshops offered significant benefits that enhanced collaboration, knowledge sharing, and networking. **Our Nol members were invited to SUSTCERTBIOBASED and BiobasedCert group events and workshops to further interact and share their knowledge and views on bioeconomy certification-related aspects, triggering a cross-disciplinary dialogue.**

Events that our Nol members participated in as speakers (besides the five Network of Interest meetings):

Table 3. Events (besides the Nol meetings where the Nol members were speakers)

Event's name	Date
<i>Sustainability Certification of Bio-based Products (EUBCE 2023)</i>	15.06.2023
<i>Robust and Effective Sustainability Certification for Bio-based Systems</i>	11.12.2023
<i>Monitoring sustainability certification schemes and labels for bio-based products (EUBCE 2024)</i>	26.06.2024
<i>Driving sustainability through certification</i>	11.11.2024

<p><i>How can voluntary certification systems support the transition to a sustainable circular bioeconomy</i></p>	<p>13.05.2025</p>
--	--------------------------

Participation as speakers at our engagement events within the framework of the EUBCE in June 2023, June 2024 and May 2025 provided an opportunity to share their views and exchange knowledge.



Panelists EUBCE 2023



Panelists EUBCE 2024

Figure 28. Nol members as panelists in our EUBCE events

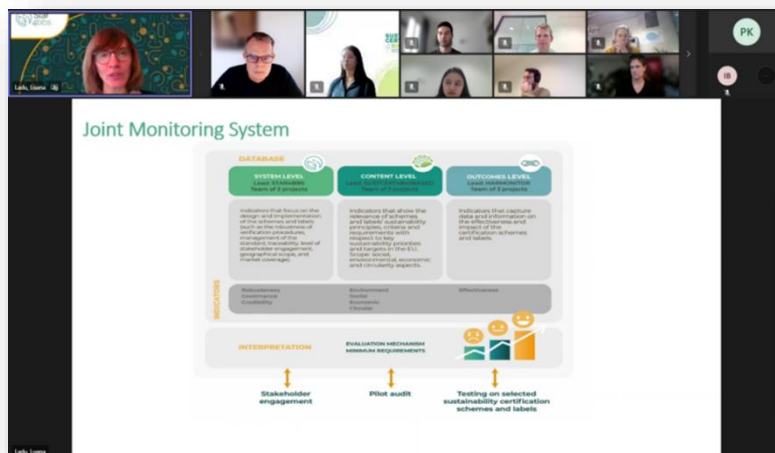


Figure 29. Nol members as panellists in BIOBASEDCERT co-creation events

8.7 Participation in the project's research work

Engaging Nol members in research activities brought together a range of expertise and perspectives while significantly enhancing collaborative participation in the project's activities.

→ *Distribution of survey under T5.4 to Industry stakeholders, members of our Network*



Figure 30. Open invitation to Industry members of our Nol to participate in the survey.

- *Participation in Data collection template for cost-benefit analysis under T4.3*
- *Shared with all Nol members the project's scientific publications (available online [here](#))*
- *Updated all Nol members when a Deliverable was uploaded to our website (available online [here](#))*

9. SUSTCERT4BIOBASED engagement events

9.1 Rationale behind the engagement events

Our engagement events are aimed at creating awareness around the project, facilitating knowledge exchange and networking as well as disseminating results. These events gathered insights from stakeholders and experts working on the sustainability certification area and provided insightful knowledge on the current status and future regulations.

The close synergy with our sister projects HARMONITOR and STAR4BBS has been established and the three projects have formed a project cluster named BiobasedCert which has agreed that effective cooperation among projects is crucial in achieving shared goals and maximising impact. The three projects agreed to engage in various cooperation activities, such as the exchange of information, thematic area discussions, coordination of activities, and dissemination and communication. For all joint dissemination activities, all three sister projects were invited to participate.

According to the original planning of the GA, 2 events would be organised with the first being organised by before M18 and second being organised towards the end of the project (M36). However, after forming the BiobasedCert cluster and in line with the clustering activities it was decided to join forces with the sister projects in organising joint events to enhance the impact of our work and avoid stakeholder fatigue. We decided to hold 3 joint events with one project taking lead in organising for each while others supporting the organisation and our Project Officer (PO) accepted that.

The 1st joint event was led by HARMONITOR while the 2nd one was led by SUSTCERT4BIOBASED (organised again as an EUBCE side event) and the 3rd one was led by STAR4BBS as a final event in Brussels. The table below summarises the initial and updated planning.

Table 4. Engagement events planning

Original planning	Updated planning
2 events	3 events
1st organised by WR (M18)	1st led by HARMONITOR (M12) as side event of EUBCE conference 2023 Supported by SUSTCERT4BIOBASED, STAR4BBS
2nd organised by WHITE (M36)	2nd led by SUSTCERT4BIOBASED (M24) as side event of EUBCE conference 2024 Supported by HARMONITOR, STAR4BBS
-	3rd led by STAR4BBS (M36) as a final event in Brussels in May 2025 Supported by SUSTCERT4BIOBASED, HARMONITOR

9.2 Engagement event at EUBCE 2023 in Bologna

Aiming to create awareness around the project, the sister projects SUSTCERT4BIOBASED, HARMONITOR and STAR4BBSS jointly organised an engagement event promoting the three projects in the framework of the 31st European Biomass Conference and Exhibition in Bologna. The engagement event ***Sustainability certification of bio-based products*** aimed to create awareness and generate interest in the three sister projects collectively and attracted **77 participants**. You can find more information on the event [here](#)).

Highlights:

- **Project Presentations:** Each of the three sister projects, SUSTCERT4BIOBASED, HARMONITOR & STAR4BBSS, had the opportunity to present their objectives and research scope during the event. They showcased their work through project posters, offering insights into their respective approaches.
- **Interesting Discussions:** Engaging discussions were held on various topics, including policy priorities related to sustainability requirements, biobased value chains, and trade flows. The attendees actively participated in these discussions, providing valuable inputs.
- **Joint Monitoring Tool:** The project coordinators presented the Joint Monitoring Tool, which is a collaborative effort among the three projects. During the event, attendees had the chance to offer feedback and suggestions to enhance the system.
- **Certification Schemes and Labels (CSLs):** The workshop included discussions on the current status and progress of existing Certification Schemes and Labels for biobased products. Attendees shared their opinions on the effectiveness and potential improvements of these schemes.
- **Roundtable Discussion:** The joint event concluded with a roundtable discussion featuring prominent experts in the field. Bernard de Galember, Blanca De Ulibarri, Loek Verwijst, Gernot Klepper, Silvia Maltagliati, and Mariana López Dávila offered their valuable insights, moderated by Sergio Ugarte, the coordinator of HARMONITOR Project.

AGENDA

15:00 – 15:05
Welcome
 Moderator: Costanza Rossi (SQ Consult)

15:05 – 15:20
Short introduction of the three sister projects

- SUSTCERT4BIOBASED – Iris Vural Gursel (Wageningen Research)
- STAR4BBS – Luana Ladu (TU Berlin)
- HARMONITOR – Sergio Ugarte (SQ Consult)

15:20 – 15:40
Policy priorities and mapping sustainability requirements
 Luana Ladu (STAR4BBS, Technische Universität Berlin)

15:40 – 16:00
Credibility of CSLs for bio-based feedstocks and products – Outcomes of consultation
 Birka Wicke (HARMONITOR, Radboud University)

16:00 – 16:15
Questions and Answers

16:15 – 16:35
Biobased value chains and trade flows
 Iris Vural Gursel (SUSTCERT4BIOBASED, Wageningen Research)

16:35 – 16:55
Joint Monitoring System
 Martin Junginger (HARMONITOR, Utrecht University)

16:55 – 17:10
Questions and Answers

17:10 – 18:10
Roundtable: Role of CSLs as Co-Regulation Instrument

Figure 31. EUBCE 2023 Side event “Sustainability certification of bio-based products” agenda



Figure 32. EUBCE 2023 Side event “Sustainability Certification for Biobased Products” audience and panel



Figure 33. Sister projects coordinators and project posters

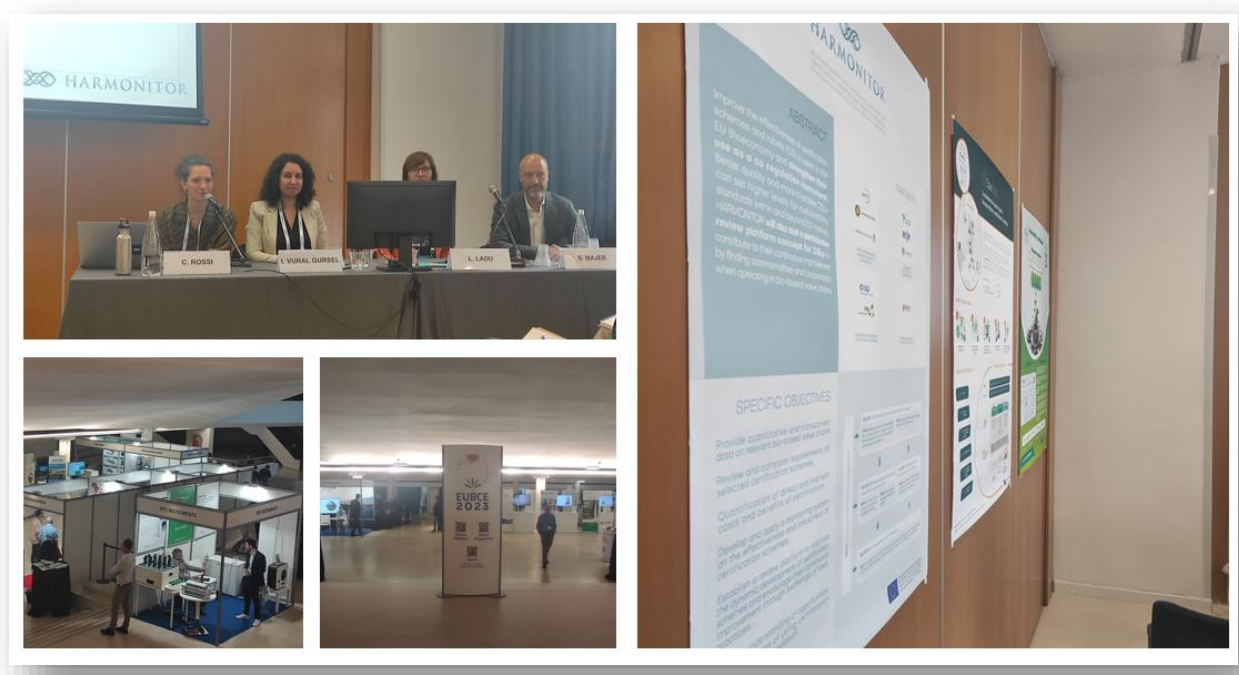


Figure 34. EUBCE 2023

9.3 Engagement Event at EUBCE 2024 in Marseille

Continuing our effort to raise awareness of sustainability certification and engage stakeholders in our endeavour to harmonise sustainability schemes and labels, our 2nd Engagement Event took place at the 32nd European Biomass Conference and Exhibition in Marseille on the 26th of June 2024.

The event **Monitoring sustainability certification schemes and labels for bio-based products** was part of the parallel sessions at the EUBCE 2024 and attracted **55 participants**. It was a fruitful moment for advancing discussions on sustainability certification within the bio-based sector. You can find more information [here](#).

Highlights:

- **Introduction session:** The event kicked off with a welcome and introduction to the BIOBASEDCERT cluster, led by Iris Vural Gursel from Wageningen Research. This session set the stage for the discussions that followed on the importance of sustainability certifications in the biobased sector and how the BMT will work on monitoring CSLs for bio-based products.
- **Policy priorities and initial policy recommendations:** Following the introduction, Luana Ladu from TU Berlin and BAM and STAR4BBS coordinator presented guiding policy priorities and initial recommendations aimed at promoting sustainable biobased systems and their certification. This session was crucial for understanding how policy could shape the future of biobased certifications. A Q&A session followed, allowing participants to engage directly with the speaker and clarify any queries.
- **BIOBASEDCERT Monitoring Tool:**

The next sessions delved into the BMT, designed to assess CSLs for industrial bio-based systems. The BMT aims to provide the European Commission and CSL owners with a framework to evaluate CSLs' potential contribution to EU policies and UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), while also facilitating potential harmonization of existing CSLs and which was thoroughly explained at different levels.

- **System Level – presented by the STAR4BBS team**

Participants listened about the foundational aspects of the System level, focusing on key indicators centered around governance and operational requirements.

- **Content level – presented by SUSTCERT4BIOBASED team**

Participants listened to the core criteria at the Content level, covering indicators on environmental sustainability, circularity, social responsibility, and economic viability.

- **Outcome level – presented by the HARMONITOR team**

Participants learned about the indicators designed to assess the impact of Certification Schemes and Labels. Participants expressed significant interest in the BMT's structure and actively contributed feedback on its ongoing development.

The final section of the event featured a roundtable dialogue where panellists discussed the potential roles of CSLs in advancing the European Circular Bioeconomy. This session aims to explore how CSLs can serve as co-regulation instruments and contribute to sustainable solutions in biobased industries. Panellists include experts from various organizations, such as:

- ✓ Audrun Utskarpen (Nordic Swan Ecolabel)
- ✓ Rodrigo Rupérez (UN Trade and Development – The United Nations Forum on Sustainability Standards)

D6.4: Network of Interest and project activities and events, 31/05/2025

- ✓ Oliver Hurtig (European Commission)
- ✓ Jean-Marc Jossart (Bioenergy Europe)
- ✓ Mirjam Röder (Energy & Bioproducts Research Institute at Aston University)
- ✓ Laura Väyrynen (ECOS)



Figure 35. EUBCE 2024 Side Event “Monitoring sustainability certification schemes and labels” highlights (1)



Figure 36. EUBCE 2024 Side Event “Monitoring sustainability certification schemes and labels” highlights (2)



Figure 37. EUBCE 2024 Side Event “Monitoring sustainability certification schemes and labels” highlights (3)



Figure 38. EUBCE 2024 Side Event “Monitoring sustainability certification schemes and labels” highlights (5)



Figure 39. Dedicated promotional material for the 2nd engagement event (poster, leaflet, bookmark)

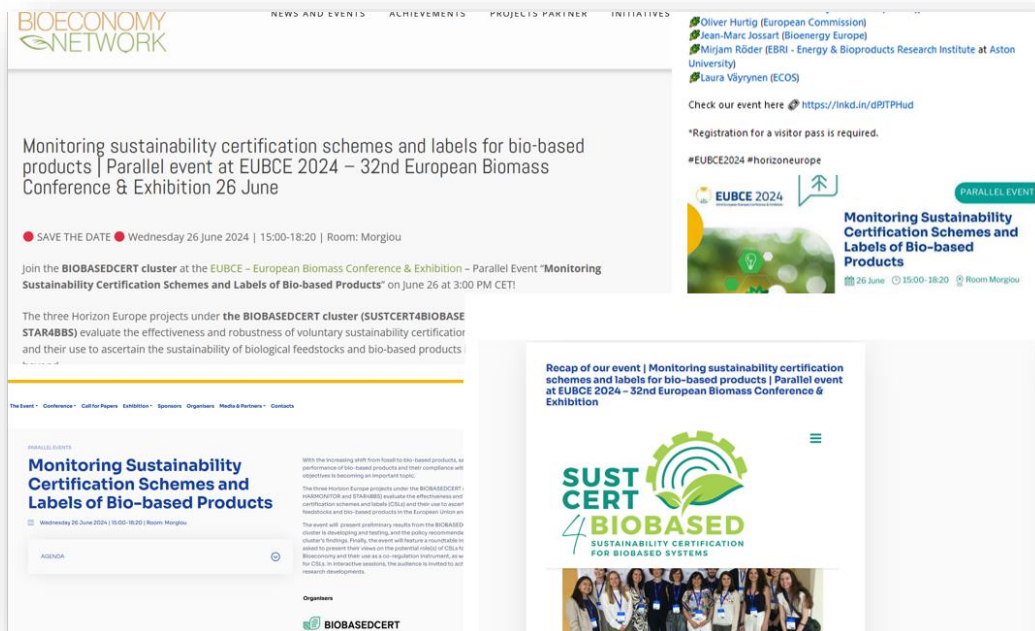


Figure 40. Dissemination of the 2nd engagement event

Our engagement events included a diverse audience and promoted dialogue on sustainability certification-related developments. Participants and panellists deep-dived into discussions and presentations that enhanced their knowledge in the sector and generated more interest in the project’s scientific work. Below you can find more information on the engagement events’ organisation and structural points.

Table 5. Dissemination details of our engagement events

Event No	Type of invited stakeholders	Event's average duration	Dissemination plans	Coordination between the three projects	Common promotional material efforts	Dedicated meetings
1	Researchers, Scientists, Industry professionals, Policymakers, Exhibitors	3 hrs	Common	Continuous	Common leaflets, bookmarks, organic tote bags	Once per month

In our effort to increase the project's cluster visibility, we distributed common leaflets, bookmarks, and organic tote bags. Our dissemination materials created a consistent brand presence, attracting attention from key stakeholders in the sustainability certification sector. They also provided an opportunity to gain more followers on our social media platforms and effectively communicate the cluster's vision. Additionally, they served as conversation starters, as a responsible member of the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED Dissemination Team distributed them at the entrance of the venue, facilitating dialogue among participants.

These materials significantly enhanced the event's impact and contributed to communicating efficiently the cluster's vision and objectives.



Figure 41. Common dissemination material

9.4 Engagement Event at Brussels 2025 (Final event)

As part of the final phase of the BIOBASEDCERT cluster's journey, the conclusive engagement event took place in **Brussels on May 13th, 2025**, at 21 Rue Du Champ De Mars, bringing together policymakers, industry actors, NGOs, academia, certification scheme owners, and EU-funded projects. Titled "**How can voluntary certification systems support the transition to a**

sustainable circular bioeconomy”, the event served as both a capstone and a strategic policy dialogue to reflect on the outcomes of the BIOBASEDCERT initiative.

With **81 participants** in attendance, the conference offered a platform to present the cluster’s final results and position them within the broader EU bioeconomy and green policy frameworks. Stakeholders engaged in high-level policy conversations, co-creation activities, and interactive thematic sessions exploring the role of sustainability certification in supporting legislative and market developments.

Highlights:

- **Opening and Welcome:** The day commenced with welcoming remarks and an outline of the conference’s goals. The opening underlined the significance of voluntary sustainability certification in advancing EU objectives on climate, environment, and industrial transformation.

- **Session I:** Exploring the applicability of the BIOBASEDCERT Monitoring Tool (BMT) as a co-regulation instrument This session introduced the functionalities of the BMT and key insights from its testing phase. Discussions explored how the tool could function as a co-regulatory mechanism to guide policy and market decisions related to bio-based products. The session addressed its potential role in informing upcoming regulatory proposals and enhancing the uptake of certified sustainable materials.

Policy Workshop: Certification within the ESPR and Green Claims Framework Led by DG RTD.B1, this workshop examined the evolving regulatory landscape, particularly focusing on the Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR) and the proposal for a Green Claims Directive. With active contributions from EU project representatives, the workshop reflected on how certification can serve as a transparent, science-based instrument to substantiate environmental claims in the EU single market.

- **Session II:** Impact of certification on global bio-based value chains. The session contextualized certification in the global policy sphere, considering interlinkages with the EUDR, the Biotechnology and Biomanufacturing Act, and the EU Competitiveness Compass. Stakeholders exchanged views on how sustainability certifications can align with international trade, environmental justice, and emerging legislative shifts.

- **Session III:** Feasibility of Voluntary Sustainability Certification. This evidence-based session shared outcomes from the cluster’s economic assessments. Topics included cost-benefit analyses, operational barriers, and enablers of scheme adoption. Multi-stakeholder panellists offered insights into overcoming implementation challenges, and strategies to scale credible certification across bio-based sectors.

- **Session IV:** Strategic Recommendations for the Future. The concluding session of the day synthesized key takeaways and translated them into actionable policy and practice recommendations. Drawing from the Roundtable of Certification Schemes, panellists and participants identified strategic pathways and critical knowledge gaps. Emphasis was placed on how certification can evolve into a core policy tool driving sustainability transitions in the circular bioeconomy.

- **Networking Reception.** The event concluded with an informal networking session, giving attendees the opportunity to further exchange ideas, build collaborations, and reflect on the future of sustainability certification systems in Europe and beyond.


 BIOBASEDCERT	
BIOBASEDCERT FINAL CONFERENCE	
Title	How can voluntary certification systems support the transition to a sustainable circular bioeconomy
Date and location	May 13 th , 2025 - 21 Rue Du Champ De Mars, 1050 Ixelles, Brussels
Participants	Policy makers, Advisory Board members, schemes and label owners, industry actors, NGOs, academia, EU projects related to bio-based systems
Organizers	STAR4BBS, SUSTCERT4BIOBASED, HARMONITOR
Related projects	BIORECER, 3-CO, SUSTRACK, ALIGNED, CALIMERO, VSS, REBOLUTION, BIOTRANSFORM, SYMBIO, SYMBA, ESCIB, LCA4BIO, ACTIPAC, ARGONAUT, BIOBADAR
Approach	The event will share key results from the BIOBASEDCERT cluster, linking them to the broader European bioeconomy policy framework. The day will feature: i) interactive thematic sessions, including presentations by the cluster, panel discussions and co-creation activities involving key stakeholders; ii) integrative sessions to reflect on and synthesize the insights gained during the day. Discussions will cover the BIOBASEDCERT Monitoring Tool (BMT), assessment of certification schemes and labels, trade flow analysis, and cost-benefit evaluations. The main focus will be on exploring how voluntary sustainability certification systems can function as effective policy tools for a sustainable circular bioeconomy. Key takeaways and policy recommendations will be documented, with the day concluding in an integrative session to synthesize findings. A highlight of the event will be a European Commission DG RTD B1-led workshop on "Bio-based products in the frame of the Ecodesign for sustainable products Regulation and the Consumer empowerment Directive". Throughout the event, insights on how voluntary sustainability certification systems can serve as effective policy tools for a sustainable circular bioeconomy will be explored. Key takeaways and policy recommendations will be documented, with the day concluding in an integrative session to synthesize findings.
Morning session: 09:00-12:30	
9:00 - 9:15	Opening Opening Agenda and Objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Luana Ladu (TU Berlin) Welcome and introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unit: Green Transitions, DG Research & Innovation at European Commission -TBC Stefania Rocca (Project Officer, European Research Executive Agency, DEA)
9:15 - 11:00	Session I "Exploring the applicability of the BIOBASEDCERT Monitoring Tool (BMT) as a co-regulatory instrument" This session will provide a short overview of the BMT, including its structure, core functionalities, and key findings from its two-phase testing process. The discussion will focus on the potential of the BMT to support EU policy objectives, particularly in fostering the uptake of sustainable bio-based materials. Special attention will be given to the tool's use as a voluntary or co-regulatory instrument within current or forthcoming EU legislative frameworks on bio-based products. The panel will explore the BMT's relevance to sustainability certification schemes and labels (CSLS), its potential alignment with regulatory instruments (such as
10:00 - 10:30	regulation instrument" and its long-term integration in the broader EU sustainability governance landscape. 9:15 - 10:00 Moderator: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ilis Vural Cursel (Wageningen Research) BIOBASEDCERT Monitoring Tool - BMT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BMT: Introduction and applicability (Luana Ladu, TUB) System Level (Nikola Matović, TUB) Content Level (Heleen Bailemans, WR) Outcome Level (Maulidia Khairani, UU)
10:30 - 10:40	Q&A from all participants
10:40 - 10:45	Panel discussion with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jiannis Kouppoulis (DG GROW) Blanca de Ulbarri (RSB) Audun Utskarpen (Nordic Swan) Martin Junginger (3-CO + BIOBASEDCERT Cluster) Rodrigo Rupérez (UNCTAD) Summary - recommendations
10:45 - 11:00	Coffee break
11:00 - 12:30	Workshop: "Bio-based products and certification in the frame of the Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation (ESPR) and the Consumer Empowerment Directive" The policy framework that designs and steers the pathway of the EU industry towards the green transition includes the Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation and the Consumer empowerment Directive. This workshop will explore the progress the bio-based industrial value chains along such pathway, bringing together experts from the projects' consortia. Panelists will examine how the Empowering Consumers Directive and the ESPR influence bio-based products (in scope of the legislation), particularly in areas such as sustainability claims, certification schemes, and labelling—including the introduction of digital product passports. Additionally, discussions will focus on the necessary developments, including research and innovation efforts, to align both traditional bio-based products—such as textiles, wood-based and bio-based construction materials, paper packaging, detergents, and lubricants—and innovative bio-based solutions with the requirements set by these regulations. Panel discussion with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lara Dammer (nova-institut) Luca Boniolo (ECOS) Maira Devitscher (ISEAL) René Bethmann (VALUDE) Ivana Krikjusz (BASF) Floris Akkerman (BAM)
12:30 - 13:30	Lunch
13:30 - 14:30	Session II "Impact of certification on global bio-based value chains" This session will explore the critical role of certification schemes in shaping global bio-based value chains, highlighting their influence on sustainability, market access, and regulatory compliance. Key insights from sister projects will be presented, showcasing the main results achieved and the lessons learned. The session will also address the challenges, barriers, and opportunities faced by certification schemes across bio-based value chains. An interactive segment will invite participants to share their perspectives and collaboratively identify potential solutions to overcome existing barriers, fostering resilient and sustainable bio-based value chains. Presentations from the cluster (key results & recommendations) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Myrna van Leeuwen (WR) Gabriela Lopez Carney (Preferred by Nature) Luciano Proto Cassina (nova-institut) Moderator: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lara Dammer (nova-institut)
13:30 - 13:45	Interactive session
13:45 - 14:30	Interactive session

Figure 42. Final event Agenda



Figure 43. Final event at Brussels (1)



Figure 44. Final event Brussels (2)



Figure 45. Final event Brussels (3)



Figure 46. Final event Brussels (4)

9.5 Our engagement events' impact

The events held by the BIOBASEDCERT cluster at the EUBCE conferences and Brussels had a significant impact on advancing discussions around sustainability certification in the bio-based sector. There was increased engagement as the events successfully brought together stakeholders interested in sustainability certification schemes and labels for bio-based products, creating an environment for knowledge sharing and networking.

The events featured a detailed presentation of the first policy results from the BMT, which evaluates CSLs across system, content, and outcome levels. The presentations provided valuable insights into the effectiveness and robustness of current certification schemes and participants raised their questions and key inputs in the open discussion. Attendees expressed strong interest in the BMT's structure and actively contributed by giving their feedback to better meet all stakeholders' needs, which is crucial for the ongoing development of this monitoring tool.

The roundtable/panel discussions in all events included experts from various organisations, leaving room for several questions from the audience. The dedicated Q&A session increased the audience's engagement and included an interactive exchange between attendees and panelists, creating deeper engagement and collaboration among participants.

Our events highlighted our commitment to developing robust tools for streamlining sustainability certification schemes, which will support policymakers in creating effective policies that promote sustainability in the bio-based sector. The events not only advanced discussions on sustainability certification but also strengthened collaborations among stakeholders, paving the way for enhanced practices and policies in the bio-based industry.

10. SUSTCERT4BIOBASED workshops

10.1 Project's workshops and purpose

The project's workshops (organized under WP1-WP5 by the responsible task leaders) served several important purposes such as enhancing research and innovation across the European Union and boosting the stakeholders' interest in sustainability certification-related topics.

The workshops provided the chance for participants to share insights, best practices, and lessons learned from various other projects. Some workshops focused on getting feedback from the CSLs owners and stakeholders and enhanced our capacity to understand the needs for the necessary elements of the BMT better.

Workshops facilitated insightful dialogues among diverse stakeholders, including researchers, policymakers, industry representatives, and CSL owners. As a result, this engagement was crucial for ensuring that projects aligned with stakeholders' needs and expectations, particularly in areas such as the sustainability certification of biobased systems.

SUSTCERT4BIOBASED organized many of these activities in collaboration with its sister projects, working together as the BIOBASEDCERT cluster. Early in the project, it was decided to join forces in order to streamline consultations, minimize stakeholder fatigue, and maximize synergies and the impact of the results.

An overview of the project's workshops are presented below:

Table 6. Overview of workshops organised

No	Title of the workshop	Short description	Date	Number of participants	Type of stakeholders
1	Workshop with Joint Advisory Board members	Discussing on biobased value chain selection	24.02.2023	30	Industry & Academia
2	Robust and Effective Sustainability Certification for Biobased Systems - BIOBASEDCERT cluster online co-creation workshop	Presented the latest developments and intermediate results of the BMT and gathered feedback from various stakeholders.	11.12.2023	77	Industry, Academia and Bioeconomy stakeholders
3	Workshop on the first results of the pilot testing of the BIOBASEDCERT Monitoring Tool (BMT)	CSL owners provided feedback on the levels of the BMT after the 1 st testing round	29.05.2024	15	CSLs owners and consortium members

4	The Role of Certification in Global Trade Flows in Bio-based Value Chains	Representatives of the three projects presented the cluster's work and discussed their so far findings and insights into trade flows of biological feedstocks and biobased materials in global regions along with the role of CSLs.	13.06.2024	15	Industry & Academia stakeholders
5	1 st BIOBASEDCERT Roundtable Meeting	1 st Workshop with representatives from CSL owners	12.07.2024	20	CSLs owners and consortium members
6	2 nd BIOBASEDCERT Roundtable Meeting	2 nd Workshop with representatives from CSL owners	27.09.2024	20	CSLs owners and consortium members
7	Driving Sustainability through Certification: Unveiling the Costs and Benefits of Certification Schemes in Bio-Based Industries and Products	The workshop focused on discussing the costs, benefits, and feasibility analysis of improving the effectiveness and transparency of sustainability certification schemes and labels in the bio-based sector.	11.11.2024	43	Industry, CSL & Academia stakeholders
8	3 rd BIOBASEDCERT Roundtable Meeting	3 rd Workshop with representatives from CSL owners	04.12.2024	20	CSLs owners and consortium members
9	Workshop on the second testing phase of the BIOBASEDCERT Monitoring Tool (BMT)	CSL owners provided feedback on the levels of the BMT after the 2 nd testing round	27.01.2025	10	CSLs owners and consortium members

10	Workshop with regional stakeholders in Spain	Physical workshop in collaboration with REDOL at Aragon's Regional Hub for circularity	25.02.2025	35	Industry & regional bioeconomy stakeholders
11	4 th BIOBASEDCERT Roundtable Meeting	4 th Roundtable meeting with representatives from CSL owners	02.04.2025	20	CSL owners and consortium members
12	Dutch regional workshop: Sustainability Certification in the Dutch Bio-economy: an Exploration	Physical workshop to share insights and recommendations from the BIOBASEDCERT and validate how applicable our recommendations are in practice.	08.04.2025	7	Regional bioeconomy stakeholders
13	5 th BIOBASEDCERT Roundtable Meeting	5 th Roundtable meeting with representatives from CSL owners	26.05.2025	20	CSL owners and consortium members

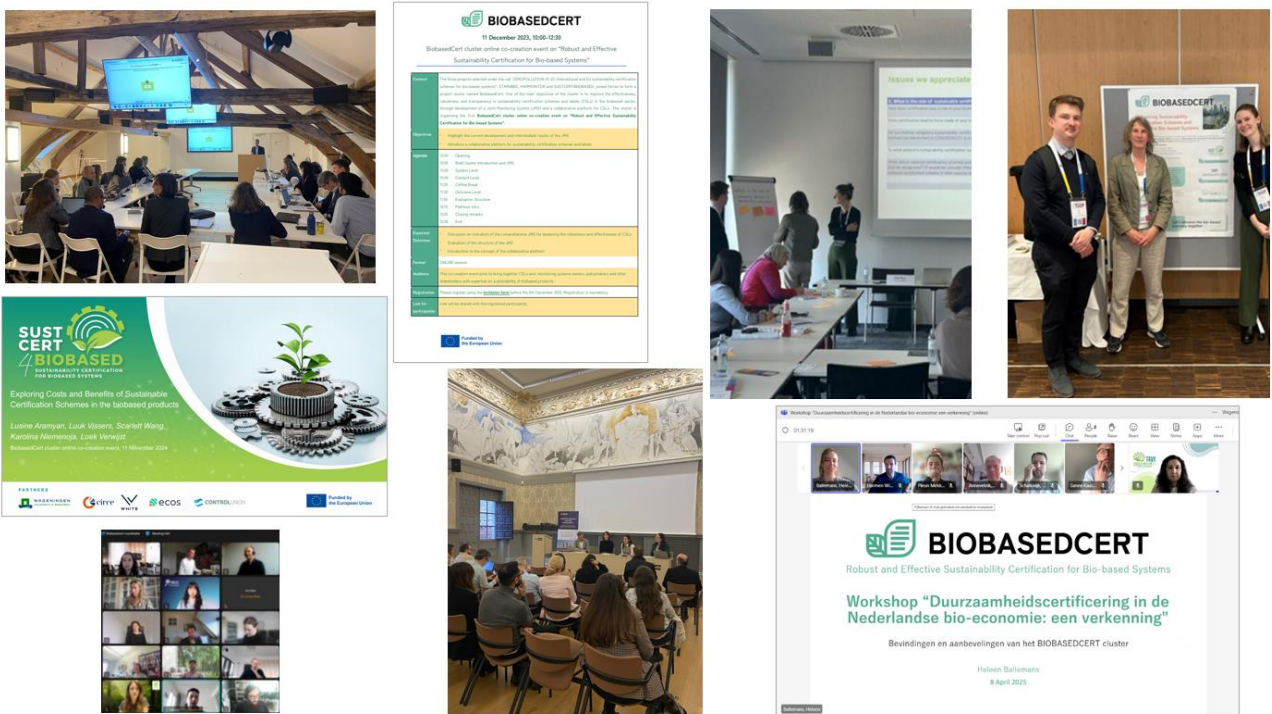


Figure 47. Highlights from the workshops organised

11. Conclusions

Engagement events and workshops had a significant impact that extended beyond the immediate activities of the projects themselves. They provided networking opportunities which are valuable for connecting individuals and fostering partnerships that can lead to joint initiatives and projects beyond the original scope.

These events facilitated the sharing of results, feedback and insights among participants. By enhancing participants' knowledge and skills, workshops contribute to building capacity enabling them to implement effective research and innovation strategies in future endeavours. Additionally, feedback gathered during engagement events can further inform policy discussions.

Furthermore, the Nol will continue its impact beyond the end of the project. The Nol members were invited to participate in our joint [LinkedIn group](#) which is active and can support all to interact, exchange opinions and stay updated with the most recent advancements in the sector of sustainability certification.

Our aim was to provide this vibrant community with a new home after the project's conclusion

— a space to stay informed about developments in the sector and to continue sharing knowledge.

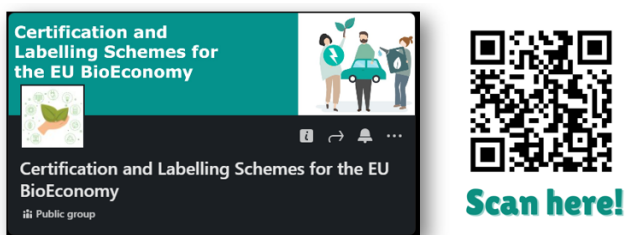


Figure 48. Nol members invited in our joint LinkedIn group

Annex

Annex I – Website’s privacy policy

This Privacy Policy applies to SUSTCERT4BIOBASED project website and governs personal data collection and use by the website only. SUSTCERT4BIOBASED project is committed to being transparent and to ensuring your privacy is protected. By using our website, you consent to personal data practices described below. SUSTCERT4BIOBASED project Privacy Policy is effective from 18.10.2022. We reserve the right to update or change the policy at any time, therefore you may want to review it periodically.

1. How we collect your personal data

We collect personal data both directly and indirectly:

Directly. We obtain personal data directly from individuals in a variety of ways, including but not limited to the following cases:

- an individual subscribes to our newsletter/s;
- an individual registers to attend in meetings and/or events (e.g. conferences, webinars, etc.) we host and during attendance at such events;
- we establish cooperative relationships with an individual;
- we provide professional services pursuant to our contract with the European Commission;
- an individual participates in an interview or survey organised and performed by us.

Indirectly. We obtain personal data indirectly about individuals from a variety of sources, including:

- our research partners;
- our networks and contacts;
- public and open data sources such as public registers, news articles and internet searches;
- social and professional networking sites (e.g. LinkedIn).

2. What types of data we collect?

We only collect the data that are necessary for the smooth implementation of our project. These data fall into the following categories:

- **contact details** (name/ surname, e-mail address, street address, mobile phone number, land line phone number);
- **professional information** (job title, organisation, field of expertise);
- **demographics** (e.g. age, gender, nationality);
- **information about what a person knows or believes.**
- **videos and photos** (from people that attend our events).

3. Bases of lawful processing

We process personal data on the following legal bases:

Legal obligations – for processing activities required for compliance both with applicable national and European legislation, as well as with the specific legal and regulatory framework of the Horizon Europe Framework Programme for Research and Innovation of the European Union.

Consent – for processing activities such as organisation of surveys and interviews, completing of questionnaires and dissemination of project’s results.

Contractual obligations – for processing activities such as reporting to the European Commission and complying with project’s publicity obligations.

4. What we do with your personal data

We process your personal data with the purpose of:

- Conducting research (e.g., interviews, surveys);
- Disseminating our project's results to different types of stakeholders;
- Sending invitations and providing access to guests attending our events and webinars;
- Administering, maintaining, and ensuring the security of our information systems, applications, and websites;
- Processing online requests or queries, including responding to communications from individuals;
- Complying with contractual, legal, and regulatory obligations.

5. How we secure your personal data when we process it

We continuously apply a personal data risk assessment process to identify, analyse, and evaluate the security risks that may threaten your personal data. Based on the results of this risk assessment, we define and apply a set of both technical and organisational measures to mitigate the above security risks, including but not limited to:

- Data Protection Policies to guide our personnel when processing your data;
- Written contracts with organisations that process personal data on our behalf;
- Non-Disclosure Agreements with our personnel;
- Back up process, antimalware protection, access control mechanisms, etc.
- Some of/ all our partners have appointed a Data Protection Officer.

6. Do we share personal data with third parties?

We may occasionally share personal data with trusted third parties to help us deliver efficient and quality services. When we do so, we ensure that recipients are contractually bound to safeguard the data we entrust to them before we share the data. We may engage with several or all the following categories of recipients:

- Parties that support us as we provide our services (e.g., cloud-based software services such as Dropbox, Microsoft Teams, Google Drive);
- Our professional advisers, including lawyers, auditors, and insurers;
- Dissemination services providers (e.g., MailChimp);
- Law enforcement or other government and regulatory agencies or other third parties as required by, and in accordance with applicable law or regulation;
- The European Commission, according to our relevant contractual obligations.

7. Do we transfer your personal data outside the European Economic Area?

We do not own file servers located outside the European Economic Area (EEA). However, some partners may use cloud and/or marketing services from reputable providers such as SharePoint, DropBox, MailChimp, Google, etc., situated both inside and outside the EEA. We always check that such providers comply with the relevant GDPR requirements before start using their services.

8. Do we use cookies?

Our website uses cookies. A statement will be sent to your browser explaining the use of cookies. Cookies are small text files which are saved on your computer, mobile phone or tablet. They allow the website to remember your actions and preferences (such as login, language, font size and other display preferences) so you don't have to keep re-entering them whenever you come back to the site. You can control and/ or delete cookies as you wish. If you do this, however, you may need to

manually adjust your preferences every time you visit a site. For more information on how to manage cookies, please visit: <http://www.aboutcookies.org/>

We use tools like Google Analytics to better understand how visitors interact with our website. This provides us with important information to enable the site to work better. The information collected is not linked to your personal data. For more information on the cookies set by Google Analytics, please visit: <http://code.google.com/apis/analytics/docs/concepts/gaConceptsCookies.html>

The following cookies are used by Google Analytics:

Name	Typical content	Cookie expires after
_ga	Used to distinguish users	2 years
_gat	Used to throttle request rate	1 minute
_gid	Used to distinguish users	24 hours

9. Your rights

You have the following rights regarding our processing of your personal data:

- **Right to withdraw consent** – You can withdraw consent that you have previously given to one or more specified purposes to process your personal data. This will not affect the lawfulness of any processing carried out before you withdraw your consent.
- **Right of access** – You can ask us to verify whether we are processing personal data about you and, if so, to have access to a copy of such data.
- **Right to rectification and erasure** – You can ask us to correct our records if you believe they contain incorrect or incomplete information about you or ask us to erase your personal data after you withdraw your consent to processing or when we no longer need it for the purpose it was originally collected.
- **Right to restriction of processing** – You can ask us to temporarily restrict our processing of your personal data if you contest the accuracy of your personal data, prefer to restrict its use rather than having us erase it, or need us to preserve it for you to establish, exercise or defend a legal claim. A temporary restriction may apply while verifying whether we have overriding legitimate grounds to process it. You can ask us to inform you before we lift that temporary processing restriction.
- **Right to data portability** – In some circumstances, where you have provided personal data to us, you can ask us to transmit that personal data (in a structured, commonly used, and machine-readable format) directly to another entity.
- **Right to object** – You can object to our use of your personal data for direct marketing purposes, including profiling or where processing has taken the form of automated decision-making. However, we may need to keep some minimal information (e.g., e-mail address) to comply with your request to cease marketing to you.
- **Right to make a complaint to your local Data Protection Authority (DPA)** (see https://ec.europa.eu/justice/article-29/structure/data-protection-authorities/index_en.htm) regarding any concerns you may have about our data handling practices.

To ask us to do anything of the above, you can contact us by e-mail info@sustcert4biobased.eu. We will promptly examine your request against the relevant requirements of the laws and regulations governing privacy and personal data protection, and we will answer the latest within 30 days after receiving your request. We will ask you for some kind of identification (e.g. photocopy of your identity card or passport) to avoid non-authorized revealing your personal data. If, due to the complexity of

the request or a multitude of requests, we are unable to respond promptly, we will notify you within 30 days of any delay, which in no case may exceed two months from the expiration of the 30-day deadline.

10. How long do we retain personal data?

We retain personal data to provide our services, stay in contact with you and to comply with applicable laws, regulations, and contractual obligations to which we are subject. Please note that we are obliged to retain data concerning projects funded by the Horizon Europe Framework Programme for Research and Innovation of the European Union for up to five years after the project's end (unless auditors request further retention). After the expiry of the retention period, and unless further legitimate grounds for retention arise, we will dispose of personal data securely.

11. Disclaimer of liability for third party websites

Although our site may contain links to third-party sites, including the sites of the consortium partners, we are not responsible for the privacy practices or content of these sites and we expressly disclaim any liability for any loss or damage that may be caused by the use of these links. We do not monitor the privacy practices or the content of these sites. If you have any questions about the privacy practices of another site, you should contact the site's responsible personnel. We suggest you read the privacy policy of each website you interact with, before allowing the collection and use of your personal data.

We may also provide social media features that allow you to share information on your social networks and interact with our project on various social media sites. The use of these social media features may result in the collection or sharing of information about you. We recommend that you check the privacy policies and regulations of the social networking sites you interact with, so that you can be sure that you understand what information may be collected, used and disclosed by these sites.

12. Children

We do not knowingly collect, use, or disclose information from children under the age of 16. If we learn that we have collected the personal information of a child under 16 we will take steps to delete the information as soon as possible. Please immediately contact us if you become aware that a child under 16 has provided us with personal information.

13. Revisions of this Privacy Policy

This Privacy Policy is valid from 18.10.2022 and replaces any other previous notifications that we had issued in the past regarding our personal data management practices. We reserve the right to revise this Policy at any time. The current version will always be uploaded to our website indicating the date of entry into force, so you know when the most recent revision took place. If there are critical changes in this Policy or if our personal data practices change significantly in the future, we will notify you by posting the changes on our website.

Annex II - Network of Interest online registration documents

Declaration of Acceptance for the Network of Interest



Declaration of Acceptance

(for individuals appointed as members of the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED NoI)

I, the undersigned, _____ certify that I have read and agree to abide by the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED Network of Interest Terms of Reference.

I pledge that I will participate in the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED NoI in my individual capacity and as such, I may not delegate another person to carry out the work or be replaced by any other person without prior written agreement with the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED consortium.

I undertake not to divulge any information given in the context of the work of the NoI, unless the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED consortium agrees to release me from this obligation, and to respect the confidentiality requirements.

I declare to accept entirely and with no reservations my appointment as a SUSTCERT4BIOBASED NoI member as described in the Terms of Reference.

I consent that any input or contribution I provide as a member of the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED NoI may be used by the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED consortium for reporting purposes or to align the project's activities with the needs of the relevant stakeholders.

I consent to the processing of my personal data needed for my participation in the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED NoI.

NoI Terms of Reference

Introduction

You have been invited to become part of the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED Network of Interest. This document includes the terms of reference and will assist you to understand what your involvement in the NoI will include before you decide to participate. Please take some time to read carefully the document. In case you have questions, you can always contact us at info@sustcert4biobased.eu.

SUSTCERT4BIOBASED in a nutshell

In the transition from a linear fossil-based economy towards a circular biobased economy, numerous biobased value chains have been set up at different levels of development, and several new biobased products have been introduced to the market. Biobased products are wholly or partially derived from biological resources, but still, it is important to ensure their sustainability considering the range of environmental impacts, as well as to ensure their social and economic sustainability.



To this end, a plethora of sustainability certification schemes and business-to-business labels have been developed to allow traceability and transparency of sustainability impacts along the value chains and trades. Today, it is essential to evaluate the credibility of these tools and support their harmonization. This is where SUSTCERT4BIOBASED comes into play!

SUSTCERT4BIOBASED aims to develop a monitoring system to assess the effectiveness, robustness and completeness of the existing certification schemes and labels, identify their strengths and weaknesses and promote the adoption of the best-in-class certification schemes and labels. The interdisciplinary consortium will also be reviewing and analysing the existing sustainability certification schemes and business-to-business labels; creating a database of global trade flows for biological resources and biobased products, and carrying out costs and benefits analysis from the adoption of certification schemes and labels in selected industrial biobased value chains. In this vein, the consortium will engage a variety of relevant stakeholders such as international organisations, industrial biobased value chain actors, scheme owners, certification bodies, regional bioeconomy actors, and policymakers, and will offer recommendations for the adoption of effective and robust sustainability schemes and labels.

Project Partners

SUSTCERT4BIOBASED brings together 5 partners across 4 European countries as follows:

	<p>Stichting Wageningen Research (WR) https://www.wur.nl/</p>	<p>WR is part of Wageningen University & Research in the Netherlands that carries out application-oriented and field-based research in the domain of 'healthy food and living environment' for governments and the business community at large.</p>
	<p>Fundacion Circe Centro de Investigacion de Recursos y Consumos Energeticos (CIRCE) https://www.fcirce.es/en/</p>	<p>CIRCE is a multidisciplinary technology transfer center that specialises in innovation and sustainable development solutions.</p>
	<p>White Research SRL (WHITE) https://white-research.eu/</p>	<p>WHITE is a boutique research and consulting company, providing services to the public and private sector, academia and civil society organisations. White specialises in research services and business consulting, communications and stakeholder engagement as well as in EU studies and EU funding services.</p>

	Environmental Coalition on Standards (ECOS) https://ecostandard.org/	ECOS is an international NGO with a network of members and experts advocating for environmentally friendly technical standards, policies and laws.
	Control Union Certifications Germany GmbH (CU) https://controlunion-germany.com/	Control Union Certifications has focused its efforts on developing services around the sustainability of the industry's supply chains which feed into the food, feed, forestry, biomass, bioenergy, social compliance and textiles markets.

Role and benefits

Role

SUSTCERT4BIOBASED Network of interest will engage a wide range of stakeholders to facilitate the international networking, dialogue and knowledge exchange across industrial biobased value chain actors and the sustainability system community.

The role of the Nol would be to interact, receive project updates, inform about recent advancements and trends, and share their knowledge and views on bioeconomy-related aspects. The Nol members will be invited to meetings and events such as biannual online meetings, where the main findings of the project will be presented, and they will have the chance to provide feedback based on their expertise. They will also be invited to participate in workshops and other events that might be organised during the project's lifecycle. Additionally, Nol members might be invited to talk about their expertise, promote the project's activities and results, or participate in future dissemination and communication actions during the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED project. In that way, their participation could contribute to triggering cross-disciplinary dialogue, stimulating interaction with target actors and associations as well as helping build trust among the range of stakeholders.

Lastly, they could be subscribed to the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED newsletter and project partners could pool the Nol expertise on an ad-hoc basis according to the needs of the project.

Benefits

Some of the benefits of participation in the Nol would be to:

- Connect with other individuals and organisations interested in bioeconomy and sustainability certifications/labels.
- Participate in the bi-annual online meetings to interact with other participants and discuss various issues from the sector and the project
- Participate in events and workshops organised by the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED project
- Receive project updates

- Share their knowledge and views on bioeconomy certification-related aspects
- Receive the biannual newsletter which will contain interesting news on SUSTCERT4BIOBASED and more

Terms of membership

Membership

The SUSTCERT4BIOBASED Nol is expected to be composed of at least 50 members and will be consisted of key stakeholders. Although individual members of the Nol may be selected because of their affiliations with key organisations, they will serve on the Nol in their individual capacity to represent the interests and views of their stakeholder communities. Equally, members of the Nol may not delegate another person to carry out the role expected from them or be replaced by any other person without prior written agreement.

Members of the Nol are appointed for the duration of the project (36 months, from 1 June 2022 to 31 May 2025).

Although active engagement is expected, participation in the Nol activities is entirely voluntary. There will be no adverse consequences if a Nol member decides not to participate or withdraw at any stage. In fact, Nol members may withdraw their participation at any time by informing the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED Network of Interest Manager (White Research). They may as well request to withdraw their data without giving a reason and without prejudice. Anonymous data already collected will be used because we cannot trace the information back to a specific person, but no further data or input will be collected, nor any other procedure will be carried out in relation to the specific member.

Stakeholders who agree to join the Nol will be requested to sign the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED Declaration of Acceptance (DoA), according to which they will commit to:

- abide by the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED Nol Terms of Reference (as presented herein);
- participate in the Nol in their individual capacity and not delegate another person to carry out any expected work without a prior written agreement;
- agree not to divulge any information given in the context of the work of the Nol and respect the confidentiality requirements;
- agree that any input or contribution they provide as members of the Nol may be used by SUSTCERT4BIOBASED for reporting purposes and/or to align the project's activities and results.

Management

The Network of Interest is managed by the Network of Interest Manager (White Research). The Network of Interest (Nol) Manager facilitates the interactions between the consortium and the Nol in order to ensure that the members will not be overloaded. The Nol manager is also responsible for arranging the biannual Nol meetings.

Contact point

Any further information, complaint, or concern about any aspect of your experience as a member of the NoI could be addressed to the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED Network of Interest Manager (White Research), who oversees the setting up and the management of the NoI, by using the details provided below:

SUSTCERT4BIOBASED NoI Manager: White Research SRL

Contact Person: Annie Kalimeri

Phone: +32 2 520 00 09

Email: akalimeri@white-research.eu

Project Website: sustcert4biobased.eu

Information Sheet and Consent form

SUSTCERT4BIOBASED Introduction

We would like to invite you to take part in an activity being carried out by the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED project, a 3-year project funded by the European Union within the framework of the Horizon Europe program. Take some time to read this information sheet and if you have questions feel free to reach us.

What is the SUSTCERTBIOBASED project about?

Biobased products play a prominent role in the transition from a fossil-based economy to a circular economy at an EU and global level. According to an assessment done by the European Commission, biobased products can contribute to a more sustainable economy and could represent approximately €57 billion in annual income and involve 300.000 jobs.¹

But what exactly are biobased products? Biobased products are wholly or partially made from materials of biological origin. Even though they could help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and offer other advantages such as lower levels of toxicity or novel product characteristics (e.g. biodegradability), it is still very important to ensure their sustainability on environmental, social and economic dimensions.

There are plenty of sustainability certification schemes and business-to-business labels that have been developed to track the sustainability impacts of biobased products. However, given the fact that there is no harmonization of these certification schemes yet, the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED project will contribute to defining and promoting the adoption of effective and robust sustainable certification schemes and business-to-business labels. The project will lay the foundation to support a faster and smoother transition to a circular, sustainable bioeconomy!

It will do so by developing a monitoring system to evaluate the effectiveness and robustness of existing certification schemes and labels and assessing the feasibility of adoption of certification schemes and labels by taking into consideration costs and benefits (including internalized environmental and social ones). The results of the project as well as the insights gained along the way will be used to provide recommendations to four key target groups: policymakers, sustainability system community, industrial biobased value chain actors, and regional bioeconomy stakeholders

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/biotechnology/bio-based-products_en

Within the next years the multidisciplinary consortium of the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED project will organise several events and workshops to inform the audience about important findings and updates on the progress of the project. Additionally, a Network of Interest consisting of at least 50 members will be developed to facilitate the international networking, dialogue and knowledge exchange across industrial biobased value chain actors and the sustainability system community.

Useful Information

Is my participation voluntary and what will it involve?

Your participation in the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED project is entirely voluntary. If you decide to participate in a SUSTCERT4BIOBASED activity, you will be asked to sign an **Informed Consent Form** to collect and process your data. The project will last for 36 months but your involvement will last as long as you wish.

Purpose of personal data collection

The role of the Network of Interest (NoI) is to provide a platform where members can interact, receive project updates, and share their knowledge and views on bioeconomy and sustainability certification related aspects. To effectively conduct this, we would need to process some of your personal data:

- Your contact details;
- Demographics (age, gender, country of origin)
- Professional information (where you are working, what is your job position, which is the area of your expertise)
- Personal opinions on the topic

What we will do with your data

The information you provide is **confidential**. Your name and professional information (role, expertise) will be visible in our website in the list of Network of Interest members. Your consent form will be kept separate from the observations collected during the course of the project activity. We will share your data with other SUSTCERT4BIOBASED project partners that are involved in the data analysis and reporting process. Once the data is analysed, a report of the findings may be submitted for publication. The project's deliverables that will be derived by this activity will not include your personal data or any other information that could identify you. The results of this project activity might be also shared with European Union representatives (e.g., the Project Officer evaluating the project's progress, auditing EU agencies). Only broad trends will be reported, and **it will not be possible to identify any individuals**.

Are there any risks involved?

No, there are no risks involved.

Access, deletion of information, or consent withdrawal

According to the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), you have the right to request:

- I. a copy of your data;
- II. correction of your data, if you think they are not accurate;

- III. to delete your data;
- IV. to limit or stop processing your personal data;
- V. to give you your data in an appropriate format and transfer them to another organisation.

You can also withdraw your consent and, therefore, your participation at any time without consequences. In case of anonymous data already collected, keep in mind that will be used since we cannot trace the information back to you. Further data would not be collected, or any other procedure would not be carried out in relation to your information.

In case you wish to verify the personal data we store, to modify, correct, delete or request a consent withdrawal you may communicate with the responsible partner listed below.

Contact Information

Partner name: WHITE RESEARCH SRL

e-mail: info@sustcert4biobased.eu

Website: sustcert4biobased.eu

Informed Consent Form

I confirm that I understand that by ticking each box below I am consenting to this element of the study. I understand that it will be assumed that unticked boxes mean that I DO NOT consent to that part of the study. I also understand that by not giving consent for any of the elements, I may be deemed ineligible for participating in this project's activity.

I confirm that I have been given an explanation of the purpose of the project's activities. I have read and understood the Information Sheet which I was provided with or listened to an explanation about the project by a project partner.

I have had an opportunity to consider what kind of information will be expected of me. I have also had the opportunity to ask questions and clarifications about the requested information which have been answered to my satisfaction.

I agree to provide my name, role and name of the organisation I belong and I am aware that I will appear on the project's website.

I agree to receive the project's biannual Newsletter with the project's updates.

I agree to appear in pictures/videos that might be taken during project activities as evidence of any activity itself and as promotional material for the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED project. I understand that these pictures will not be provided to any organisation for commercial purposes. However, they may be processed by third parties as a consequence of their dissemination at international level through the project's social media and website.

I understand that the consortium has no control on the images after dissemination.

I agree that my anonymised research data may be used by others for future research (I will not be identifiable when this data is shared).

I understand that my participation is voluntary and I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason, and that any data after the time of which it is withdrawn will be no longer included as part of any future reports, unless I agree.

I understand that my personal data will be held and processed in confidence and in accordance with the principles laid out by GDPR.

I am aware of whom I should contact if I wish to lodge a complaint.

I confirm that I have read and understood the above information and freely consent to participate in activities of the project. I have been given adequate time to consider my participation.

Annex III – Indicative letter template

Updated Indicative letter for the Nol

Title: *SUSTCERT4BIOBASED: A new Horizon Europe project on sustainability certification schemes (Join our network)*

Dear XX,

I hope my e-mail finds you well.

My name is XX and I am an XXX at XX (link your organisation's website). We are contacting you regarding our new Horizon Europe project [SUSTCERT4BIOBASED](#). The project aims to define and promote the adoption of effective and robust sustainability certification schemes and business-to-business labels for industrial biobased systems.

Currently, our project is establishing its "[network of interest](#)", which will engage a wide range of stakeholders (policy, sustainability system actors, industry, regional bioeconomy stakeholders etc.) in order to facilitate networking and knowledge transfer.

With this email, we would like to kindly ask whether you would be interested in joining our project's Network of interest. You can very easily and quickly get registered online by following this [link](#).

By being part of our Network of Interest among others you can:

- ➔ Connect with other individuals and organisations interested in bioeconomy certifications.
- ➔ Receive project updates
- ➔ Join the bi-annual online meetings to stay updated and interact with other participants and discuss various issues from the sector and the project.
- ➔ Participate in events and workshops organized by the project.

- Publicize recent advancements and trends.
- Share your knowledge and views on bioeconomy certification-related aspects.
- Receive our biannual [newsletter](#) (subscribe to receive our news)

We would be excited to have you join us in this mission.

Our social media (follow us to receive updates on the project and the sector)

→ [LinkedIn](#)

→ [Twitter](#)

→ [Facebook](#)

→ [Youtube](#)

Thank you in advance for your time.

Best regards,

Annex IV – The guidelines document by WR

What is the “Network of Interest”?

The SUSTCERT4BIOBASED Network of Interest is as a dynamic community, bringing together a diverse range of stakeholders to support international networking and meaningful dialogue. At its core, the Nol aims to facilitate knowledge exchange and monitor progress on addressing challenges arising on bioeconomy-related aspects.

Members of the Nol will be engaged in meetings, including bi-annual online gatherings where key project findings will be unveiled, and will offer a space for knowledge exchange and fruitful dialogue. Moreover, they will be invited to participate in project workshops and other events. Additionally, Nol members may be invited to showcase their expertise through interviews, presentations, or talks to promote the project's initiatives and outcomes. They will also have the chance to participate in future dissemination and communication activities within the project.

Although engagement is expected, participation in the Nol activities is entirely voluntary. There will be no adverse consequences if a Nol member decides not to participate in different activities or even withdraw at any stage.

Network of Interest Objectives

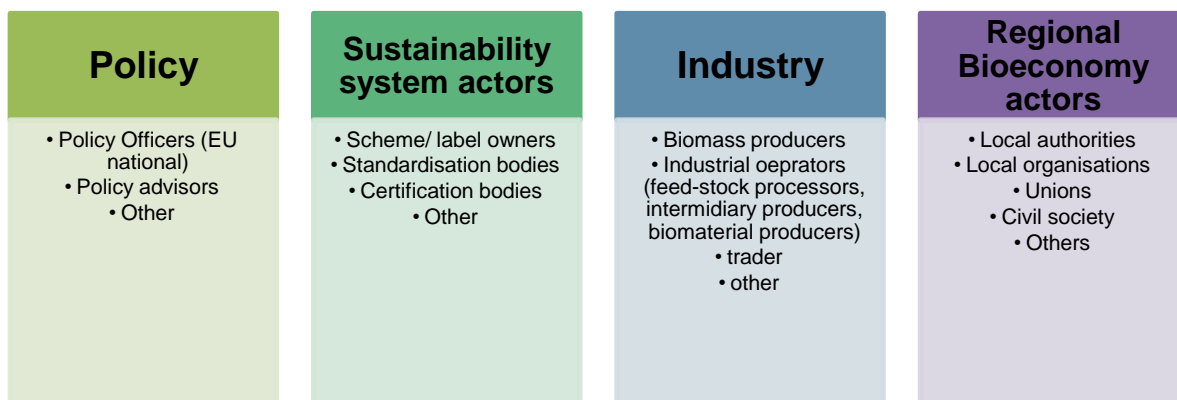
Below are the primary objectives behind establishing our Network of Interest:

- Disseminate and promote the project's results, including produced deliverables and promotional materials, across a broad spectrum of networks and platforms to maximize visibility and impact.
- Support the post-project's exploitation of results.
- Facilitate continuous learning by encouraging members to exchange best practices, lessons learned, and emerging trends.

- Support collaboration and networking.
- Serve as advocates for the community's interests by engaging with policymakers, industry stakeholders, and the broader public to raise awareness and promote the importance of the field.
- Promote diversity and inclusivity within the community by actively seeking out and welcoming members from diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences.

Network of Interest stakeholder groups

Aligned with the major groups of the SUSTCERT4BIOBASED project, the main categories and subcategories of the members of the Noi can be found below. You can find more information and suggest more sub-categories here.



Preliminary identification of activities

Below is an initial list of activities in which members of the Network of Interest can participate. This list is dynamic and will be updated throughout the project. You can add new activities in our online template here.

- **Participation in project's workshops and events:** Noi members will receive invitations to participate in workshops and events organized by the project.
- **Engagement in bi- annual online meetings:** Noi members will have dedicated bi- annual online meetings, providing a platform for in-depth discussions, knowledge sharing.
- **Support in dissemination activities and results:** Noi members will support the dissemination of project activities and results by leveraging their social media followers and networks.
- **Speakers at our events:** Noi members can be reached in order to be speakers in our events and workshops.
- **Contribution to website content:** Noi members will provide interviews for dissemination purposes on the project website or contribute articles on specific topics relevant to their expertise.
- **Subscription to project Newsletter:** Noi members will be subscribed to our Newsletter and promote it through their networks.

Recruitment strategy

In our efforts to attract a diverse pool of stakeholders from various fields and establish a vibrant, inclusive community, we will utilize multiple channels to recruit members for our NoI throughout the project.

1. Internal recruitment through consortium networks:

In order to invite the first pool of members we will leverage the extensive networks of our consortium. Each consortium partner is tasked with inviting 5 experts from their networks to join the NoI.

2. Invitation to synergies and relevant projects:

In addition to internal recruitment efforts, we will actively reach out to stakeholders involved in synergistic projects and initiatives that align with our mission and objectives. By extending invitations to these stakeholders, we aim to leverage their expertise to enrich our NoI.

3. Designing an Open Call for community engagement:

Finally, we will design an open call to attract individuals and organizations outside our immediate network who share an interest in our project's objectives. This open call will be disseminated through our project website, social media platforms, and other relevant channels to reach a wider audience. By opening the community to external participants, we aim to enrich the diversity of perspectives.

Roles and Responsibilities

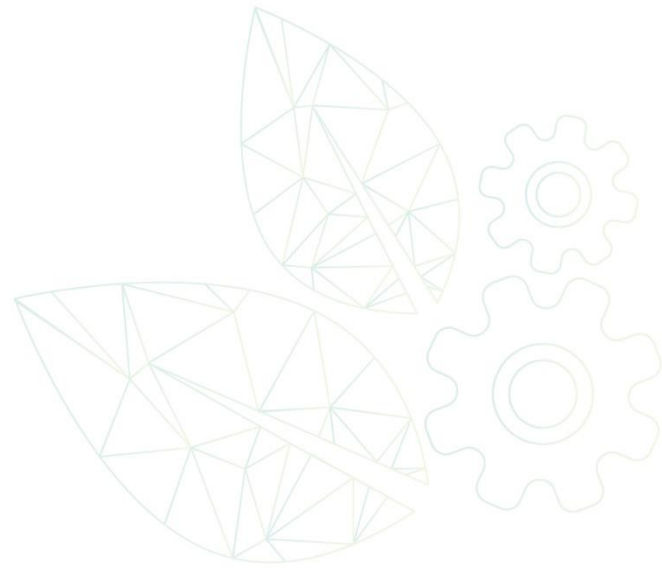
Below, you'll find the roles and responsibilities regarding the recruitment of NoI members. Members will be continuously recruited throughout the project's duration. All consortium partners will be responsible for supporting the effort to identify and engage members within the group, with guidance and support from WR. A major effort will be undertaken during the first months of the project to establish the initial pool of members.

Involvement of the Consortium:

- To kickstart the formation of our Network of Interest (NoI), we rely on the support and engagement of the project's consortium. Each project partner is tasked with extending invitations to 5 potential members for the NoI from their extensive networks. These potential members should possess diverse expertise and insights relevant to our project objectives. Consortium partners will identify and register these potential members in the online monitoring excel file provided in our online repository here.
- The consortium members will utilize the **invitation letter** provided by White Research (WR) to formally invite the identified stakeholders to join the Network of Interest. The registration process will be conducted online, ensuring efficiency for all invited members. This initial list of members will serve as a foundation for our NoI and will continue to evolve as new members are invited throughout the project duration.

White Research (WR):

- As a key facilitator, WR will take responsibility for inviting sister groups associated with our project to participate in our Network of Interest. Additionally, WR will launch a dedicated online open call campaign aimed at inviting external stakeholders beyond our consortium's closed network who share an interest in our project objectives.



About SUSTCERT4BIOBASED

SUSTCERT4BIOBASED is an EU funded (Horizon Europe) project aiming at defining and promoting the adoption of effective and robust sustainability certification schemes and business-to-business labels for industrial biobased systems to support tracing the sustainability (environmental, social, economic) of biobased products along the value chains and trades within the EU and globally for responsible production and consumption. This objective is realised by the development of a monitoring system, mapping of the current situation in global trade flows of biological resources and biobased products, and feasibility assessment from the adoption of certification schemes and labels considering actual economic as well as internalized environmental and social costs and benefits. The results of the project are leveraged to provide recommendations to four key target groups: policy makers, sustainability system community, industrial biobased value chain actors, and regional bioeconomy stakeholders. These ambitions are addressed by a strong, well-balanced, and multi-disciplinary consortium comprised of 5 complementary partners. SUSTCERT4BIOBASED thereby supports the development of harmonized system requirements, continuous improvement of sustainability certification schemes and labels and contributes towards establishing a circular, climate-neutral, and sustainable biobased industry.



Stichting Wageningen Research (WR)
www.wur.nl



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Environmental Coalition on Standards (ECOS)
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