Round table "The Bioeconomy – potential and challenges for the region"

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On November 20, from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM, the round table „Bioeconomy – potential and challenges for the region" will be held at TIZ Event Center, organized by the Regional Bioeconomy Hub – Plovdiv, in partnership with Trakia Economic Zone Cluster and Lider.bg.

The bioeconomy is one of the fastest-growing sectors in Europe. It encompasses all activities related to the sustainable use of biological resources – from agriculture and forestry to industries that produce energy, materials, and value-added products. The goal is clear: greater efficiency, less waste, and higher competitiveness.

Bulgaria has significant potential in this direction – favorable natural conditions, established agricultural traditions, and developing scientific infrastructure. The Plovdiv region is emerging as a key territory where science, industry, and the entrepreneurial sector can meet.

In 2024, the „Regional Bioeconomy Hub – Plovdiv" Association was established – a platform that unites academic institutions, business organizations, and local authorities with a common goal: to stimulate sustainable innovations and new economic models based on bio-resources.

The round table „Bioeconomy – potential and challenges for the region” will gather representatives from academia, business, municipalities, the non-governmental sector, and sustainable development experts, who will discuss strategic opportunities for the development of the bioeconomy in the region and in Bulgaria. The focus will be on the application of innovative biotechnologies, the development of bio-based industries, European policies, regulatory requirements, and the challenges for real business models.

Participants in the event:

- Anna Petrova – Ministry of Agriculture and Food
- Georgi Ilyov – Ministry of Agriculture and Food
- Prof. Dr. Vladislav Popov – Regional Bioeconomy Hub - Plovdiv; Agricultural University – Plovdiv
- Prof. Dr. Tsanko Gechev – Center for Plant Systems Biology and Biotechnology
- Gergana Andreeva – Bulgarian National Association of Essential Oils, Perfumery and Cosmetics
- Marin Genurov – Bulgarian Association of Greenhouse Producers
- Ivan Shishkov – Municipality of Brezovo
- Katya Staykova – Trakia Economic Zone Cluster
- Prof. DSc Petar Borisov – Agricultural University – Plovdiv
- Prof. Dr. Angel Angelov – Competence Center „Agri-Food Systems and Bioeconomy”
- Prof. Dr. Darina Zaimova – Thracian University - Stara Zagora
- Dr. Eng. Lyubcho Trichkov – Executive Forest Agency
- Prof. Dr. Petar Manadaliev – Center for Clean Technologies and Biomass Resource Efficiency
- Dimitrina Shindova – Center for Clean Technologies and Biomass Resource Efficiency
- Roberto Santorelli – Confindustria Bulgaria
- Konstantina Voynova – SCION
- Desislava Beleva – lawyer and ESG expert
- Rangel Matanski – Association „Together”

PROGRAM

09:30–10:00 – Registration and coffee

10:00–10:10 – Opening

10:10–10:30 – Presentation of the Regional Bioeconomy Hub – Plovdiv (Prof. Vladislav Popov)

10:30–11:30 – Panel I

„Bioeconomy – untapped potential for Bulgaria and the region; the role of the European Union”

The panel will present key directions and opportunities for bioeconomy development, including sustainable agriculture, biotechnologies, bio-based materials, and biomass utilization. It will cover major European policies – the Green Deal, circular economy, requirements for sustainable products, and ESG standards, as well as their impact on businesses, industrial zones, and municipalities.

11:30–12:30 – Panel II

„From science and innovations to business and investments: the possible future”

The discussion focuses on the transfer of scientific developments into real business solutions: biotechnologies, bioprocesses, biomass utilization, demonstration centers, and testing platforms. Emphasis will be placed on factors determining the successful implementation of innovations – industrial partnerships, investment readiness, funding programs, and accelerators. Key challenges for bio-based businesses will also be presented, including regulatory uncertainty, limited access to capital, high initial costs, lack of market awareness, and requirements for certification, traceability, and ESG compliance.

12:30–13:00 – Informal networking

Admission is free, but with prior registration: https://luma.com/q4bkajhs