



STAR-ProBio Focus Group Webinar on Sustainability Assessment Factors for Bio-Based Products

Context

STAR-ProBio (Sustainability Transition Assessment and Research of Bio-based Products) is a 3-year research project funded by the European Commission through the H2020 programme. Its primary goal is to develop a blueprint for a sustainability assessment scheme for bio-based products. Detailed information can be found at www.star-probio.eu.

STAR-ProBio supports the implementation of various European policy initiatives, including the Lead Market Initiative on bio-based products, industrial policy and the European Bio-economy Strategy.

The project includes the identification and overview of sustainability assessment factors, and aims to detail relevant consumer preferences in sustainability assessment schemes. By building on foresight methods, such as focus group activities and a first round of a Delphi study, this task involves an *ex-ante* analysis of the demand for new sustainability criteria that are easily understood by consumers and relevant to their needs. The scope of the analysis includes the needs of three kinds of consumer groups: the public, public procurers and businesses.

STAR-ProBio focus group

In the context of this analysis, a focus group is used as a temporary forum of selected experts focusing on a specific subject for sharing knowledge and experience. The aim is to discuss and document research issues and results to provide practical solutions in the relevant field based on the specific knowledge of its participants.

The first STAR-ProBio focus group event will take place in January 2018 as a webinar. Further information can be found below. In addition to this, STAR-ProBio is interested in continuing contact with focus group experts, and the project partners are interested in sharing and discussing research results with them before and beyond official publications, using different communication tools (e.g. emails, phone interviews).

Goal of the first focus group webinar

This webinar aims to discuss sustainability preferences for bio-based products and to specify what factors define an acceptable bio-based products sustainability assessment scheme. The results shall be used for further specifications of consumer preferences based on a three-stage Delphi study.

Consumers and businesses are increasingly paying attention to the sustainability of bio-based products and many companies are becoming aware of the need to know their consumers' sustainability preferences. As a result, companies are attempting to be more transparent about the sustainability impacts of their products.

Different studies have tried to anticipate preferences on environmental aspects of sustainability assessment schemes. However, there are various research gaps in additional areas, especially regarding social and economic aspects. Furthermore, product performance is not appropriately addressed by current sustainability assessment schemes. In addition, the state of the art in



research has shown that the acceptance of various kinds of bio-based products depends on individual characteristics. The specific acceptance drivers of many bio-based products have not yet been investigated, which indicates an additional research gap.

The aim is therefore to understand how sustainability attributes can be communicated to the different consumer groups of bio-based products.

Target group

Experts for bio-based products, consumer organisations, environmental organisations, companies using bio-based products in their production processes, and public procurers.

Draft agenda of the first focus group webinar

Monday, January 29, 2018, 10 am until 12 pm (noon)

1. Welcome and introduction to STAR-ProBio
2. Possible sustainability assessment factors for bio-based products
3. Identification of relevant sustainability assessment factors for specific bio-based products
4. Summary and conclusion

Experts interested in participating in the event are requested to indicate this via a short message to simone.wurster@tu-berlin.de.

Information on technical details of the webinar will be disseminated after the registration.

Participants of the focus group webinar will receive additional material with background information for the discussions.