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## **EU ambition to build the world's leading bioeconomy – uncertain times demand innovative and sustainable solutions**

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### Highlights:

- The European Bioeconomy Strategy
- Using waste as a resource
- The blue bioeconomy
- Investing in a sustainable future for Europe

### **Abstract**

This article outlines the current context and the development of the European Bioeconomy Strategy. It analyses the current situation, challenges and needs for EU action and concludes with the next steps that the European Commission will undertake to review and update the Bioeconomy Strategy. Bioeconomy offers great opportunities to realising a competitive, circular and sustainable economy with a sound industrial base that is less dependent on fossil carbon. A sustainable bioeconomy also contributes to climate change mitigation, with oceans, forests and soils being major carbon sinks and fostering negative CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. The EU has invested significantly in research and innovation in this field and the European Commission is committed to lead on European bioeconomy strategy.

### **Introduction**

#### **The European Bioeconomy Strategy**

While the global population grows, incomes rise and the world economy continues to expand, demands for biological resources, food and energy are ever increasing. By 2030, for example, the world will need to produce around 50% more food and energy, together with 30% more fresh water [1] At the same time, governments must also take major steps in combating climate change by phasing out the use of fossil resources in materials and energy production and replace these with renewable resources.

How can these targets be achieved without increasing our environmental footprint? These concerns and the need to address societal challenges – such as food security, sustainable production, mitigating climate change, contributing to global sustainable development - triggered the EU to launch its Bioeconomy Strategy in February 2012. In

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