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EDITORIAL

Marine Biotechnology in the Bioeconomy

Environmental concerns, economic realities and nature's role in supporting our lives, have brought political attention to the need for changes to how society can be sustainably supported. Goods, services, food and welfare are mainly taken for granted in Europe, but as fossil oil resources are declining, the term [Bioeconomy](#) has come on the agenda. Conferences, reports, research and innovations are devoted to understand and develop how to create a future where it is the resources in the biomasses that support our lives. This is basically the core of the bioeconomy.

To manage this change, new knowledge and new innovations needs to be realized related to how biomass of all kinds, sustainably and resource efficiently can be transformed into food, feed, chemicals, energy, etc...

... continued on page 2



ERA-MBT Consortium at the project management meeting in Ljubljana, Slovenia, 22 April 2015

The *Marine Biotechnology ERA-NET* (ERA-MBT) is a consortium of 19 national funding agencies seeking complementarities between national activities by pooling resources to undertake joint funding of transnational projects in the area of Marine Biotechnology.

During the lifetime of the project the following activities will be carried out, supporting the European Bioeconomy:

- Launching [three thematic calls](#) to generate joint European research and development activities.
- Arranging a number of [stakeholder events](#) to promote dialogue between science, industry and policy and to identify requirements for successful developments within the area.
- Performing [outreach activities](#) to seek complementarities and avoid overlap with other activities sharing common interest with ERA-MBT.
- Establishing a [Strategic Roadmap](#) with the support of the [International Advisory Group](#), an expert panel reflecting views and expertise from the scientific, policy and business sectors.
- Developing a [perspective on the future](#) of marine biotechnology research and development and its likely impacts.
- Providing information about marine biotechnology in an [online and open access portal](#) with a wiki function.



Land based biomass, most often as wood and (by) products from agriculture, have for historical and natural reasons been in focus until now, and multistream biorefineries able to handle the processing of cellulosic feedstock into a range of products are emerging. A significant challenge is to develop processes that are cost efficient enough to meet a market where the fossil oil derived products rule. Another challenge is to produce enough of all the different goods a society needs and someday be able to sustainably deliver products based on nature's renewable resources.

In this context, the marine environment which makes up more than 70 % of the planet's surface must come into play as a significant resource for the supply of carbons embedded in proteins, fats and cellulose fractions. Luckily enough, the marine polysaccharides have structures easier to utilize than terrestrial ones, and marine fats have different beneficial health effects from terrestrial ones, just to mention a few of the many obvious arguments to forcefully include the marine environment as a natural part of the foundation for the bioeconomy. Through a strategic focus on the possibilities for also the marine environment to deliver, society will be much better off when being supported with a supply of a future scarce feedstock.

To utilise the marine biomasses, biotechnological knowledge and methods needs to be developed and adapted for the specificities of this environment. [ERA-MBT's role](#) is to help fill the biotechnological toolbox and coordinate transnational financial and strategic resources to stimulate a development leading to sustainable utilization of marine biomass and its contribution to foster the European bioeconomy.



Steinar Bergseth
The Research Council of Norway (RCN),
Norway

FIRST JOINT CALL

Through the first joint call entitled "[The development of biorefinery processes for marine biomaterials](#)", 14 funding organisations from 11 countries brought together almost 9M€ to support transnational research projects from academia and industry.

After the submission deadline in December 2014, the call secretariat received 37 pre-proposals, with a requested funding of 42 M€ and own contribution of 10 M€. Industry participated with 42 partners in the various projects. The pre-proposals were clustered into five main marine biomass groups: Bacteria or other non-algae microorganisms (10), Microalgae (9), Macroalgae (6), Fish (7) and Crustacea/Molluscs/Others(5).

All pre-proposals were reviewed and classified by at least 3 different experts, over a period of three months. In February 2015 and based on the experts' classifications, the Call Steering committee (CSC) members decided on the threshold for selecting projects to be invited to send full proposals. Out of the 35 eligible pre-proposals, 24 (~30 M€) were selected and invited to submit a full proposal before 30 April 2015. This left a significant number of promising proposals on the contest which were evaluated by the final Expert Panel Meeting in June 2015.

The Call Steering Committee is expected to reach a final funding decision before the end of July.



Follow the website for more news:

<http://www.marinebiotech.eu/first-transnational-call>



FIRST ERA-MBT STAKEHOLDER MEETING REPORT IS ONLINE!

Topic? WAVES OF INNOVATION -
Integrating National Efforts to Build the
Future of Marine Biotechnology

When? 28th - 29th October 2014

Stakeholder feedback? The stakeholder event was considered as highly successful in addressing strategic issues that will be taken into account for further developing ERA-MBT and providing participants with the opportunity to expand their research and other collaborative networks.

The report outlines extensive stakeholder feedback.



Photocredit: VLIZ

Download documents:

- [Programme](#)
- [Participants list](#)
- [Presentations](#)
- [News report](#)
- [Public report](#)
- [Photo gallery](#)



THE VOICE OF A STAKEHOLDER

Jens Bleiel
Chief Executive of FHI

An important role of the ERA-MBT is to have dialogue with its stakeholders. In conversation with Mr Jens Bleiel the Chief Executive of Food for Health Ireland¹ (FHI), Dr Dermot Hurst from Ireland's Marine Institute explored the search for new food ingredients by FHI and discussed the role of marine origin compounds as functional food ingredients. Ireland is a leading supplier of food ingredients to Europe and the rest of the world. A strong tradition in dairy processing initially led to Irish firms producing worlds famous dairy products, after which firms in the dairy sector started to "mine" milk in the search for new sources of healthy food ingredients. FHI is a joint venture between Irish public research institutions and leading Irish Dairy companies to identify novel ingredients for use in food products and dietary supplements. This distributed research centre is supported by investments from industry and the state that will total €40 million by 2018.

Q: What level of awareness exists in the global food sector of the potential of marine bioactives as functional ingredients?

A: A key feature of the food sector is the constant attention given to product and process innovation. This includes an ongoing search by firms for materials with the potential to improve the health benefits of food products and to improve their competitiveness. It is not only the growth in the global markets for healthy foods that is behind this innovation, but also the need to provide the food matrix with enhanced functionality during processing and production; in storage; and in use or consumption by the customer or end user. And importantly to meet demands from customers for natural ingredients. While few firms would have a specific demand for marine bioactives; they all have a high level of awareness of the role and potential of all naturally sourced materials – be that plant or animal, bioactive or passive. More important for the food firm than the origin of a natural ingredient when looking for new compounds, is the fit with key acceptance criteria including, the functionality of the ingredient; that it is safe to use; its taste properties; cost effectiveness and whether it can be scaled up from laboratory to production levels. The challenge of ensuring a sustainable supply of ingredients often means firms develop more than a single source of supply.

Q: What market and other factors are driving the search for novel functional ingredients in the food sector?

A: Functional foods, are whole foods or food components that may provide the consumer with demonstrated physiological benefits or reduce the risk of chronic diseases, in addition to providing basic nutritional functions. What we choose to eat can have a profound



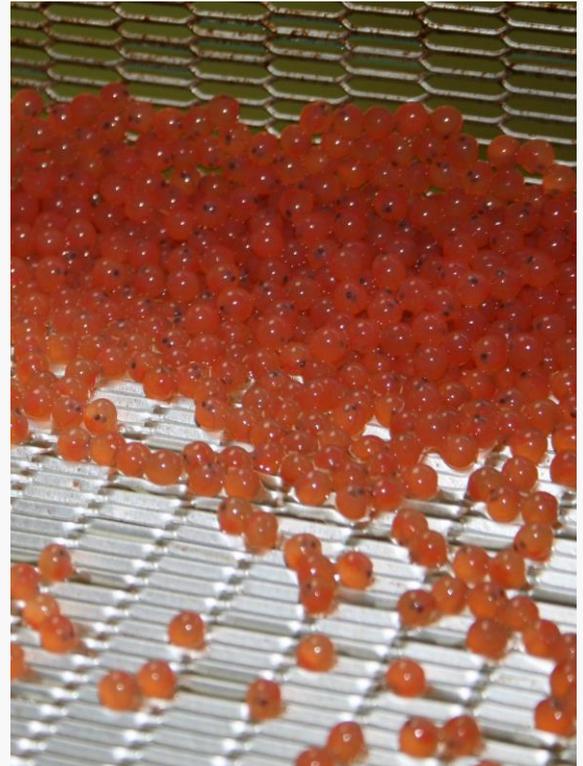
effect on body function. Research consistently shows the links between diet and health. The promotional efforts of health authorities in highlighting this, has influenced consumer food choice. In seeking new ingredients, the food industry is responding to pressures from authorities and consumers for food products that contribute to health and lifestyle. Competition within the food sector to find health beneficial components is strong and rising. Being able to attach a health claim to a natural origin compound gives a massive competitive edge to a firm producing food ingredients.

Q: Are there signs of a merging of food and pharma products/firms with the obvious search for novel health compounds?

A: There are similarities but as yet the signs are insufficient to support any claim of a merging of interests or markets. An essential difference is the pharmaceutical sector produces products to help people to get better and recover from illness, whereas the challenge for food ingredients firms remains clearly focused on helping to prevent food related illnesses by producing tasteful and enjoyable nutrition. Each sector has different regulatory systems; developing a new drug typically takes upwards of 15 or even 20 years, whilst a qualifying a new functional ingredient and registering a health claim might take less than ten years. However, there are some noticeable similarities in each sector. The R&D tool box used by food and pharma has evolved around common core scientific disciplines; the use of certain analytical or “omics” technologies is common in both and there are similarities in aspects of product safety and production processes. The emphasis on scientific and technological development in each creates opportunities for technology transfer and possibly achieving economic synergies. The food industry is more and more adopting the Pharma “tool box” for its high end research and I would envisage that both sectors will continue to add to the range of available research tools.

Q: From a purely functional perspective, what compounds are high on the research agenda in the search for new food ingredients?

A: Rather than specific compounds or sources, and there are many that are under investigation, the research emphasis is on finding food solutions that contribute to improving health. High on the target list for functional foods/ingredients are metabolic health, the prevention of diabetes, obesity, aging, cardio-vascular health, muscle health, weight management and customized nutrition - particularly sports nutrition and low GI (Glycemic Index) foods. At FHI we are building on our knowledge of milk proteins and comparing proteins from other natural sources. Because our scientific capabilities evolved from early work on natural products from milk, we have established benchmarks that allow us to investigate a wide range of other natural compounds and to screen them using a wide range of bioassays that help us to assess their effect on improving health. High on the list of research priorities are also studies of the role of lipids and oligosaccharides in early life. Research into polysaccharides (especially fucoidan) is a rapidly emerging research area. Interestingly, from the perspective of the ERA-MBT project, the marine environment is a source of lipids and polysaccharides.



Photocredit: Cushla Dromgool-Regan; Copyright: Marine Institute

SHORT BIOGRAPHY: JENS BLEIEL

Jens Bleiel started his career at a management consultant company in Germany. After 5 years, he joined Dutch company Numico and held several management and executive functions in the baby food branch of the company. His last function was Global Marketing Director Infant Milks. After 10 years in this business, Jens Bleiel joined Dutch multinational DSM. As Senior Vice President Metabolic Health Products, he built up the functional food business in the area of metabolic health products. In August 2009, Jens Bleiel was appointed as Chief Executive Officer of Food for Health Ireland and moved over to Ireland. Food for Health Ireland combines world-class science of 7 Public Research Organisations and the industry expertise of 5 leading dairy companies in Ireland to improve health through innovation in food.



ERA-MBT IN INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

BIOPROSP_15 CONFERENCE

BIOPROSP International Conference on Marine Bioprospecting is a biennial conference on [bioprospecting from cold marine environment](#) that is held in the university town of Tromsø in Northern Norway. The conference has been organized since 2002 and it has already established itself as one of best conferences in the field of marine bioprospecting. The 7th BIOPROSP conference was held from February 18-20, 2015 and focused on the possibilities and challenges in industrial development of novel marine bioactive compounds and biomass.

About 200 stakeholders in biotech life sciences and pharmaceutical industry, scientists, public support system, decision-makers and others interested in marine bioprospecting and biotechnology attended the conference, including some of the ERA-MBT partners.

The BIOPROSP_15 conference brought together scientists and industry representatives and addressed issues of how to translate basic research into applied research on possible industrial applications– overcoming the bottlenecks. Leading speakers from science and industry gave updates on what's new and what's next within the field of biodiscovery.

More information at <http://bioprosp.com/about>



Photocredit: BIOPROSP_15

Q: What contributions to the global food sector do you think marine origin functional ingredients could make?

A: An immediate advantage of a marine origin ingredient is that it is formed from a natural source(s) which is an important entry criteria for industry. But alone this is insufficient to them to make an impact in the food sector; they also have to meet the rigid specification for safety, efficacy, taste, cost, consistency of supply and scalability. Compared to the terrestrial environment, we have yet to fully understand the potential of the marine environment as a source of functional ingredients. We are, however, aware of the immense environmental diversity within the oceans and with it the potential it offers as a source of biological and chemical diversity. The food industry welcomes if this diversity can provide new ingredients that offer high potency, improved functionality and would ideally be available at a lower cost than current ingredients. Sustainability of supply and environmental sustainability are hugely important for the food sector, marine products need to meet industry requirements on both fronts.

Q: Do you think scope exists to strengthen links between researchers involved in marine biotechnology related areas and the food ingredients sector?

A: Yes, there are always opportunities to strengthen collaboration, be it between researchers, or between industry and the research community. We would like to see further progress on developing new multi-disciplinary collaboration on research that also includes an increased involvement with customers, funding agencies and with the regulatory authorities. We are beginning to increase our efforts to better understand the health effects of combining ingredients and to develop insights to the various mechanisms that are involved in complex interactions. There is some evidence that points to a possible link between the role of β -glucans in maintaining normal blood cholesterol concentrations and in maintaining or achieving a normal body weight. And we know that some dairy protein-derived amino acids can enhance muscle protein synthesis, lean body mass and skeletal muscle metabolic function. We are therefore starting to consider the effect of combining marine and dairy origin ingredients for enhanced functionality.. Though we are in the early stages of this work, we certainly recognise the potential in continuing this kind of work, making the promise of the marine to providing more and more novel ingredients especially exciting. Ireland has a dedicated research programme (NutraMara) which investigates marine functional foods, and FHI has strong links with NutraMara that allows us to directly compare the performance of marine functional ingredients with dairy ingredients; it is early days yet but we anticipate being able to share some interesting insights from this work in the near future..

1 Established in 2008, Food for Health Ireland (FHI) is one of the biggest technology centres in Ireland and its purpose is to identify novel ingredients coming from milk to develop functional food ingredients which will offer health benefits to consumers. The research is focusing on infant nutrition, healthy cheese, appetite modulation, performance nutrition and healthy ageing as well as products that can be used to manage elevated glucose levels. For more information about FHI see <http://www.fhi.ie>.



CONCARNEAU MEETINGS

A series of conferences have been held with the title 'Rendez-Vous de Concarneau – Where Industry Meets Science in Marine Biotechnology'. The venue is always the [Biological Station in Concarneau, Bretagne](#). In the period when ERA-MBT was prepared, i.e. under the CSA MarineBiotech, several members of the consortium made presentations and gave an update on how the planning of the ERA-MBT proceeded.

2014. At the meeting of 9-10 October 2014, [Catherine Boyen](#), CNRS, France, gave a presentation on '[Progress in ERA-NET MarineBiotech with particular focus on French participation](#)'. After giving an overview of ERA-MBT and the different actions, she gave examples of ongoing projects in France within the area of marine biotechnology, and how the collaboration between research and industry was organised. In the same session, [Renata Denaro](#) at Institute for Coastal Marine Environment – National Research Council, Italy, presented the '[Industry-policy interactions as targeted in the ERA-NET MarineBiotech](#)'. She gave a good overview of the industry-oriented activities in ERA-MBT (WP3) and presented the initial results of a mapping survey of the marine biotechnology environment in Europe with emphasis on the industry sector, its use of raw materials and the products marketed. Download here the full report on '[ERA-MBT Open Stakeholder Consultation](#)'.



Photocredit: Rendez-Vous de Concarneau 2014

NATIONAL MARINE BIOTECH RELEVANT NEWS



ITALY

- Two principal strategies have been planned regarding the Blue Growth at regional level “The Smart Specialisation Strategy – RIS3 Sicilian Region” and at national level the “Italian Consultation Board scoping paper SC2 Horizon 2020 Societal Challenge“. [The Italian Forum for Industrial Biotechnology \(IFIB\)](#) is an interesting meeting promoting the starting collaborations between academy, industries, public and private stakeholders.
- [The Intesa Sanpaolo Startup Initiative](#) is an international acceleration platform which selects promising high-tech startups, coaches them and connects them with financial and corporate investors. A call for companies, start-ups and projects focusing on Red Biotech (e.g. life sciences, diagnostics, drug discovery, drug delivery, therapy and treatment) and Green & White Biotech (e.g. biotech for environment and agriculture, biomaterials and biofuels, marine biotech) has just been closed. A recap and the downloadable documents can be found on the [website](#).
- An education project: POR-FSE 2007-13 Progetto CIP n. 19 “Eco.mar” Education: Strengthening of R&S system and creation of new Spin-Off in the frame of the Blue Growth (2015).



NEW CALEDONIA (NC) & EUROPEAN OVERSEAS COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES (OCTS)



- The new AOD, (Overseas association decision) that draw up the framework of relations (EU) and [Overseas Countries and Territories \(OCTs\)](#), entered into force in 2014. It establishes a more reciprocal partnership, centered of competitiveness and regional integration.
- In 2014, the project “[Territorial Strategies for Innovation \(TSI\)](#)“ funded by EU and coordinated by [OCTA](#) started. The project is built on a proposition made by New Caledonia. Each OCT will foster cooperation between key stakeholders (research, industry, and public institution), aiming to set up territorial strategies for innovation, building on OCTs’ capacities and comparative assets. For French OCT in the Pacific, like New Caledonia or French Polynesia, for which Marine Biotech have already been identified as priority even if there is no formal dedicated strategy, it will speed up the process and precise the place of Marine Biotechnology for territorial innovation.



2015. The Concarneau meeting this year is scheduled to take place 15-16 October, and members of the ERA-MBT will again be present. In the morning session the first day, focus will be on Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) of genetic resources found in the marine environment, where [Catherine Boyen](#), CNRS, Roscoff, France will be one of the moderators. In the afternoon session, focus will be on marine biotechnology and SMEs. ERA-MBT Coordinator [Steinar Bergseth](#), RCN, will give an 'Overview of marine biotechnology SMEs in Europe', followed by presentations from different companies and organisations in Europe. The last day of the conference will be devoted to marine biotechnology in Polynesia.

ERA-MBT AT A MAJOR IRISH CONFERENCE – NUTRAMARA

[NutraMara - the Marine Functional Foods Research Initiative](#) - is a research programme for marine based functional food development which focuses on the mining of marine bioresources including seaweeds (macroalgae), microalgae and marine processing by-products as well as aquaculture, for functional food ingredients. On 29-30th June 2015 a Conference and Expo was hosted at the Royal Dublin Society, gathering more than 200 participants, where the latest international scientific findings in harnessing and exploiting marine bioresources were presented.

At the opening session, ERA-MBT Deputy Coordinator [Torger Børresen](#) gave an overview on '[Innovation in the European marine bioresources sector](#)'. At the second day of the conference IAG member of ERA-MBT, Professor [Alan Dobson](#) gave a presentation on '[Marine bacteria as a source of novel bioactive agents for use in strategies against foodborne pathogens and in food processing applications](#)'.

WP2 leader of ERA-MBT, [Dermot Hurst](#), moderated a panel session where the questions were raised: what is the greatest challenges, and what are the most promising potentials when exploiting marine resources?



Photocredit: NutraMara Conference 2015

- Early 2014, the Innovation Division of ADECAL-Technopole (NC) opened a [business incubator](#) to support innovative companies and projects bearers (topic: marine and terrestrial resources, renewable energy, TIC).
- The French Ministry of Research and Higher Education (NC) has given the impulse to setup a consortium for cooperation of research at site scale, in order to increase synergies between research institutions and formalize local research assets and priorities. For New Caledonia, this consortium has been signed in Sept 2014 ([CRESICA](#)). One of the topics is the enhancement of biodiversity and natural substance.
- A [Maritime Cluster](#) was created in August 2014, gathering actors within the marine sector (32 members). The aim of the cluster is to advocate the role of the blue sector for the economy of NC, raise policy maker awareness and increase political attention and investment.

NORWAY AND PORTUGAL STRENGTHEN COOPERATION



- Norway and Portugal have signed an agreement for increased ocean related Scientific and Technological Cooperation, based on their mutual interest in strengthening research for sustainable management and utilization of marine resources. Portugal's President Silva visited the Research Council on 4 May 2015, on the occasion of the signing of the [MOU on ocean related scientific and technological cooperation](#) between the Research Council of Norway (RCN) and the Portuguese Research Council (FCT). He brought with him an entourage of nearly 100 people, including three ministers, representatives of management and research, and no less than 20 journalists. The agreements underline the strategic importance of the sea for growth and development in Europe. The signing ceremony was followed by a workshop on marine biotechnology and bioprospecting for scientists and business leaders from Portugal and Norway, held in cooperation with Innovation Norway and FCT. In addition, parallel sessions on seafood, marine environment and offshore energy and technology were arranged to provide researchers from both countries the opportunity to meet and discuss research.



SYNERGIES WITH OTHER PROJECTS

BG-14: ATLANTIC OCEAN RESEARCH ALLIANCE COORDINATION AND SUPPORT ACTION (AORAC-SA)



The objective of the AORAC project is to provide scientific, technical and logistical support to the European Commission in developing and implementing trans-Atlantic Marine Research Cooperation between the European Union, the United States of America and Canada. The CSA is carried out within the framework of the Atlantic Ocean Research Alliance as outlined in the Galway Statement on Atlantic Ocean Cooperation (May 2013).

Recognising the evolving nature of the Atlantic Ocean Research Alliance, the hallmark of this 5 year project is that it is flexible, responsive, inclusive, efficient, innovative, value-adding and supportive. As such, the project will provide a platform to engage the widest European input, engaging with research policy makers and funders, research performers, major regional and pan-European research networks, and including industry and NGO interests.

Marine Biotechnology is one of the six identified research priority areas for which a mapping and assessment exercise will be carried out to identify relevant industry needs and research gaps. This will contribute to aligning the planning and programming of future cooperative research activities. [Sigurdur Bjornsson](#), Head of Science and Innovation at the Icelandic Centre for Research (Rannis) is leading the marine biotechnology related activities within the project and will closely involve the ERA-MBT partners in these developments.

The **AORAC** website will be coming soon.

PORTUGAL



- Portugal has a “[National Ocean Strategy 2013-2020 \(ENM\)](#)” which lists a series of concrete measures and actions in Marine Biotechnology. There are several public and private institutions and organisations that support this mission, like clusters (ocean XXI and blue alliance), dedicated publications (magazine and journals), entrepreneurship & innovation associations and specialized law firms. There are some private funding mechanisms but the main financial support comes from public funds, national and European.
- Currently, calls from European structural funds are being launched through [The European Maritime and Fisheries Fund \(EMFF\)](#) (aquaculture and fisheries) but also through transversal programmes such as COMPETE, and other regional or thematic programmes.
- National funds support marine biotech through the funding of institutions, research projects, infrastructures and scholarships. There are several R&D institutions with specialisation in MBT and 25 large marine research facilities registered in the [European large exchangeable instruments database](#).

SPAIN



- The Spanish strategy is developed under the leading authority of the Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness ([MINECO](#)) through the Secretariat of state for research, development and innovation. The strategy is implemented through the [Spanish National Plan for Scientific and Technical Research and Innovation \(PECTI\)](#) (2013-2016), a document designed to develop and fund Central Government actions in the area of RDI.
- These actions are set out in four National Programmes. The National Programme for RDI oriented to the [Societal Challenges](#) fosters the participation of Spanish research groups in international cooperative projects, through the International Joint Programming Actions. Although there is not a specific programme on “Marine Biotechnology”, the marine and maritime RTDI activities are included in the societal challenges “Food security, sustainable agriculture and forestry, marine and maritime and inland water research, and the Bioeconomy” and “Climate action, environment, resource efficiency and raw materials”.



MARINE AND MARITIME KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER – EXPLORING BLUE GROWTH WITH COLUMBUS



The **COLUMBUS** project, a flagship European Commission-funded Blue Growth initiative, has successfully kicked-off and now moves into the first stages of managing knowledge and carrying-out Knowledge Transfer of marine research outputs to measurably increase their uptake and application by different end-users, such as industry, policy makers, and society in general. **COLUMBUS** represents the most substantial investment by the EC in Knowledge Transfer to date. The EC has provided €4m funding for the three-year project, which is designed to ensure that outputs arising from publicly-funded marine research projects have positive societal benefit.

COLUMBUS is very much at the forefront of the Blue Growth agenda, as its overarching objective is to ensure that applicable knowledge generated through EC-funded science and technology research can be transferred effectively to advance the governance of the marine and maritime sectors while improving competitiveness of European companies and unlocking the potential of the oceans to create future jobs and economic growth in Europe.

COLUMBUS will establish a “Knowledge Fellowship”, a network of nine full-time Knowledge Transfer Fellows whose role will be to carry out Knowledge Transfer using a methodology based on the needs prioritised early in the project. These fellows will work across nine nodes, each with a specific focus area. Marine Biotechnology will be dealt with within the Marine Biological Resources Competence Node, which is overseen by CNRS – specifically the station biologique de roscoff.

COLUMBUS is an ambitious project with the potential to deliver game-changing results. To be successful, the partnership will need to cooperate and collaborate. As such, the Marine Biotechnology ERA-NET is one of the projects that will be followed up and which output will be taken forward to help achieve measurable impacts and to develop a blueprint for future activities in this field of work, ultimately contributing to the development of a thriving and sustainable marine and maritime economy.

The **COLUMBUS** website will be coming soon at www.columbusproject.eu.

NEW PARTNERSHIPS AS ERA NET COFUNDS

There is a new trend in supporting money from the Commission, now turning more funds into various partnerships. One category is termed **COFUNDS**, and the difference relative to the traditional ERA NETs is that the Commission adds funds to what is contributed by the different Member States in the call. This means that the traditional ERA NETs as we know them will not exist in the future.

In ERA-MBT we have a task in WP2, where we will ‘[Develop a framework and initial cooperation for a sustainable, European marine biotechnology supportive network](#)’ that will last also after the present ERA-MBT financial period. Although we have more than two years more to prepare such a lasting partnership, it is important to start early. It is thus of interest to observe which ERA NET COFUNDS are being called for in the 2016-17 period of Horizon 2020.

The provisional call text scheduled to be launched in October 2015 contains two interesting topics that could be of considerable value for the future of ERA-MBT. One topic ‘ERA NET COFUND on Biotechnologies’ is being planned as part of the work programme termed ‘Nanotechnologies, Advanced Materials, Biotechnology and Advanced Manufacturing and Processing’ (NMBP). This topic addresses three ERA NETs being ERA-IB, ERASynBio and ERASysAPP, but consortia applying for funds from the topic may just as well include partners not having participated in these ERA NETs, and the topic description may allow for contents that today is relevant also for ERA-MBT.

The second topic for the next call of interest to marine biotechnology is nested under the Blue Growth strategy, and the provisional title reads ‘ERA NET COFUND on marine technologies’. The call text is very broad, but includes the application of biorefineries, and considering the statement that this topic is seeking synergies with the Joint Programming Initiative Healthy and Productive Seas and Oceans (JPI Oceans), the topic is worth attention also for ERA-MBT.

Other types of partnerships of interest to ERA-MBT are also expected in the future, e.g. the Bio Based Industries Joint Undertaking, where projects closer to industrial application are being called for.



ERA-MBT IN A GLANCE



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ERA-MBT Partners

The ERA-MBT partners welcome you to ERA-MBT and invite you to become involved in the shaping of a common ERA in Marine Biotechnology. Contact the individual project partners using the partner information page at the [project website](#).

Stay connected

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Contribute to

[The MarineBiotech wiki-pages](#) which aggregate information on marine biotechnology to inform funding agencies, stakeholders and the interested public about developments, achievements and knowledge in this area.

[A LinkedIn communication forum](#) to support exchanges between stakeholders and to highlight opportunities for interlinkage and collaboration.

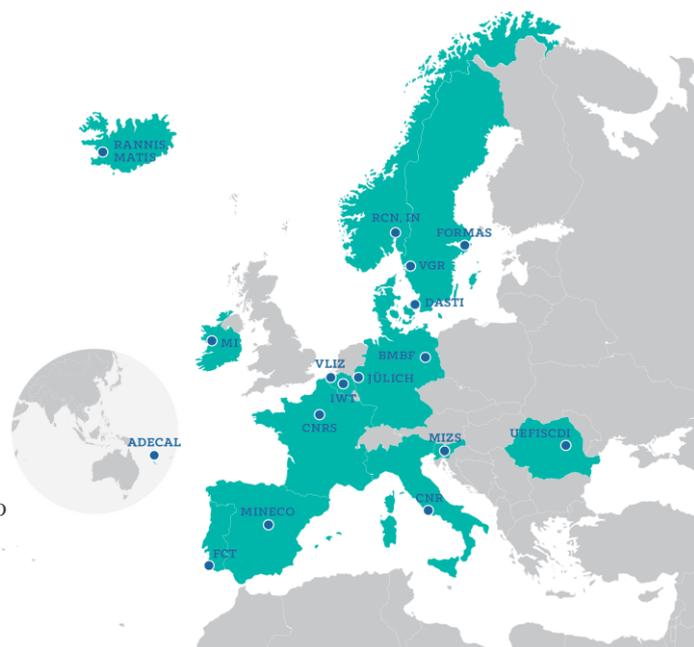
Comments? Suggestions?

Please contact us at info@marinebiotech.eu.

Upcoming events

We are collecting information on all events related to the field of marine biotechnology.

To stay up to date, please visit our [upcoming events page](#). If you cannot find the event you are organising or attending and would like to have it featured in our events calendar, please contact [us](#).



Newsletter acknowledgements

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