**About the Global Bioeconomy Summit 2018**

In November 2015, the first **world summit on bioeconomy policy** was held in Berlin under the patronage of chancellor Angela Merkel. More than 700 experts from around 80 countries came to the conclusion that they share a common vision, i.e., bioeconomy as a way and means to achieve several Sustainable Development Goals of the then newly agreed Agenda 2030. First and foremost, bioeconomy aims for economic development and food security, climate protection as well as nature and biodiversity conservation. The Communiqué of the Global Bioeconomy Summit 2015 highlighted these opportunities, but it also stressed that bioeconomy is not sustainable per se and that international collaboration is needed in research and development as well as in creating a suitable international policy framework (<http://www.nature.com/news/policy-five-cornerstones-of-a-global-bioeconomy-1.20228>) .

From **19 to 20 April 2018**, the second Global Bioeconomy Summit will take place in Berlin. The summit is overbooked. We expect again about 700 participants from more than 70 countries. The newly appointed German Minister of Education and Research, H.E. Anja Karliczek, will open the Summit on 19 April 2018. Several ministers (e.g. from Thailand, Argentina and Ecuador) and leading figures of the global bioeconomy community will discuss the latest developments and the way forward.

The Global Bioeconomy Summit 2018 is organized by the Federal German Bioeconomy Council ([www.gbs2018.com](http://www.gbs2018.com)) in cooperation with an [International Advisory Council](http://gbs2018.com/summit/international-advisory-council/). It offers an ambitious and high-profile [plenary program](http://www.gbs2018.com/program) featuring bioeconomy visionaries and multipliers, such as ministers, leadership from science, NGOs and industry. There will be [14 expert workshops](http://www.gbs2018.com/workshops) on topics of global relevance. High-level representatives of international policy and research organizations, such the European Commission, UN FAO, UNESCO, UNECLAC, OECD, CGIAR, the Global Green Growth Institute, the Pontifical Academy of Sciences and the WEF Global Future Councils are involved as workshop organizers and speakers.

A bioeconomy world exhibition will showcase how innovative bioeconomy products from around the world can contribute to achieving zero hunger, health and wellbeing, climate action and sustainable innovation and growth.

A communication and education exhibition will demonstrate bioeconomy outreach material, such as text books, brochures, games, movies and first applications of augmented reality and virtual reality.

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**Program Highlights**

GBS2018 will take stock of what happened since holding the first Summit in 2015. It will discuss emerging and pressing issues and seeks to pave the way forward for the development of an innovative and sustainable bioeconomy globally:

* More than 50 countries and regions have now integrated the bioeconomy in their policy strategies (An updated country study and map will be published at GBS2018, preview available on request from the organizers). Thus, **significant resources at an unprecedented level are available for bioeconomy R & D worldwide**[1].
* The effects of climate change and the unsustainable use of resources along with the growing amount of waste have become clearly noticeable in many places. Health effects, drinking water shortages, loss of species and marine pollution are just the tip of an iceberg that is increasingly gaining public awareness (e.g. <https://edition.cnn.com/2017/08/16/asia/melati-isabel-wijsen-bali/index.html>) The Summit will discuss the critical role of **maintaining the living biological resources for humanity**, e. g. speaker John Schramski <http://www.pnas.org/content/112/31/9511> ) and the expected contributions of the bioeconomy for nature conservation and sustainability. Highlevel speakers at the Summit:  former president of Mauritius and biodiversity researcher Ameenah Gurib Fakim (e.g.<https://www.nature.com/news/capitalize-on-african-biodiversity-1.22388>)  and Environment Minister of Ecuador Tarsicio Granizo (e.g.<https://www.eltelegrafo.com.ec/noticias/sociedad/6/tarsicio-granizo-la-basura-puede-ser-un-gran-negocio>)
* It has been shown that the bioeconomy can inspire low and high-tech innovation in a wide range of economic sectors and is suitable as a concept for the implementation of sustainability goals. Various speakers will reveal concrete examples, e.g. Navi Radjou the author of [Frugal Innovation](https://www.amazon.de/Frugal-Innovation-more-Economist-Books/dp/1610395050). Furthermore, a **world bioeconomy exhibition** shows a wide variety of bioproducts and solutions for everyday life.
* **Life sciences breakthroughs and advancing digitization** pave the way for innovation in the bioeconomy faster than we thought in 2015. They make way for new product developments and the convergence of technologies, e.g. using blockchain technology for storing and trading genome sequences (one of the pioneers, Juan Carlos Castilla Rubio will speak at the GBS). Genetic engineering and biotechnology have seen exponential improvements, similar to Moore's law in the IT industry. The author of several studies on these curves and bioeconomy books and papers, Rob Carlson (<http://www.nature.com/articles/nbt.3491>), will speak at the GBS2018.
* At the same time,**uncertainty in politics and society** as a whole is growing as to how to deal with fast and converging technological developments. The European Union and its member states, for example, are struggling to take a decision regarding the approval process for products based on genome editing.
* Furthermore, following the signing of the Paris Climate Agreement on December 2015, there has been a shift away from multilateralism, in which as many countries as possible seek and negotiate solutions together. The concrete implementation of the sustainability goals has also slowed down or is below expectation. The bioeconomy could be a broad field that shows that important goals are being pursued together but are being implemented differently in each country. A high-level strategic debate involving the S&T Ministers of Thailand and Argentina, along with Prof. Klaus Töpfer (former Director General of UNEP and German Federal Minister) and Dr. Videbaek, COO of Novozymes will **discuss future policy cooperation**.
* The International Advisory Council of the GBS2018 has elaborated a set of **policy recommendations** targeting all of the above issues. This Communiqué will be presented at the Summit.

[1] (A grand total is not available, but in the EU, for example, research funding has doubled, from 1.9 billion Euros in the 7th Framework Program to 4.52 billion Euros in Horizon 2020. Bioeconomy projects are eligible for EU co-funding, for example by the European Investment Bank (EIB), Horizon 2020, the Biobased Industries Joint Undertaking, the European Structural and Investment Funds, the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) or the so-called 'Juncker Investment Plan.' In the individual Member States, such as Finland, France or Germany, several billion Euros of public R&D funding supports bioeconomy development(German Bioeconomy Research Strategy, France Investissement d'avenir, etc.) In Thailand, the 2017 Bioeconomy Roadmap foresees public and private investments of around 3 billion US dollars. In Malaysia, up to 6 billion Euros are to be invested in the bioeconomy by 2020. In India, China and Australia, biotechnology and bioproducts and services are expected to grow to multi-billion dollar businesses over a period of 10 years.

In the USA, in addition to multi-agency public funding (sums are not known to the authors) for bioeconomy, several private sector bio-funds have been launched recently. For example the Andreessen Horrowitz Biofund II intending to invest 450 million US dollars in companies and projects at the intersection of biology and engineering. Synthetic biology company Ginko Bioworks alone raised around 250 million US dollars end of 2017 and set up a joint venture with Bayer for 100 million euros.)