

D T.2.1.1 Missing Links for Regional Circular Bioeconomies

Republic of Serbia

IPA PP1 Regional Agency for the Development of Small
and Medium Size Enterprises Alma Mons Ltd

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1. Introduction

Results of the first output from the GoDanuBio project (“Analysis of Circular Bioeconomy Framework Conditions (WP T1)” provide an overview of current strategies and governance structures in the Danube macro-region and offer a hint on the existing gaps of circular bioeconomy, in terms of concentration (critical mass of relevant actors), capacity (skills), conditions (rules, legislation procedures) and culture (social acceptance and impact of circular-bioeconomy approaches). The outputs from WP T1 should serve as a basis for the identification of actors that are currently neglected in the bioeconomisation of the respective regions.

2. Methodology

The aim of this report is to create an overview of actors that are neglected in the circular bioeconomy so far but are needed to co-create sustainable development models. To also serve as inspiration source, good practice examples (projects/initiatives/business models) that already exist in individual regions of GoDanuBio or outside the consortium area were collected.

The methodology encompassed the following steps:

Step 1. Analysis of the regional reports T.1.2.1 Development of regional stakeholder reports

Each region has identified the existing actors involved in the bioeconomisation process. They have been divided into 4 categories:

- Industry (chambers of commerce, clusters, cluster organisations, enterprises, professional associations)
- Academia & Research (universities, research institutes, competence centers)
- Public (state agencies, local government, regional/central government, regional development agencies)
- Society (NGOs, informal civil organisations)

These represent the maximal typology of actors to be considered in the elaboration of the Integration Plan for prospective actors for developing a sustainable and holistic circular economy (T2.1).

Some categories of actors are currently involved in the bioeconomisation process in all regions (e.g., universities), others are not and hence the regional gaps occur.

The current situation and the pre-identified gaps are shown in a google drive shared document (Annex 1)

Step 2. Identification of good practice examples

When adding a missing actor in the list, the partners have relied on the shared experience from other partners that have identified that specific missing actor.

The following table shows the shared experience for Republic of Serbia.

Type of stakeholder	Pre identified actors	Examples/Type of cooperation
Industry		
Chamber of commerce	Chamber of Serbia, Chamber of Commerce of Vojvodina	-Promotion of guarantee schemes; -Education events; SCC Center for Circular Economy of Chamber of Serbia is informing, educating and preparing the economic environment for the transformation from linear into a circular economy.
Clusters	Energy efficiency, Agro, Agroindustria	-S3cluster project; -Incentives; guarantee; -Promotion events; -Knowledge and technology transfer.

Cluster organisations		
Enterprises		
Professional associations		
Universities	Technical Sciences, Agriculture	-Studies/projects; -Expertise for projects; -Knowledge and technology transfer; -New programs design; -Trainings;
Research institutes	Institute for food technologies; Biosense Institute	-Exchange of expertise; -Projects
Competence centres		
Public		
State Agencies		
Local Government		
Regional/Central Government	Provincial secretariat for Agriculture, Water Management and Forestry; Provincial secretariat for Energy, Construction and Transport; Provincial Secretariat for Economy and Tourism; Provincial Secretariat for Regional Development	-Guarantee schemes; Incentives; -Events; -Knowledge and technology transfer; -New programs design; -Projects.
Regional Development Agencies		
Society		
NGOs	Innovation network, LAG The Sunny Plain; Environment Engineering group; Scouts movement of Vojvodina.	-Projects; -Events; -Transfer of knowledge; -NGO organizations in Vojvodina active in circular bioeconomy are mainly local initiatives focused on environmental issues, sustainable rural development, development and promotion of local products, organic agriculture
Informal civil organizations		

Step 3 Identification of the potential stakeholders

In Republic of Serbia the pre-identified gaps are: cluster organisations, professional association, enterprises, competence centres, state agency, local government, informal civil organisations as shown in Annex 1 (google drive shared document).

The potential stakeholders are fill in Annex 2 (google drive shared document).

Step 4 Identification of good practices

The identified good practices are listed in Chapter 4 and will be further described in a dedicated template which will be integrated into the Best Practice Brochure (D.T2.1.2).

3. Missing Actors

Stakeholder group	Industry
Stakeholder subgroup	Enterprises
Position in the network	Suncokret doo ¹ is a pioneer in the field of cold-pressed oils in Serbia as well as founder of organic production and processing in Serbia. It is a champion and the driving force of Agroindustija ² , a cluster that was formed in 2010 and has 76 members - agricultural producers, associations and agro-food producers. The projects implemented in the cluster are aimed at organizing education, strengthening capacity to diversify production and preparation for export, improving the competitiveness of members through linking in the value chain in organic food production, providing a higher level of product processing and forming a value chain particularly towards the tourism sector. Recent initiatives are related to management of biomass residues in fruit production. They are well networked with local initiatives and stakeholders and have good cooperation with the university and scientific research institutions.
Importance for GoDanuBio	Participation in capacity building activities on participatory governance, regional policy dialogue, co-creation workshops.

Stakeholder group	Industry
Stakeholder subgroup	Professional associations
Position in the network	Serbian Biogas Association ³ brings together all bio-gas producers in Serbia, scientific research organizations, certification companies, bio-mass processors, etc. They are very active in organizing various events and initiatives and making analyzes and studies aimed at educating the membership, disseminating and improving information and knowledge about the problems and challenges of the biogas sector in Serbia. They also cooperate intensively with the relevant ministry and public companies in charge of energy, as well as with institutions dealing with ecology. In cooperation with the German Biogas Association, they are implementing a second project aimed at empowering members through the transfer of expertise and knowledge and creating a more favorable environment for the work of members and new investors in this sector in Serbia.
Importance for GoDanuBio	Stakeholder in definition of regional policy agenda, participation in regional policy dialogue, dissemination of project results

¹ <https://www.granum.rs/>

² <https://agroindustrija.net/index.php/sr/>

³ <https://biogas.org.rs/>

Stakeholder group	Public
Stakeholder subgroup	1.State agency
Position in the network	The Innovation Fund of the Republic of Serbia ⁴ is the key state institution supporting innovative activities and managing funding for stimulating innovation. Fund supports the development of innovation through various financial, technical and advisory support instruments. It aims to improve the links between science, technology and the economy and contribute to encouraging the development of innovative entrepreneurship. Since its inception Fund has supported 991 innovative projects with more than EUR 37 million. The Innovation Fund is a pioneer in the institutional implementation of the innovation imperative - primarily by increasing the capacity of start-ups and available resources for their growth. The Fund is a part of a broader state innovation strategy.
Importance for GoDanuBio	Dissemination of project results

⁴ <http://www.inovacionifond.rs>

4. Good Practice Examples

4.1. Serbian Biogas Association⁵ is a representative association that gathers over 30 members, which owns 14 biogas power plants, with a total installed capacity of over 14.4 MW, but also other institutions and companies that are directly or indirectly related to this technology or plan to build biogas plants. In cooperation with domestic and international institutions, the Association works intensively on professional development of its members, in the segment of using renewable energy sources and management of biogas plants. The Biogas Association is an active partner of the German association Fachverband Biogas e.V. but also a member of the European Biogas Association EBA - European Biogas Association. They were involved in the process of drafting new legislation in the field of renewable energy sources, which resulted in the adoption of new incentive tariffs for the purchase of electricity, but also in the transfer of technology and training of our members.

4.2 Panona net⁶ – The Subotica Palić Microregion Cluster Fund was founded in 2008 and has 33 members who are relevant representatives of the sustainable tourism offer of the microregion. Cluster has implemented several international and domestic projects aimed at researching the tourist valorization of microregion resources for rural and sustainable development. The Panona-net project (funded under the IPA CBC CRO-SRB program) deals with the integration of tourist local and international routes with the bioeconomy, maintaining local resources and existing initiatives. Tourist tours are created around producers of ecological products and tourist offers related to the protected natural asset. The result is rural development with complex promotion and conservation of biodiversity.

4.3 Rural HUB⁷ is a local social innovation initiative, a co-working space in the village of Vrmdža, Eastern Serbia, active since 2010. It is a space where individuals, teams and organizations work, get to know each other, learn, develop ideas and receive mentoring support. Rural HUB also works to develop its local community by using and developing their products and services (food, accommodation services, craft shops, etc.) and networking the local population in order to encourage small family businesses. Unlike the aging and depopulation of Serbian villages, Vrmdža, which has just over 600 inhabitants in about thirty households, sixty of them are under the age of thirty. Apart from agriculture and ethno tourism, there is a lot of work for craftsmen. Recently, about forty families who had no previous connections with this village, bought residential houses, among them are programmers, composers, therapists, etc

4.4 Environmental Engineering Group⁸ is an NGO founded in 2005. With the mission to improve the environmental protection system in Serbia through the dissemination of knowledge, concrete activities, and public advocacy. In 2015 they established a Center for Rural Development and Applied Education. They have participated in several domestic and EU funded projects focused on environmental protection and the promotion of the circular bio-economy: Green Incubator, EuroChangeMakers, Turn on the brain - to circular Eco-dinar, Responsible waste management". They have also published several publications aimed at strengthening the capacity of civil society organizations and citizens, socio-economic development of local communities on the principles of circular economy. They act as a hub for launching initiatives, spreading awareness and knowledge about the concept of sustainable development.

4.5 Sustainable Land, Livelihoods, and Energy Initiative--Serbia (SLES)⁹ is initiative launched by E3 International (E3I) in cooperation with UNEP and key Republic of Serbia stakeholders,

⁵ <https://biogas.org.rs/>

⁶ http://ftksp.org.rs/projects.php?lang=eng&project_name=panoma

⁷ <https://ruralhub.rs/en/>

⁸ <https://www.activity4sustainability.org/about-us/>

⁹ <https://sustainablebalkans.org/>

The goal of the SLLES is to improve rural land and livelihoods and to protect native forests, biodiversity, and human health through the restoration of abandoned and degraded land, by sustainable cultivation of fast-growing bioenergy crops on short rotation plantations (SRPs). These solutions are currently being piloted on four different sites in Vojvodina Province, including a landfill, municipal degraded agricultural land, private land, and adjacent to a coal mine. In Vojvodina alone, about 200,000 ha of degraded and/or abandoned agricultural land are suitable for SRPs. It is estimated that woody biomass from 75,000 ha of SRPs can substitute 10% of Serbia's coal-based energy through co-firing in coal-powered plants.