



Dear Reader,

with this newsletter you receive the latest news on the Q-BICON project.

## Bioenergy in focus

Fostering the utilization of bioenergy is a key to an energy turnaround and the reduction of climate-damaging CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Biomass is today the most important renewable energy source in Europe with a share of 64%. Nevertheless, the comparison between countries shows wide differences with regard to the utilization of bioenergy. These differences are linked to the respective issue-specific state of knowledge. The EU-project [COACH BioEnergy \(2009-2012\)](#) identified a lack of specific bioenergy expertise at the levels of multipliers and decision-makers in economy and administration. This constitutes a bottleneck for the EU-wide growth of the bioenergy sector. Especially in Central and Eastern Europe exists a lack of suitable trainings that go beyond the scope of general knowledge on renewable energies and facilitate deep and specific competences in the field of bioenergy.

## Q-BICON project

Facing the lack of suitable trainings, a consortium of partners from Austria, Germany, Hungary and Poland develops a qualification framework for an innovative advanced training to train biomass consultants, all bundled in the project Q-BICON (Competences for tomorrows energies: A qualification scheme for biomass consultancy). Q-BICON is funded by the European Commission in its Leonardo da Vinci programme for two years, beginning in 2012. The new type of advanced training is designed for consultants and multipliers those planning and investment decisions are crucial for the future utilization of bioenergy. According to the competence requirements of this target group the advanced vocational training addresses the following topics:

- (Understanding) energy systems
- Sustainable utilization of biomass for energy purposes
- Project management, legal framework and funding programmes
- Communication and participation (regarding stakeholders)

Consultancy and communication competences are most important with respect to increasing doubts of bioenergy, exemplified through the "food versus fuel debate", issues of land consumption or the carbon footprint. Including target-group-specific consultancy and communication competences will enable participants to establish successful material and value cycles.

The development of the vocational training is carried out in four stages:

1. Detailed demand analysis in all partner countries
2. Development of training curriculum
3. Elaboration of teaching contents and materials
4. Open and free-of-charge pilot phase

After the evaluation of the practice results, it is planned to have a Europe-wide transfer of the qualification framework to foster the sustainable biomass utilization in other countries through a tailor-made vocational training as well.

[www.q-bicon.eu](http://www.q-bicon.eu)



## Q-BICON partners

The project consortium involves expert institutions from the fields of knowledge transfer, bioenergy and sustainability to secure the quality and timeliness of the training contents with a comprehensive expertise. The involved educational institutions ensure the application-related and customer friendly implementation of the contents through latest teaching methods.

- [Fraunhofer Centre for Central and Eastern Europe \(MOEZ\)](#), Leipzig (D)
- [C & Q Bildungszentrum Haberhauffe GmbH](#), Berlin (D)
- [Kujawsko-Pomorski Agricultural Advisory Centre](#), Minikowo (PL)
- [Energiaklub Climate Policy Institute and Applied Communications](#), Budapest (H)
- [Berufsförderungsinstitut Steiermark](#), Graz (A)
- [Europäisches Zentrum für Erneuerbare Energien](#), Güssing (A)



The project partners at the Berlin kick-off meeting

## December 2012: Q-BICON kick-off

With the kick-off meeting in Berlin in December 2012, Q-BICON has started into its active phase. After the opening of the event through project coordinator Mrs Helene-Olesja Betuch from Fraunhofer MOEZ and the get-together of the partners, particular work packages were presented and discussed. The following day was spent with the preparation of the market analyses.

## April 2013: 1st milestone achieved – demand analysis

In April 2013, Q-BICON achieved its first milestone with the completion of the demand analysis. Previously, potential participants for the vocational training from expert institutions, companies and associations were interviewed to gather their estimations on technological trends and qualification demands in the bioenergy sector.

Main questions for the development of the training schedule and contents were: What are state-of-the-art technologies in national bioenergy markets? Which kind of knowledge bioenergy consultants lack today? Which specific training contents require potential participants?



## Outlook: Target groups and pilot courses

The evaluation of the questionnaires and interviews indicated great interest in the innovative vocational training for biomass consultants. Almost all interviewees stated that the training schedule should contain modules that cover technical and scientific basics of the generation of bioenergy as well as the topics energy law, funding and subsidies. Many of the respondents were interested in sustainability strategies and soft skills. This diverse demand profile is due to the fragmentation and specialization in the bioenergy sector. For instance, utilization of biomass for energetic use is preceded by a complex process of generation, processing and conversion. Moreover, the sustainability of the material and product cycle is dependent on the necessary processing of accumulating residues. Another challenge is posed by the extensive regulation of the energy sector in the European and national law.

The survey results show that the respondents up to now usually have competences only in particular fields of expertise. Thus, energy consultants often lack specific knowledge in the field of bioenergy, while bioenergy experts rarely have consultant competences or knowledge in energy law. Through the combination of topics participants of the Q-BICON vocational training will get the chance to “think outside the box” and to learn about new possibilities regarding an economically and ecologically sustainable handling of biomass.

Following the results of the demand analysis, the Q-BICON vocational training framework will be tailored to the needs of professionals with a profound practical experience in the fields of bioenergy. Addressed are especially skilled employees and decision makers from public and private sector, as well as NGOs. Potential participants work in the following fields in particular:

- Waste disposal, technical and building services
- Agricultural and forestry
- Spatial planning and architecture
- Energy providers and municipal utilities
- Organizations and associations related to (bio)energy

Interested persons have the chance to participate at no charge in the practical phase of Q-BICON and to avail of the new vocational training. The pilot course will take place mid-2014 in Berlin (D), Budapest (H), Minikowo (PL) and Wels (A). The courses will combine the advantages of e-learning and classroom training.

If you are interested in participating please do not hesitate to contact us via the [Q-BICON website](http://www.q-bicon.eu). We are looking forward to hearing from you!

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