

MarineBiotech – an EU-funded Coordination & Support Action

Marine ecosystems provide a unique environment with an enormous potential to contribute to environmental and human health and to the sustainable supply of food, energy and biomaterials. Biotechnology has the power to release this potential by providing knowledge and methodologies for sustainable exploration and use of marine biodiversity. In the European context, marine biotechnology can and should make an important contribution towards meeting the *Grand Challenges for the 21st century* and the development of greener, smarter economies, central components of the *Europe 2020 Strategy*. However, a sound strategy and a concerted coordination of relevant national and regional research, technology development and innovation programmes (RTDI) are urgently needed in Europe to allow this potential to be realised.

The Coordination and Support Action 'MarineBiotech' is delivering the first concrete steps towards this, aiming at a future ERA-NET in marine biotechnology that can deliver '*smart, sustainable and inclusive growth*', a core objective of the Europe 2020 Strategy. The project engages funding agencies and stakeholders to achieve a long-lasting impact. The structure to achieve this is set up with:

- MarineBiotech's Strategic Forum of national funding agency representatives who will scope the content and shape of a transnational funding activity and begin the work of securing commitment to providing funds for this.
- The MarineBiotech Stakeholder Group, drawn from representative and inclusive organisations from all parts of the chain from research to industry, who will ensure the strategic relevance.

The MarineBiotech team will also produce overviews of the Marine Biotechnology RTDI landscape in Europe and beyond, to inform discussion and decision-making, and will organise information sessions, workshops and other project activities.

MarineBiotech is a collaborative network of 11 partners from 9 countries who support marine biotechnology research and development in Europe. The consortium includes funding agencies and non-profit organisations involved in research funding, research strategy and technology-based economic development. Further details can be found on www.marinebiotech.eu.

Workshops will take place between now and Spring 2013 to allow the exchange of information. The first workshop will take place in Portugal towards the end of April 2012, when funding organisations and stakeholders will be asked to come and begin to create a shared vision for the future in this area. The project will finish with a public conference to disseminate the outcomes and begin the next phase, the ERA-NET.

For further information see www.marinebiotech.eu or contact:

The Coordinator: Dr Steinar Bergseth, The Research Council of Norway;

The Project Manager: Mr Meredith Lloyd-Evans, BioBridge Ltd UK;

The Strategic Forum Team Leader: Dr Cristiana Leandro, FCT Portugal;

The Stakeholder Group Team Leader: Dr Imke Schneemann, Norgenta GmbH Germany.

All these can be reached using info@csamarinebiotech.eu.