

Mr Robert-Jan Smits
Director-General
DG Research & Innovation
European Commission
B - 1049 Brussels

5th September, 2012

Dear Director-General Smits,

COPA COGECA support to the Public Private Partnership (PPP) on Biobased Industries

As a founding member of the PPP on biobased industries, COPA COGECA would like to reiterate its commitment to this European project.

We are convinced that the global paradigm shift from oil-based to biobased materials represents a unique opportunity for Europe to kick-start a world-leading competitive biobased industry over the next decade, with significant economic, environmental and societal benefits. Supplementing food production, the conversion of biomass into bioproducts will present a chance for the EU27 agricultural and forestry sectors to diversify revenues and lead the push to reindustrialise Europe

With leading companies in the biobased sector and a strong agricultural and forestry base, Europe is well placed to take advantage of its technological edge. However, other regions such as the US, Brazil and China have engaged in the race towards the bioeconomy by making significant public investments in bringing biorefineries to commercial scale.

Companies and associations involved in the emerging PPP on biobased industries are committed to make it happen in Europe. We were very pleased to see the market driven approach taken by Horizon 2020 and the Bioeconomy Strategy, in particular the reference to the PPP as a tool to address the innovation "death valley". Since then, we have invested work, time and resources to ensure we are ready to enter the PPP journey. This is a symbol of our commitment and enthusiasm for this project which is only increasing over time.

We have now put together a team of experts to contribute to the Impact Assessment, prepare the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda and support our communication activities. We are multiplying effort to raise awareness among national and EU policy leaders to ensure that they support the decision for a JTI on biobased industries in due time. We are also broadening the PPP membership with new companies joining us.

We talked about radical innovation in our vision document from R&D and deployment to market pull, to deliver biobased products superior, or at least comparable to, non-biobased products in terms of price, performance and availability, and environmental benefits. This is truly what we want to achieve and feel the PPP can act as a shutter release with a positive domino effect across Europe.

We are defining and will achieve ambitious objectives by 2020 with this PPP that will significantly leverage the public contribution.

We are well aware we will face unprecedented levels of scrutiny; in difficult economic times, justifying a PPP is increasingly challenging. However, we would strongly recommend not losing a tangible opportunity to initiate sustainable growth and job creation in rural Europe.

We are truly excited about the prospect of working together with you to make the PPP happen and deliver on its ambitious objectives by 2020. A lengthy and difficult decision-making process is ahead of us and we therefore very much look forward to the official launch of the public consultation in September 2012.

We would also like to take the opportunity to invite you to the stakeholder consultation event we will be holding on 10 September in Brussels to raise awareness about this emerging PPP and get input and comments on the preparation work conducted so far.

We would like to thank you in advance for your kind consideration of this letter and look forward to meeting with you to discuss this topic in more details on 11 September.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pekka Pesonen', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Pekka Pesonen
Secretary General, COPA COGECA

