Atlantic Stakeholder Platform Conference - 20 January 2015, Porto

[Please replace this by the title of your workshop and timeslot that was assigned to you]

Blue biotechnology – Recommendations to overcome SME development barriers in the Atlantic marine biotechnology sector

[Replace this by the description of your workshop as in the programme]

The Atlantic Area Cooperation Programme "Atlantic BlueTech" (ABT) project has gained a substantial insight of the barriers and drivers to the development of the marine biotechnology sector through an articulate survey of c.a 60 SME companies in the Atlantic Area.

A panel of experts will review these results and recommend measures to overcome the identified barriers to the development of the marine biotechnology sector in the Atlantic Area.

Organiser: [Insert here the organiser]

The workshop is organized by Technopôle Brest-Iroise in collaboration with Brest métropole, National University of Ireland, Galway, and Plymouth Marine Laboratory.

1. Anne-Marie Cabon, Brest métropole: "The Atlantic Blue Tech project"

2. Ilaria Nardello, National University of Ireland, Galway: "Recommendations for the development of the biomarine business sector in the Atlantic Area"

3. Willie Wilson, Plymouth Marine Laboratory: "Models for marine biotech based innovation: a North American perspective based on three case studies"

1. Key messages

[Please write here what are the three key messages from your workshop?]

- Marine Biotechnology is identified as one enabling technology for industry innovation and economic growth, on both sides of the Atlantic;
- Clustering and knowledge sharing are of paramount importance to overcome sectorial development barriers;
- Companies need mentoring on how to approach financing their operations;
- Funding should be made available to support networks operating across the Atlantic Ocean, which will deliver connectivity, knowledge transfer and business development models.
- Align the mission of the European Investment Bank to support the innovation effort of the micro enterprises (micro-credit?)

2. Summary

The Atlantic Area Cooperation project “Atlantic Blue Tech” project has gained a substantial insight of the barriers and drivers to the development of the marine biotechnology sector through an articulate survey of c.a 60 SME companies in the Atlantic Area. Informed by these results, the ABT workshop has discussed, validated and refined a series of recommendations to support the growth of this micro-medium entrepreneurial landscape, aimed at both entrepreneurs and public agencies with a stake in the delivery of a smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in the Atlantic Area.

The workshop has particularly focused on industry-university interaction; trans-Atlantic models of innovation centres; and finances for the growth of the blue sector.

3. Questions and answers

[What main questions were raised by participants? What answers were provided?]

Discussions mainly addressed the problem of business financing in Europe, and the cultural differences between the US and Europe. The discussion was particularly intense with respect to the approach of venture capitalists in their investment strategies (risk adverse in Europe, largely open to any result in the US). The discussion further portrayed the European Companies as quite naïve in their approach to venture capital and business planning in general. The panel and the audience also debated the role that the Commission envisages for the European Investment Bank.

4. Follow up

[What follow -up actions have been identified in your workshop? To be taken up by whom and by when?]

- The discussion will provide input to the report that the ABT project will deliver by June 2015, containing recommendations for the development of the bio-marine sector, addressed to both businesses and public authorities;
- One pilot action will be delivered to facilitate knowledge transfer between Industry-University , through B2B interaction
- Provide business mentoring and information on how to access public and/or private funding;
- Promote and support trans-atlantic relationships

The actions will be followed up by ABT consortium and coordinated by Technopôle Brest-Iroise.

5. Next Atlantic Stakeholder Platform Conference

[Would you be interested in reporting back on the progress made since Porto at the next Atlantic Stakeholder Conference, which is to take place towards the end of 2015 (date and place TBC)?]

Yes/~~no~~