



NOVAMONT-LED *FIRST2RUN* PROJECT AWARDED €17 MILLION OF EU FUNDING

The initiative is part of the European Union programme designed to stimulate growth and employment in member states by developing the circular bioeconomy

Brussels, 23 July 2015 – “Bio-Based Industries Joint Undertaking” (BBI), the public/private partnership between the European Union and a consortium of bio-based industries (BIC, Bio-based Industries Consortium), has allocated a 17 million euros grant to the project coordinated by Novamont in partnership with four companies – SIP (UK), SoliQz (The Netherlands), Biophil (Slovakia), Matrìca, (Italy - JV 50:50 Novamont/Eni Versalis,) – and a university (Alma Mater Studiorum - Bologna). The project, named FIRST2RUN aims to demonstrate the technical, economic and environmental sustainability of a highly innovative, integrated bio-refinery.

Low input oilseed cultures (for example thistle) cultivated on arid and/or marginal land, are used to extract vegetable oils to be converted into bio-monomers (primarily pelargonic and azelaic acids) and esters for the formulation of bioproducts such as biolubricants, cosmetics, plasticisers and bio-plastics. By-products resulting from these manufacturing processes will be further enhanced to obtain animal feed, other value-added chemicals and energy from scraps in order to increase the sustainability of the value chain. Standardisation, certification and dissemination will be integral aspects of the project, as well as a study into the social impact of products deriving from renewable resources.

The project, on which private partners have to date invested over 300 million euros, will see regeneration in existing industrial plants which are no-longer competitive or have already been decommissioned. The public/private “Bio-Based Industries Joint Undertaking” partnership plans to invest during the 2014 – 2020 period up to 3.7 billion euros, of which 975 million euros will be made available by the European Union whilst BIC will contribute with 2.7 billion euros. In total, the number of projects funded in this first stage stands at 10 (7 for research, two demo and 1 flagship, the latter represented by FIRST2RUN coordinated by Novamont, the only company to have obtained this important contribution).

The objective of the Bio-Based Industries Joint Undertaking is to create new jobs, especially in rural areas, offering European citizens new, sustainable, locally made products. Bio-based industries will give European Union countries a competitive edge through re-industrialisation and sustainable growth, with the creation of new value added chains linking diverse sectors.

"We are very proud of this achievement which represents yet another important step in the development of Novamont's integrated biorefinery model and demonstrates the speed we are able to turn research results into industrial applications and the creation of new markets. We believe that the Bio-Based Industries Joint Undertaking, through this first flagship project can produce a decisive acceleration in the field of Circular Economy and circular Bioeconomy, creating not only new knowledge but also opportunities for economic growth and employment in Europe," said Novamont's CEO Catia Bastioli.

*The **BIC, Bio-based Industries Consortium** is an industrial partner in the public/private initiative and includes a very diverse range of organisations belonging to different sectors: small/medium and large scale companies, clusters, research centres, universities and associations in the agricultural, paper and forestry sectors as well as food and agriculture, technology, chemistry and energy. Established in 2012, it is still growing and the number of associates is expanding (www.bbi-europe.eu).*

***Novamont** is a leading EU manufacturer of bio-based materials through the integration of chemistry, the environment and agriculture. The main fields of application of Novamont's biochemicals are packaging, separate organic waste collection, retail purchasing, disposable tableware, farming, cosmetics and automotive. In Italy all carrier bags distributed by major retailers are made from Novamont's Mater-Bi®, a bioplastic fully biodegradable and compostable according to EU standard EN 13432. The company produced biodegradable tableware for the 2012 Olympic Games and works with many local councils (including the City of Milan and some London boroughs) engaged in the separate collection of bio-waste. Novamont has a portfolio of 1,000 patents, 400 employees and a global turnover of €145M. It has its headquarters in Novara (Italy), commercial offices in Germany, France and the United States and operates through its own distributors in Benelux, Scandinavia, the UK, China, Japan, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.*

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