



Who is who in the SCAR Bioeconomy Working Group



Johanna Kohl (FI)
johanna.kohl@luke.fi

Adjunct Professor, Dr. **Johanna Kohl** works as Director in [Circular Bioeconomy Research Programme](#) in Natural Resources Institute Finland. She leads the research project portfolio and future developments of optimized material cycles, added value and new products from main and side streams and transition towards circular bioeconomy. She is strongly connected with Circular Bioeconomy, national Circular Economy strategy implementation and influencing via research the future research need development in Horizon Europe National Expert Group on Cluster 6 (incl Circular Economy). She was also working in the SCAR foresight expert panel for the EU Commission on [Resilience and transformation](#). Kohl has over 25 years of experience on foresight and participatory RDI collaboration.



Luka Juvančič (SI)
Luka.juvancic@bf.uni-lj.si

Luka Juvančič, agricultural and resource economist, Associate Professor and Head of the Centre for Circular Bioeconomy at the Biotechnical Faculty, University of Ljubljana. Within his extensive research record, spanning across several research areas and methods in agricultural economics and policy, environmental and ecological economics, his work related to bioeconomy includes strategic research (evidence base, bioeconomy-related assets and transition pathways, policy analysis and evaluation in BIOEAST region) and innovation management (economic feasibility and environmental impact assessment, value chain optimisation). Among his teaching references, he has led the development of a newly accredited interdisciplinary Master's degree programme Bioeconomy at his home university.



Martin Behrens (DE)
m.behrens@fnr.de

Martin Behrens holds a MA in political science and a MSc in Environmental Studies. He is working as Senior Advisor and Deputy Head of the department of EU and International Affairs at the [Agency for Renewable Resources](#). He is involved in EU-Project development and implementation, specialised in multi-stakeholder activities focusing on bio-based products. He is also in charge of EU networking activities at FNR. Martin participates in various EU Advisory Boards in EU projects and is also member of the SCAR Forest working group.



Barna Kovacs (HU)

Barna Kovacs is currently working as counsellor at the Permanent Representation of Hungary to the EU. He has been appointed as the Secretary General of the BIOEAST Initiative, as vice-chair of the FACCE JPI, and as SCAR member on behalf of Hungary. His responsibilities cover the follow up of the Council discussion with regard to the research and innovation in the field of bioeconomy. Between 2009-2017 he worked as scientific and policy officer in the European Commission's Directorate General Research and Innovation, Bioeconomy Strategy unit, in 2016 Mr. Kovacs was appointed as Secretary for the Standing Committee on Agricultural Research. Upon obtaining his PhD degree and teaching at the Budapest University of Economic Science and Public Administration, between 1999-2004 he worked at the Hungarian Ministry of Agriculture and Hungarian Statistical Office.



Sascha Bollerman (NL)
ms.bollerman@minlnv.nl

Sascha Bollerman is an experienced Senior Policy Advisor with a demonstrated history of working in the field of government administration. Skilled in Policy Analysis, Government, Public Policy, Diplomacy and European and International Affairs. Strong community and social services professional graduated (MSc) from Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen in international economics. Since 2018 he is working within the Ministry of Agriculture mainly in international innovation policy, e.g. Horizon 2020 en Horizon Europe.



Alina Donici (RO)
alina.donici@madr.ro

Alina Donici holds a doctorate in horticulture and two master's degrees in the protection of plants and biotechnology for environmental protection. She has over 18 years of research experience as a principal investigator or project leader. She is a Senior Advisor in the Ministry of Agriculture's research department and an Associate professor of the Horticulture Faculty. She is involved in programming, implementation, and monitoring of the policies and strategy in agriculture research –innovation, by default in the bioeconomy, on the national level. She participates in various Advisory Boards in national projects and is also a national representative of the SCAR.



Hilde Muylle (BE),
hilde.muylle@ilvo.vlaanderen.be

Hilde Muylle works as a senior scientist at the Flanders Research Institute of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. She is conducting research in the frame of circular bio-economy including the primary sector, focusing on biomass production for bio-products, valorisation of side streams in view of optimized valorisation of natural resources and this in a multi-stakeholder approach and aiming at system innovation. She is involved in the execution of the Flemish policy for Bio-economy and the Flemish circular economy. In this, she is co-ordinating the B2BE- facilitator which acts at the interface of primary sector and the processing bio-industry.



Argo Peepson (EE)

argo.peepson@agri.ee

Argo Peepson is working as Bioeconomy Advisor at the Research and Development Department, Estonian Ministry of Rural Affairs. He is member of BIOEAST Board and National Contact Point of Estonia, as well as expert-level member of European Bioeconomy Policy Forum, and member of State Representative Group of Horizon CBE JU Partnership.



Alexandros Theodoridis (DE)

theodoridis@fz-juelich.de

Alexandros Theodoridis holds a PhD in immunobiology. He has been working for the German National Contact Point Bioeconomy and Environment since 2014. At the NCP, he is responsible for advising researchers and companies on European funding opportunities in Horizon Europe's Cluster 6, especially in the field of circular economy and bioeconomy, and for providing information and advice on the public-private partnership Circular Bio-based Europe Joint Undertaking (CBE JU). He also supports the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, among others as an alternate member of the States' Representatives Group of the CBE JU. He is part of the co-coordination team of the EU-funded project "CARE4BIO", the network of Cluster 6 NCPs. Alexandros Theodoridis has been active in the SWG Bioeconomy since 2018.



Jan Nedělník (CZ)

nedelnik@vupt.cz

Jan Nedělník is a senior researcher, director of Agricultural Research, Ltd. Troubsko, coordinator of the BIOEAST HUB CZ, established in 2019. Coordinator of many national and international (Eureka, V4 fund) research projects, recently mainly in H2020 and HE focused to bioeconomy sector. He is strongly connecting with preparation of national bioeconomy strategy, co-author of Bioeconomy Concept Paper of the Czech republic. Member of scientific boards at different Czech Universities and research organisations, member of "shadow" national group for HE Cluster 6, coordinator of RIS3 strategy for envi sector. Chairman of the Czech Academy of Agriculture Science.



Miroslav Hájek (CZ)

hajek@fld.czu.cz

Miroslav Hájek is forestry and environmental economist and Associate Professor at the Forestry and Wood Science Faculty. He previously worked at the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of the Environment. He has been an employee of the Czech University of Life Sciences Prague for the last ten years. He has been engaged in research for 25 years, particularly in the areas of economic instruments, ecosystem services and bioeconomy. Scientific results of his work were published in 96 scientific and special journals. He is an author and co-author of 6 scientific books, and he presented his work at 67 international and national conferences. In the last five years, he was elected president of the Bioeconomy Platform of the Czech Republic.



Sophie Thoyer (FR)

Sophie.thoyer@inrae.fr

Sophie Thoyer is a senior researcher at the National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and the Environment (INRAE) and Deputy Director of the INRAE Department of Economics and Social Sciences. She has led national and international research projects on the design of agri-environmental policies and the transition of farmers towards agroecology. She co-founded the REECAP network, on experimental approaches for the evaluation of the common agricultural policy. She is the national director of the major program funded by INRAE on the “bioeconomy for cities”. Sophie Thoyer conducts her research at the Center for Environmental Economics in Montpellier (CEE-M), where she was a professor for 20 years before turning to full-time research and research management.



Helmut Frischenschlager (AT)

helmut.frischenschlager@umweltbundesamt.at

Helmut Frischenschlager holds a doctorate from the Vienna University of Technology with a focus on environmental analysis and a master's degree in chemical engineering. After seven years of work in research & development and as an application engineer in the field of environmental technology, Helmut Frischenschlager has been employed at the Environment Agency Austria in Vienna since 2005, initially in the expert team 'Industry & Energy Generation', and since 2022 in the expert team 'Environmental Assessment & Transformation of the Economy'. He has been National Expert in various Technical Working Groups (TWGs) under the European Industrial Emissions Directive (IED) with focus on the chemical industry, polymers and tanneries. Helmut Frischenschlager's main work is dedicated to eco-innovation and environmental technology with its processes, products and services, including innovative, function-oriented business models (e.g. chemical leasing) and new economic concepts such as sustainable bio-economy, biobased industries (e.g. bioplastics), biobased circular economy, green chemistry and its renewable feedstock. With his background in chemical and process engineering, Helmut Frischenschlager has always pursued integrated, systemic approaches in his work and studies wherever possible, with their ecological effects and its contribution to achieving the SDGs.



Helmut Gaugitsch (AT)

helmut.gaugitsch@umweltbundesamt.at

Helmut Gaugitsch studied technical chemistry and food chemistry at the technical University of Vienna, with graduation as PhD in these areas. After some years in applied research, he joined the Environment Agency Austria in 1991. He has worked on biodiversity and sustainability topics, including ecosystem services, impact of landuse activities, as well as environmental risk assessment and monitoring issues, including genetically modified organisms (GMO). Presently he is Head of Scientific Management Biodiversity at the Environment Agency Austria, coordinating the Agency's work on sustainability and biodiversity topics, including scientific quality assurance. His scientific and management responsibilities involve the coordination and preparation of studies on sustainability measurement and assessment, ecosystem services, environmental effects of different economic activities, bioeconomy, capacity building projects concerning development and implementation of national, regional and international Regulatory Frameworks for sustainability, landuse, agriculture and food as well as biosafety.



Lars Ole Hansen (DK)

loha@fvm.dk

Lars Ole Hansen has a master's degree in economic geography from the University of Copenhagen. Lars is teamleader and senior advisor in the Danish Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries and is, among other things, secretary of the National Bioeconomy Board, which advises the Danish government on bioeconomy. Lars Ole Hansen also participates in the Nordic Council's working group on bioeconomy.



Stefano Grando (IT)

s.grando@masaf.gov.it

Stefano Grando holds a MSc in European Regional Development at the Cardiff University and a PhD in Agrarian Economics at the University of Basilicata. As a lecturer and researcher, he has been working in several EU-funded projects since 2001 with various Universities and research centres in the fields of rural development, agricultural economics and food studies. He has also experience in the field of technical assistance, monitoring and evaluation of regional programmes funded by EU structural funds. Currently he works for the Italian Ministry of Agricultural, Food Sovereignty and Forests (MASAF) in the coordination of research policies for agriculture, food and bioeconomy, also as deputy national delegate to the SCAR - Standing Committee on Agricultural Research – and member of various SCAR Working Groups.



Agata Foks (PL)

agata.foks@mein.gov.pl

Agata Foks is working as a Counsellor to the Minister in the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Poland. She advises the Minister in relation to European Affairs in the scope of cluster 6 Horizon Europe merit and coordinates activities related to agriculture, climate change, biodiversity and bioeconomy on behalf of the Ministry. She is a Polish representative and delegate to PC CL6, a member of the Governing Board JPI FACCE and the Chair of the SRG CBE JU partnership. She also represents Poland as a support delegate in the SCAR. Professionally she is a Government in EU Affairs specialist with 14 years of professional experience in public and policy management both on national and EU level.



Patrick Barrett (IE)

Patrick.Barrett@agriculture.gov.ie

Patrick Barrett is an Agricultural Inspector with the Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine with responsibility for bioeconomy as outlined here: - [The Bioeconomy \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie). He has lead responsibility for developing the national bioeconomy action plan 2023-2025 [Bioeconomy Policy \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie). He is also part of the States Representative Group for the [Circular Bio-based Europe Joint Undertaking \(CBE JU\) \(europa.eu\)](http://europa.eu), participates in the [European Bioeconomy Policy Forum technical group and attends the International Working Group | Sustainable and circular bioeconomy for food systems transformation | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations \(fao.org\)](http://www.fao.org). He previously was a co-author of the [Deploying the bioeconomy in the EU - A framework approach for bioeconomy strategy development: 10 policy recommendations for building national bioeconomies toward a fair and just climate neutral Europe](http://www.fao.org) as part of the Policy Support Facility established by the EU Commission to support the implementation of the EU Bioeconomy Strategy.



Matthew Halpin (IE)

matthew.halpin@agriculture.gov.ie

Matthew Halpin, Assistant Agricultural Inspector, Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine, Ireland. Matthew is an Assistant Agricultural Inspector in the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine in Ireland. He is based in the Research Division of the Department, working specifically in the area of the Bioeconomy ([The Bioeconomy \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie)). Matthew is currently involved in the implementation of Ireland's Bioeconomy Action Plan ([Bioeconomy Policy \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie)), as well as participating in the secretariat of Ireland's Bioeconomy Implementation and Development Group, Bioeconomy Forum and Bioeconomy Network ([Stakeholder Coordination & Consultative Groups \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie)). Matthew is also centrally involved in developing and managing bioeconomy research and demonstration funding opportunities offered by the Department ([Bioeconomy Funding & Finance Options \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie)). Matthew has a degree in Agricultural Science from University College Dublin and has past experience in the Agri-Food Industry in Ireland.



Jesús Escudero (ES)

jesus.escudero@inia.csic.es

Jesús Escudero, PhD in Molecular Biology of Plants from the University of Basel (Switzerland). He has experience in the area of sciences applied to agriculture in different research centres, both national (Spanish Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Science), as foreigners (Friedrich Miescher Institute, Basel, Switzerland; Leiden University, Leiden, The Netherlands), as well as in the industrial biotechnology sector (MOGEN International, Leiden, The Netherlands; Zeneca Agrochemicals, Syngenta Ltd., London, UK). He has participated in scientific projects, having been supported for their realization by leading research organizations such as the European Molecular Biology Organization and Human Frontier Science Program Organization. Lately, he has been focussed in management, performing international-cooperation functions at the National Institute of Agricultural and Food Research and Technology-INIA (Madrid, Spain). His current position is Head for Scientific International Relations with the European Union. He is also National Contact Point for issues related to Agriculture, Food and Bioeconomy within the European Framework Programme for Research and Innovation.



Harley Stoddart (GB)

harley.stoddart@defra.gov.uk

Harley Stoddart is the Head of Climate Mitigation Science for Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), providing scientific support to evidence-based net zero policy making and manages the research interests across Agriculture, Forestry, Biomass, Peat (& soils), Waste, Wastewater and F-Gases sectors.

Previously he was the lead on agricultural emissions at the national Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board. Harley was formerly a farm surveyor, an environmental policy advisor for Defra, and a bioeconomy advisor for Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC, now renamed the Department of Energy and Net Zero (DESNZ)).

He is responsible for understanding policy issues affecting the land-based sectors, as well as the emissions from and mitigation potential across the sectors. Harley is a Chartered Biologist, and a Member of Institute of Agricultural Managers.



Sharleene Bibbings (GB)

Sharleene.Bibbings@defra.gov.uk

Sharleene Bibbings, is the Head of Economic Strategy Policy for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). Sharleene's team use policy expertise and insight to set the direction of the Economic Strategy. This includes cross-government initiatives such as the UK's previous Engineering Biology Roadmap. Currently, Sharleene leads on Defra's industrial strategy, championing engineering biology, agri-tech, and a circular economy. Previously Sharleene was the Head of Engagement and Research at the UK's Trade and Agriculture Commission. Sharleene also worked at the Department for International Trade, working overseas to lead support for the UK's agri, food and drink sector. Sharleene also worked at UK Export Finance, widening access to capital for UK investors and exporters.

Sharleene holds a Ph.D. in Politics, and is a graduate of executive education from Yale University with a focus on excellence in multi-disciplinary teams. Sharleene is responsible for ensuring Defra's economic strategy supports teams across the department to play their part in fostering the economic health of the nation - harnessing the potential of the rural economy; driving resource efficiency through a circular economy, unlocking innovation and building resilience to natural hazards.



Ali Berk (TR),

ali.berk@tarim.gov.tr

Ali Berk is an Associate Professor at the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Turkey, specializing in agricultural economics, rural development, project management, agricultural value chains, and digital agriculture. He holds a PhD in Agricultural Economics from Çukurova University and advanced diplomas from CIHEAM, Italy, and France. Dr. Berk has contributed to international projects, including the FAO-supported National E-Agriculture Strategy for Turkey, and has represented Turkey at global forums like the International Sustainable Development Congress and the FAO High-Level Forum on E-Agriculture.

Dr. Berk has published numerous peer-reviewed articles on agricultural production efficiency, rural development, and agri-food sector competitiveness. He has collaborated extensively with international organizations and academic institutions and Dr. Berk has over 20 years of experience in field studies, including data collection and analysis processes, policy formulation, and management of monitoring and evaluation processes.



Spyridon Mantzoukas (GR)

Spyridon Mantzoukas is an Entomologist. He works as researcher at Institute of Mediterranean Forest Ecosystems and is the head of the Entomology laboratory. He has published 62 works in international acknowledged scientific journals, and is Section Editor in Applied Science, Applied Biosciences and Bioengineering Section. He main scientific field is Biocontrol of insect's pests in Agriculture and Forest Ecosystems, specializing the utilization of entomopathogenic microorganisms such as fungi, viruses and bacteria.
