



## Who is who in the SCAR Bioeconomy Working Group



**Johanna Kohl** (FI)  
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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)  
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**Luka Juvančič**, agricultural and resource economist, and Associate Professor of Economics of Natural Resources at the Biotechnical Faculty. His research experience spans widely in terms of time (more than 25 years of experience as researcher, principal investigator, or project leader), substance (agricultural and rural development policies, risk management, ecosystem services, bioeconomy) and methods (econometric modelling, system modelling, environmental accounting, economic experiments). As for his work related to bioeconomy it is worth highlighting his leadership of two nationally relevant projects, his recent research on bioeconomy-related assets and transition pathways in BIOEAST region, publishing (editor, author), teaching (course leader, supervisor) and professional work (BIOEAST, TWG Education and Knowledge Transfer).



**Martin Behrens** (DE)  
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**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)**

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**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)**

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**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.



**Argo Peepson (EE)**

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**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)**  
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**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)**  
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**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)**  
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**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)**  
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**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)  
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**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)  
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**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)  
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**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)**

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**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)**

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**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)**

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**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.gov.ie). 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.gov.ie) as part of the Policy Support Facility established by the EU Commission to support the implementation of the EU Bioeconomy Strategy.



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**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)  
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**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.

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