

# Challenges, opportunities and issues in developing and funding innovation in biorenewables



Dr Adrian Higson March 2011



## **Today's Presentation**

**About the NNFCC** 

Biorenewable energy

**Bio-based products** 

**Financing Needs** 

**Summary** 



## The UK's National Centre for Biorenewable Energy, Fuels and Materials

An Independent 'not for profit' company

#### **Mission**

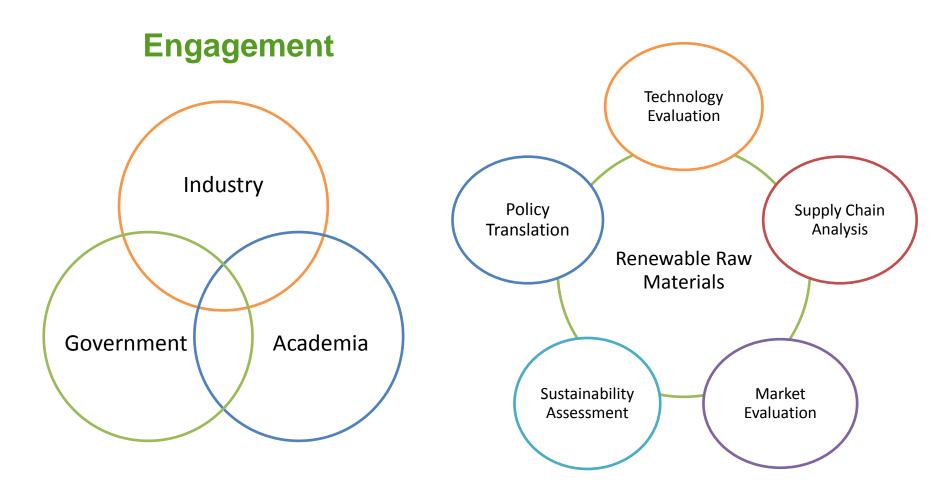
The NNFCC is committed to the sustainable development of markets for biorenewable products. We promote the benefits of biorenewable energy, liquid fuels and materials for enhancement of the bioeconomy, environment and society.

#### **Company Activity**

Advisor to UK Government
Commercial Consultancy
Member Services

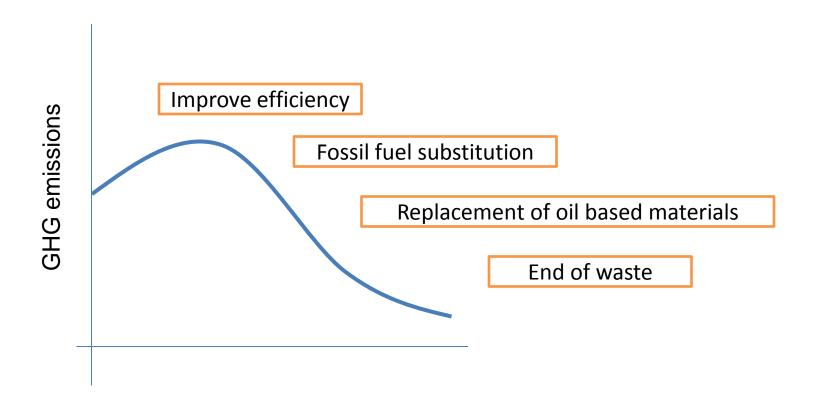


## **NNFCC Operating Space**



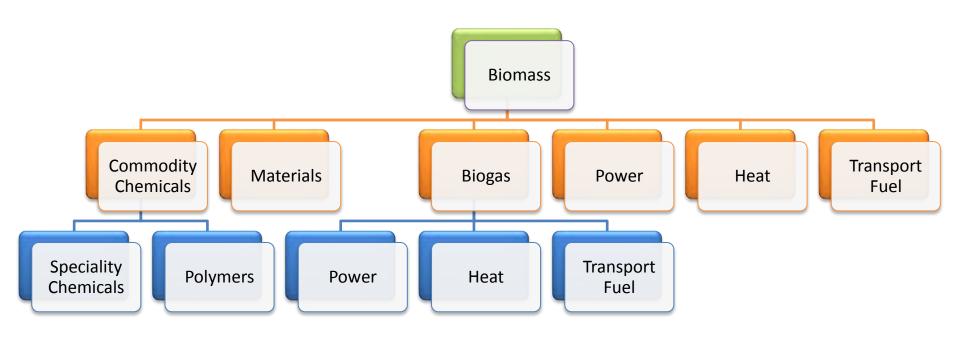


## The NNFCC shares the vision of a low carbon economy



Source: Adapted from 'GHG Emission reductions with Industrial Biotechnology': Assessing the Opportunities, WWF & Novozymes

#### **Biorenewables Markets**



#### **Biorenewables - Feedstocks**

An industrial crop is a crop grown to produce goods to be used in the production sector

UK industry processes over 100 industrial crops

- Major crops include
  - Hemp
  - Wheat
  - Sugar Beet
  - Oilseed rape
  - Maize
  - Miscanthus

- SRC Willow
- Linseed
- Sunflower
- HEAR
- Kenaf



### The need for innovation?





## NNFCC











## **Combustion requires innovation**

#### **Energy Grasses**

- Most acceptable crop to farmers
- Not well suited to current combustion technologies (high alkali metal, high ash)

#### **Short Rotation Forestry**

- Good combustion characteristics
- Low understanding of production potential (trials required)

#### **Short Rotation Coppice**

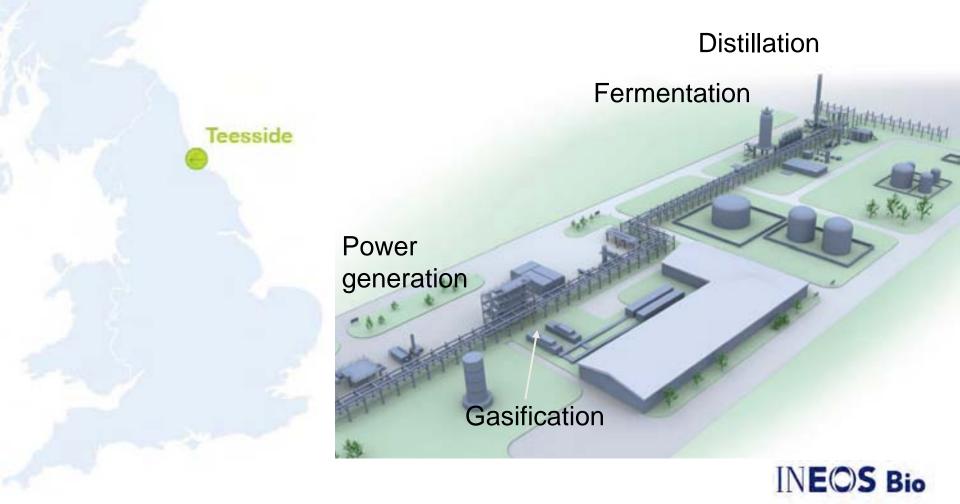
- Good combustion characteristics
- Considerable lag period until first income (cash flow issues)
- For poplar Issues with disease

#### **Technology**

- Gasification technology immature, requires demonstration
- Cost of small scale biomass boilers is prohibitive



## Integrating thermal & bio processing

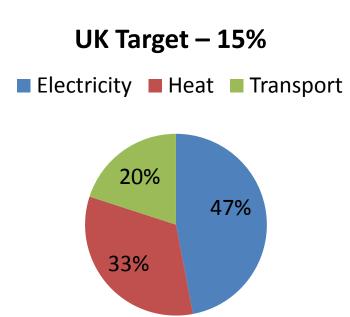


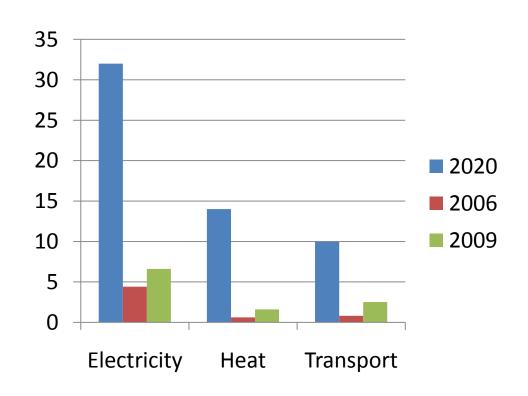
## **EU Renewable Energy Directive**

European Governments focussed on Bioenergy

Mandatory EU target of 20% renewable energy in overall energy

consumption by 2020







## **Anaerobic Digestion**



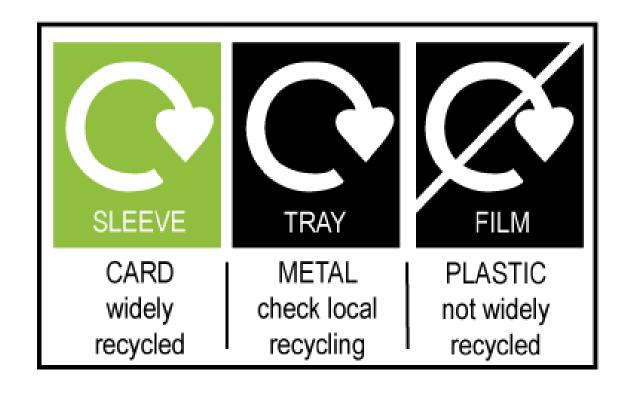
www.biogas-info.co.uk

The UK produces about 100 million tonnes of digestible waste each year which could generate up to 7.5% of the renewable energy required in the UK by 2020.





## Reduce, Reuse, Recycle



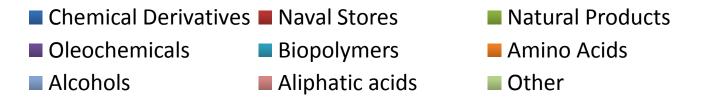


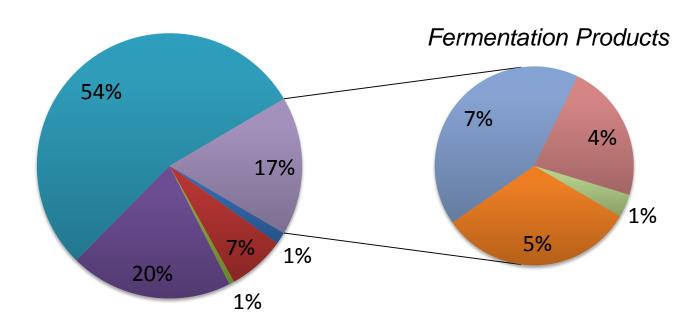
## AD suitable packaging - Innovation required

Material	Measured CV (MJkg <sup>-1</sup> VS)	Actual CH <sub>4</sub> yield (m³ CH <sub>4</sub> MJkg <sup>-1</sup> VS)	Recovery as CH <sub>4</sub> (MJkg <sup>-1</sup> VS)	% Recovery of measured CV	% Calculated solids destruction
Cellulose film	17.23	0.413	14.79	85.8	98.0
Cellulose diacetate	20.20	0.050	1.80	8.9	10.3
Polylactic acid	18.39	0.097	3.47	18.8	20.2
Card packaging	14.34	0.274	9.81	68.4	70.3
Food waste	22.59	0.471	16.89	74.8	83.7
LDPE	46.58	0.018	0.64	1.4	1.5

## **Biorenewable Chemicals and Polymers**

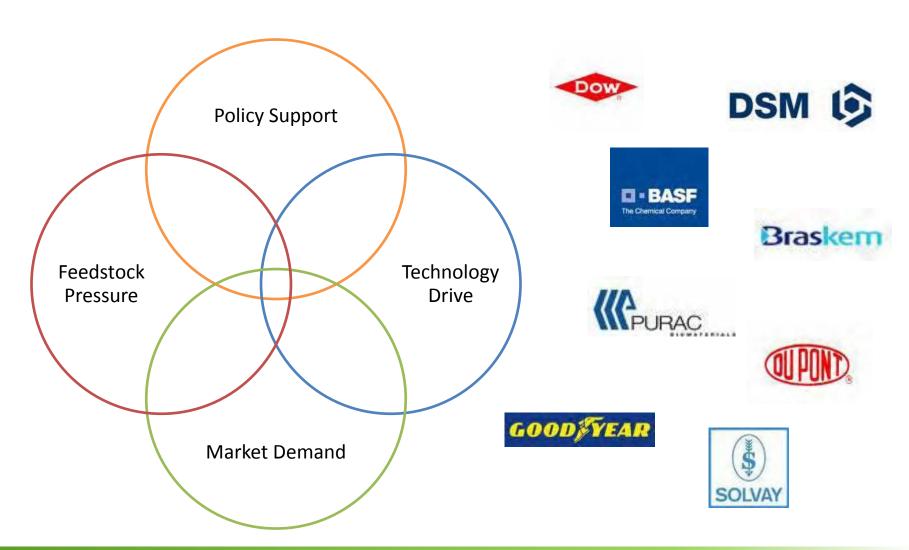
#### Market size ~ 50 million tones







## Interest in bio-based chemicals - Why now?



## **European Lead Market Initiative**

Foster the emergence of lead markets of high economic and societal value by ...

- creating innovation-friendly market framework conditions ....
- to reduce the time-to-market of new goods and services and to enable emerging sectors to grow faster.

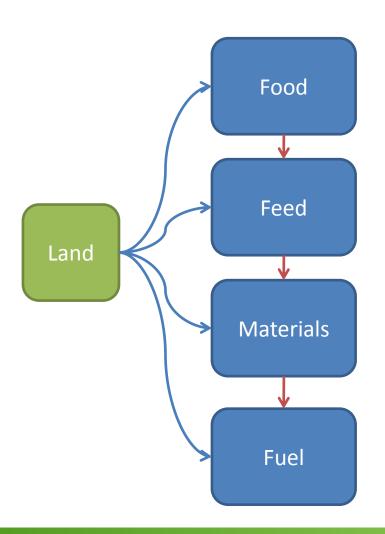


#### **Bio-Based Products**



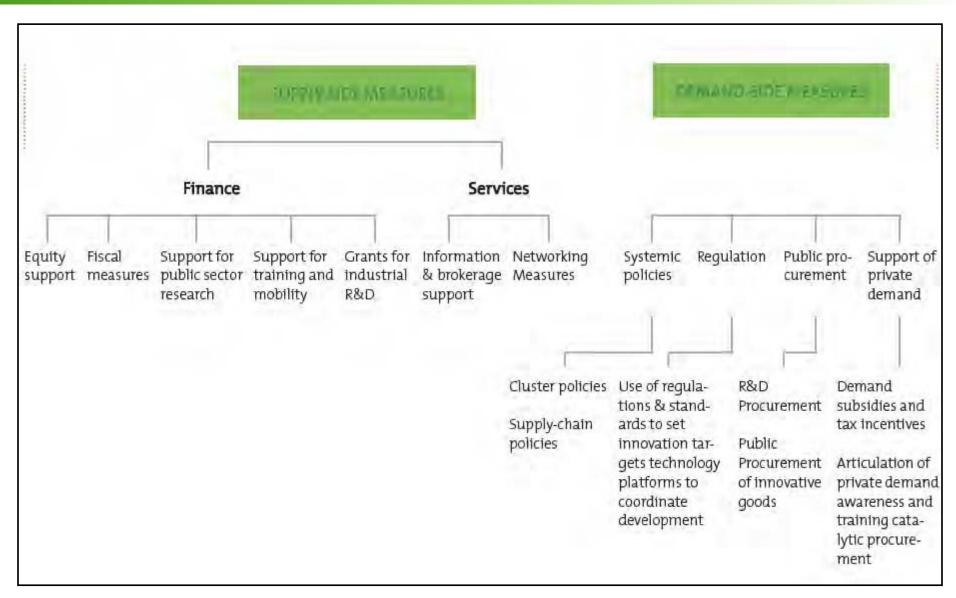
- Standards, labels and certification
- Legislation promoting market
- Product specific legislation
- Access to biomass
- Encourage Green Public Procurement
- Financing and funding of research

#### Access to biomass



- Increasing crop yield benefits all sectors
   (1st generation trait development)
- Future trait development aimed at improved crop processing e.g. Enogen – Corn Amylase Trait
- Innovative material processing and use required to deliver efficiency







## **Product/Process Development**



#### **Research and Innovation**

The main objectives to share the risk of the development of innovative biobased products and processes

Should cover the entire value chain (from crop to bio-based product)

plant engineering, harvest and local processing, logistics, processing at the biorefinery through pre-treatment, enzymes, fermentation organisms, recovery, secondary manufacturing, downstream chemistry, compounding, shaping, side product valorisation and product recovery

Also

research on the social acceptance of the technology and products.



## Integrated Biorefining Research and Technology Club (IBTI Club)



## BBSRC review of support for Bioenergy and Industrial Biotechnology

- 11 recommendations for BBSRC, including
- 1. increase the size of its IB portfolio
- 2. ensure that IB is recognised a priority for funding
- 3. promote IB nationally and internationally
- 4. identify, develop, and promote new and existing mechanisms for working with private sector
- 5. strategic allocation of training resources
- 6. industrial chemical production from living organisms
- 7. branched and straight chain alkenes from living organisms (synthetic biology)

## The EU needs to bridge the gap between research and market

Europe's relatively poor record on innovation is partly due to insufficient expenditure and investment in research and development,

Also fragmented public funding

And the duration in transforming research results into innovative, marketable products

There is a risk of knowledge resulting from European research being used for commercialization of products by European companies in other parts of the world

### Improve access to pilot and demonstration facilities

#### E.g. NIBF Demonstrator Facility

The NIBF's 10,000 litre Demonstrator is an open access facility of a unique scale in the UK.

The Demonstrator allows clients to produce material on a large scale.

The outcomes from this process include an understanding of:

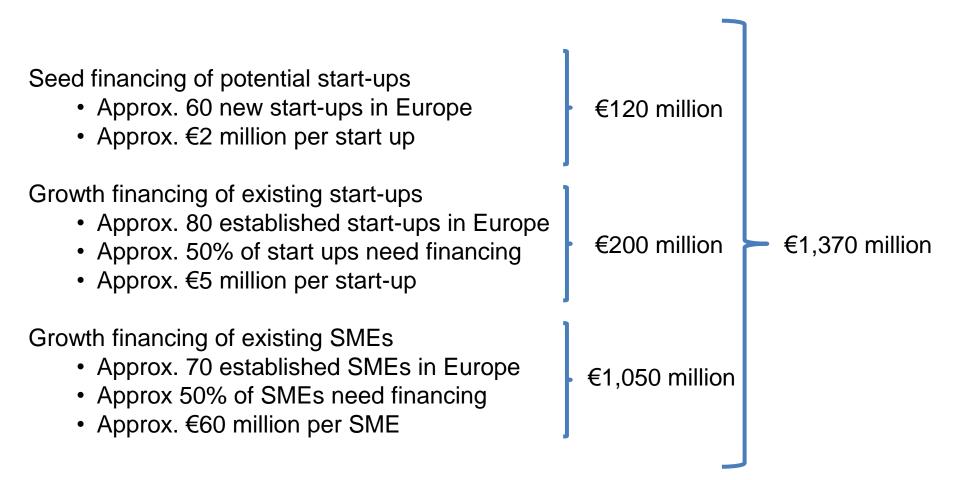
how the plant needs to be set up

the likely cost of manufacturing

and the production of data and material to help support the delivery of a reliable and consistent process.

http://www.uk-cpi.com/

#### Finance requirement of European IB SMEs



Source: Festal Capital

### **Advisory group recommendations**

#### Research

- 1) Further support for calls on bio-based products (FP7 & FP8)
- 2) Research initiatives focussing on market perspective and covering the full supply chain
- 3) Increase public funding for public private partnerships
- 4) Avoid fragmentation of resources in Europe

#### **Development & Demonstration**

- 1) Facilitate access to existing flexible research-oriented pilot and scale up infrastructure
- 2) Increase public funding for demonstration projects
  - a) Stimulate co-ordination and joint use of funding
  - b) EU innovation funds to bring end users and product developers together
- 3) Open up Structural Funds used to support bioenergy projects to bio-based materials

### **Advisory group recommendations**

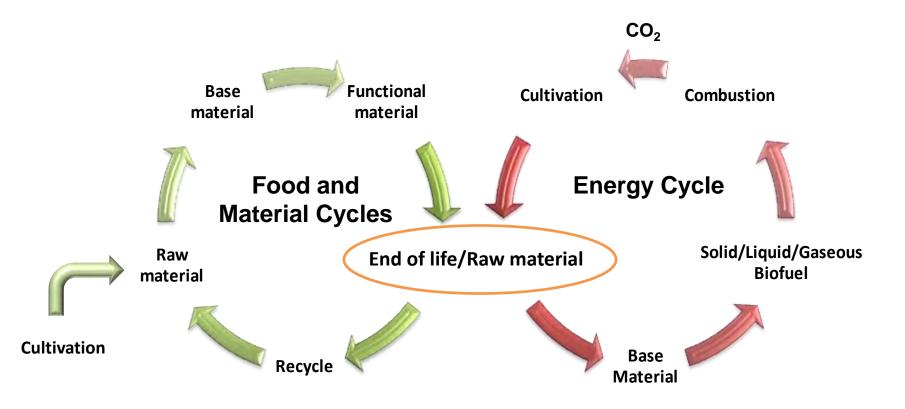
#### Improve access to finance for SME's

- 1) Improving access to public finance for "proof of concept studies"
- 2) Attract new investors through communication campaigns and development of a database of "player of excellence"
- 3) Develop adapted investment models lying between loans and private equity
- 4) EU evaluation of existing market instruments

#### **Market Support**

- 1) Develop incentives (taxation or state aid measures, grants) to support the development of new, sustainable bio-based products' production processes
- Realize a binding political framework for supporting bio-based economy in a long-lasting manner

## Carbon recycling and policy development



## **Summary**

Biomass is a key resource within a low carbon economy

Multiple actions are required to develop the EU bio-based economy

- EU needs to ensure access to sustainable biomass
- Support for research must cover all aspects of value chain
- Access to facilities and funds for pilot and demonstration required
- Support SMEs through development
- Market mechanisms to support bio-based products?

### THANK YOU FOR LISTENING

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## **Any Questions?**

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