

MORE THAN 160 SPANISH BIOTECH COMPANIES SEEK OUT SOLUTIONS FOR A GREENER INDUSTRY

- **Biotechnology is a strength in this process of industrial transformation towards a circular economy and a more sustainable world.**
- **AseBio has been designated as the national coordinator of the European Commission's European Green Pact, proving the key role of biotechnology.**
- **Most of these companies will be at the most important annual event for the sector, BIOSPAIN 2021, which will be held in Pamplona-Iruña from 27th September to 1st October.**

Madrid, June the 16th of 2021.- The transformation towards a greener industry has been a priority for the European Union since the European Commission launched the **European Green Deal**. To pave the way towards sustainability, **industrial biotechnology** is one of the great strengths. In Spain, there are already at least **163 biotech companies specialised in the industrial area**, which are **fighting to combat climate change**, according to the data collected by **AseBio**, the Spanish Association of Biocompanies.

Industrial biotechnology companies manufacture **more than half of the world's enzymes** used in the production of a wide range of products in industrial sectors including chemicals, pharmaceuticals, food and feed, detergents, paper and pulp, textiles, energy, materials, and polymers.

Driving the transition to a fair and flourishing society, with a modern, resource-efficient, and competitive economy in Europe, is the main objective of the **Green Deal**. So key is the role of biotechnology in this industrial transformation that **AseBio** has been appointed as the **national coordinator** to ensure compliance with this climate pact.

Spain has also recently joined this important challenge with its "**Spain 2050**" plan, whose focus is to achieve a **circular and carbon neutral economy**, as well as to develop new technologies to stop depending on oil and other types of energy sources such as natural gas.



*"The economic recovery will be green, or it won't be. Biotechnology, present in 11 of the 17 SDGs, is key to driving sustainable, knowledge-intensive growth and contributing to the green transition by mitigating climate change, conserving natural resources, facilitating safe agriculture and a safe and healthy food supply," says **Ana Polanco**, president of AseBio.*

Industrial biotechnology ensures the **sustainable development** of all businesses, and its many benefits speak for themselves. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions by up to 65% with bio-based products, developing new solutions for wastewater treatment, reducing the emission of up to 2.5 billion tonnes of CO₂ per year by 2030 and boosting green transport with biofuels that replace fossil materials.

These are just a few examples of how biotechnology, in addition to preserving the environment using green industrial machinery, **saves the consumption of resources such as water and electricity** and makes more efficient use of them, reducing CO₂ emissions, producing healthy and nutritious food, and improving energy security.

This same idea is supported by **NAGRIFOOD**, the Agri-Food Cluster of Navarre, which, according to its president, **Santiago Sala**, *"it is essential that we support a biotechnology sector that allows us to provide the agri-food sector with solutions through genetic improvement. Its applicability ranges from the the creation of improved agricultural inputs, more resistant and productive crops, and the use of biosensors, to the food industry in the creation of new foods, as well as its use in techniques applied to food safety"*.

Sponsor of **Biospain 2021** and coordinator of the working group of AseBio's Industrial Transformation Commission, **Alga Energy** manufactures and markets agricultural, food and cosmetic products obtained from **microalgae**, considered by the UN to be the **food of the millennium**. Among its many virtues is the way it uses CO₂, as two kilos of carbon are needed to obtain each kilo of microalgae, which is why the bioreactors where they are cultivated are located next to thermal power stations.

"Industrial biotechnology is one of Europe's strengths that we must leverage to achieve global competitiveness. It is in this sector that Europe and Spain are leading regions, and its development will allow the European Union to develop solutions to many of the world's major challenges," highlights Alga Energy's CEO, **Carlos Rodriguez-Villa**.

But it is not only Spanish biotech companies that are committed to tackling climate change. **Cajamar banking group** has supported the **agri-food sector as a driving force for sustainable development in Spain** for years through two experimental centres. *"To the extent that we can improve biological processes, we will be able to increase the availability of resources to maintain a high level of well-being. These processes must start with soil management, where plants establish their root systems*



and from where they obtain the nutrients they need to grow in a complex environment, in which many micro-organisms intervene and which will have a decisive influence on crop health," warns Cajamar's director of agri-food innovation, **Roberto García Torrente**.

In the energy area, the **National Renewable Energy Centre (CENER)** is a leading technology centre in Spain, specialised in renewable energy research, which has, among other infrastructures, its **own biomass centre**. A sector that has gone from 19.3% of electricity demand coverage by renewable energies in the year 2000, to 38.6% in 2020. **CENER** highlights the role of the Bioeconomy for the *defossilisation* of the chemical industry to improve the sustainability of many products thanks to renewable biogenic carbon.

"The bioindustries sector is very dynamic and innovative, with a great weight of R&D&I, and it will surprise us with new developments of all kinds that will transform the economy in the field of health, energy transition, sustainable chemistry, circular bioeconomy and sustainable agriculture, with the aim of leading us towards a more sustainable world", emphasises the director of the Biomass department of CENER, **Javier Gil**.

The great commitment of **Repsol**, one of the largest multi-energy companies, is the **circular economy**. "It is a key lever for transforming our industrial centres into multi-energy centres capable of manufacturing products with a low or zero carbon footprint that society needs. To achieve this, we use all available technologies and among them, a great ally is biotechnology, with which we transform waste into sustainable biofuels," explains Repsol Technology Lab's technical expert in economics, **Enrique Espí**.

Industrial transformation at Biospain 2021

Industrial transformation will be one of the highlights of Biospain 2021, the benchmark international event for the Spanish biotechnology sector, which will be held from 27 September to 1 October 2021 in hybrid format, both virtually and in person, at the Palacio de Congresos y Auditorio de Navarra-Baluarte in Pamplona-Iruña, in collaboration with the Government of Navarra and Sodena (Sociedad de Desarrollo de Navarra) and with the support of the platinum sponsors ICEX España Exportación e Inversiones and Merck.

"Biospain 2021 will be a unique opportunity to catalyse the enormous potential of the biotechnology sector to address the climate challenge," said **Ana Polanco**.

What is AseBio

AseBio brings together 270 entities representing the Spanish biotechnology sector. Our mission is to lead the transformation of the country, positioning science, innovation and especially biotechnology as an engine of economic growth and social welfare. Our members include companies, associations, foundations, universities, technology, and research centers that develop their activities based on the biotechnology in Spain.

#BIOSPAIN2021 #WeAreBiotechnology

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