Establishment of an environmental technology network in Baden-Württemberg

The Baden-Württemberg Ministry of Economic Affairs is supporting the establishment of a state-wide environmental technology network through the “Plattform Umwelttechnik e.V.” by providing financial support with ERDF funds. BIOPRO Baden-Württemberg is part of the network and is specifically tasked with the exploration of the development potential of biotechnology for the Baden-Württemberg environmental sector.

On 14th December 2010, the Baden-Württemberg Ministry of Economic Affairs published a press release related to the funding of the future network:

The Baden-Württemberg Minister of Economic Affairs, Ernst Pfister, has announced that the state Ministry of Economic Affairs has granted the Ostfildern-based “Plattform Umwelttechnik e.V. (PU e.V.) association funds totalling 182,000 euros through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The PU e.V. association brings together 15 stakeholders from industry and academia who all have a special focus on environmental technology.

PU e.V. has been granted financial support as a result of its successful participation in a competition launched by the Baden-Württemberg Ministry of Economic Affairs to identify outstanding ideas for the establishment of a network in the environmental technology sector which works across numerous different industries. Based on the successful project proposal, PU e.V. subsequently submitted a concrete funding application to the ministry.

Environmental technology as a motor for growth and employment
"Baden-Württemberg industry's prospects for the future will also depend on the development of environmental technology in the state," explained Ernst Pfister highlighting that the environmental technology sector's estimated worldwide annual growth of 6.5 per cent gives it the potential to create new, sustainable jobs. Pfister also pointed out that innovative products and processes that increase materials- and energy efficiency are likely to boost the competitiveness of resource-intensive traditional industries. He went on to say that Baden-Württemberg is one of the top-ranking states in Germany in the environmental technology sector due to its numerous research institutions and environmental technology companies.

The objective of PU e.V. is to exploit and further develop the innovation potential of this cross-sectoral
industry along the value creation chain by putting in place professional network management and implementing a comprehensive package of measures. "Increasing cooperative projects between companies as well as cooperation between industry and academia will contribute to the more effective, and in particular quicker, use and unlocking of existing innovation potentials," said the Minister.

The Baden-Württemberg Environmental Technology Network and the Technology- and Innovation Centre represent major pillars of the “Baden-Württemberg as Environmental Innovation Laboratory in Europe” initiative

A report published in July 2010 by McKinsey and the Institute of Applied Economic Research on Baden-Württemberg's economic and technological perspectives up to 2020 highlights the importance of environmental technology and resource efficiency for the Baden-Württemberg economy. In addition to the Environmental Technology and Innovation Centre that is currently also being established, the Environmental Technology Network is one of the two major pillars of the "Baden-Württemberg as Environmental Innovation Laboratory in Europe" initiative.

"Baden-Württemberg's support of the establishment and expansion of state-wide networks is an integral part of the state's cluster and network strategy aimed at making the state fit for dealing with the challenges of the 21st century," said Ernst Pfister highlighting that Baden-Württemberg's competitiveness can only be maintained and expanded by bringing knowledge into companies at a very early stage and by making use of this knowledge in strategic alliances with competitors as well as by enabling its flexible economic exploitation.

BIOPRO activities within the network

Biotechnology is a classic cross-sectoral technology involving biology as well as physics, chemistry and process engineering. In the field of environmental protection, biotechnology mainly brings together knowledge from the fields of bioprocess engineering, applied microbiology and applied engineering. As "environmental biotechnology", biotechnology has become an established discipline that is an integral part of modern environmental protection and is likely to considerably enhance the performance of environmental technologies.

BIOPRO Baden-Württemberg's goal is to unlock the development potential within the network by putting specific measures in place. Some of the activities that BIOPRO will particularly focus on include providing support through its "SYNPRO" initiative and providing access to a knowledge management system.
Microorganisms play a crucial role in the removal of toxic substances. Environmental technology stands to considerably improve its performance by involving modern methods from the field of molecular and systems biology.
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Plattform
Umwelttechnik e.V.