

STRIVING FOR SUSTAINABLE BIOECONOMIES: STRIVE PROJECT AT ZEF

The project STRIVE (Sustainable TRade and InnoVation transfer in the bioEconomy: from national strategies to global sustainable development goals) combines research expertise from economics, political science and environmental geography. The researchers involved aim to improve the knowledge base for developing sustainable bioeconomy policies and investments. A main research focus is on national and international regulatory frameworks.

Bioeconomy can be described as part of the overall economy that uses renewable biological resources from land and sea - such as crops, forests, fish, animals and micro-organisms - to produce food, materials and energy. With regard to this, Bioeconomy is often proposed as a viable strategy to meet the global sustainable development goals (SDGs). As such, current concepts of a bioeconomy go far beyond the topic of biofuels and include the substitution of fossil resource-based inputs to various productive sectors, such as chemical or pharmaceutical industries, the construction sector and food and recycling industries.

However, potential socio-economic shifts towards more sustainable production and consumption do not make outcomes automatically more sustainable. Technological innovations, social and political advancements and consumer behaviour are crucial factors, among others, for initiating, steering and adjusting transitional pathways towards more sustainable economic systems. Also, institutional and regulatory frameworks of policy and legislation are necessary elements when establishing emerging bio-based supply and value chains not only to further economic growth, but also environmental and social achievements.



Nevertheless, societal responses to pressing global challenges such as population growth and a growing natural resource scarcity in a more and more climate-constrained world have to be founded on a solid empirical base of social and political science for the development of policies and regulations. As such, evidence-based policies and governance frameworks will play a crucial role to, on the one hand, foster bioeconomic developments, but, on the other hand, to also constraining them where necessary within planetary boundaries.

One of the central questions the STRIVE project will provide answers to is: how can effective governance frameworks for the bioeconomy be developed nationally and globally, and which regulative characteristics should they contain in order to steer socio-economic transitions towards a sustainable bioeconomy?



About the author



Jan Janosch Förster
is a senior researcher at ZEF.
Contact: jforster@uni-bonn.de