

## PRESS RELEASE

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# Scientists unite to provide balanced view on bio-economy debate

LISBON, Portugal -- Leading scientists from eight countries have launched the independent 'Global Biorenewables Research Society' (GBR Society). In announcing the new organization here today, Professor Joaquim Cabral, President of Portugal's Institute for Biotechnology and Bioengineering (IBB), said the network will provide the standard for science-based knowledge for sustainable bio-renewables.

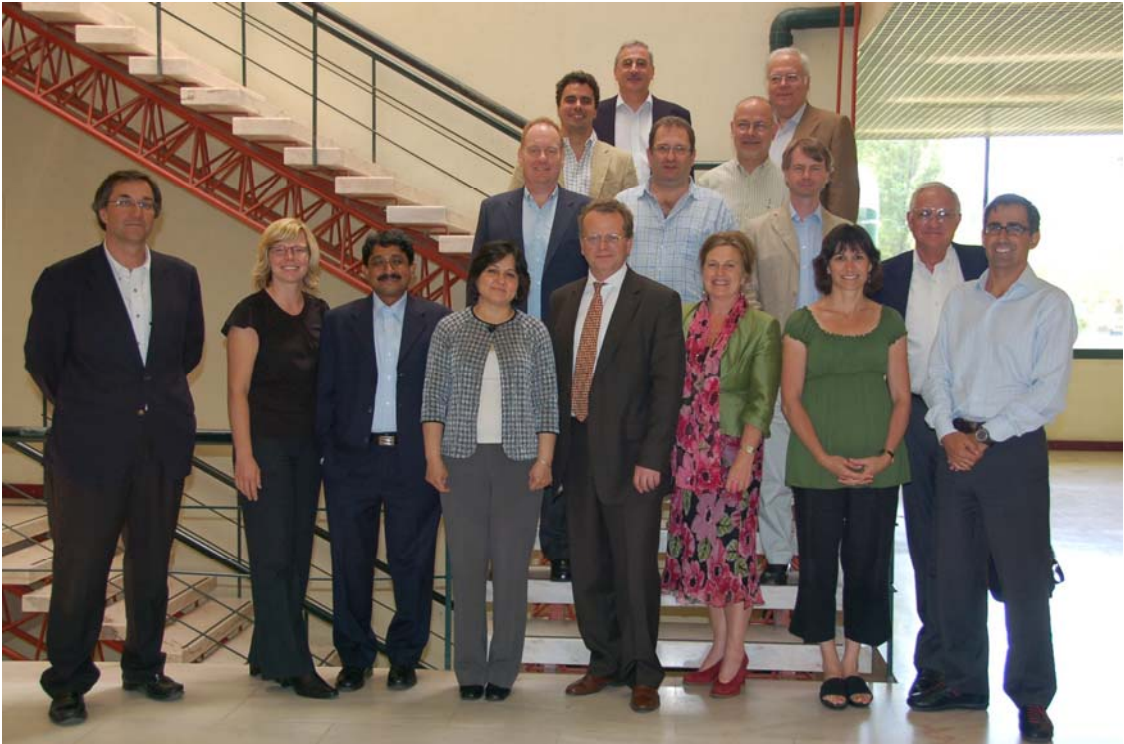
"This effort will be of great value to policy-makers who will be facing a world transitioning from non-sustainable technologies to bio-based economies," said the Chair of the Society, Professor Luuk van der Wielen from Delft University of Technology. Professor Manuel Heitor, Portugal's Secretary of State for Science, Technology and Higher Education, stressed that governments as well as the international debate, would greatly benefit from the input of sound scientific knowledge provided by the GBR Society.

The founding members are international research leaders from diverse disciplines including agriculture, biology, economics and engineering. They will provide scientific assessments on environmental, social and economic challenges that increasing demand for biomass will bring. Importantly, the Society will explore opportunities for rural development, better management of agriculture, and reduction of green house gas emissions. Priorities also include enhancing interactive communication between scientists, policy-makers and the general public, as well as facilitating an educational network for international exchange of students and scientific staff. The GBR Society will be feeding into this year's United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen.

"Our ecosystems are under pressure by increasing demands for food, feed, fiber and fuel," Van der Wielen said. "Implementation of a bio-based economy will significantly impact our society, as the increasing demand for biomass requires sustainable production, responsible use and equitable sharing of the resources and products. Energy security and climate change mitigation, rural development, sustainable land use will depend upon rigorous debate supported by the best available fact-based information."

The founding partners of the GBR Society are scientists from the following leading international bio-renewables centres: B-Basic (Netherlands), Energy Biosciences Institute (USA), Kluyver Centre (Netherlands), Institute for Biotechnology and Bioengineering (IBB) (Portugal), Institute of Advanced Studies of the University of São Paulo (IEA-USP) (Brazil), University of Queensland (Australia), Porter Alliance (United Kingdom), University of Cambridge (United Kingdom), Copernicus Institute of Utrecht University (Netherlands), Catholic University of Valparaiso (Chile), Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur (India) and University of York (United Kingdom). Membership will be open to other scientists from public research institutes.

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The founding partners of the GBR Society



Portugal's Secretary of State for Science, Technology and Higher Education, Professor Manuel Heitor, receives founding agreement of the GBR Society from Professor Luuk van der Wielen, Delft University of Technology.

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Note for the editors, not for publication:

More information on the GBR Society:

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