



# INTERMEDIATE SUMMARY REPORT



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***PROBIO Project***

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

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The main objective of the PROBIO European Project is to promote the integrated development of the biodiesel supply chain throughout the European countries in general and in particular, in the five participating regions: the provinces of Burgos, Avila and Huelva (Spain) and the regions of Pomurje (Slovenia) and Abruzzo (Italy). To this regard, the main objective for the first half of the Project has been to establish a suitable framework in these areas in order to carry out the promotion activities established in the Project Work Programme. This means that the different Project partners have contacted local actors in their respective provinces and regions and established “panels of experts” for the purpose of conducting an in-depth analysis of the current biodiesel situation in said areas, formulate strategies aimed at overcoming the existing barriers in this field and preparing the main promotional activities to be carried out during the second half of the Project.

The main results obtained during the first fifteen months of the Project are:

- The establishment of a **solid partnership** between the Project partners
- The establishment of local **“Panels of experts”** made up of the principal local actors in the biodiesel market (farmers, producers, distributors, service stations, wholesale consumers, public administrations, etc.)
- **An analysis of the current biodiesel situation** in the participating regions, including a comparative study of the usage ratios for this biofuel
- The formulation of a **triple strategy** (training-market-promotion), based on the results of the preliminary analyses and studies and aimed at overcoming the barriers detected in each one of the participating regions and provinces
- A detailed study of the **possibilities of obtaining local raw materials** in each one of the participating regions and provinces through a comparative study of the primary energy crops and crop practices as well as an analysis of the used vegetable oil collection network.
- Intensive **communication and dissemination** work, presenting the Project at many national and international events (congresses, seminars, conferences, etc) and publishing various articles in the local press and in specialized magazines. Moreover, the Project website, [www.probio-project.com](http://www.probio-project.com), has been up and running since April 2007.

## 2. THE PROJECT CONSORTIUM

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The Project consortium is made up of various energy agencies and local administrations which act as local Project leaders (Agencia Provincial de la Energía de Burgos [Provincial Energy Agency of Burgos], Agencia Provincial de la Energía de Ávila [Provincial Energy Agency of Ávila], Diputación Provincial de Huelva [Regional Government of Huelva], Razvojna Agencija Sinergija and Regione Abruzzo/ARAEN), as well as an Italian university and a Slovenian university (University of Teramo and University of Maribor), which are responsible for leading the energy crop studies and courses in their regions, and the Centre for Business and Innovation of Burgos, which leads the Project communication and dissemination activities. As the general Project coordinator, the Agencia Provincial de la Energía de Burgos leads the general management of the Project. In order to properly carry out the Project activities and appropriately plan said activities, the partners are equipped with

coordination and management tools and plans and periodically attend transnational meetings to define biannual lines of action.

### **3. ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT DURING THE FIRST FIFTEEN MONTHS (January 2007-March 2008)**

In accordance with the Contract established between the Project partners and the European Commission, the activities carried out during the first half of the Project focused on the analysis of the current biodiesel situation, the study of the possibilities of obtaining local raw materials and communication and dissemination activities. The following are the primary actions which have been undertaken, broken down by work packages:

#### **WP1. COORDINATION, MANAGEMENT AND EVALUATION**

The general coordination activities undertaken in the first fifteen months of the Project can be summarized as follows:

- the establishment of a multidisciplinary consortium of partners who are highly committed to the Project objectives
- the preparation and distribution of the Coordination, Management and Evaluation Plan as a management tool to be used to track partner activities, calendars and budgets
- three biannual transnational meetings: the launch meeting in Burgos (March 2007), the second meeting in Pescara, Italy (July 2007) and the third meeting in Huelva (January 2008)
- contact with other (PROBIODIESEL) Projects and organizations (DG ENTR, Acciona Biocombustibles, Agriculture Institutes, local authorities, sector businesses, etc.)
- the preparation and submission of the Progress Report to the European Commission

#### **WP2. ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT TECHNOLOGICAL, LEGAL AND MARKET BARRIERS**

The main objective of this work package (March-September 2007) is to analyse the current situation of the biodiesel supply chain in the participating regions (consumption ratios, main barriers to development, etc.) and formulate a triple strategy for the integrated promotion of this chain in each one of the regions. To this regard, the local Project leaders conducted a comparative study on the current biodiesel consumption ratios in each area and an analysis of the existing barriers to the development of the biodiesel chain. To do so, the Project partners relied on the advice and collaboration of the "Panels of experts" in each region and province, which are made up of the primary agents implicated in the biodiesel supply chain (farmers, producers, distributors, public administrations, consumers, service stations, etc.). Finally, a triple strategy was established based on training, market and promotion activities in order to develop a local integrated biodiesel chain in each participating region or province.

#### **WP3. IMPROVEMENT OF THE RAW MATERIAL SUPPLY TO PRODUCTION PLANTS**

The main objective of this work package is to analyse the current situation of the raw materials (vegetable oils) supply to the production plants and to boost said supply with local raw materials. To do so, the participating universities led a comparative study on the main

energy crops and farming practices aimed at obtaining vegetable oil for biodiesel production in the participating regions. The purpose of this study, which concluded in March 2008, is to make the best species and most profitable farming practices known in order to promote obtaining local raw materials in said regions. Furthermore, this study is the basis for the energy crop courses the Project partners are going to carry out in their respective areas and which will be directed towards the farmers in said areas in order to train them on the profitable ways to obtain vegetable oil for biodiesel from energy crops. These courses will be held between April and September 2008.

On the other hand, another important raw material for biodiesel production plants is used vegetable oil and therefore the local Project leaders have undertaken an analysis of the collection network for this waste and its possibilities as a raw material for biodiesel plants. To this regard, the different partners have been in contact with the major local used vegetable oil agents so as to improve and strengthen their collection networks.

#### WP4. IMPLEMENTATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF INNOVATIVE MARKET INITIATIVES

This work package began in September 2007 with the preparation of a Dissemination Plan to promote small facilities. Since then, the local Project leaders have been working on the preparation of specific commercial agreements between major biodiesel producers and distributors and possible consumers in the participating regions (municipal fleets, new bio petrol stations, transport associations, etc.) in order to improve the local biodiesel distribution and market.

#### WP5. PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

The public awareness campaigns that are being carried out in each one of the participating provinces constitute work package number 5, which was established to overcome the existing barriers as far as the lack of information and promotion of biodiesel among the general population. Each local Project leader, in collaboration with the rest of the partners, the panel of experts in its area and other local actors, is carrying out a general awareness campaign which, as of March 2008, has included the following activities:

- The creation and implementation of a travelling exhibition on biodiesel, which shall reach the major cities of each one of the participating regions and provinces for the purpose of making the citizens aware of the main characteristics and advantages of biodiesel as an alternative fuel. The first exhibitions were implemented in the provinces of Ávila and Burgos in March 2008.
- The development of a “biodiesel point card system” and its implementation at bio petrol stations in the participating provinces, where the consumers who habitually refuel with biodiesel would have a card which keeps track of said refills and accumulate a series of points in order to get benefits and awards. The subcontracting processes for these systems began at the end of 2007 and once they are implemented, they are expected to be in operation for a period of one year.
- General biodiesel promotion. The local Project leaders have been promoting the Project activities in general through e-mailings directed at the principal biodiesel chain agents (members of the panel of experts, public administrations, energy agencies, producers and distributors, etc.).

## WP6. COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION

During the first fifteen months of the Project, the various partners have worked intensively to communicate and disseminate the activities and objectives of the Project as reflected by the following specific actions:

- The creation of a Dissemination and Communication Plan (March 2007) that contains the partners' primary lines of action as far as Project dissemination activities
- The development of the Project website ([www.probio-project.com](http://www.probio-project.com)), which is the primary Project collaboration tool. This website has been up and running since April 2007, translated into the four Project languages (English, Spanish, Italian and Slovenian) and contains information on the Project activities and objectives. Moreover, other information of interest (links, news about biodiesel, news from the press, etc.) can be found on the site. From the time the website was launched until 20 March 2008, it had registered 2,700 visits.
- The publication and distribution of the biannual "PROBIO News" newsletter which contains major news related to the development of the Project and the biodiesel sector in general. This newsletter is distributed in the five participating regions in their respective languages.
- Articles in the press and specialized publications.
- The presentation of the Project at numerous national as well as international energy-related events (conferences, congresses, seminars, trade shows, etc.).
- The creation and distribution of the Project informational brochure

## WP7. EUROPEAN DISSEMINATION

La Agencia Provincial de la Energía de Burgos, as the Project leader, has contributed to the European dissemination activities of the Directorate-General for Energy and Transport and the EACI by providing these bodies with the necessary promotional material.

Furthermore, the PROBIO Project has received the membership certificate for the European Commission "Sustainable Energy Europe" Campaign.

## **4. WORK PROGRAMME UNTIL THE END OF THE PROJECT**

The following will be the principal lines of action during the second half of the Project:

- ü WP3: Encourage the supply of local raw materials through training activities directed towards farmers, a Biodiesel Info Day in Burgos (June 2008) and the improvement of the used vegetable oil collection network.
- ü WP4: Development of specific commercial agreements to promote biodiesel consumption among potential wholesale consumers in the participating provinces.
- ü WP5: Conclusion of the public awareness campaign with the development of the five travelling exhibits, the consumer loyalty systems through point cards at bio petrol stations, the implementation of promotional campaigns in the media and the publication and distribution of informational material.

- ü WP6 and WP7: Development of the Project communication and dissemination activities (publications, website, newsletters, presentations at national and international events, etc.)