



Universität  
Zürich UZH

**ETH**

Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich  
Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich



Zurich – Basel Plant Science Center, Department of Political Science, UZH and  
Bioeconomy Science Center, Germany



## Governing the Transition to a Bio-based Economy Summer School 2013

20. – 23. August 2013, Einsiedeln, Switzerland



### About

Bioeconomy has been defined as an economic system which is based on the transformation of renewable biological resources into food and feed, energy and other industrial products such as bioplastic (see front picture), thereby reducing our dependency on fossil and non-renewable resources. The transition to a biobased economy is acknowledged as a prerequisite for sustainability, but how can it be accomplished?

What are the contributions of plant science research to the bioeconomy? How does a bio-based economy transform markets? And what are the implications thereof for the governance of economies?

This summer school has two aims. First, the challenges and potentials for the transition to a bio-based economy will be discussed together with invited international experts from the fields of natural sciences, economics, political science and law. It will provide a platform for experts and PhD students to address the topic from various angles and to collaborate in the development of an interdisciplinary framework bringing together those pivotal components needed for the development of a

sustainable bio-based economy. Participants will thereby also gain the opportunity to understand how their expertise fits into the field of bioeconomic governance.

Secondly, the summer school provides an interdisciplinary working ground both during and beyond the formal framework of the summer school. Opportunities for this will be created, among others, by the inclusion of team-work sessions focusing on a particular aspect of the bio-based economy as well as by the organization of informal panel discussions.

The course will address three main interlinked research questions:

- What are the social, environmental and economic implications of a growing bio-based economy?
- What are the implications for different scales of governance?
- How can strategies for a successful implementation of policies be coordinated between government, market and research communities (best practice examples)?

## Benefits

Participants will:

- Identify and analyse challenges and opportunities of a sustainable bioeconomy
- Get insight into alternative and novel fields of expertise of PhD colleagues and experts
- Discuss their own project in a community of interested specialists and peers
- Apply tools for working in interdisciplinary teams
- Network with international students and experts from other disciplinary fields
- Have fun and enjoy the beautiful Swiss scenery

## Course structure

The summer school includes input lectures, accompanied by moderated plenary and working group discussions. Preparatory readings will be disseminated ahead of the course.

Each student will be asked to present the work of a fellow Ph.D. student from another discipline and to discuss the main findings in small interdisciplinary teams. The aim of this session as well as other team-work sessions is to introduce students to the challenge of

finding a common language across disciplinary boundaries.

As a wrap-up, students will elaborate on their understanding of the main components and challenges of a sustainable bioeconomy by means of a written essay and oral presentation of a European case.

## Who

PhD students, or Master students in their final year in natural sciences, political science or economics.

## Application and Program:

[www.plantsciences.ch/psc\\_events/Summer](http://www.plantsciences.ch/psc_events/Summer)

Together with the application, please submit your CV, a letter of motivation and your latest publication or a report on your PhD project. Prior to the start of the summer school the latter will be used in an exercise to encourage interdisciplinary learning.

**Application Deadline: May 31, 2013**

**Confirmation of Participation: June 17, 2013**

## General Information

Date: Tuesday 20th (4pm) to Friday 23rd (2 pm), August 2013

Location: Hotel Allegro, Einsiedeln, Switzerland

Accommodation: Shared rooms (3 to 4 persons) with shared bathrooms. Rooms will be allocated by the organisers.

Meals: Full board

Costs: CHF 150 / € 120

Credits: 2 ECTS

## Contact

Dr. Andrea Pfisterer

Zurich – Basel Plant Science Center

[andreapf@ethz.ch](mailto:andreapf@ethz.ch)

+41 44 632 02 71

The summer school is jointly organised by the Zurich-Basel Plant Science Center, the Department of Political Science, University of Zurich and the Bioeconomy Science Center, Germany



Photo credits: Annuntiata-Stiftung; IFMAS (front)