

FROPTOP white paper encourages funding in renewables

A white paper on UK Expertise for Exploitation of Biomass-Based Platform Chemicals produced by the FROPTOP special interest group led to a £1.2m investment from EPSRC in collaborative research for the area.

FROPTOP (From Renewable Platform chemicals to high value Products) is a joint special interest group involving the Chemistry Innovation and Biosciences Knowledge Transfer Networks, the National Non-Food Crops Centre (NNFCC), the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC) and the Institution of Chemical Engineers (IChemE).



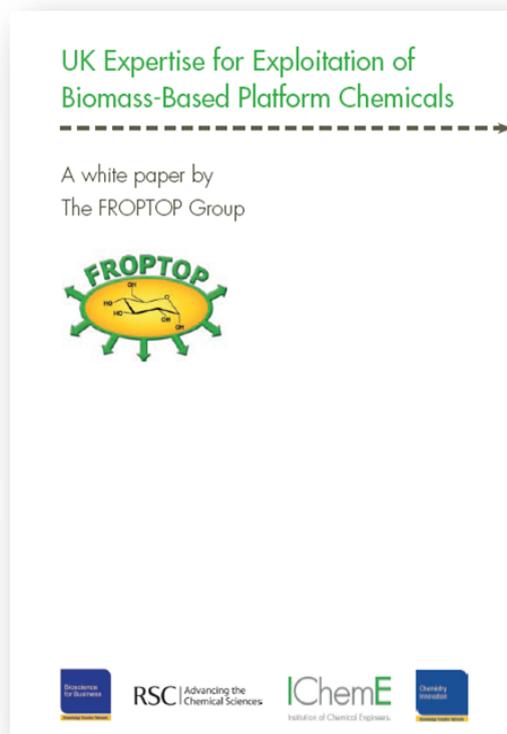
Towards the end of 2008 FROPTOP ran an Expert's Workshop from within its community to develop a report providing an overview of current UK expertise in the production and conversion of biomass-based chemicals into products. The resulting white paper also presents a rationale on why the use of biomass as a chemicals feedstock could be advantageous for UK businesses and for the wider population. The work was the culmination of two years efforts from the FROPTOP partners to identify and develop a network of experts on conversion of renewable platform chemicals in UK academia and industry.

'The FROPTOP report that you were responsible for was a major input to the evidence that led to EPSRC engaging in this club'

Emma Feltham,

Head of Business Relationships, EPSRC

Both the EPSRC and BBSRC were involved throughout the development of the paper (below) and were a key audience for its recommendations. The paper stated: 'Appropriate funding routes are required to support research into the area of renewable chemicals, especially for academic research groups. In particular, funding for academic research aimed towards industrial use is required'. Recognising the identified funding gap, EPSRC made an investment of £1.2m into the BBSRC industry club – IBTI (Integrated Biorefining Technologies Initiative). The white paper was also a key source document for the Industrial Biotechnology Innovation and



Growth Team which reported in 2009. FROPTOP is part of Chemistry Innovation's Bio-Based Products Priority Area.