

lab of tomorrow (lot) 26: Unlocking Potential from Biogenic Waste in Albania and the Western Balkans

In Albania and the Western Balkans, biogenic waste from agriculture, food processing, and households remains largely unexploited. Over 50% of municipal solid waste in Albania is biogenic, yet most of it ends up in landfills - contributing to greenhouse gas emissions and loss of resources.

This untapped potential poses both a challenge and a major opportunity. Biogenic residues such as olive pomace, used cooking oil, chicken manure, food waste, and fish processing by-products could be transformed into renewable energy, fertilizer, biofuels, or protein-rich animal feed. However, currently these biogenic waste streams are hardly collected or processed, and the potential of these valuable resources remains unexploited.

The lab of tomorrow (lot) #26 addresses this potential by developing and promoting sustainable and scalable business models for the productive use of biogenic waste - fostering innovation, circular economy, and new income sources in the region.

lab of tomorrow (lot) process

By following a structured open innovation process, the lab of tomorrow transforms local development challenges into business opportunities. The process brings together private sector actors, innovators, and experts from Europe and the Western Balkans to co-create innovative business models with measurable development impact. Guided by Design Thinking, the process focuses on real market needs, encourages cross-sector collaboration, and supports rapid prototyping and market entry.

Expected Results

- Viable, scalable business solutions for the productive use of biogenic waste
- Enhanced circular economy and local value creation in Albania and the Western Balkans
- New partnerships between EU and Western Balkan actors in sustainable business sectors

We are looking for you if you are

- An entrepreneur, innovator, SME or corporate working in the fields of:
 - bioenergy (pellets, biogas),
 - organic fertilizer
 - animal feed (e.g. insects, food/fish waste),
 - local logistics and transport
 - waste separation
- Bring technical expertise, local knowledge or innovative business models
- Want to explore or expand your market presence in the Western Balkans
- Are committed to building sustainable, impact-driven solutions

Benefits

- Co-establish your business
- Access to network of companies, innovators from the region and EU and the support of political partners and topic experts
- Receive technical and financial support for piloting and scaling your solution
- Learn hands-on Design Thinking and benefit from post-sprint incubation
- Drive sustainable impact and contribute to the SDGs

About us lot #26 is implemented by the **Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)** in Albania, in cooperation with the **Austrian NGO ICEP**, on behalf of the **Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)**, the **Austrian Development Agency (ADA)**, and the **European Commission (EU4CELC)**.

More Information <https://www.lab-of-tomorrow.com/challenges/challenge/make-use-of-biomass-in-the-western-balkans>

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