

Successful application for a H2020  
**Research & Innovation action**

Dr. Jens Krömer

02.06.2021

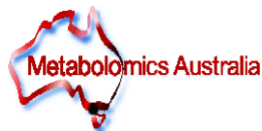
HORIZONT EUROPA - Details zum  
Arbeitsprogramm im Bereich Energie

## Outline

- about me
- about the project
- about the process



UNIVERSITÄT  
DES  
SAARLANDES



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- 2002 Diploma in Biology Saarland University
- 2006 Dr rer nat Systems Biotechnology at Technical Biochem - Saarland University (Heinzle/Wittmann)
- 2006 Postdoc University of Queensland (AIBN, Lars Nielsen)
- 2007-2009 UQ Postdoctoral Fellowship at AIBN
- 2007-2011 Lecturer Systems Biotechnology and Node Manager Metabolomics Australia (AIBN,UQ)
- 2012-2016 Director Centre for Microbial Electrochemical Systems, Senior Lecturer School of Chemical Engineering, UQ
- Since 2017 Group Leader Systems Biotechnology Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research - UFZ

## PROMICON

**HARNESSING THE POWER OF NATURE THROUGH PRODUCTIVE  
MICROBIAL CONSORTIA IN BIOTECHNOLOGY – MEASURE, MODEL &  
MASTER (PROMICON)**

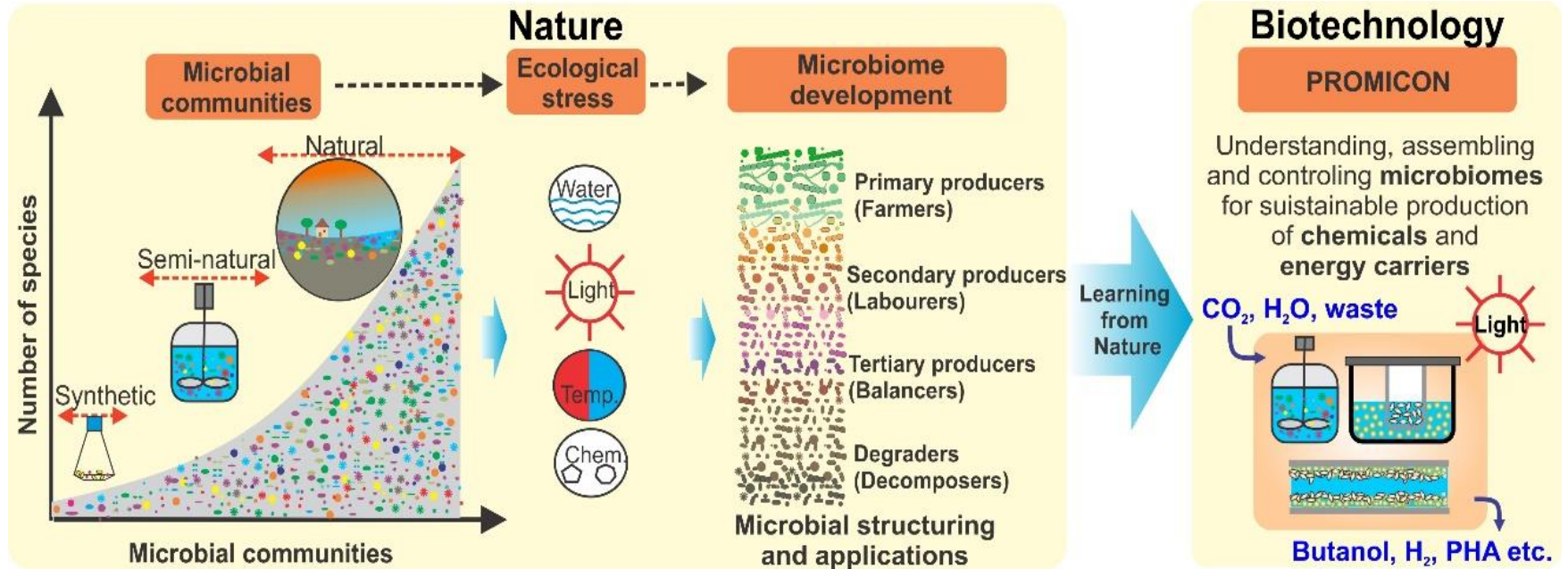


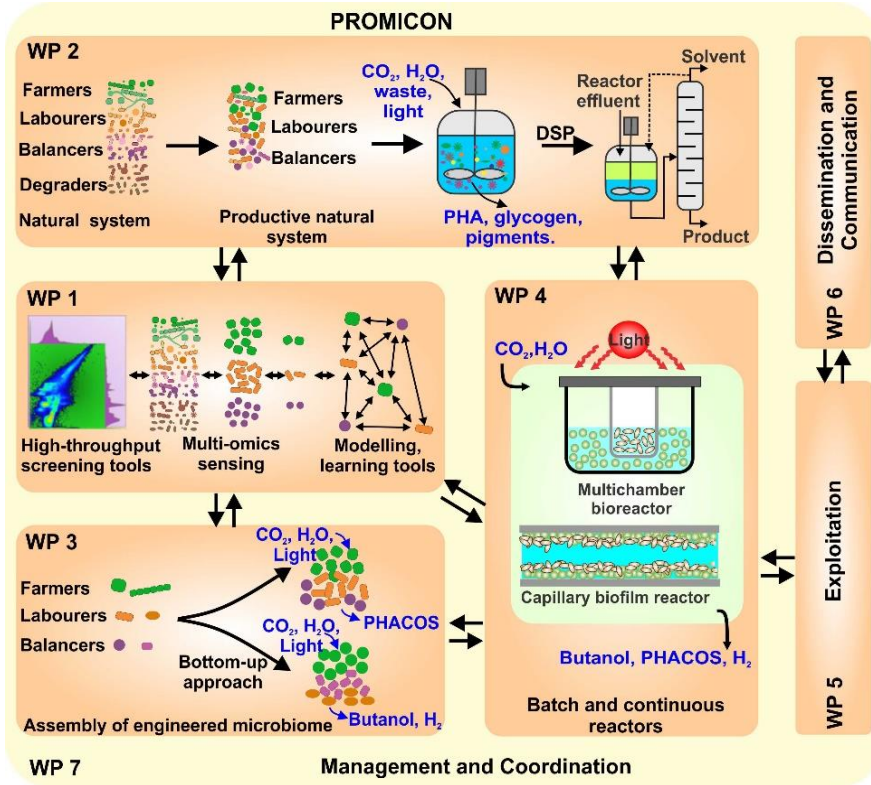
**6 € (UFZ 1.275 M€)**

10 partners / 7 countries / 6 million / 4 years

Bulgaria, Germany, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and The Netherlands







- WP8 Ethics: This was added to the proposal by the EC after successful evaluation.

2 years !



- In 2018 a consortium attempted to get funding in a related area. No success.
- In the middle of 2019 a new call opened. Two stage process. 1<sup>st</sup> stage due in January 2020. 10 pages
- Took over the previous coordination and remodelled the existing consortium.
- Application in 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020 for the 1<sup>st</sup> stage.
- Evaluation results end of April, generalized feedback for ALL applications on a SINGLE page. Over 30 proposals. 6 invited for stage 2, 2 to be funded.
- Deadline for 2<sup>nd</sup> stage 09.09.2020. **70 Pages** for the scientific part.
- Decision announced 15.12.2020
- January - March providing extra information to the EC and negotiating a collaboration agreement with all partners and the grant agreement with the EC.
- Project start 01.06.2021



- Tips:
  - Assemble the consortium in the best possible way for the project, aim for a good distribution around Europe. Don't make a partner fit in, because you like them. The work must add value.
  - Our consortium is gender balanced.
  - In two stage processes, request budget information almost at a level for the full stage even for the first stage. People complained why I would need all this info so early, but it will give you a better way to plan, once the cake needs to be distributed in stage 2. Things can become awkward, if you have the stage 1 numbers you can remind people and if in doubt use those numbers.
  - Upon submission of stage 1, I blocked dates for a workshop for preparation of stage 2 with all partners. That way we could react straight away when the positive result came in. Trying to find a meeting date and time with 10 or more partners ad hoc can be very challenging.
  - Use templates that gather all the necessary info, ideally based on the tables that the EC usually provides. I collected far more info for stage 1 than needed, but it gave a good overview and made writing the proposal over the summer break much easier. Consider that other countries might have other holiday seasons and might really go off the grid....

- Tips:
  - Get Help! Identify the leaders in each WP, who could push individual subsections forwards and deliver content to you, on budget and in time. Identify those that can also help with language polishing.
  - At UFZ, we have a full time admin officer supporting these applications. If you don't, try to get maybe at least a temporary support. Filling out all the details yourself will take a long time. Rather focus on the science, if you can.
  - Also somebody must chase all the partners all the time for the administrative inputs.
  - After the EC announced that we would be funded, a lot of questions /requests form the EC came in. At least all partners then will be proactive, since they want the money as fast as possible.
  - The EC implemented an ethics work package for us. No choice. We did not consider it so important in our case to make it a WP, but they made it compulsory. So consider if you need it carefully, as at that stage you can no longer reshuffle the person months in the budget table to meet the deliverables for this WP.
  - The EC also made some requests that we did not agree with. We politely disagreed and ask for exceptions. In our case this was granted on 3 occasions. Our case officer was approachable.

- Tips:
  - Finally, we budgeted a postdoc with 50% scientific management duties on the project. This will help to fill in required reports on all deliverables to the EC.
  - Good luck!

## Questions?