



**Conference “Reconnecting Economy and Society  
through Innovation” -  
Grand Opening BioBDO Plant in Bottrighe – September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

**Opening Speech by Catia Bastioli**

It is with great pleasure and a bit of emotion that I am going to open the conference dedicated to the grand opening of the Mater-Biotech plant for the production of BioBDO.

I thank all of you who have been able to be here today, for dedicating us some of your precious time, as well as for your heartfelt participation. I thank all the authorities present here, as well as all the companies, associations and realities that have accompanied us through this adventure: in particular, the partners of the Mater-Bi brand, our investors and Genomatica, the technological partner of Mater-Biotech.

I wanted to title the meeting: *The Bioeconomy, an occasion to reconnect economy and society* since I have always believed, today more than ever, that **a way out of the crisis and a greater stability cannot be achieved without recreating strong roots of sustainable development of the industries in the local areas, with the involvement of local communities.**

**The storming sea of the global world cannot end but turning into deserts those territories that are not able to reconnect their economies with their own social fabric.**

There is a much more at stake than industry and agriculture in this reconnection: there is the antidote against the increasing poverty that fuels populisms jeopardizing our democracies. The social fabric is not something separate from the industrial world: industry, agriculture and the environment, academy and school institutions, the world of consumption and labor must work together for a common project of development where virtuous cooperation – at a time so highly critical on many fronts - could take the place of sterile position battles, defending what is no longer existing.

Our **model of bioeconomy** as territorial regeneration **starts from deindustrialized sites**, and regenerates them by inserting **world-first technologies** through flagships - that is, **world-first plants** seen not as white elephants but as **"bioeconomy infrastructures" integrated with the local areas and interconnected with each other**. They are **real and true seeds, the starting point of new value chains, of new partnerships and alliances.**

Novamont is currently involved with six deindustrialized sites undergoing reindustrialization; 4 are the world-first technologies being completed to date and multipliable. To achieve this important result, a highly multidisciplinary systemic approach has been developed, involving different research sectors - from polymer synthesis, to materials science, technologies of plastic processing, organic chemistry applied to renewable raw materials, white biotechnologies, chemical engineering, energy efficiency, agronomy, microbiology and plant genetics, omics science, ecology of products and systems, to waste management.



We are not talking about projects that we are going to develop, but of concrete achievements. In fact, **we have always been choosing an approach of concrete action: not to announce, but to do; to place our part of responsibility, knowledge, passion, courage and even recklessness to really build something, in a world increasingly dominated by mass-media, where “saying” equals “doing”**. Even in the case of Mater-Biotech we did not want to talk about this initiative before finishing it; and it was not an easy journey.

The effort made by Novamont in the past years to bring 4 world-first technologies to industrialization has been huge and I believe it has few equals in Europe. Nevertheless, I am convinced that **it is vital not to fall prey of the error of thinking that the Mater-Biotech BioBDO, as well as the Matrìca azelaic acid, are just only biobased monomers result of new technologies, that today we are the first able to produce efficiently at an industrial level. There is much more: in the case of BioBDO, for example, there is the starting point of a real biotechnological platform, which we must look at like a formidable accelerator, as a point of interconnection and multiplication of the value chain of bioplastics and chemicals - for those producing raw materials, final products, new business ideas for the creation of job opportunities, as well as for those who bother to design a future of greater environmental and social sustainability.**

The choice of **the applications on which to focus the development of the value chain products** is another key aspect of our model: the objective is **to contribute in solving real societal challenges** and not just to place on the market another of the millions of products. Therefore, the new products which nowadays Europe can count on, thanks to the value chain created by Novamont, together with their partners, are **the elements of a system conceived to provide concrete solutions to much more challenging problems than the product itself**. In this perspective must be included the Mater-bi, the Origo-Bi polyesters, the pelargonic acid and the new polymeric plasticizers realized under the Matrìlox brand, as well as Matrìca azelaic acid and the Mater-Biotech bio-butanediol. **The BioBDO, for example, has already become part of a bioplastic, the Mater-Bi of 4<sup>o</sup> generation, that thanks to the plant we are opening today makes a step further and goes to a first application that was considered the most vile of bioplastics: the bags, turning them into specialties and into a useful support to the collection and virtuous reuse of organic waste.** Therefore, I hope you will share with me the fact that **BioBDO is important not only because it is a biobased product at disposal of Europe, but because it is much more: it is part of a virtuous supply chain that, by pushing a product, pushes an integrated system, with a wide range of opportunities to be seized.**

Therefore, this grand opening, for us in Novamont, is not a point of arrival to celebrate the great effort done, but instead an opportunity to reflect together on how to collaborate to create a formidable acceleration process, that starts from what has already been built, pushing all the value chain, multiplying the fallout. I count on all of you! Thank you for your attention.