



# The BEST Newsletter



Eanáir/January 2026



**BEST – Bioeconomy Education and Sustainability Teachers Network: Giving a Voice to All**



Happy New Year and Fáilte to the first BEST (Bioeconomy Education & Sustainability Teachers) Network newsletter of 2026! January is a month of renewal, reflection and new cycles in nature and in our classrooms. The days are slowly lengthening, and even in winter's quiet, seeds and ideas are resting, ready to sprout. It's a perfect time to plan sustainable projects and learn from nature – after all, every winter tree will green again. Let's carry that optimism into our teaching: small eco-actions now can bloom into big impacts by spring. This edition brings you fresh bioeconomy news, a fun DIY activity, a career profile and of course some laughs and a quiz to kick off the year. Here's to new beginnings and growing a greener future together with BEST! By the way, you can continue to find all the past editions of the newsletter [here](#).

## New Year, New Light: Brigid's Day & Imbolc (1 February) 🌱🔥

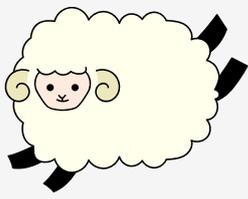
January begins the calendar year, and Imbolc/Brigid's Day begins the turning of the seasonal year, on 1 February – a gentle reminder that new cycles don't start all at once, they brighten gradually, like the lengthening days.



Brigid's Day, or Brigit's day in old Irish spelling, marks the beginning of spring, and in Christianity, it is the feast day of Saint Brigid, Ireland's patroness saint. Brigid's Day/Imbolc celebrates renewal, creativity, and care for home and land, and it fits beautifully with bioeconomy thinking: our wellbeing and livelihoods depend on living systems that regenerate – soil, water, plants, animals and the return of growth.

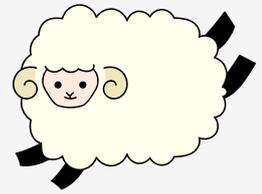


**Back to the Future with Beo and Raja: A Tale from the Early Bioeconomy**  
**From The Beo and Raja Comic Series!**



# Imbolc & Brigid

## Celebrating New Beginnings



### Imbolc & Saint Brigid's Day (1 February) 🌱🔥

Imbolc is one of the four great seasonal festivals in the Irish calendar. It sits halfway between the winter solstice and the spring equinox and traditionally marks the return of light, the first stirrings of spring and the start of lambing season.

### Where the word "Imbolc" comes from

The word Imbolc comes from Old Irish, and scholars often link it to early spring and the beginning of the farming year. One commonly suggested meaning is connected to "imbold", which translates to "in the belly" possibly referring to pregnant ewes and the arrival of new life, while another links it to milk (the start of lactation in sheep). Either way, the name points to a world where people watched seasonal signs closely and organised life around land, animals, weather, and food.

### Saint Brigid's Day 🦋

Brigid (Brigit/Bríd) is associated with craft, creativity, healing, and protection of home and land. Brigid's Day has long been a moment to mark the shift in the season and to carry symbols of care into the home and classroom. One of the best-known traditions is making a Brigid's Cross, usually from rushes, and hanging it as a sign of welcome and protection.

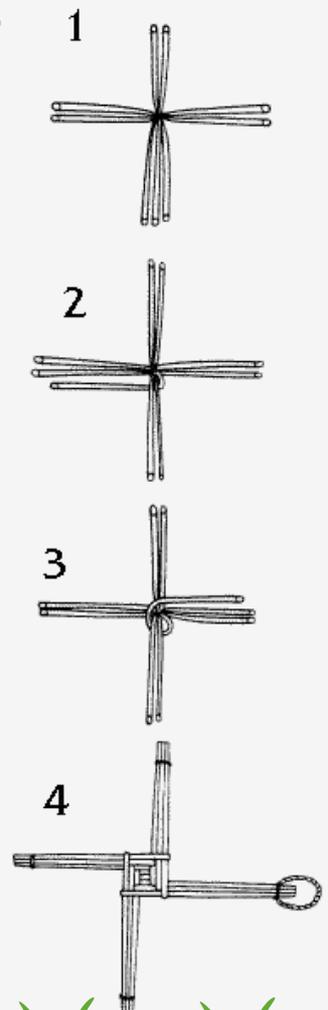


### Saint Brigid's Cross (Wheat/Straw Version) 🌱🌟

Materials: 9 long thick wheat straws (no heads), string/elastic, bowl of cool water, towel.

Soak straws in cool water 30 mins, then wrap in a towel for 15 mins.

1. Tie all 9 together at one end. Place tied end facing down.
2. Fan out the straws: 3 to the right, and 2 in each other direction (up/left/down). (See Image 1)
3. Take the front straw of the group of 3, fold it under the other two. (Image 2)
4. Bring it up and over to join the next corner's pair. (Image 3)
5. Repeat the same move around the cross (front straw → under → up/over → next corner) until it looks even. (Image 4)
6. Tie the ends of each arm, trim if needed, and add a loop to hang. (Image 4)



If you need more help, check out the "[Making a St. Brigid's Cross - Easy Step by Step Guide](#)" from [folklore.ie](#) on YouTube!





# Bioeconomy News Roundup

## Global Highlights



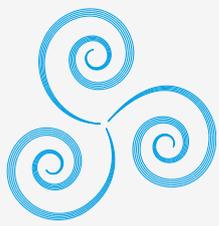
### Global Highlights

- Major EU funding for bio-based innovation: The Circular Bio-based Europe partnership has announced €170.7m in new funding topics for biorefineries and circular bio-based products, with the next call opening in April 2026.
- Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) expansion: New blending requirements are increasing demand for SAF (often made from waste oils and residues); analysts note tightening supply of key waste feedstocks. Switzerland also began aligning with the EU's ReFuelEU Aviation approach from 1 Jan 2026.
- US biofuel blending targets for 2026: The US is expected to finalise updated renewable fuel blending volumes for 2026 in early March, shaping demand for biofuels and feedstocks.
- Energy transition markers: Reporting highlights renewables reaching new milestones relative to coal in global electricity generation, alongside a reported annual decline in China's thermal power generation.
- Circular economy policy on the horizon: The EU is preparing a Circular Economy Act for 2026, aimed at strengthening markets for secondary raw materials and high-quality recycling.
- Davos Watch (WEF Global Risks & the Environment): The WEF Global Risks Report 2026 notes that environmental issues remain the most significant issue facing us in the long-term (10-year) outlook, while near-term concerns also include risks such as extreme weather and pollution. Experts ranked economic confrontation as the top near-term risk, especially with regards to energy and other scarce resources, with environmental risks still prominent over longer horizons. These themes link closely to bioeconomy discussions, including how societies produce food, materials and energy, and how resources are managed over time

### An Leabharlann/The Library :

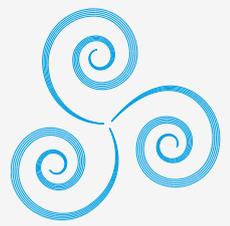
- Embedding Bioeconomy Education: A Case for an Interconnected Curriculum. Leaving Certificate Curriculum Redevelopment – Economics Consultation Submission. [Click here to read.](#)
- Empowering Education for Sustainable Development: A Submission from the BEST Network for Ireland's Third SDG National Implementation Plan – A Case for a Bioeconomy Approach. Executive Briefing. BiOrbic. [Read it here.](#)
- Draíocht Dara (An Irish-language resource for teachers of 10–14-year-olds, offering ready-to-use outdoor, nature-based activities that connect Gaeilge, sustainability and the intrinsic link between language and nature, funded by An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta. [Check it out here!](#)





# Bioeconomy News Roundup

## Ireland Highlights



- **Funding for Greener Schools:** The Irish government delivered over €850,000 to 390 schools for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) projects. Each school received €1,000–€2,500 for their 2025/26 sustainability ideas. Projects include developing school gardens and outdoor classrooms, starting composting and recycling systems (even biodigesters!), tackling fast fashion with upcycling, harvesting rainwater, and more.
- **Safe Routes to School Expansion:** 105 additional schools across Ireland have been added to the Safe Routes to School programme to make walking and cycling to school safer. Expect to see fun pencil-shaped bollards, colourful road markings, improved footpaths and new pedestrian crossings around these schools. Slower traffic and better crossings mean pupils can “wheel or walk” to school more easily. The goal is safer, healthier students and fewer cars – cutting congestion and emissions. Schools already in the programme saw big benefits (like a 36% jump in cycling and 17% drop in car drop-offs), so this expansion is a win-win for safety and sustainability.



- **All-Ireland Circular Bioeconomy Push:** A new initiative called BioDirect 2.0 has launched to boost circular bioeconomy innovation across the island of Ireland. It will bring companies, researchers and policy makers together in 2026 for industry roundtables tackling real-world challenges in four key sectors: Agriculture, Textiles, Construction, and Manufacturing. By brainstorming solutions and sharing ideas, this all-island programme aims to turn organic waste and renewable resources into new products and jobs. It's a great example of collaboration for a greener economy!
- **Sustainable Furniture Showroom:** Ireland's first sustainable office furniture showroom has opened in Dublin's city centre. The company Future Office redesigned their business around eco-friendly design. In the new showroom you'll find office furniture made from innovative green materials – think acoustic panels grown from mushroom mycelium, table legs made of 100% recycled steel, wall tiles from recycled fabric and cork, and even chairs made of hemp!



# Irish Spotlight: UCD Greenacre

## Closing the Circle with Mushrooms



A brilliant circular economy project at UCD Greenacre by Thomas Macagno and Dimitrios Argyropoulos has produced its first batch of mushrooms grown using spent coffee grounds collected from the UCD University Club Café. The project ran over 15 weeks and involved collaboration between UCD Greenacre, the UCD School of Biosystems and Food Engineering, the UCD University Club, and the UCD Innovation Academy.

This is a simple but powerful circular idea: a “waste” material becomes a useful resource. Coffee grounds still contain nutrients, and with the right conditions (and mushroom “spawn”), they can help grow food!

### Why mushrooms are a great bioeconomy story

Mushrooms are part of the fungi kingdom and play an important role in nature.

- Nature’s recyclers: Many fungi help break down dead plant material and return nutrients to soils.
- Mycelium: The main body of a fungus is a thread-like network called mycelium, often hidden in soil or growing media.
- Low-waste potential: Mushrooms can be grown on various organic “leftovers” (like coffee grounds or agricultural by-products), which makes them a useful example of bio-based circularity!



# Policy Watch: EU–Mercosur Deal



The EU–Mercosur trade agreement (between the EU and Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay) has moved forward recently after many years of negotiations. EU member states authorised signature in early January 2026, and the agreement has now entered a new phase of EU ratification and legal scrutiny.

## What's the latest?

- European Parliament vote (Jan 2026): MEPs voted to refer the agreement to the European Court of Justice to assess legal compatibility with EU treaties. This is expected to delay the ratification process.
- Provisional application: Reporting suggests parts of the deal could still be applied provisionally while legal and political steps continue, but timelines remain uncertain.

The debate is closely connected to bioeconomy themes because it involves:

- Food and farming trade (including beef and other agri-food products), which can affect farm incomes, production systems, and rural communities.
- Environmental and sustainability standards, including questions about land-use change and supply chains, which are central to how a sustainable bioeconomy is designed and governed.

## Ireland's Position:

In early January, the Irish Government confirmed it would vote against the EU–Mercosur agreement. In Irish debate, the strongest concerns have centred on beef and farming livelihoods, with farm organisations arguing that increased access for South American beef could place downward pressure on prices in a sector facing cost and income pressures.

A related issue raised repeatedly is standards, traceability and environmental concerns: farmers and some politicians have questioned whether imported products would be produced under requirements equivalent to EU rules (for example on animal welfare, production practices and supply-chain verification). Environmental concerns have also featured in the Irish discussion, particularly around land-use change and deforestation risk in supply chains, and how such risks are monitored and enforced through trade agreements.

Where it goes next: At EU level, the process is continuing but timelines are uncertain — including due to the European Parliament decision to seek a legal opinion from the European Court of Justice



# Events: Stay in the loop!



## Upcoming Events (Bioeconomy & Sustainability)

### Ireland – In-person / hybrid

BioDirect Roundtable Workshops (Circular Bioeconomy, all-island focus)

A series of sector-based roundtables connecting industry, researchers and partners to support circular bioeconomy value chains.

- ISSN Events including weekly online “Bitesize Biodiversity” meetups, monthly online catchup sessions and regular practical educational sessions.
- 26 February 2026 – Manufacturing Roundtable (Irish Manufacturing Research, Mullingar)
- 4 March 2026 – Construction Roundtable (Kingspan IKON Centre, Kingscourt, Co. Cavan)

(Tip for teachers: even if you’re not “in industry”, these can be useful for making school-community links, classroom speakers, and real-world project ideas.)

- All Island Bioeconomy Summit, 19 May 2026

### Europe / Online – Great for educators and researchers

- CBE JU Info Day (Online) – Circular Bio-based Europe
- An online information session explaining the 2026 call topics, rules, and practical tips for proposals and partnerships. 12 March 2026.
- CBE JU Networking Event (Brussels)
- An in-person networking event to meet potential partners for bio-based and circular innovation projects. 21 April 2026 (Brussels).

### Save the Dates ★ (Ireland hosting major bioeconomy events)

- All Island Bioeconomy Summit, 19 May 2026
- International Symposium on Biopolymers (ISBP 2026) – Dublin: A global event covering the biopolymer value chain “from biomass to products”. 6–9 September 2026.
- The fifth Global Bioeconomy Summit will take place at the Convention Centre Dublin on 20–21 October 2026 (during Ireland’s EU Presidency).

Stay in the loop   
We’ll share details of seminars, webinars, teacher CPD, and school-friendly events through the [BEST Network LinkedIn page](#) and future newsletter editions.





# Conas beathadán éan a chruthú



**Scríobh Sinead, Alex, Jane agus Ciara an t-alt seo. Is scoláirí oideachais iad i Roinn Froebel, Ollscoil Mhá Nuad.**

**Conas is féidir linn an comhshaol a chosaint agus tacú leis an bhfiadhúlra trí úsáid a bhaint as smaointe in-athnuaite agus ciorclacha ón mbithgheilleagar?**

Sa tionscadal seo, chruthaíomar beathadán éan. D'úsáideamar cartán bainne. Tacaíonn an beathadán éan le bithéagsúlacht trí fhoinse bia a chur ar fáil do na héin áitiúla. Na héin abú!

## Ábhair Athchúrsáilte & Ealaíne:

- 1 Cartán bainne folamh (1L nó 2L)
- Snáithe nó corda le haghaidh crochta
- Síolta éan nó síolta beaga (mar shampla: lus na gréine, rís, cruithneach)



## Uirlisí:

- Siosúr nó scian ceardaíochta (cabhair ó dhaoine fásta riachtanach)
- Téad nó spúnóg bheag
- Rialóir
- Peann luaidhe nó cipín



## Treoracha:

- Nigh agus triomaigh an cartán bainne folamh. Bain na lipéid.
- Tarraing cearnóg (10cm x 10cm) nó ciorcal mór ar aghaidh agus ar chúl an chartáin. Tarraing seo leathbhealach suas. Is sé seo an fhuinneog beathaithe.
- Gearr an poll go cúramach.
- Gearr dhá pholl faoin bhfuinneog beathaithe.
- Brúigh peann luaidhe nó cipín tríd an dá thaobh.
- Gearr dhá pholl ag barr an chartáin. Cuir téad tríd an bpoll.
- Cuir síolta éan nó síolta beaga ag bun an chartáin.
- Croch an beathadán éan in áit chiúin.

## Cad a d'fhoghlaim muid?

D'fhoghlaim muid gur féidir le gníomhartha beaga simplí cabhrú leis an timpeallacht. Trí ábhair athchúrsáilte a athúsáid, mar shampla cartán bainne, laghdaíomar dramhaíl agus thacaíomar leis an ngeilleagar ciorclach. D'fhoghlaim muid freisin conas aire a thabhairt d'éin áitiúla trí fhoinse shábháilte bia a chur ar fáil dóibh. Léirigh an ghníomhaíocht seo dúinn an tábhacht a bhaineann le hinbhuanaitheacht, cruthaitheacht agus freagracht don nádúr. Is féidir le gach duine tionchar dearfach a bheith acu ar an timpeallacht.





# How to make a bird feeder



This article was written by Sinead, Alex, Jane and Ciara, students in the Froebel Department at Maynooth University.

**How can we protect the environment and support wildlife using renewable and circular ideas from the bioeconomy?**

In this project, we created a DIY bird feeder using a milk carton. This activity supports the bioeconomy by encouraging the reuse of materials and reducing waste. By using renewable and recycled resources, we promote circularity and help protect natural resources. The bird feeder also supports biodiversity by providing a food source for local birds. This project shows how simple, sustainable actions can have a positive impact on the environment and wildlife.

## Recycled & Craft Materials:

- 1 empty milk carton (1L or 2L)
- String or twine for hanging
- Birdseed or small seeds (e.g., sunflower, millet, oats)



## Tools:

- Scissors or craft knife (adult supervision required)
- Marker or pen for marking cuts
- Hole punch or skewer (for string holes)
- Ruler



## Instructions:

Wash and dry the empty milk carton. Remove the labels.

Draw a large square or circle on the front and the back of the carton. Draw this halfway up the carton.

Cut the hole carefully.

Punch two small holes under the feeding window.

Push a pencil or branch through both sides. This will be the sitting perch.

Punch two holes at the bottom of the carton. Thread string through the hole for hanging.

Put bird seeds or small seeds at the bottom of the carton. Make sure it is not too full.

Hang the bird feeder in a safe place. Enjoy watching the birds visiting your bird feeder!

## What have we learned?

We have learnt that small simple actions can help us protect the environment and wildlife by reusing materials, such as milk cartons, we reduced waste and supported the circular economy. We have also learnt how to care for our local birds by providing them with a safe food source. This activity showed us the importance of sustainability and responsibility towards nature. It helped us understand that everyone can have a positive impact on the environment.



# Lá Buíochais na nIoraí 2026

Scríobh Caroline, Aoife agus Rachel an t-alt seo. Is scoláirí oideachais iad  
Roinn Froebel, Ollscoil Mhá Nuad.



Ba é an 21 Eanáir 'Lá Buíochais na nIoraí'. Chuir Christy McKeown tús le 'Lá Buíochais na nIoraí' sa bhliain 2001, mar bhealach chun daoine a spreagadh chun aire a thabhairt do na hainmhithe seo agus dá ngnáthóga. Chreid McKeown go raibh sé tábhachtach daoine a chur ar an eolas faoi ioraí. Cheap sí go raibh cabhair ó dhaoine ar fud an domhain de dhíth chun a ngnáthóga a chosaint. Mar sin, ar an 21 Eanáir 2026, tháinig go leor daoine ar fud na tíre le chéile chun ceiliúradh a dhéanamh ar na hIoraí. Chaith daoine am amuigh faoin aer agus d'fhéach siad ar ioraí i bpáirceanna agus i gcoillte áitiúla. Mhol grúpaí bithéagsúlachta agus caomhnaithe, mar shampla, 'Páirc Fiadhúlra Fota' agus 'EcoÉireann', do dhaoine bia breise cosúil le síolta, cnónna agus uisce úr a fhágáil amuigh d'Ioraí.

In Éirinn, is é an t-Iora rua an t-Iora dúchasach agus tá ról tábhachtach aige sa timpeallacht nádúrtha. Tá eireaball mór clúmhach agus fionnadh rua air, rud a chabhraíonn leis fanacht i bhfolach sna crainn. Cónaíonn ioraí i bhforaoisí, i gcoillte agus i bpáirceanna ina bhfuil go leor bia agus crann. Déanann siad a dtithe i bpoll crainn nó i neadacha ar a dtugtar 'nead iora rua', a dhéantar as bataí, duilleoga agus caonach. Itheann ioraí cnónna, síolta, caora, beacáin, agus bachlóga crainn. Le linn an fhómhair, bailíonn ioraí bia mar chnónna agus cuireann siad i bhfolach é. Cuidíonn an bia seo leo fanacht sláintiúil agus láidir i rith an gheimhridh nuair nach bhfuil mórán bia ar fáil. Cuireann ioraí le bithéagsúlacht trí chnónna agus síolta a adhlacadh a chabhraíonn le crainn nua fás. Tá sé tábhachtach aire a thabhairt do na foraoisí ionas go mbeidh áit shábháilte ag ainmhithe cosúil leis an iora.

Thacaigh Lá Buíochais na nIoraí 2026 leis an mbithéagsúlacht agus leis an mbitheacnamaíocht áitiúil. Rinne daoine friothálacha d'Ioraí as adhmaid athchúrsáilte agus ábhair bhithbhunaithe, agus d'úsáid siad coimeádáin le síolta agus cnónna a stóráil. Chuir siad bia dúchasach ar fáil (cnónna agus síolta). Chruthaigh daoine nasc láidir leis an dúlra agus léirigh siad gur féidir le gníomhartha beaga tionchar dearfach a bheith acu ar fhiadhúlra na hÉireann. Chomh maith leis sin chuir siad crainn dhúchasacha, cosúil le dair. Is breá linn na hIoraí, na hIoraí rua ach go háirithe!



Iora Rua



Iora Glas



# Squirrel Appreciation Day 2026

Caroline Phelan, Aoife Hussey, Rachel O'Shea



January 21st was 'Squirrel Appreciation Day', celebrated annually in countries around the world. Squirrel Appreciation Day was started by wildlife rehabilitator Christy McKeown in 2001 as a way to encourage people to care for these animals and their habitats. McKeown believed that it was important to educate people about squirrels. She felt that people around the world needed help to protect their habitats. So, on this day, many people around Ireland came together to celebrate squirrels. People spent time outdoors and watched squirrels in local parks and woods. Biodiversity and conservation groups, such as 'Fota Wildlife Park' and 'EcoÉireann', encouraged people to leave out extra food such as seeds, nuts and fresh water for squirrels.

In Ireland, the red squirrel is our native squirrel and plays an important role in the natural environment. It has a large, fluffy tail and red fur, which helps it stay hidden in the trees. Squirrels live in forests, woodlands and fields where there is plenty of food and trees. They make their homes in tree holes or in nests called 'dreys', which are made from sticks, leaves and moss. Squirrels eat nuts, seeds, berries, mushrooms and tree buds. During the autumn, squirrels collect food such as nuts and hide it. This food helps them stay healthy and strong during the winter when food is scarce. Squirrels contribute to biodiversity by burying nuts and seeds, which can help new trees to grow. It is important to look after forests so that animals like squirrels have a safe place to live.

On Squirrel Appreciation Day 2026, people across Ireland took action to help squirrels in their local areas. They planted native trees such as oak, hazel, and hawthorn, which gave food and shelter to squirrels, supporting SDG 15: Life on Land. People also cleared small areas of weeds and non-native plants to make safer spaces for squirrels to move and find food. They made squirrel feeders from recycled wood and bio-based materials, including small boxes and hanging baskets, and used containers to store seeds and nuts. These feeders showed circularity, because the materials were reused instead of thrown away. People also provided natural food, like mixed nuts, seeds, and berries, and put water dishes in shaded areas for squirrels. Through these actions, people across the country strengthened connections with nature, supported the local bioeconomy, and showed how small, sustainable actions can make a real positive difference to Ireland's wildlife.



Irish Red Squirrel, native to Ireland



Grey Squirrel, introduced to Ireland from North America in 1911

# Career Profiles

Name: Francisco Guerreiro

Location: Portugal

Role: Founder & CEO of BIO4EST



## CAN YOU GIVE US AN OVERVIEW OF YOUR JOB?

I am currently the founder and manager of BIO4EST, a company focused on transforming degraded areas and low-profit land into biodiversity carbon sinks (offset projects). We help municipalities and landowners restore their assets and attract investors to develop carbon and biodiversity projects. We operate on both the supply and demand sides, providing full technical support to monitor, manage, and oversee long-term projects.

It is also important to note that we are incubated in a low-density region—Penela, in central Portugal—and that all our profits are reinvested in the Pinhal Interior, a group of rural municipalities with low economic activity and low population density.

## HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN IN THIS LINE OF WORK?

BIO4EST was launched in late 2025; however, I have worked in this field for more than ten years, particularly within Portuguese and European environmental and agricultural committees. My main motivation is to bring together multiple stakeholders to support the development of rural and inland Portugal by valuing biodiversity and long-term strategies, rather than short-sighted, single-industry approaches.



## WHERE ARE YOU USUALLY BASED?

In the rural municipality of Penela, which has fewer than 6,000 inhabitants.

## HOW DID YOU GET INTO THIS CAREER?

I came up with the idea for BIO4EST while trying to offset my carbon footprint during my time as a Member of the European Parliament. The experience was neither effective nor satisfactory, so I decided to build a project that would manage not only capital investment but also the land being restored. That is how the company was created. I have a deep attachment to my country, especially its rural areas, and I am committed to protecting them from the predatory industries currently operating there. At its core, this is a problem of economic and cultural incentives. We need to change direction, build resilience, and develop rural territories, or we will face even harsher consequences from deglobalisation and climate impacts.



## WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE PART OF THE YOUR JOB?

Finding opportunities for biodiversity to thrive while helping municipalities and citizens better manage their resources. In the process, I am able to spend time outdoors and contribute to wildlife conservation.

### What is the most challenging part of your job?

Being away from my family most days, as they live near Lisbon.

## WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE A YOUNG PERSON INTERESTED IN THIS TYPE OF CAREER?

Go for it. Don't be afraid to push new, untested projects and seek partners who can support you along the way. Stay true to your goals and don't let fame, status, or wealth change who you are. There are far more important things than these socially overrated attributes.

### BESIDES FORMAL QUALIFICATIONS, TRAITS ARE MOST USEFUL FOR YOUR WORK?

Always be open to learning and prepared for rejection. My mindset is focused on solving problems regardless of obstacles—anticipating them where possible and finding solutions when they arise. Staying focused on the goal is essential: economic sustainability that allows reinvestment in BIO4EST, the community, and the environment.

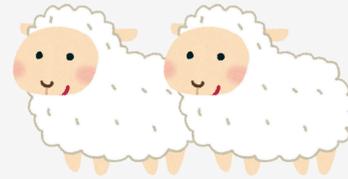


# BEST Quiz – Eanáir Edition!



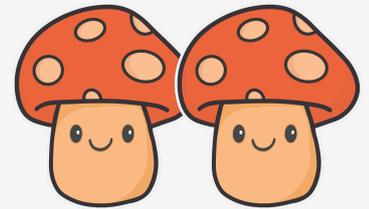
1. When is Imbolc / Brigid’s Day celebrated?

- A) 1 January
- B) 1 February
- C) 17 March
- D) 31 October



2. In the circular mushroom project (UCD Greenacre), what “waste” material helped grow mushrooms?

- A) Plastic bottle tops
- B) Banana peels
- C) Spent coffee grounds
- D) Sand



3. In simple terms, what is mycelium?

- A) A type of seed
- B) The hidden thread-like network that fungi grow from
- C) A kind of compost bin
- D) A renewable fuel

4. According to the WEF Global Risks Report, which environmental issue is still highlighted as a near-term risk?

- A) Volcanoes
- B) Extreme weather
- C) Meteors
- D) Space debris

Answers: 1-b | 2-c | 3-b | 4-b



## Bioeconomy Matters Podcast



Bioeconomy Matters – Delve into groundbreaking bioeconomic insights and revelations with podcast host Hailey Ciantar and podcast editor and producer Rita Escórcio. Through a series of interviews, you will learn about bioeconomy’s presence in various sectors.



In this episode, Dr Mohamad Midani discusses how the bioeconomy can be transformative for Arab nations whose economies rely heavily on oil.



## Joke Corner

Q: Why do birds fly south for the winter?

A: Because it’s too far to walk!



Thanks for reading! You can subscribe or unsubscribe from the newsletter [here](#) and make sure you check out the BioBeo website by scanning the QR code! See you again soon!





# About the BEST Network

## Bioeconomy Education and Sustainability Teachers Network

The BEST Network brings together teachers, educators, researchers and partners who are interested in exploring the bioeconomy and sustainability in Irish and European education.

### Our Mission

The BEST Network aims to:

- support teachers in integrating bioeconomy and sustainability into their teaching,
- share good practice, classroom ideas and resources,
- build links between schools, universities, industry and communities,
- encourage creativity, critical thinking and active citizenship, and
- promote transdisciplinary work across subjects including arts, music, science and social studies.



Follow the BEST Network on LinkedIn!

You can now follow the [BEST Network on LinkedIn](#) for updates, resources, event news and teaching ideas:

We invite all teachers, partners and supporters to follow the page and join the conversation.

### What We Do

Members of the BEST Network collaborate on:

- workshops for teachers,
- classroom and community projects
- share resources and teaching ideas
- research and knowledge exchange
- links to events such as the Bioeconomy Summit.
- share papers such as our January submission "Empowering Education for Sustainable Development: A Submission from the BEST Network for Ireland's Third SDG National Implementation Plan" - A Case for a Bioeconomy Approach" for Ireland's SDG NIP.



### Get Involved!

Teachers, educators and partners are welcome to [join the BEST Network](#) to:

- take part in events or projects,
- share resources or ideas,
- connect with others interested in bioeconomy education.

A BEST Network webpage on the BiOrbic website is currently being developed and will include resources, upcoming events and contact information.



# The Beo and Raja Comic Series

## Catch up on all our adventures below. Just click to download or read online!



### [Finding Beo](#)

[Back to the Future with Beo and Raja](#)

[Answering the Curlew's Call](#)

[Beo, Raja and The Butterfly Effect](#)

[Beo and Raja's BioBus Adventure](#)

[Beo, Raja agus Éifeacht an Fhéileacáin](#)

[Tóraíocht Bheo](#)

[Ar Ais chuig an Am atá le Teacht le Beo agus Raja](#)

[Ag Freastal ar Ghlaio an Chrotaigh](#)

