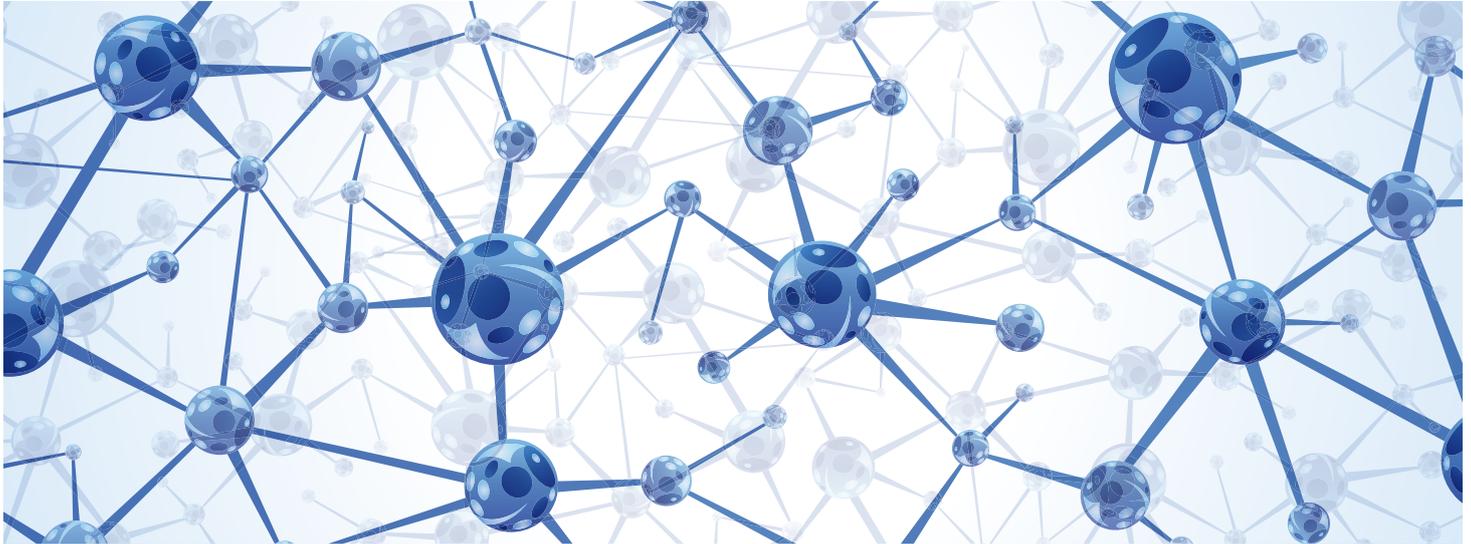


Global Agenda Council on Biotechnology 2012-2014



Understanding/Context

In recent years, research combining chemistry and biology has driven valuable discoveries for human health, energy and agriculture. The application of science and technology to living organisms, known as biotechnology, has led to numerous advances: vaccines and drugs have been created to combat disease; fuels, materials and chemicals have been produced from converted biomass; and genetically modified seeds have improved crop yields, increased resource efficiency and boosted health and nutrition. At the same time, methods have been developed to utilize areas previously unsuited for human use, such as deserts and ocean surfaces.

However, several barriers are preventing advances in biotechnology from becoming widely used. The Global Agenda Council on Biotechnology has identified public perception and public policy as the two areas of focus of its work, both of which are crucial factors in raising investment for these new technologies.

Shaping the Agenda

The Council has initially focused on the public perception of biotechnology. Council Members identified the 10 most important breakthroughs in biotechnology that they believe can help solve global challenges such as limited resources and the rapidly growing demand for energy, food and nutrition, and presented them during a Biotechnology Week on the World Economic Forum's website.

The list was accompanied by blogs, in which Council Members explained the implications and benefits of the biotechnological breakthroughs in detail. The campaign, "How could biotechnology improve your life", received high visibility online, with thousands following it on the website and through social media. The breakthroughs were also presented at the

Governors Meeting for the Chemicals Industry at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2013 in Davos-Klosters.

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Looking ahead, the Council will try to influence existing regulation regarding biotechnology by developing a set of recommendations to policy-makers on how to use biotechnological advancements for the well-being of society. Council Members will also shape the Forum's programmes for upcoming events by providing insights into biotechnology and through initiatives such as the Forum's 3B Platform (biorefineries, biotechnology and bioenergy), a partnership to facilitate innovation related to biotechnology around the world.

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