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Email:	7						
Dessword	4						
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Laboratory Products (/home/laboratory-pro	oducts/3/)	Microscopy & Microtechniques (/home/microscopy-and-microtechniques/4/)			
News & Views (/home/news-and-views/5/)	Chroma	tography (/home/chromatography/1/)	IT Solutions (/home/it-solutions/2/)		

Mass Spectrometry & Spectroscopy (/home/mass-spectrometry-&-spectroscopy/41/)

 HOME (/)
 BUYERS GUIDE (/BUYERS_GUIDE/)
 NEWS (/SEARCH/NEWS/)
 ARTICLES (/SEARCH/ARTICLES/)
 E-JOURNALS (/EJOURNALS/)

 POLLS (/POLLS/)
 SUBSCRIBE (/SUBSCRIBE/)
 ADVERTISE (/Advertise/)
 RSS FEEDS (/RSS/)
 CALENDAR (/CALENDAR/)

 CONTACT US (/CONTACT/)
 CONTACT //
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 CONTACT //
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Home (#)

News & Views

Feb 15 2012 02:25 PM



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Computational Modelling for Biotechnology

A new European joint effort aimed at developing new computational tools to integrate and analyse the large amounts of data arising in biology and biotechnology with the final goal to improve biotechnological processes and applications, was announced during December. The BioPreDyn project - coordinated by the Centre for Genomic Regulation (CRG) in Barcelona - includes eight academic labs and three industrial partners from countries all across Europe.

It is a three-year project with a budget of €2.9 million from the 7th Framework Program of the European Commission. The BioPreDyn Project (New Bioinformatics Methods and Tools for Data-Driven, Predictive Dynamic Modelling in Biotechnological Applications), aims to develop novel computational tools, methods and algorithms, for integration into a userfriendly software platform for research institutions and the biotech sector.

Biological systems studied in the lab and specific biotechnological applications will be used as benchmark problems to develop these new approaches. Julio R. Banga, CSIC researcher, in Vigo and one of the scientific coordinators of the project, emphasised that: "BioPreDyn presents a holistic approach to model building in bioinformatics and systems biology, targeting both fundamental theory and real-world applications.

" His colleague and co-coordinator Johannes Jaeger, from the Centre for Genomic Regulation, in Barcelona, pointed out that the project is indispensable as it "aims at creating an integrated suite of robust and solid methods to empower data-driven modelling for the systems biology and biotechnology of the future, shortening the lag time 'from ideas to the market'."

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top of page ↑ (#header)

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