

Press release

Leipzig, 25.01.2022

Successful evaluation: Science Council confirms DBFZ's positive further development

By decision of the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL), all federal research institutions in the BMEL's portfolio, as well as the DBFZ as an institutional funding recipient, are regularly evaluated by the German Council of Science and Humanities (WR). After an evaluation phase of more than one year, the DBFZ was once again certified successfully in the final evaluation report, which has now been published, as having made great progress and conducting "highly relevant research for a cycle-oriented economic system" for the period under review from 2017 - 2019.

On behalf of the German Bundestag and the Federal Government, the German Council of Science and Humanities is conducting a successive evaluation of six institutions with departmental research tasks in the portfolio of the ministry or institutionally funded by the BMEL until the end of September 2024. The evaluation of the DBFZ as an institutional funding recipient in the BMEL's portfolio was the first to be carried out. The aim of the evaluation is to modernise existing structures where necessary, to strengthen competitive elements, to increase the quality and efficiency of research and thus to contribute to an improved fulfilment of the federal government's tasks. The evaluation, which has now been completed, was preceded by an intensive assessment with a comprehensive evaluation report, numerous video interviews and meetings as well as a walk-through of the DBFZ. Due to Corona, the evaluation in 2021 could only take place virtually and with pre-produced video contributions on various research topics as well as the DBFZ's research infrastructure.

In its final report of around eighty pages, the German Council of Science and Humanities once again attests to the DBFZ's great progress for the evaluation period 2017-2019 and attributes great importance to the Leipzig research institution in addressing issues for the sustainable and efficient use of biomass and thus for a future more cycle-oriented and biobased economic system. Due to the combination of excellent infrastructural facilities and comprehensive expertise in the various sub-fields of biomass research, the DBFZ has unique selling points throughout Germany. "Since the previous evaluation in 2014, the institute has developed into a renowned institution in the field of biomass research. Not only the quality of the scientific achievements, but also the very good national and international networking of the DBFZ with industry and the scientific community should be emphasised," the Science Council said in its published statement.

"We are very pleased that we were able to improve significantly again compared to the previous evaluation in 2014. The overall very positive result provides a very solid basis for our further scientific work and I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks for this outstanding performance by the entire DBFZ team. Nevertheless, the results report presented is also a mandate for

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further improvement for us. The recommendations noted in the report represent important future challenges that we now want to successively implement," says the DBFZ's Scientific Managing Director and holder of the Chair of Waste and Material Flow Management at the University of Rostock, Prof. Dr Michael Nelles.

In its assessment report, the Science Council suggests, among other things, an expansion of science communication: "Against the backdrop of the national energy transition and the political goals for greenhouse gas reduction, science communication - especially to a broad public - is becoming increasingly important," says the Chair of the Science Council, Dorothea Wagner. "Efforts by the DBFZ to expand offerings in this area are therefore strongly supported by the Science Council." The implementation of the Science Council's recommendations will be reported on again in three years at the latest.

The entire statement of the Science Council can be viewed at the following link:

<https://www.wissenschaftsrat.de/download/2022/9475-22.pdf>

Smart Bioenergy – innovations for a sustainable future

The DBFZ works as a central and independent thinker in the field of energy and material use of biomass on the question of how the limited available biomass resources can contribute to the existing and future energy system with sustainability and high efficiency. As part of the research the DBFZ identifies, develops, accompanies, evaluates and demonstrates the most promising fields of application for bioenergy and the especially positively outstanding examples together with partners from research, industry and public. With the scientific work of the DBFZ, the knowledge of the possibilities and limitations of energy and integrated material use of renewable raw materials in a biobased economy as a whole should be expanded and the outstanding position of the industrial location Germany in this sector permanently secured – www.dbfz.de/en.

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