

LETTER TO EDITOR / CARTA AL EDITOR

The role of science in our society

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Reaching society with the most relevant scientific advances achieved worldwide is an essential responsibility for academics and researchers. Unfortunately, frequently the knowledge generated in universities and research centers fails to reach the private sector and civil society, which are meant to be the final consumers of this knowledge. Today, more than ever, promoting alliances between academia, industry, and the government is critical to promote technological and creative solutions to urgent problems we face as a society.

Events like the V Biotechnology and Biodiversity International Congress ("CIBB" for its name in Spanish) offer an excellent platform for researchers in biotechnology and business leaders to share ideas, experiences, and expertise. Several relevant topics were discussed during the event, where top-level scientists shared their latest advancements, highlighting the strong connection between biotechnology and biodiversity. For instance, discussions on genetic editing technologies like CRISPR/CAS demonstrated the advantages of using such precise editing tools to tackle climate resilience and power-up agricultural traits in crops to attain food security and nutrition for future generations. Other revealing discussions brought attention to the importance of preserving our environment and its biodiversity. It was emphasized that there still exist many secrets hidden in the genetic of organisms and their interactions, which uncovering would be essential to make a green industrial revolution a reality.

Biotechnology is a promising strategy for the sustainable development of green industries, still rising in underdeveloped countries where the risk of biodiversity loss is a significant threat. Currently, the development of clean technologies focused on the design of high value-added biobased products – e.g., food additives, agricultural bio inputs, crops biofortification, and designed microorganisms – is proving to be fertile ground for the partnership between scientists and the private sector.

It must be noted that conveying pragmatic and timely scientific solutions to world problems should not be an enterprise of scientists alone. Scientists' efforts must be complemented with appropriate public policies to facilitate knowledge co-creation and adoption of scientific advancements into the private sector, thus forming long-lasting partnerships between science and the industry.

Although several challenges remain to be addressed, one thing is undeniable, the best approach to achieving the objectives of academia and the private sector is hand-in-hand collaboration. This will only be achieved by forging a strong alliance at the institutional, state, regional, and, why not, global level. I urge events like the V CIBB to continue to be replicated, and may this allow our society to get involved now more than ever in the decision-making and direction that research should take.

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