

Cooperation in Science and Technology

Mexico – European Union

The 5th meeting of the Mexico-European Union bilateral Steering Committee in Science and Technology took place in Cancun on 17 November 2011. The meeting was hosted by the Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología (CONACYT) and co-chaired by Dr José Enrique Villa Rivera, Director General of CONACYT and Mr. Isi Saragossi, Director of International Cooperation, DG Research and Innovation of the European Commission. Representatives from CONACYT and the European Commission were joined by Ambassador Sandra Fuentes-Berain, Head of Mission of Mexico to the European Union, Ambassador Marie Anne Coninx, Head of Delegation of the European Union to Mexico, Mr Ernesto Herrera López, Deputy Director General for Technical and Scientific Cooperation from the Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and experts from both sides.

The meeting discussed recent policy developments in research and innovation in Mexico and the European Union. This included the development of programmes, especially scholarships, where Europe is the main host for Mexican researchers funded by CONACYT. Both sides recognised the importance of international cooperation in research and innovation for addressing the challenges, such as climate change and demands for sustainable energy, facing society. It was noted that the participation in the EU 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development of Mexican partners has recently increased significantly.

Both delegations expressed their willingness to continue the efforts in scientific and technological cooperation, in the frame of the Agreement for Scientific and Technological Cooperation and the Joint Executive Plan of the Strategic Partnership.

Both parties recognize the importance of the bi-regional approach to cooperation and encourage the use of the bi-regional initiatives as an effective way to support effective collaborations in research and development. In this context, the EU-LAC¹ Joint Initiative for Research and Innovation is an important forum for such regional cooperation and both sides will continue to work effectively to promote this process.

SPECIFIC CONCLUSIONS

Specific outcomes were agreed in the areas of Food, Agriculture and Biotechnology and Social Sciences and Humanities:

- In the area of food, agriculture and biotechnology, a partnering initiative will be developed on biodiversity with Latin American countries. An exchange of letters to formalize this agreement will take place between DG Research and Innovation and CONACYT involving an estimated amount of 1 million Euros by CONACYT. In addition, a workshop will be organized on biodiversity in spring 2012.
- In the area of the Social Sciences and Humanities, it was agreed to look at ways of strengthening research cooperation with the main European social sciences funding organizations which are currently integrated in specific thematic ERA-nets. The potential of program-to-program collaborations on specific thematic subjects will be explored with the European coordinators.

Cooperation in the field of renewable energies will also be explored with the Joint Research Centre of the EU.

¹ EU-LAC: European Union-Latin America and the Caribbean