

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH UPDATE

April 2013 Issue 33

INFORMATION FLASH ON INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ACTIVITIES
DIRECTORATE GENERAL FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION DIRECTORATE

POLICY

Commissioner Geoghegan-Quinn's Presents New Strategy for International Cooperation in Research and Innovation at the European Parliament

Commissioner Geoghegan-Quinn delivered a keynote speech at the conference 'EU Science: Global Challenges, Global Collaboration', co-organised by the European Parliament and the Irish Presidency of the Council. The conference was held on 4-8 March and brought together policy makers, scientists and industry representatives to discuss how the Union's research and innovation policy can contribute to an international response to global challenges. In her [speech](#), the Commissioner presented the new strategy for international cooperation in research and innovation. Further information on the conference can be found on the [website](#).

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EU and Canada Launch Cooperation in Transatlantic Maritime Research

The EU and Canada have identified the Atlantic Ocean and the Arctic as major new areas for research and innovation cooperation in the coming years. This newly launched cooperation will cover: Transatlantic Maritime Research ranging from ocean observation to seabed mapping and aquaculture, as well as sustainable climate observations; Arctic Research, where Canada and Europe have excellent research capacity; as well as Research Infrastructures.

The decision was taken at the 11th Meeting of the EU-Canada Joint Science and Technology Coordination Committee (JSTCC), which took place in Brussels on 6 March 2013 under the EU-Canada "Agreement for Scientific and Technological Cooperation". The meeting was co-chaired by Anneli Pauli, Deputy Director-General of DG Research and Innovation, and by Scott Fraser, Director General for Global Business Opportunities at the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada.

As a direct follow-up of this meeting, the EU and Canada will organise a joint symposium in September 2013 in Italy to identify new collaboration opportunities in the development, management and use of Arctic and Marine research infrastructures. Other key areas of active science and technology cooperation with Canada include Health, Food, Biotechnology and Researchers Mobility.

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EU-Chile Cooperation

The 7th meeting of the Steering Committee under the EU-Chile S&T Cooperation Agreement took place on 11 March in Santiago, Chile. The meeting was co-chaired by Sigi Gruber, Head of Unit, International Cooperation Directorate, DG RTD, and by José Miguel Aguilera, President of Chile's National Commission for Science and Technology. Rafael Dochao Head of the EU Delegation in Chile gave the welcoming address.

The meeting took stock of recent developments in research and research funding on both sides, and addressed potential new areas for bilateral and multilateral cooperation. Specific cooperation opportunities exist in the "natural laboratories" that the country offers. These include: astronomy (extremely clear skies over the Atacama Desert); geological research (volcanoes, glaciers and frequent earthquakes); marine research (long coastline and strong currents); polar research (proximity of southern Chile to Antarctica). These offer unique conditions for enhanced S&T cooperation in key areas such as Earth observation, polar research, disaster management, "green mining" and renewable energy.

The recently launched Bilat project CEST+I will play a key role in identifying promising new areas of cooperation, under the broad areas identified under the H2020 themes and involving interested EU Member States.

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SIRIC Discusses Toolbox of Instruments for international Cooperation in Horizon 2020

The Strategic International Research and Innovation Cooperation (SIRIC) coordination group held its 9th plenary meeting on 18 March in Brussels. A first objective of the meeting was to discuss the state of preparation of multi-annual plans for international cooperation. DG RTD Environment Directorate presented their draft multi-annual plan for international cooperation under the Horizon 2020 Challenge 5 "Climate action, resource efficiency and raw materials". This 7-year plan is well-advanced and was developed with the priority setting methodology established in the Commission Communication 'Enhancing and Focussing EU International Cooperation in Research and Innovation: A Strategic Approach'.

A second point concerned the development of a toolbox of instruments to mainstream international cooperation in Horizon 2020. The meeting discussed good practice examples and the shift towards a programme-based approach, including stepping up cooperation with international organisations and other multilateral fora. The next meeting of SIRIC scheduled for 17 June will focus on the general opening of horizontal international cooperation activities in Horizon 2020.

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Strategic Forum for International S&T Cooperation

The plenary of the Strategic Forum for International S&T Cooperation (SFIC) met on 18 March. On the China initiative, the meeting considered a paper on topics where there is an interest to join forces in Europe to achieve a more coordinated cooperation with this country. This will be followed by an in-depth discussion on available instruments to reinforce this coordination. On the USA initiative, the Commission reported on the meeting of the EU-US Joint Consultative Group which took place on 12 February. Member States and Associated Countries were invited to express their interest to join the initiative on Transatlantic Marine and Arctic research recently launched with the US and Canada. On India, the thematic groups to finalise the strategic research and innovation agenda for the Indo-European partnership are taking shape. A week of joint events with India is scheduled to take place in Brussels and Paris next October, in conjunction with the first meeting of the Group of Senior Officials governing the Indo-European partnership. For the Brazil initiative, information gathering is on-going and the first SFIC workshop on Brazil is planned in June. The EEAS presented the on-going reform of the EU-Africa 'eighth partnership' on science, information society and space.

The SFIC work programme 2013-14 was also adopted on 4 March. The election of a new SFIC Chair will take place at the June plenary meeting.

*For further information, please visit the [website](#) or contact
Sofie Norager, DG RTD, Directorate D*

EVENTS

EURAXESS Links: a New Team Takes Office

[EURAXESS](#)-Researchers in Motion is a unique pan-European ERA initiative providing access to a complete range of information and support services for European and non-European researchers wishing to pursue research careers in Europe. EURAXESS Links, the international arm of EURAXESS, is a network for researchers residing outside Europe and wishing to network with other researchers or to receive information on opportunities offered in Europe. It provides information on research in Europe, EU research policy, opportunities for funding and jobs, international collaboration and trans-national mobility. This multi-disciplinary network includes members at all stages of their careers. The network is open to all nationalities. Membership is free of charge.

EURAXESS Links is currently active in the US, Japan, China, India, and the ASEAN; with Brazil, the network will open a sixth location. The Links team interacts and collaborates closely with EU Delegations and S&T Counsellors in the respective countries. The new team of local EURAXESS Links Information and Communication Managers includes: USA: [Viktoria BODNAROVA](#) and [Jean-Michel SERS](#); Japan: [Lee WOOLGAR](#); China: [Jacques de SOYRES](#); India: [Aurélie PACHKOFF](#); S-E-Asia: [Suzanne PENTZOW-VASU](#) and [Simon GRIMLEY](#); Brazil: [Charlotte GRAWITZ](#)

For further information, please visit the [website](#)

'Destination Europe' Event in Boston

The latest event in the *Destination Europe* series took place in Boston on 22 February, back to back with the MIT European Career Fair. The objective of the initiative is to raise awareness of the excellence of European research and the many opportunities available to researchers who are interested in spending part of their careers in Europe.

The programme included sessions organized by European Member States (AT, DE, FR and NL) as well as by CERN, the ERC, Marie Curie and Euraxess.

The Boston event once again succeeded in transmitting the message that Europe 'speaks with one voice' on the attractive opportunities it offers to researchers. The next event, which will focus on Health Research opportunities, will take place in Washington DC on 11 April.

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Africa-EU Joint Task Force Meeting

On 14-15 February 2013, the Africa-EU Joint Task Force held its 15th meeting in Addis Ababa to review the 8 partnership areas of the Joint Africa-Europe Strategy (JAES), including Priority 8 for Science, Information Society and Space.

The objective of the meeting was to assess recent progress and to agree on priorities for 2013 in each area. For Priority 8, it was acknowledged that progress had been made, but that more could be achieved. The meeting identified a number of areas for enhanced collaboration to be developed in the coming months. These include: enhancing African participation in Horizon 2020; continuing the successful EU-supported AU Research Grants and the Kwame Nkrumah Scientific Awards programmes; as well as helping build Africa's capacities, such as the Pan African Intellectual Property Organisation (PAIPO) and the African Observatory for STI (AOSTI).

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ERC Promotes Funding Opportunities in Europe to Top Talent in India

In the context of the ERC Goes Global awareness raising campaign launched in February 2012, Prof. Donald Dingwell visited India to forge closer ties and to inform researchers about ERC's funding opportunities. Several meetings were organised with key representatives and researchers from leading universities and research institutions in Chennai, Bangalore, Pune, Mumbai, and New Delhi.

The ERC Secretary General was accompanied by ERC grant holder Dr. Ramesh Pillai who was awarded an ERC Starting Grant in 2010, worth €2.4 million for five years. Based in France, he carries out research in the fields of molecular and structural biology and biochemistry, using interdisciplinary approaches.

Since 2007, around 13 Indian researchers received ERC grants. These grants are both substantial and highly flexible, and also allow grant-holders to spend half of their research time outside the EU. This allows grant-holders to maintain an affiliation with their country of origin. ERC grantees can also employ team members based anywhere in the world.



Prof. Donald Dingwell with Members of the Institute of Mathematical Sciences, Chennai, India

The overall objective of such grants is to support global "brain circulation" and bring the best researchers together to exchange both ideas and experience. Current estimates show that, in addition to financing the principal investigator of the project, the ERC supports some 22,000 team members; out of which close to 500 are of Indian nationality. Prof. Dingwell visited previously Canada, South Africa, Asia and Latin America. China and Australia are the next stops on the agenda.

*For further information, please contact
Samantha Christey, ERC
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DG RTD Meeting with China Ministry of Science and Technology Delegation

A delegation from the Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST) led by Mr Chen Linhao, Deputy Director-General of the International Cooperation Department of the ministry, met on 13 March with Laurent Bochereau, Acting Director, International Cooperation Directorate, DG RTD. The meeting, and a lunch hosted by DDG Rudolf Strohmeier, took place in a constructive atmosphere. This visit followed just four months after the Joint Steering Committee meeting held last November in Beijing. Its prime objective was to prepare the first EU-China Innovation Cooperation Dialogue scheduled to take place at the time of the next Summit in Beijing (expected in October).

Both sides expressed their commitments to ensure maximum benefit and visibility from the First Innovation Cooperation Dialogue meeting. MoST representatives agreed to an RTD proposal to bring together two expert groups, to work together to prepare the first high-level meeting of the dialogue.

In addition, participants agreed to identify a limited number of priority sectors of common interest; to launch jointly funded innovation-driven projects; and to define areas where both sides agree to upgrade framework conditions so as to facilitate cooperation in the field of innovation.

MoST representatives also agreed to consider the workshop on urbanisation jointly organised by the Commission and the China Centre for Urban Development, which will feed into the first meeting of the Innovation Cooperation Dialogue.

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EU-China Coordinated Call on Biomaterials for Health

Proposals in the first coordinated call on Biomaterials for Health "Biomaterials: Imaging and rapid precise prototyping technology for custom made scaffolds", launched by the Commission and the National Natural Science Foundation of China, were jointly evaluated by the EU and Chinese experts.

The objective of this coordinated call is to foster greater cooperation between the EU and China, in this important field, and, in particular, to integrate medical imaging -

computed tomography (CT) or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI)) - and rapid micro/nano prototyping in order to create customised scaffolds using novel biomaterials for tissue regeneration or repair.

In total, 28 proposals were received. They were evaluated by a panel of EU and Chinese experts drawn from the relevant scientific fields. Four proposals were positively evacuated. Out of these four, only three were open to negotiations, due to budget availability. These cover the development and tissue prototyping of bioscaffolds for bone regeneration, nervous system and urethra reconstruction and the deployment of natural inorganic polymers and smart functionalised micro-units into such bioactive scaffolds.

This call will result in integrated and coordinated research activities with approximately equal research effort on both sides, along with an intensive exchange and training of researchers. EU and Chinese evaluators felt that the experience was extremely positive and worth repeating, perhaps on a larger scale in the future.

*For further information, please contact
Fergal Donnelly, DG RTD, Directorate G*

CONCERT-Japan Funding Organizations Forum and Steering Committee Meetings

On 27 and 28 February, the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST) hosted in Tokyo the 2nd Steering Committee of CONCERT, the ERA NET. The project is now in its third year and can already now look back on most successful results.

The 13 members of the project had been able to collect more than 5m€. In 2012, they launched with this budget two calls both in areas of great interest to Japanese and European researcher: one on "disaster management and prevention", the other in the area of "energy storage and dissemination".



With 96 project proposals submitted, the competition had been high and the independent international scientific Committee showed themselves as most satisfied with the high quality of the applications.

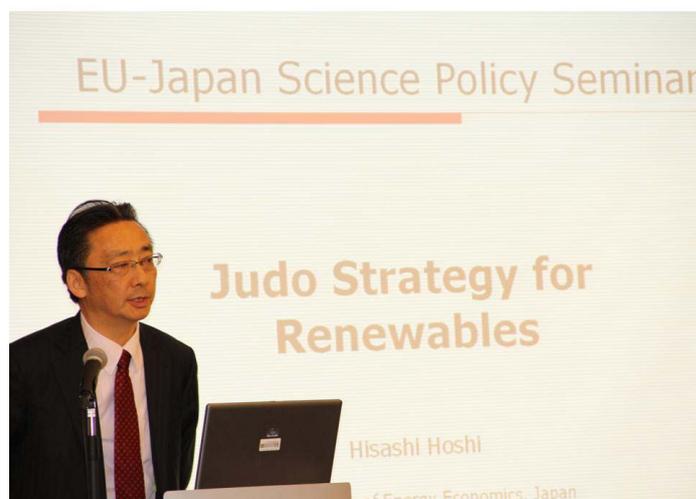
Tubitak, the Turkish coordinator and the Japanese partners in the project JST, MEXT and JSPS, in addition CNRS and DLR as the call coordinators - despite the normal level of difficulties such freely funded international project bring about - all agreed that results were much better than originally expected. Also

the group of MS and AC had been broadened throughout the project. The question now will be how to keep the momentum and continue this fruitful collaboration.

*For further information, please contact
Barbara Rhode and Tom Kuczynski, EU Delegation in Japan
Or visit the project [website](#)*

EU-Japan Seminar on the Economics of Solar Power and the Role of Photovoltaic (PV)

On 6 March, the EU Delegation in Japan, in cooperation with the European Business Council (EBC) in Japan and the CNRS Institute PV Next at University of Tokyo, organized a seminar on "The Economics of Solar Power - How can Photovoltaic contribute best to Business, Energy Production and Growth?" to explore the role solar energy could play in Japan's future energy mix.



Prof Hisashi Hoshi on Japan's "Judo Strategies for Renewables"

Mr. Jaeger Waldau, author of the annual "PV status report" of the JRC indicated that the recent massive increase in PV in Europe had contributed significantly to generally lower the overall electricity prices in the EU. The technological component to bring PV prices down was illustrated by Prof Yamaguchi, JP coordinators of a 11,5m€ co-funded project of NEDO and DG RTD. Frenk Withoos chair of the EBC Energy Committee and the vice president of ABB pointed to the legal and administrative bottlenecks that still need to be address while Mr. Sean Miwa Shigeki of the JP mobile phone provider Softbank explained how his company will use their customer relation to rent roofs in JP and install PV capacities widely and in short time.

The half day seminar was one of a series of events of a broader EU-Japan Science Policy Dialogue to support decision making regarding the energy situation in Japan.

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ERA NET Explores Cooperation Opportunities in Materials Research with Japan

A Delegation of the ERA NET on Materials came to Japan on 23 February - 1 March to explore whether an

international extension would be feasible. Headed by the Austrian FFG and joined by 37 national and regional funding programs in Europe. Representatives of these programmes had talks with potential partners, including materials institutes NIMS and AIST, and networks operating in Japan with funding agencies JST and NEDO and with ministries MEXT and METI.

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PROJECTS

Biodiversity: Science-Policy Interface

Biodiversity is a cornerstone of society's well-being and development but faces multiple challenges such as loss of species or habitats. The European Biodiversity research programme unites forces beyond Europe, generating knowledge and fostering innovative multi-level governance in international forums.

The Intergovernmental Platform for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) hosted a side event on "Regional support approaches to IPBES – Europe as showcase" at its First Plenary. Organized by FP7 EU projects Biodiversity Knowledge, SPIRAL, EBONE and EUBON, this side event outlined the importance of regional interactions to support and facilitate input into the work programme of IPBES. The talks represented three areas of work on the Science Policy Interface in Europe: organization of data and knowledge, analysis of concepts and approaches of SPIs and networking of knowledge holders. The meeting highlighted progress achieved in this area of research in the EU, and the growing influence of the science-policy interface in decision-making for environmental policy.

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PACENET- Researchers Discuss Impacts of Climate Change in Pacific Islands

Researchers from around the region met to discuss ways on tackling climate change and improve research skills to determine the impacts of climate change. Speaking at the Pacific Europe Network for Science and Technology (PACE NET) stakeholders' conference, the Minister for Local Government and Environment Colonel Samuela Saumatua said Pacific Island states were vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

"Natural hazards such as cyclones and floods are occurring at quite a frequent rate in the region, an example is the recent Tropical Cyclone Evan and major floods we faced last year," the minister said.



European Union's Fiji's Ambassador Andrew Jacobs and Minister for Local Government Samuela Saumatua are flanked by researchers from the region at the PACENET Stakeholder Conference

Colonel Saumatua highlighted that due to the impacts of climate change problems began to emerge such as communicable diseases, inundation of sea water into fresh water supply and poor sanitation.

The PACE NET project is aimed to strengthen regional and international co-operation in science and technology research for development in the Pacific region. The European Union and the University of the South Pacific will be supporting this initiative through the implementation of policies to control climate change issues.

Meanwhile, EU's Ambassador to the Fiji, Andrew Jacobs encouraged researchers from the region to develop better policies because climate change is becoming a serious issue in the Pacific: "These forums will allow researchers to deliberate on climate change issues and implement future actions on how to deal with climate change," Mr Jacobs said.

Mr Jacobs commended Government for its continuous support towards addressing climate change at national and local government levels.

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"REALISE IT": Erasmus Mundus and Oceans Alumni Association Develop New IT Applications

REALISE IT is a joint initiative of the Erasmus Mundus Alumni Association and the OCEANS Network, the alumni association of the ICI program for cooperation in education and training between the EU and Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea and the USA. Both programmes and the corresponding alumni associations are under the wings of the Commission, DG Education and Culture. Within the REALISE IT initiative, alumni from both associations developed interesting IT applications including Ideapod Unexus, to create networks or communities around an innovative concept in this area of research and [Wyrd in](#), an application to help achieve better time management for projects.

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Martine Deré, DG EAC/C/4, or visit the project [website](#)*

CAAST-Net Plus Launched to Strengthen S&T Cooperation between Europe and Africa

On 11-12 February 2013, the CAAST-Net Plus initiative was launched with the aim of further strengthening cooperation in science and technology between Europe and Africa over the period 2013-2016. The project is funded by the EU's 7th Framework programme and coordinated by the Association of Commonwealth Universities. CAAST-Net Plus will inform the bi-regional policy dialogue on science and technology; build support for innovative and joint approaches to bilateral research funding; broker the public-private relationship to improve the uptake of research for development; and encourage bi-regional research collaboration and partnerships. A first conference is planned end-June 2013 in Addis Ababa.

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Integration in Southeast Asia: Trajectories of Inclusion, Dynamics of Exclusion: SEATIDE Project Launched

The kick-off meeting of the SEATIDE project took place on 1-2 February at the University of Chiang Mai in Thailand. The SEATIDE project is driven by a consortium of institutions from five EU Member States – Estonia, France, Germany, Italy, United Kingdom – and four Southeast Asian International Cooperation Partner Countries – Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam. SEATIDE will run for three years from 1 December 2012. Led by the Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient (EFEO), it benefits from the resources and expertise of major Asian Studies institutions in South-East Asia and Europe.

With an EU contribution of 2.4 million EUR over a 36-month period, the project will examine whether and to what extent national integration can cope with regional and ethnic diversity, social and migratory challenges in South-East Asia. Research teams from partner institutions will analyse, on the one hand, the integrative processes that offer the promise of economic and cultural development, free movement of people and promotion of citizenship and knowledge networks with extensive links with the wider world. They will also look into the processes of exclusion that undermine national/regional frameworks and entail risks in the fields of human development and security, including the danger of social, regional and ethnic unrest and disintegration.

SEATIDE participants will meet again in Chiang Mai in February 2014 for the first Research Workshop of the project with the aim of presenting the first results of field researches. Project outcomes will be disseminated

and discussed with SEA specialists in Europe and Asia, community representatives and local stakeholders, as well as policymakers in both ASEAN and the EU.

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Or visit the project [website](#)*

Social Innovation in Water and Sanitation Governance in Latin America: DESAFIO Project Launched

The kick-off meeting of the DESAFIO project took place on 26 February-1 March in Recife (Brazil). A research consortium bringing together two European and six Latin American partners (four from Brazil, one from Argentina and one from Colombia), coordinated by the University of Newcastle, will look into innovative socio-technical solutions to foster access to safe water supply and sanitation in South America, with a particular emphasis on Brazil.

With an EU contribution of 1 million EUR over a 30-month period, the project will examine case studies covering informal settlements in the urban periphery of world megacities (Rio de Janeiro) or in peri-urban areas of provincial capitals (Cali, Colombia), favelas located in the heart of booming mid-range urban centres (Recife), small rural villages (Mondomo, Colombia) and communities in semi-arid areas (Ceará and Minas Gerais, Brazil and Santa Fe, Argentina). Researchers will formulate recommendations to make social innovation successful in other socio-cultural and economic contexts. In parallel, a conference on Innovation and challenges for the democratization of water and sanitation services was hosted by the Federal University of Pernambuco, partner in DESAFIO. The conference featured a lively debate between local policy makers, representatives of civil society organisations and academia on the crucial issue of access to water and sanitation services in deprived areas of the State of Pernambuco.

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FORTHCOMING MEETINGS (April - June 2013)

Joint Committee Meetings

18 April	ARGENTINA	Brussels
April (TBC)	ALGERIA	TBD
23-24 May (TBC)	UKRAINE	Kiev
6 June	SWITZERLAND	Brussels
20 June (TBC)	NEW ZEALAND	Brussels
21 June	JAPAN	Tokyo
25 June	SOUTH KOREA	Brussels
28 June	RUSSIA	Brussels
June (TBC)	TUNISIA	Brussels
June (TBC)	BRAZIL	Brussels

Regional Dialogues

16-17 April	EU-CELAC SOM	Brussels
29 May	Eastern Partnership	Brussels
24 May	EU-ASEAN SOM	Philippines
May (TBD)	MOCO/UfM	(TBD)
5-6 June	WBC Platform	Montenegro

International Summits

May (TBC)	EU-India Summit	Brussels
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International Events

11 April	Destination Europe	Washington
24 May (TBC)	Launch of Transatlantic Marine Initiative	Ireland
30-31 May	Urbanisation Workshop	Foshan
17-19 June	4th INCO Conference and the annual INCO National Contact Point meeting More information on the website	Marseille

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