

**Summary Report of 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting H2020 Societal Challenge 2 & LEIT Biotechnology Advisory Group: 16<sup>th</sup> October 2013, Brussels.**

**Co-Hosts:** Antonio Di Giulio, DG RTD E and Nikiforos Sivenas, DG AGRI.

**Advisory Group (AG):** Jean Cahill, Lorenza Daroda, Ulf Emaluelson, Lucia Gardossi, Sigrid Gaseidnes, Niels Halberg, Catherine Halbert, Cornelius Hammer, Ulrich Ketting, Tomasz Nocun, Sergio Marelli, M. Ines Minguez-Tudela, Calliope Panoutsou, Maria Pele, Marta Pérez-Soba, Stéphane Alain Riou, Jørgen Schlundt, Evangelia N. Sossidou, Jozef Turok.

**AG Apologies:** Veronique Chable, George Eckhard, Sara Paulina Monteiro.

**European Commission (Commission):** Ati Vassarotti, RTD E.1, Marco Cortopassi, RTD E.1, Thomas Arnold, RTD.E.ADV01, Pauline Ongemba-Okende, RTD E.1, Paul-Henri Pesset RTD E.1, Elisabetta Balzi, RTD E.1, Maria Fernandez-Gutierrez, RTD E.2, Barend Verachtert, RTD E.2, Patrik Kolar, RTD E.3, Ciaran Mangan, RTD E.4, Jacques Fuchs, RTD E.4, Szilvia Nemeth, RTD E.1, Annette Schneegans, AGRI.DDG2.L.1.

The Commission welcomed and congratulated all members of the group for their election, considering the large number of applicants.

H2020 Societal Challenge 2 "Food Security, Sustainable Agriculture, Marine and Maritime Research and the Bioeconomy" (SC2) has been assigned a large budget for research and therefore the role of the AG is relevant.

The Commission introduced the Horizon2020 programme and outlined the main issues:

- H2020 aims to bring ideas to market and to create new jobs;
- There is a strong emphasis on expected impact;
- It is intended to be a seamless approach linking excellent science, industrial leadership and societal challenges;
- International cooperation is an important aspect, and there is a need to clarify the aims and objectives and how best to achieve a win-win situation;
- SMEs are crucial as illustrated by the SME specific instrument.

**Notes on AG working modalities**

The following information in relation to the organisation of the AG was provided:

- In general, two 1-day meetings a year will be supported by the Commission;

- *Additional meetings must be organised by other means i.e. Skype, etc;*
- *The meetings will be organised where possible to coincide with important H2020 events taking place in Brussels;*
- *Basic secretariat support will be provided by the Commission (agenda setting, meeting logistics, travel reimbursement);*
- *Meetings of the Chairs of different AGs may be organised to ensure coordination and deal with cross-cutting issues;*
- *The Commission will upload all policy papers and presentations delivered at the meeting to the Library section of CIRCA BC web-site (Completed). All AG members need to familiarise themselves with the policy documents;*
- *The Commission emphasized the confidentiality requirements in relation to the group's operations;*
- *AG members are precluded from working as proposal evaluators for SC2 and LEIT Biotechnology calls;*
- *The AG members were also informed about privacy issues – e.g. the names of the group members and the meeting reports provided by the chair will be made publicly available on the Commission website and experts may be contacted by anyone with access to this:  
<http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regexpert/index.cfm?do=groupDetail.groupDetail&groupID=2939>*
- *The Commission explained the role of the AG:*
  - *Provide advice to Commission on Strategic Programmes and Work Programmes (not current work programmes as these are almost complete) - impact/challenge based-approach/orientations;*
  - *Provide advice to Commission on Objectives and Scientific, Technological and Innovation priorities, by way of opinions, recommendations, reports.*
- *Advice is expected to be in the form of meaningful reports which will be made public. The documents should be comprehensive, minority views should be acknowledged.*
- *AG members are represented as experts in their individual capacity or as individuals representing an interest or an organization;*
- *Working groups for specific purposes can be created in agreement with the Commission. However, no additional support can be provided by the Commission to these possible working groups. There will be a need to dedicate time to the provision of elaborated opinions.*

### **Election of Chairs**

*Niels Halberg was elected Chair of the AG to facilitate the decision-making process and Lucia Gardossi was elected Vice-Chair of the group. Marta Pérez-Soba and Jean Cahill will act as rapporteurs.*

## **Presentations of H2020 Specific Programme**

A number of Commission H2020 presentations were made to the group providing an overview of H2020 and a more detailed examination of the programmes of relevance to the AG. (Presentations available on CIRCA website)

Some general points taken:

- The Commission will not be organising an official launch of Horizon 2020 in Brussels. Each Member State will have its own National event. Details of these events will be posted here:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index\\_en.cfm?pg=h2020-events](http://ec.europa.eu/research/horizon2020/index_en.cfm?pg=h2020-events)
- NCPs are in place for all countries now and H2020 training has commenced;
- There will be a pre-call announcement on December 11th providing details about the first calls for proposals – the calls will open from January 2014 onwards;
- H2020 is aiming to have an overall impact on growth and jobs.

## **Issues and questions to be addressed**

Some issues of concern and/or suggested roles for the AG members were presented by the Commission in the form of questions or reflection points, with subsequent comments from the AG members:

### **LEIT Biotechnology**

- Which cross-cutting actions could be envisaged between LEIT Biotechnology (platform technologies) and Societal Challenges (applications)?
- How would the AG envision the role/involvement of industry/SMEs in the development of these platform technologies?
- Which Third Countries should be considered as strategic for establishing international cooperation initiatives on specific research areas? On what topics?
- Some other relevant suggestions were included in her presentation uploaded to CIRCA after the meeting:
  - What emphasis shall be put on e.g. large-scale pilots and demonstration activities, prototyping and product validation in pilot lines? Linked to which kind of activity or industrial applications? Which is the role to be paid by other mechanisms e.g. procurement, knowledge transfer?
  - The exploitation of KETs synergies and crossing the boundaries towards KETs trans-disciplinarity is central point in Horizon 2020's proposal. In what converging areas would near term investment be most likely to lead to long-term benefits and competitive advantage?

- Which are the key biotech platform technologies with potential to enhance leadership and competitiveness in a number of industrial and economic sectors?

### **Bio-based industries - Challenges ahead**

- Solutions for conflicting use of resources and options for creating synergies between environmentally friendly crop production (perennials etc) and bio refineries based on green biomass;
- Demand side measures, standardisation, certification, need to research activities support;
- There is a need to secure dialogue with other advisory boards and groups under the Commission with a mandate or focus on bioeconomy/biorefinery etc.
- Some other relevant suggestions were included in her presentation uploaded to CIRCA after the meeting:
  - Discovery and exploitation of biological resources for biomass;
  - Development of bio-based products and biologically active compound;
  - New opportunities, aspects of trade off between uses, improved sustainability, new and resource efficient processes etc;
  - Supporting market development for bio-based products. Opening new markets for innovation).

### **Challenges in the food area – Role of the AG**

- How to increase the SME involvement in food research and innovation?
- Discussion of the need for an infrastructure in food and/or nutrition
- How to avoid overlap between R&D policies, projects & support mechanisms?
- How to guard subsidiarity?
- Importance of life-style and prevention.
- Relevant links to Food for Life technology Platform and PPP Joint Action group 'Healthy diets and healthy lives'.

### **Sustainable Agriculture and Forestry**

- How best to achieve the scientific and political objectives of the specific programme?
- Are we on the right track - are the right tools and modalities in place to achieve these objectives?
- Do the work programmes and selected projects accurately reflect the objectives?
- Consider innovative approaches to include smaller organizations / groups.

## **Marine, Maritime, Inland water research: Open questions to the AG/opportunities for the future Strategic programme**

- *Key R&I challenges to be addressed in the future strategic programming?*
- *Which challenges should be better covered in SC2 or by other SCs/parts of H 2020?*
- *How to improve synergy between several parts of H 2020, with MS (Joint Programming Initiatives), Industry (Technology Platforms), and with the society in general?*
- *How to make the best use of results of R&I projects?*
- *How AG SC2 could organise to address marine challenges:*
  - *Sub-group AG SC2?*
  - *Cross cutting sub-group with other AGs e.g. SC2, 3, 5?*

### **Horizontal issues**

*The AG will be entitled to address other issues, such as gender balance or ethic aspects, as long as they are identified as relevant.*

### **Strategic programming**

*The Commission presented a structured approach to the strategic planning process which identified areas of focus covered by specific calls.*

*The Commission also presented a strategic programming diagram illustrating the 4 stages within the strategic programming process and suggested that the AG could provide an input into the first and second stages in particular – Sense Making and Strategic Intelligence - providing consolidated advice for future Work Programmes, in particular intelligence gathering and sense making of the evidence.*

*The AG could help set strategic priorities (including areas that will have an impact on job creation and growth) providing consolidated advice for future work programmes, in particular intelligence gathering and making sense of the evidence.*

*The Commission stressed again that the role of the AG is to decide how the group would like to prioritise their work and to try to develop a working framework.*

*Work on the first and second strategic programming stages in relation to the next Work Programme was estimated to commence in the Spring or Summer of 2014.*

### **Future plans**

*The Chair and Vice-Chair of the AG in conversation with the Commission will select a suitable communication platform for sharing documents and organising*

*consultations and meetings and will inform the AG members in due course. The Commission will provide some EU policy documents relevant to foresight, while the members will actively contribute to provide and share any other relevant document.*

*Several members of the group expressed an interest in making a contribution to the work but stressed the need for a more structured approach and the need to develop a work plan with time at future meetings dedicated to working on specific tasks.*

*The structure and focus of any working groups would be proposed to the Commission by the Chair and Co-Chair, after consultation with the AG.*

*The rapporteurs will initiate a working document on the practical scope and functioning of the AG and will share it with the Commission services.*

*The rapporteurs will prepare a meeting report for circulation for comment.*

*The group agreed that the next meeting should be held end of March / beginning April 2014.*