

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH UPDATE

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EUROPEAN COMMISSION, RESEARCH AND INNOVATION DG DIRECTORATE D: INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION MONTHLY INFO FLASH ON INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ACTIVITIES

POLICY

Commissioner meets Western Balkans Science Ministers

Commissioner Máire Geoghegan-Quinn met with the Science Ministers from the Western Balkans countries on 15 September in Brussels to discuss future research and innovation (R&I) cooperation. The Commissioner encouraged all the Ministers to prepare for the Innovation Union, highlighting a number of commitments which are of particular current relevance. She also encouraged the Ministers to continue their endeavours to raise the political profile of R&I at national level and increase their investment in research capacity. DG Enlargement reinforced this message by confirming the importance of mirroring the efforts expected from Member States in delivering the Innovation Union, and noted that the Pre-Accession Instrument (IPA) for the period 2014-2020 could provide support to strengthen R&I capacity at both national and regional level. Each Minister provided an update on their national actions to strengthen R&I capacity. It was also noted that participation in FP7 was considered to be difficult mainly due the fact that cooperation in an international context is new for most research entities from the region. The Commissioner encouraged each of the Western Balkans countries to take full advantage of the opportunities offered in the last two years of FP7.

For further information contact Tania Friederichs

The international dimension of ERA

On 7 September, the Strategic Forum for International S&T Cooperation (SFIC) held a consultation meeting on the international dimension

of the European Research Area with seventeen pan-European stakeholder organisations. The workshop was hosted by the Finnish Permanent Representation to the EU and covered questions such as the coordination of international S&T cooperation between the EU and the Member States and the added value of a joint EU-MS strategy for international S&T cooperation. The findings of the meeting will feed into the SFIC opinion on the ERA Framework.

The international dimension of ERA also received prominent attention during the ERAC stakeholders' seminars on 13 September, which marked the launch of the Commission's public consultation on the ERA Framework initiative. More than fifty stakeholder organisations participated in the meeting, which addressed all the questions relevant for the completion of ERA: managing and monitoring the ERA partnership, researchers, cross-border operation of research actors, research infrastructures, the external dimension of ERA, and knowledge circulation. Participants noted that the diversity of strong, often historically grown relationships of the EU and the Member States with practically all countries and regions around the world was a unique feature and strength of the EU.

For further information contact Richard Burger

SIRIC discusses the international dimension of Horizon 2020

On 12 September, ahead of the launch of the inter-service consultation on Horizon 2020, the Strategic International Research and Innovation Cooperation (SIRIC) coordination group of research, user and external policy DGs as well as the EEAS had an

exchange of views on the future approach for international research and innovation cooperation in Horizon 2020. International cooperation is central to Horizon 2020 and mainstreamed in the Specific Programmes. The legislative texts set out further information on international participation, including association to the Programme. The approach to international cooperation was welcomed by the participants and it was noted that many of the issues would be further defined at work programme level and/or in the forthcoming International Cooperation Communication, which is foreseen for autumn 2012. A more in-depth discussion will take place in future meetings of SIRIC when the upcoming Communication will be on the agenda.

For further information contact Minna Wilkki

2012 - ASEAN-EU Year of STI

The Southeast Asia–Europe Year of Science and Technology 2012 will be launched in November. The Year will coordinate joint S&T events, establish a platform for the mobility of ideas and researchers between Southeast Asia and Europe, and strengthen the political dialogue between the two regions in support of S&T cooperation and increase awareness, especially amongst young scientists, of the importance of Southeast Asian–European S&T cooperation. The FP7 international cooperation project [SEA-EU-NET](#) is the driving force behind the initiative but encourages other organisations to get involved. The 'Year' would be the first of its kind, in which our bi-regional cooperation with an emerging region would be highlighted. By concentrating the efforts on topics of strategic importance to both regions as well as being of global relevance it will give greater impact and higher visibility of STI cooperation between ASEAN, Europe and its Member States. Actions currently under preparation include the participation of DG RTD in the opening event of the Year in Hanoi on 16-17 November as well as the preparation of a closing event in Brussels towards the end of 2012. STI could also be at the top of the agenda for the 19th EU-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting which will take place in Brunei in April 2012.

For further information contact Jean-Michel Sers or Jürgen Sanders

New ERAWATCH site up and running

The new ERAWATCH website is up and running. It provides information on national and regional research policies, actors, and programmes in the EU and beyond. It currently covers 61 countries: 27 EU Member States, 13 countries associated to the

Framework programme and 21 other third countries. It contains synthetic country 'fiches' describing the basic characteristics of the research and innovation systems in each country as well as more detailed information (specific templates) on research organisations, policy documents and support measures. Each year an analytical report is also prepared per country to analyse and assess the performance of the research and innovation system, including the international dimension. ERAWATCH is an invaluable tool for anyone interested in science policy and it is publicly available at: <http://erawatch.jrc.ec.europa.eu/>

For further information contact Mary Kavanagh

BILATERAL RELATIONS

New dimension to EU/Member States STI cooperation with the USA

In the context of the partnership between the EU and Member States, SFIC is planning a workshop to develop further its initiative vis a vis the USA. 'From common challenges to joint responses - adding a new dimension to EU/Member States cooperation with the USA in science, technology and innovation' will take place in Brussels on 18-19 October. The overall objective is to develop a more coherent EU/Member States strategy towards STI cooperation with the US. The workshop is organised in thematic sessions on energy, ageing, and health and will include horizontal issues including marketing Europe as a destination for researchers, mobility and innovation. The workshop will bring together SFIC members and observers, US desk officers and US based Science Counsellors, and the main funding agencies. It will be followed by a joint workshop together with the USA in December.

For further information contact: Ludger Viehoff

EU-Chile S&T Cooperation Agreement: A Review

Five years after entering into force the S&T Cooperation Agreement with Chile is currently being reviewed by external experts. The review involves person-to-person interviews with Chilean and Member States partners, a comprehensive desk-based review and an online survey to collect information and views from a range of stakeholders. The results will be presented at the next steering committee meeting scheduled for 8 November in Brussels.

For further information contact Cornelia Nauen

Promoting European R&D in China

The EU Delegation to China, jointly with the Embassies of Finland, France, Germany, Italy and the

UK, presented their cooperation policies and programmes with China in research and innovation at an information seminar at the Europe-China Clean Energy Centre (EC2) in Tsinghua University on 30 August. The event involved presentations, discussions and networking to raise awareness among China-based research stakeholders of the opportunities offered through FP7 and the recent calls, as well as Member States' programmes for research and innovation cooperation with China. The seminar attracted over 70 participants from Beijing and beyond. The full set of presentations is available to download from the [Beijing Delegation's website](#).

For further information contact Philippe Vialatte, EU Delegation, Beijing

President Barroso visited Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Region

President Barroso visited both Australia and New Zealand during 4-9 September. The meetings included bilateral dimension with Australia, New Zealand and a regional Pacific dimension on the occasion of the 42nd Pacific Islands Forum. In relation to R&I the Australia – Euratom Agreement was renewed during the visit. The Agreement has proven a key instrument in the provision of uranium for peaceful uses. In addition, a treaty-level Framework Agreement which includes an R&I component was signed. President Barroso delivered keynote addresses at the Australian National University and the University of Auckland which acknowledged the role of R&I in the EU partnership with the countries. Other meetings covered issues such as climate change, energy and resources and digital society. Commissioner Connie Hedegaard (Climate Action) also participated in several meetings both in New Zealand and Australia, as well as the Pacific forum. HRVP Ashton will also visit this region in early November; another sign of the regained and focused European engagement towards the Pacific region.

For further information contact Pierrick Fillon-Ashida, or Michel Martino, EEAS

Research cooperation with NOAA

On 15 September, the EU Delegation in Washington hosted a workshop on research cooperation between the Joint Research Centre (JRC) and the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Based on a Letter of Intent and further recent exchanges between the JRC and NOAA, both sides worked on a text which will serve as a basis for an Implementing Arrangement between the European Commission and NOAA, under the current EU-US S&T Agreement. The Arrangement will be open to

include areas currently covered by DG JRC, RTD and DG ENTR including research related to oceans, fisheries, weather and climate. A work plan linked to the agreement with specific topics for lab-to-lab collaboration between the JRC and NOAA was also drafted.

For further details contact Ole Ostermann, JRC or Astrid Koch, EU Delegation, Washington

EU welcomes 'America Invents' Act

On 16 September President Barack Obama signed into law the America Invents Act which represents a major overhaul of the US patent system. João Vale de Almeida, Head of the EU Delegation to the United States, welcomed the new law in a press release, stating: "This vast reformation of US patent laws means US patents will now be granted on a 'first-inventor-to-file' rather than a 'first-to-invent' basis. Although there are some aspects of the new law, such as the extended grace period and prior user rights that require in-depth examination, this harmonises US law with the rest of the world, which will provide a boost to the international business community as it spurs innovation, economic growth and job creation. We will see both US and European businesses benefitting from this welcome change."

For further details contact Astrid Koch, EU Delegation, Washington

EVENTS

EU-EECA Policy Stakeholders Conference

The FP7 International Cooperation Network Central Eastern Europe and Central Asia (FP7 IncoNet EECA) will organise a Policy Stakeholders Conference, on 15-16 November, in Warsaw, in the framework of the Polish Presidency of the EU Council. The Conference, entitled "EU-EECA Cooperation in Research and Innovation: The way towards 2020" will allow policy makers and stakeholders from the science and business communities to increase their mutual understanding and to develop joint scenarios for an enhanced research and innovation cooperation between the EU and Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Southern Caucasus countries. In particular, participants will address good practices, coherent frameworks, and joint priority setting in international cooperation policies for research. Partners from the FP7 IncoNet EECA project will present a White Paper for discussion at the Conference. This document will set out an analysis of opportunities and challenges for strengthening the EU-EECA S&T cooperation. The recommendations from the White Paper will be

presented as a shared vision of EU and EECA policy makers on the prospects for joint S&T actions. Information on the Conference is available at the [project website](#).

For more information, contact Yves Maisonnay

Information on FP7 throughout Latin America

Due to the excellent collaboration with DG DEVCO and their funded project [RedCLARA](#) (an advanced internet network) which provided excellent infrastructure and logistics for two information sessions on the opportunities for S&T cooperation between Europe and Latin America, staff from different thematic areas presenting the opportunities in the 2012 FP7 work programme were able to connect to almost 100 different points across Latin America in workshops on 20 and 25 July. Much of the innovation potential in Latin America remains relatively untapped by the EU which increased S&T cooperation with Latin America could help address.

For further information contact Cornelia Nauen

EU- Israel Climate Change Conference

On 1-2 November, the EU Delegation to Israel together with the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Haifa University's Natural Resource and Environmental Research Centre will hold a conference titled 'Climate Change – Challenges, Costs, R&D'. The second day of the conference will be devoted to a workshop on EU-Israeli cooperation on climate change. It will provide an overview of the many facets of EU-Israel cooperation in this field – from FP7 through the EuroMed and ENPI programmes, to concrete projects being implemented on the ground. The workshop will conclude with a round-table discussion on research needs and gaps in the field of climate change. Participants will include researchers, representatives from environmental and energy NGOs, the business sector and local and national authorities.

For further information contact Alexandra Meir, EU Delegation, Tel Aviv

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS (OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2011)

Joint Committee Meetings			Other Meetings		
3-4 Oct	Canada	Ottawa	7 Oct	<i>Ad-hoc</i> SIRIC meeting	Brussels
4 Nov	USA	Brussels	11-12 Oct	EU-Africa SOM	Addis Ababa
8 Nov	Chile	Brussels	26 Oct	SFIC Meeting	Brussels
10 Nov	Albania	Tirana	9-10 Nov	Research Infrastructures Senior Officials Meeting	Cape Town
17-18 Nov	Mexico	Mexico	11-13 Nov	Carnegie Group Meeting	Cape Town
Nov (date tbc)	Brazil	Brasilia	22 Nov	4 th SIRIC Plenary Meeting	Brussels
23 Nov	Ukraine	Brussels	1 Dec	Western Balkans Steering Platform Meeting	Sarajevo
Nov (date tbc)	Tunisia	Tunis			