

Joint Communiqué of the 10th Joint Steering Committee for Science and Technology Cooperation meeting (JSCM) between the European Union and Mexico

September 30th, 2020

The National Council for Science and Technology of Mexico (Conacyt) and the European Commission jointly attended the 10th Meeting of the Joint Steering Committee, held virtually on September 30, 2020. The meeting was chaired by Dr. Maria Elena Álvarez-Buylla Roces, Director General of the National Council of Science and Technology on the Mexican side and on the EU side by Ms. Maria Cristina Russo, Director for International Cooperation, Directorate General for Research & Innovation, European Commission with the participation of Director General Mr. Jean-Eric Paquet. The meeting was attended by representatives of the National Council for Science and Technology, the National Institute for Climate Change, the Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation (AMEXCID), the Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, DG Education and Culture of the European Commission, the European Research Council Executive Agency, and the European External Action Service, and its agencies.

Both sides welcomed the renewal of the EU-Mexico Agreement for Scientific and Technological Cooperation, which has played a key role for enhancing dialogue and cooperation between the two sides. Within the framework of the Agreement, both sides are committed to promote, develop and facilitate strategic cooperation in areas of mutual interest with a spirit of mutual respect, equality and solidarity, by implementing research and innovation activities that will contribute to the economic, social and sustainable development of both regions.

Mexico is committed to exercising international horizontal cooperation in science and technology through inclusive development, promoting the mutual social and economic benefits of investment in science and technology in cooperation with the community, through the creation and exchange of knowledge and experiences.

Both sides agreed to continue developing common principles and adequate framework conditions needed to create a level playing field for researchers from Mexico and the European Union to cooperate with each other on the basis of trust. In this respect, the importance to continue funding, within budgetary possibilities, Mexican institutions and researchers participating in the EU framework programmes was highlighted.

Both parties acknowledged the important role of science and technology in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, and endeavour to enhance scientific exchanges and collaboration to improve existing mechanisms for strengthening areas of cooperation to make opportunities more accessible to Mexican and European researchers.

Conacyt pointed out its new priorities of directing collaborative actions towards development with a social dimension and environmental care, promoting actions between government, companies, academia, environment and society.

Both sides are committed to encourage cooperation in several thematic areas as follows:

In the area of Open Science, the EU and Mexico reaffirmed their interest in investing in policy frameworks and capacities so that open science and open access become part of scientific culture

and of research incentives aligned with innovative approaches, including to make all forms of publicly funded scientific production widely available to the general public.

Both delegations welcomed the common interests in energy, emphasizing that it is necessary to cooperate through global initiatives, in particular through Mission Innovation. In this sense, Mexico shared its interest in coordinating research efforts from a multidisciplinary and integrated perspective on energy transition.

Some of the challenges and opportunities for cooperation include: wind energy (turbine innovation, simulations to estimate small to large scale energy potential, offshore wind energy projects); bioenergy (generation of electricity from solid urban waste and biorefineries for the production of highly added value feedstock chemicals); renewable hydrogen production; energy storage (development of low-cost energy storage technologies, flow batteries, alkaline fuel cells and batteries for electromobility), and distributed generation systems with renewable energies and storage systems.

Both sides recognised that another area of mutual interest is sustainable urbanisation, in particular when it comes to clean and inclusive mobility, urban planning, smart cities and numerical modelling of urban pollutants. In addition, both Mexico and the EU have recently adopted a more systemic and holistic approach to cities, aiming for cross-sectoral initiatives that benefit from the support of city stakeholders, including citizens.

Both sides are committed to ensuring the care, protection and sustainable management of the planet's ocean, seas and coasts. In addition to sharing experiences and good practices regarding the circular economy, both sides agreed to continue working on major problems such as pollution of the ocean by plastics. In this framework, both sides welcomed the positive developments related to the possible conclusion of a [Memorandum of understanding](#) between Mexico and the European Commission to integrate Mexico into the All Atlantic Ocean Research Alliance.

Both sides agreed that an important way to stimulate R&I it is by increasing the preparation of researchers through the academic exchange and continuing training for them, both at doctoral and post-doctoral levels as well as managerial, administrative and technical staff, in conjunction with the development of excellent international doctoral networks and collaborative research cooperation under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions. They also acknowledge that programmes like Erasmus+ are essential to stimulate the international mobility of students and academic staff and develop long-lasting international partnerships.

In the area of health, both sides expressed a common interest in the way to tackle the pandemic, such as the development of diagnostic and therapeutic tools, the reorientation of health services towards more preventive strategies. They also recognized the need to work on preparedness and on addressing the social and economic impact of the pandemic. They recognised the importance to increase their cooperation exploring the participation of Mexico in the Global Alliance for Chronic Diseases.

Both sides are committed to advancing an inclusive gender equality policy in Research and Innovation and reducing the gender gap through an intersectional approach which builds on integrating strategies with gender equality, interculturality, non-discrimination and inclusiveness. Conacyt also presented its efforts to overcome regional gender gaps and inequalities and to

promote inclusion and access to higher education and the benefits of science and technology to achieve conditions of equity, justice and well-being for the majority of the country. Both sides agreed on exchanging information and experience on developing and implementing sustainable gender equality plans in research organization, and integrating a gender dimension into research and innovation.

The parties agreed to convene the next meeting of the Joint Steering Committee in 2021.