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Opinion

Title **Impact Assessment on a JTI on Fuel Cell and Hydrogen Technologies**
(draft version of 3 July 2007)

Lead DG **DG RTD**

1) Impact Assessment Board Opinion

(A) Context

The Council decision on the FP7 of Dec. 2006 identified Fuel Cells & Hydrogen as one of the first six candidates for a JTI. The corresponding JTI roadmap foresees that industry provides further information on “keys for success” and that the Commission would arrange for an objective analysis of each of those and give a considered opinion on the state of preparedness of the potential JTI.

For the present proposal, a high-level panel of Commission officials from 5 DGs and external experts came to an assessment of the state of preparation of the JTI as ‘satisfactory’

(B) Positive aspects

The IA report describes in a non-technical language the global problem of energy supply in Europe, the need to reduce green-house emissions, and the corresponding challenges for research and innovation in relation to fuel cells and hydrogen.

(C) Main recommendations for improvements

The recommendations below are listed in order of descending importance. Some more technical comments have been transmitted directly to the author DG.

General recommendation: The IA report must discuss more thoroughly and in more detail the economic, social and environmental impacts of increased FCH research. Since the IA report should be a self-standing document, it should present in the main text of the IA

report the key results of the external studies/projects that have contributed to the IA work (this point has been already agreed by DG RTD in their response to the more detailed, technical comments transmitted by the Board).

(1) The IA report should analyse the option of intergovernmental research programme more fully - alongside with the two retained options -, or at least clearly present the shortcomings of this option and the reasons why it was rejected by the industry.

(2) Social and environmental impacts in particular should be further analysed (e.g. employment effects or changes in the qualification requirements) and used for the comparison of the options. The report should analyse in more detail what impacts the increased support for R&D could have on SMEs. It should substantiate the claim that the preferred option would shorten time to market by 2 to 5 years and create a net employment gain of up to half a million jobs.

(3) The uncertainties and risks underlying the options should be made clearer, for example the risks for the options entailed by the different timing of the key technology breakthroughs, and by the efforts in the strategic research programmes in the USA and Japan. More analysis is also needed on additionality of investment and to what extent it depends on factors other than the establishment of the JTI, e.g. different allocation of resources among the main research areas within the overall budget.

(4) The report should in its main text summarize the key results of the external studies/projects that have contributed to the IA work. It should briefly describe the methodologies applied.

(5) The IA report should provide more information on the administrative costs to be expected, and use this information for comparing the options.

(D) Procedure and presentation

With regard to procedure, the IA report should explicitly state whether it is also intended to meet the requirements for an ex-ante evaluation for financial spending programmes, and, if so, ensure that it meet all the relevant requirements.

The main background documents/studies (or summaries thereof) should be annexed to the report.

2) IAB scrutiny process

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Author DG	DG RTD
External expertise used	No
Date of Board Meeting	Written procedure
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