

Contribution: Joint Research Centre

PROGRESS REPORT

on recent developments regarding S&T cooperation in/with the WBC (May– November 2011)

1 Policy actions

(e.g. essential changes in the political authorities, administrative bodies, agencies, institutions, personnel, development/launch of new national funding programmes, etc.)

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- Repositioning of the JRC: The College defines the JRC as the European Commission's in-house scientific service. It is the only Commission service responsible for direct research, providing scientific support for the conception, development, implementation and monitoring of European Union policies.
- The repositioning of the JRC essentially covers the following elements:
 - Bring the JRC activities in line with Commission policy priorities (Europe 2020);
 - Strengthening cooperation with the Secretariat-General and policy DGs ;
 - Ensuring closer cooperation with Member-States and interested partners ;
 - Strengthening cooperation with the scientific community at international level
 - Increasing the visibility and attractiveness of European scientific activities
- Related organizational changes :
 - Publishing the Deputy Director-General function with a job description corresponding to the new approach. A high scientific profile will be required
 - creating a temporary new function of Principal Adviser with the task of launching and coordinating the scientific support of the JRC in the field of modelling.
 - establishing a new Unit in charge of "Science Advice to Policy, Innovation and Horizon Scanning".
 - creating a new Unit in charge of "Nuclear safety and security coordination".
 - streamline the coordination in the fields of human resources, financial management, procurement and communication between the DG's Institutes
- On 1st January 2011 the JRC-Institute for Energy was expanded to include the Ispra based Sustainable Transport Unit and on the 1st September of the same year, the name became "Institute for Energy and Transport" to better represent the Institute's new portfolio. The new website of the Institute is now available at: <http://iet.jrc.ec.europa.eu/>

2 Legislative initiatives - development of the legal and strategic framework

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3 Important events, meetings, training activities, etc.

Enlargement and Integration Action

The draft JRC Enlargement and Integration Action (E&IA) 2012 is under preparation. It will offer both training and mobility possibilities in order to increase the participation of the Candidate Countries and Potential Candidate Countries in the relevant JRC activities.

Enlargement and integration: 40 posts available at the JRC

The JRC has launched a call for 40 seconded national experts and grantholders as part of its enlargement and integration actions. The job opportunities are available for experts from research organisations, national enforcement laboratories and scientists from the following countries: Albania, Croatia, Iceland, Montenegro, Switzerland, Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYR of Macedonia, Israel, Serbia and Turkey.

In 2011, out of these 40 temporary positions for Seconded National Experts and Grantholders: offered, 2/3 are already taken; 1/3 in procedure (some calls closed on 15 November). 40 positions are earmarked for 2012. The next public call will be published in January 2012. In 2012 also Moldova will be part of the E&IA countries.

In addition, the JRC offers specialised enlargement and integration workshops and advanced training courses within its areas of competence. The workshops are set up to allow competent organisations in the new Member States, candidate countries, potential candidate countries, FP7 associated countries, European Neighbourhood Policy countries and Russia to study the scientific and technical methods and techniques underpinning EU policy implementation. They also provide an opportunity for EU organisations to learn about the methods currently used in those countries and for both parties to discuss how the EU legislation should be implemented in the future. <http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/jrc/index.cfm?id=1720>

Specialised workshops and advanced training courses:

In 2011 about 1.5 M EUR was spent on some 50 workshops in areas like Energy Security, EU Regulation of Chemical Substances, Cyclotron research and radio-labelling of nanoparticles, EC Dual Use Regulation Implementation or Fish habitats. In 2012 a budget of about 1.6 M EUR is earmarked for 50 workshops.

JRC National Contact Points Meeting & Board meeting

The annual meeting of the JRC National Contact Points took place at the JRC Ispra site on 23rd & 24th November 2011. The JRC Board of Governors meeting was held back to back with the JRC annual NCP meeting. Participants came among others from Bosnia and Herzegovina; Croatia; Montenegro; The Former Yugoslav Republic Of Macedonia; and Turkey. There had been very active discussions with the representatives from the Enlargement countries, especially concerning young researchers, and also on the technical training of scientists. With the help of Turkey, with which the MoU is currently the most advanced, the JRC will consider how to best proceed further. The MoU under negotiation with the Ministry Of Education And Science Of The Former Yugoslav Republic Of Macedonia will be a further step in this direction.

Meeting with the Representatives of Western Balkan Countries and Turkey

On 3rd October 2011, JRC representatives met the representatives of Western Balkan Countries and Turkey at Turkish Research and Business Organisations Office - Research Liaison Office (TUR&BO) in Brussels for further strengthening of collaboration on JRC E&IA (proposed and organized by TUBITAK). JRC Board members from Serbia and Bosnia & Herzegovina; JRC NCPs from Montenegro and Turkey and representatives from Albania and Croatia joined the meeting.

A draft "Common Position Paper" including recommendations, drafted by the countries' representatives was submitted to the JRC. The recommendations of the Enlargement Countries concerned the "visibility actions, capacity building, annual meetings for priority setting and bilateral / multilateral initiatives".

The representatives noted that cooperation with the JRC was crucial for them as the JRC is the unique Commission service having a special programme for the Enlargement Countries. It has been also mentioned that the JRC's E&IA offers opportunities that can be considered as a tool for enhancing capacities and better integration of EU Acquis in the enlargement countries.

JRC noted that the JRC needs to know what the specific priorities of the countries are in order to integrate them to the E&IA. The two-way communication needs to be enhanced as it is beneficial for both sides. It has been agreed the enlargement countries inform the JRC about their priorities at the end of September each year, in order to take this feedback into account during the E&IA planning phase. Annual meetings on priority setting might be considered with a view to have "advice" from the enlargement countries on common regional issues.

JRC visit to Koc University

On 6th 7th June 2011, JRC delegation visited Koc University, Istanbul – Turkey. The meeting focused on 2 topics: "NanoBiotechnology - Security Research". Sustainable collaboration was achieved and both sides are now preparing a joint project on "*Multiscale –cell / cytoskeleton / filament- study of cell mechanical response*". Moreover, concerning the security research, relevant researchers are working to prepare a joint proposal for the next Call for Security research focused around "*the exploitation of reconfigurable radio for supporting wireless sensor networks*". Other areas for collaboration, e. g. on "*THz imaging*" are also being discussed.

Workshop on the implementation of best available techniques

The workshop on the implementation of best available techniques (BAT) under the new European Union industrial emissions (integrated pollution prevention and control) Directive 2010/75/EU was held in Ankara – Turkey on 20th July 2011 (financed by the Turkish Ministry of EU). More than 120 registered participants representing "the industry, the ministries and the academia" joined the workshop. There were discussions especially on the review processes of BAT reference documents (BREFs). Turkish researchers revealed interest for strengthened participation to the technical working groups (TWGs). JRC noted that EIPPCB was open for contributions from the member states, third countries and international organizations. The contributions were treated on "equal basis".

The Grantholders Programme between TUBITAK and the JRC

The Grantholders Programme between TUBITAK and the JRC has been carried for 4 years within the context of a Memorandum of Understanding between TUBITAK and the JRC. Up to now, (2008 - 2011) 31 Turkish researchers were awarded grants, financed by TUBITAK, to do their research activities within JRC institutes.

As the MoU will expire July – 2012, the renewal/extension of the MoU will be discussed with TUBITAK.

Strategic Energy Technology Plan

The fifth conference on the European Strategic Energy Technology Plan (SET-Plan), the technology pillar for EU's energy and climate change policy since 2007, was held from 28 to 29 November in Warsaw (PL). Held under the EU Polish Presidency, the conference was co-organised by the European Commission and Polish national bodies and ministries.

At this high-profile event, representatives of industry, research, financing and policy discussed the financing and swift development of the key low-carbon energy technologies identified in the SET-Plan. The JRC participated in two sessions of the programme related to SETIS – the information platform monitoring developments of the SET Plan – developed by the JRC Institute for Energy and Transport (IET).

Future important events

Innovation Convention 2011

On 5 and 6 December in Brussels (BE), the European Commission is holding its first Innovation Convention following the adoption of the Innovation Union Flagship initiative in October 2010. This conference will gather over 1200 participants involved in the innovation chain, including high-level policy makers, leading CEOs, deans of universities and research centres, bankers, venture capitalists, top researchers and innovators.

The JRC stand will feature a globe displaying on-line tools in support of the environment and crisis management.

High-level Seminar: "Scientific Analysis of Migration and Global Environmental Change"

Over the next 50 years profound changes in natural and human environments across the world are foreseen: climate change, global population growth and fast urbanisation. These changes affect migration flows and result in new migratory patterns.

On the occasion of the publication of the report "Migration and Global Environment Change" by the UK Government Office for Science, a jointly organised seminar with the JRC will take place on 8 December 2011 in Brussels (BE).

4 Development of international cooperation and actions on integration into ERA

(e.g. new bilateral/international agreements, memberships, support structures, important international projects, programmes, etc.)

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- JRC signs agreement with the Academies of Sciences of the Danube region: The JRC has signed on 17/11/11 an agreement for closer cooperation with the Academies of

Sciences of the Danube region Member States. The signatories are the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS), the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (HAS), the Romanian Academy (RA) and the Slovak Academy of Sciences (SAS). The agreement, which comes in the context of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region, was signed at the Fifth edition of the World Science Forum, organized by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in partnership with UNESCO, ICSU, and AAAS.

- JRC and EASAC sign agreement for closer cooperation: On 18 October the JRC and the European Academies Science Advisory Council (EASAC) signed a Letter of Intent to strengthen co-operation between the two organisations. Dominique Ristori, Director General of the Joint Research Centre, and Sir Brian Heap, President of EASAC, signed the agreement during a ceremony at the Royal Academies for Science and the Arts of Belgium. The ceremony took place in the context of the Polish Presidency of the European Union, and also involved Maria Elżbieta Orłowska, Secretary of State, Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Poland and Dr. Paul Rübzig, Member of the European Parliament, Chairman of Scientific Technology Options Assessment (STOA) panel. The speakers highlighted several relevant issues in science and research today, such as the importance of linking science and society and the need to promote evidence-based policymaking, strengthening scientific inputs for effective regulations.

5 Statistics - major changes / updates of relevant statistical data

6 Assessment of the developments and outlook on the next 6 months

(Optional personal opinion)