



Water is a resource underpinning any development. Water is essential to the production of food and fundamental for drinking and sanitation. Water is also required for many industrial processes and economically important via the growth & jobs associated with the water sector. Lack of safe drinking water and sanitation impact negatively on access to proper healthy nutrition and food security which are the main topics of the Milano EXPO 2015. During the Water JPI event at EXPO 2015 in Milan titled “*Achieving sustainable water systems for the citizens in Europe and abroad*”, experts and representatives of water-related private and public organisations discussed trends and threats in sustainable water management both in the EU- and international-context, and suggested measures to tackle present and future water challenges.

The key elements of the round table discussion between public and private experts were the following:

1. ***We are facing increasing challenges that will general more pressures on water quantity and quality:***
2. ***We should find a sustainable way for combining economic growth, urban sprawl and safe and secure water/food production***
3. ***Innovation in technologies and approaches (based on synergies) should allow to make a significant contribution to addressing the current and future challenges related to the water resources in a more efficient way.***
  - Innovative water supply technologies less demanding in energy, innovation in processing plants less water demanding, reuse of treated wastewater in different sectors, including in irrigation, etc.
  - Approaches at the relevant scale, e.g. river basin management
  - Synergies and integration, systemic approaches
4. ***The Food – Water and Energy nexus are the most promising.***
5. ***More social acceptance and new regulatory framework will be needed for the innovative solutions (e.g. reuse in irrigation for not endangering the food chain)***
6. ***Cooperation of Member States in Water Research Development & Innovation (RDI) to tackle common water-related challenges is key to achieving the overall objectives of sustainable water management. Cooperation can take place at EU level but also at international level.***

The **Joint Programming Initiative “Water challenges for a changing world”** is the relevant RDI programme in this EU strategy for research and innovation It is supported by the **European Commission, 20 Members** and by **4 Observers from EU Member States and Associated Countries**. Its aims are to:

- **Strengthen scientific and technological bases, competitiveness and capacity**
- **Promote and foster research and innovation** to jointly face the relevant societal challenges

The Water JPI team presented the activities performed so far (the [strategic research and innovation agenda](#), the results of the first joint call on emerging contaminated) and the next steps in the implementation plan of this relevant member states-driven initiative (future joint calls, alignment of national programmes and projects, international cooperation development, etc.). Some of these future steps will target some of the outcomes of the Milano Expo 2015 roundtable.