



Press release
Joint Programming Initiative
Water challenges for a changing world

Relevant speakers and a large public of stakeholders at the Water JPI conference

200 stakeholders attended the first annual international conference of the Water Joint Programming Initiative (JPI) held in Rome on the 19th May 2016. During the event, the new version of the Water JPI Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) was presented and , its implementation and the benefits from international cooperation were discussed. The conference was chaired by **Padraic Larkin** (Ireland), Water JPI co-chair.

Maurice Héral, the Water JPI President, highlighted in his introductory speech, the present and future challenges related to water availability in the world and the importance of research in bringing effective solutions to tackle the threat of water stresses in many areas of the world.

This global and long term vision of water management was also supported by the FAO representative, **Olcay Ünver**, who focused his intervention on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, in particular on the challenges related to goal 6 concerning access to water and sanitation for all.

Panos Balabanis of DG Research and Innovation of the European Commission explained strategies and initiatives to improve the role of Europe in the global water market, which in 2010 was estimated 480 billion of USD, through increased investments in science and technology vital to address global societal challenges in a more efficient and effective way.

The WATER JPI SRIA version 2.0 was presented by IRSTEA's Water Director **Patrick Flammarión**. The document lays out research, innovation and development needs in the water sector grouped by thematic areas and priorities selected after a stakeholders' consultation for their scientific and societal importance and structured around the five core themes: *Improving Ecosystem Sustainability and Human Well-being; Developing Safe Water Systems for the Citizens; Promoting Competitiveness in the Water Industry; Implementing a Water-Wise Bio-Based Economy; Closing the Water Cycle Gap Improving Sustainable Water Resources Management.*

Three round-table discussions animated by speakers representing water public utilities, ministries, research centres, private foundations, EU and international water-related platforms and networks covered the identified water research priorities in the SRIA, its implementation, and the benefits of international cooperation to jointly tackle the grand challenge of achieving sustainable water systems in the world.

New ideas for transforming the Water JPI SRIA in concrete and practical actions, structuring the necessary cooperation and accelerating the solutions development were identified and will be explored in the future.

Information on the 23 projects funded within the first two joint calls of the Water JPI and other EU water research and innovation projects was provided during the conference poster session. The conference video and presentations are published [here](#).

More information on the Water JPI is available at www.waterjpi.eu