



**“Water Challenges for a Changing World”  
Joint Programming Initiative**

## **Fact Sheet**

**July, 2013**

### **Introduction: policy aspects**

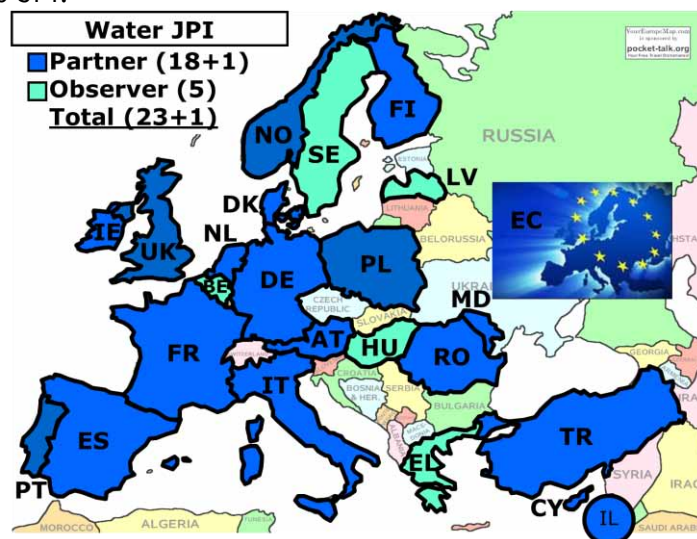
In 2008 the European Commission challenged Member States and Associated Countries to develop “Joint Programming Initiatives” (JPI). Their goal is to harmonise National research agendas and to develop joint actions (projects, mobility and infrastructure) in themes representing societal challenges. A total of [ten](#) such themes have been identified, and have evolved into JPIs. [MINECO](#) (Spain) is leading the JPI on “Water Challenges for a Changing World”, addressing a wide variety of topics related to water science, technology and management. JPIs will play a crucial role in the [European Research Area](#) (ERA) and in the new Framework Programme for Research and Innovation: “[Horizon 2020](#)”. In addition, the Water JPI will be a major player in the European Innovation Partnership (EIP) on Water.

### **Water in Europe and the World**

Current National investments in water Research, Development and Innovation have been estimated at 370 M€/yr, while the European Commission invests 130 M€/yr through the Framework Programme. This results in a total European Investment of about 500 M€/yr. Europe currently leads water research and innovation in the world, with about one third of the scientific publications and patents. The European water business, estimated at 100 G€, also represents one-third of the world market.

## **Partnership**

The Initiative is led by Spain (Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness [MINECO](#)), as coordinator, and by The Netherlands (Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment [IENM](#)), as co-coordinator. A total of eighteen countries are partners of this initiative, while five additional countries play the role of observers. The European Commission is partner number nineteen (as a non-voting partner). Partner and Observer countries are distributed across the EU. Three Associated Countries are Partners of this JPI.



## **Reference Documents**

The Water JPI launched its [Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda](#) on 30 May 2013. It is a collective, shared and forward-looking exercise identifying and prioritising directions for Research, Development and Innovation. Moreover it is intended to guide the development of Water JPI activities in 2013 and 2014, to inform stakeholders of the status of agenda developments and to contribute to sustaining an effective, mutually beneficial dialogue with Horizon 2020.

The basic reference document is the [Vision Document](#) published in April 2011. It presents the grand challenge: “*Achieving Sustainable Water Systems for a Sustainable Economy in Europe and Abroad*”. Specific challenges have been identified in the economic, ecological, societal and technological domains. Objectives address the need for increased coordination in European research, development and innovation (RDI), and address issues such as user participation, attaining targets in the coordinated use of funds and progress in the integration of RDI agendas and activities. The research questions are cast in five axes: the bio-based economy, sustainable ecosystems, healthier water systems for a healthier society, improving water use in the industry, and closing the water cycle gap. The Water JPI Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda is in progress.

## **Governance**

A governance structure has been adopted and fully implemented. The structure is based on a Governing Board, an Executive Board and two Advisory Boards: the Scientific and Technological Board and the Stakeholder Advisory Group. The Governing and Executive Boards are led by Spain and The Netherlands. Dr. Damià Barceló (ICRA, CSIC) and Dr. Cees Buisman (WETSUS) lead the Scientific and Technological Board. The Water Supply and Sanitation Technological Platform and the Finish Environmental Institute lead the Stakeholders Advisory Group.

## **Recommendation by the European Commission**

In October 27, 2011, the European Commission issued a Recommendation about this JPI. A decision of the European Council on his JPI was released in December 6, 2011. A Coordination and Support Action (CSA) call for 2 M€ was published in January 2012. The proposal submitted by the Water JPI was funded, and is being executed from January 2013 to December 2015 as Tackling European Water Challenges [WatEUr](#) project.

## **Tackling European Water Challenges [WatEUr](#)**

WatEUr will prepare and support the successful development and implementation of the Water JPI. WatEUr will permeate the structures of the Water JPI to impulse progress towards JPI objectives.

Examples of such joint activities include the recurrent mapping of national and regional RDI funding, institutions, programmes and projects, the iterative production of Strategic Research and Innovation Agendas, the undertaking of joint activities including the coordination of joint RDI agendas, joint call(s) on a variable geometry, coordination with water RDI activities within and outside Europe and joint communication and dissemination.

## **The objectives of the Water JPI**

The following objectives have been set for 2020:

- Attaining critical mass of research programmes;
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- Reaching effective, sustainable coordination of European water RDI;
- Harmonising National water RDI agendas in Partner Countries;
- Harmonising National water RDI activities in Partner Countries;
- Supporting European leadership in science and technology.

## **The research questions addressed by the Water JPI**

Five key research questions have been identified. These questions are the embryo of the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda.

- Maintaining Ecosystem Sustainability

- 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

### **Communication and dissemination**

The Water JPI web page is located at: [www.waterjpi.eu](http://www.waterjpi.eu). This site is continuously updated to present the latest information on the Water JPI and its activities. Twenty-five monthly newsletters have been published to energise internal communication.

### **Upcoming Activities**

The Water JPI is currently preparing the onset of its Joint Activities. Two sets of activities have been scheduled:

- Following discussions at the [Governing Board meeting on 14 May 2013](#), the Water JPI Pilot Call for proposals on “Emerging Pollutants” will be launched by a large number of Water JPI Partner Countries. Consensus was reached on the topic and the successful mobilization of large funds in support of this future call are very significant and positive achievements.  
The Academy of Finland team is implementing this important task, in coordination with Water JPI Partners and with the future Call Steering Committee. Stay tuned for more information on this call in the form of a call pre-announcement.
- In September 2014, a second round of activities will be published. This second round will include a call for proposals. Additional activities in this call may include networking, sharing of research results, mobility and infrastructure actions.

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The Water JPI Community gathered in Madrid on February 2013.