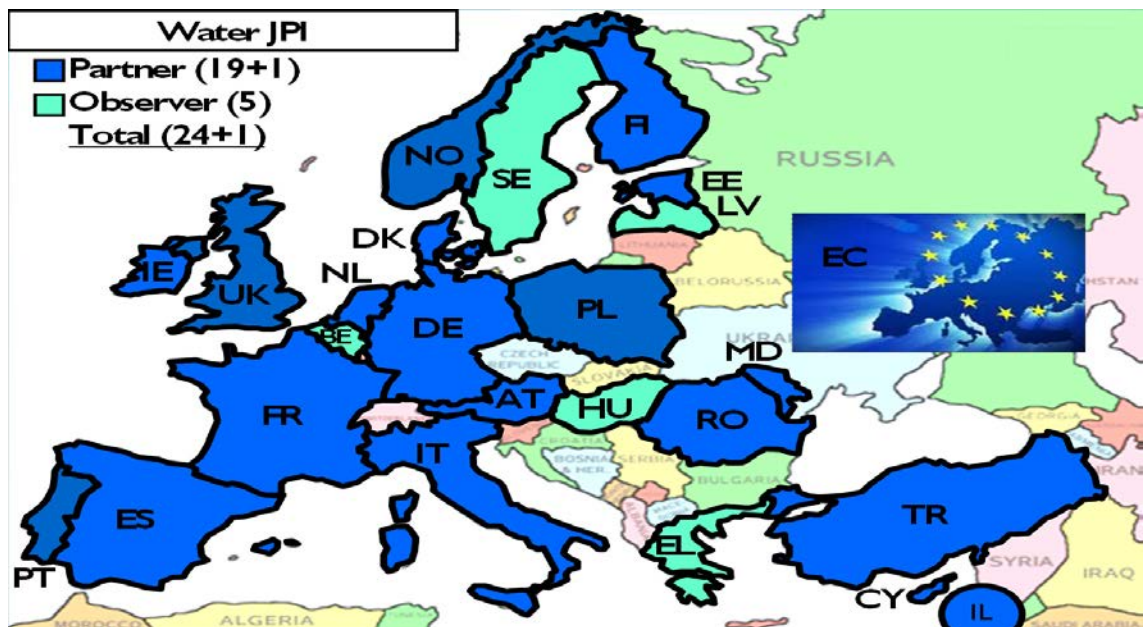


## Editorial

### WELCOME ESTONIA!

By formally expressing its interest in Water JPI on 30 September 2013, Estonia becomes the 19<sup>th</sup> country to participate in this initiative. The Estonian Government is represented by its Ministry of the Environment which is responsible for planning research and promoting water. The Water JPI now consists of a total of 24 countries, the European Commission (a non-voting partner) and five observer countries.



Hosted by ISPRA and Fondazione ENI Enrico Mattei (FEEM), Water JPI representatives met in Venice on 9 & 10 October. Two important meetings took place:

On 9 October, the Pilot Call Steering Committee finalised the revision of the Pilot Call documents. The main document, the Memorandum of Understanding, is now ready for partner country institutions to sign. The Pilot Call will be published on 1 November 2013. Information and support will be provided by the National Contact Points (the list is published on [our web page](#)).

A twitter infoday will be launched at the beginning of November for partners to have the chance to meet digitally. We strongly recommend you stay tuned to @WaterJPI and to our web page for more information on the Pilot Call and the twitter infoday.

On 10 October, the sixth Executive Board meeting of the Water JPI took place. Progress reports were presented on the mapping of RDI activities in partner countries and the new version of SRIA. The Executive Board also analysed cooperation on Horizon 2020 with the European Commission.

The beginning of 2014 sees the launch of specific mapping questionnaires which address different RDI actors in partner countries. A specific consultation workshop will also be held in March.

The seventh JPI Water Executive Board meeting will be held in Lisbon in February 2014. In the coming years, there will be a strong focus on implementation activities such as calls for collaborative projects, collaboration with countries outside Europe, mobility and infrastructure schemes.

## INTERVIEW

with **MARINA VILLEGAS**

**President of the WATER JPI Governing Board and Deputy Director General in the Spanish Ministry for Economy and Competitiveness**



Marina Villegas Gracia

**How would you describe the Joint Programming Initiative “Water challenges for a changing world” to a newcomer?**

Thank you for this question. We, as policy makers and scientists need to make more efforts to explain our daily work to the general public. The Water JPI is the joint effort of 24 countries in Europe and the European Commission to tackle water-related challenges through research and innovation.

Water is so essential for human beings, the environment, the economy and the society that research and innovation are needed to ensure continuity in water supply with the desired quantity and quality. The ambitious and coordinated efforts of European countries are required to address this vital challenge in an effective and efficient way. This is what we are doing through Water JPI.

**Why is water a grand challenge for our society?**

Water is a grand challenge for the following reasons: firstly, there is a growing gap between global water demand and water supply. The fast approaching bio-based economy will exert additional pressure to enlarge this gap. Secondly, with growing water demand and the discharge of different types of pollutants to the environment, our ecosystems will be threatened by overexploitation of water sources and increased quality problems. Thirdly, climate change is expected to intensify drought in some areas and flooding in others. This will result in damage to the ecosystems and to society as a whole. Finally, Europe is leading the world water industry, and the Water JPI will contribute to make this leadership sustainable and profitable for our society.

**Which are the main activities of this EU initiative?**

The main endeavours of the Water JPI are the development of joint research and innovation activities and the coordination of national research and innovation Programmes in Water. Today, I would like to highlight the activities which are keeping us busy. In particular, the preparation of calls for proposals for transnational research and innovation projects, such as the Pilot Call to be published on 1 November 2013 on the topic: “Emerging water contaminants – anthropogenic pollutants and pathogens”. Moreover, Water JPI is designing pan-European mobility schemes for researchers and technologists, for future water research and innovation infrastructure, and for the sharing of research results and good practices. As you can see, there are many fronts open in the Water JPI.

**What is the added value of this European initiative for water research and innovation?**

The Water JPI is an inter-governmental initiative which, by involving European countries and the European Commission, aims at tackling the European and global challenge of achieving sustainable water systems for a sustainable economy in Europe and abroad. Among the remarked added values are: 1) Water JPI gathers the forces of Water Research and Innovation programmes from the vast majority of European countries; 2) There is a shared vision bringing the countries and the European Commission to work together; and 3) The challenge to tackle is international, trans-boundary, such as water itself.

## ***Which developments do you envisage for this initiative in the future EU programme Horizon 2020?***

The philosophy behind Water JPI is joining European efforts to tackle the grand societal challenge on water. The 24 countries and the European Commission are together in the same boat, pursuing similar objectives. It is therefore natural that the Water JPI implementation activities and Horizon 2020 respond accordingly to the needs of the Water Research and Innovation community in Europe. Cooperation with Horizon 2020 is now being discussed in a number of modalities. Among them, the use of the ERA-NET instrument to cooperate in the funding of calls for proposals for collaborative projects is quite advanced.

## ***Why does MINECO support this initiative so strongly and actively?***

First of all, MINECO (the Ministry for Economy and Competitiveness of the Government of Spain) responds to the drive and potential of the water research and innovation community in Spain, which gathers scientists, engineers, technologists, SMEs and large multinational companies. Secondly, as a Member State Administration, MINECO shares the European strategic objective of completing the implementation of the European Research Area (ERA). Finally, MINECO is a believer on transnational initiatives, which stand as a unique tool to achieve tangible and sustainable results in Europe. I am indeed proud of presiding the Governing Board and hosting in our premises the Water JPI Coordination Team and the Secretariat.

## ***Which chance of success do you envisage for WATER RESEARCH in Europe?***

In order to answer this question, let me refer to Jean Monnet saying "It doesn't matter if you're positive or negative, what matters is being determined." Joining forces with determination is indeed fundamental for success. Water Research and Innovation is now living a moment of wide recognition in Europe. It counts on unprecedented mechanisms such as Water JPI or the EIP on Water. All stakeholders need to keep up the momentum and show determination for collaboration, just like Monnet - one of the fathers of Europe - used to say.

## **GROUNDWATER POLLUTION IN EUROPE**

An overview of groundwater contaminants in Europe is provided by a recent study, which calls for more integrated monitoring using a range of indicators. Groundwater contamination presents serious health and environmental issues.

A number of Directives, including the Water Framework, Groundwater, Nitrates, Industrial Emissions and Landfill Directives, together aim to protect groundwater from pollution and deterioration. The study, supported by the EU's GENESIS project, focuses on four pollutants (radionuclides, salt, nutrients and trace elements) which have both natural and human-based sources and three synthetic contaminants (pesticides, crude oil compounds and wastewater contaminants).

The study's authors call for integrated monitoring of groundwater quality where a range of physical, chemical and biological indicators (e.g. acidity, levels of different minerals, biodiversity indicators etc) are combined to allow measurement of pressures, states and impacts. Such integration is needed to make the best use of existing monitoring networks and to account for different aspects of the environment, such as soil and water. More information is available [here](#)

## **RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS**



## **DANUBIUS RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE**

The Danube International Centre for Advanced Studies for River-Delta-Sea Systems (DANUBIUS) Research Infrastructure (RI) has obtained the status of Flagship Project of the E.U. Strategy for the Danube Region. DANUBIUS can grow to a true pan-EU distributed research infrastructure dedicated to river-sea systems – also with the involvement of the 2 JPIs (WATER JPI and JPI OCEANS).

## WORLD WATER WEEK FINAL STATEMENT

The 2013 World Water Week, focusing on cooperation and partnerships, closed with a call for the United Nations to put special emphasis on water when it considers the post-2015 global development agenda. The Stockholm [statement](#) says that water, given its centrality to individuals, ecosystems and economic development, sits at the very core of sustainable global development. Therefore, "a dedicated goal on water is necessary for a world where all people can live in safety and dignity". By the year 2030 the world must have achieved a doubling of global water productivity, a realisation of the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, and increased resilience to water-related disasters.

## WATER SENSITIVE URBAN DESIGN

A [video](#) on this approach to design that delivers greater harmony between water, the environment and communities explains the relationship between water and urban areas needs to be given a higher priority to provide integrated solutions to flood risk management, sustainable water use and supply and the improvement of water quality in our treasured watercourses. This is achieved by integrating water cycle management with the built environment through planning and urban design.

## OPPORTUNITIES

### ERC GRANTS

€ 660 million in EU funding to top researchers are granted by the European Research Council. For details click [here](#)

### INTERNATIONAL PRIZE FOR WATER

Nominations for the 6<sup>th</sup> Award of the Prince Sultan Bin Abdulaziz are open. This international prize acknowledges exceptional and innovative work which contributes to the sustainable availability of potable water. More information [here](#)



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### WATER AT ECOMONDO

A special session of this international exhibition for green economy to be held in Rimini from 6- 9 November 2013 will be devoted to water the "Blue Gold" and will focus on the integrated water process which includes the distribution of water, the collection and transportation of waste water, the purification and possible final recovery for civil, irrigation or industrial reuse. For details click [here](#)



### BROKERAGE EVENT ON WATER INNOVATION

The [AquaMatch 2013](#) organized by NL Agency and Enterprise Europe Network will take place in Amsterdam on 7th November 2013 to enable exhibitors and visitors at the Aquatech Fair to find partners for cooperation, water technologies development, joint venture, manufacturing and licensing agreements.

### EUROPE INBO 2013

This international [conference](#) gathering European Basin organisations on the implementation of the Water Framework Directive will be held in Plovdiv, Bulgaria on 13 - 16 November 2013.

### WATER - INVESTING TODAY FOR THE FUTURE

This is the theme of the ninth [EWA](#) Brussel conference on the 13-14 November 2013.

### FIRST EIP WATER CONFERENCE

This one-day event will be held on 21 November in the EU Parliament in Brussels and will showcase innovations from both within and outside the water sector through keynote addresses, panel discussions and moderated plenary sessions involving also the nine initial EIP Water Action Groups established in May 2013. For more information click [here](#)



THE PREVIOUS NEWSLETTERS ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE [waterjpi](#) WEBPAGE