

Water4All and the Water JPI – Current FAQ

Version – 10 June 2020

Based on Questions received during different meetings / workshops (Water JPI preparatory workshop and Governing Board meeting, Workshop with Water4All NCP) - UNDER ELABORATION

Carine / Belgium

- Could you please clarify what would be the role of and the implications of funding agencies/ministries in charge of research to research programming activities/meetings of this partnership?

In Black – the questions – in Green the answers based on the currently available information

General Context of the development of the Partnerships

- Out of 49 Partnership candidates, 30 are completed for the first phase. What will be the key points for success? According to latest EC information, 30 of these Partnership candidates have submitted a detailed template (from 4p elaborated for the first MS consultation in May-June 2019 to ca. 40 pages) to be further considered in the EC MS consultation and be selected for submitting a proposal. The key criteria will be i) fitting the EC's criteria (cf. Annex 3 of the [Horizon Europe Partial Agreement, December 2018](#)), from which the EC evaluation template has been derived); ii) interest of the MS, and then their global financial commitments as announced in the upcoming official consultation (summer 2020).
 - o During the NCP workshop, the key criteria for EC were reminded (necessity of a partnership, actions beyond Joint Calls, measurable objectives, coherence with other partnerships, synergies with other EU programmes, inclusive and transparent process for setting the SRIA) which will complement the MS financial commitments (both in cash and in kind).
- After the Covid-19 crisis, the situation is going to be different. How this will interact with the Partnership development? This has been already considered in the Water4All (inclusion of a short state of knowledge in the challenge part of the candidature template, and in the budget part with the introduction of a reserve fund to manage such situation (requires flexibility in the management). This should be further developed in the proposal, in particular on the changes in R&I programming management and the evaluation of its impact. Any suggestion / written contribution from JPI members would be appreciated.
- The benefits of co-funded compared to co-programmed are not clear to me, since the commission is also deeply involved in writing the text of water4all. If we would chose co-programmed is it known how much budget the commission would make available, would this also be approx. 30%? Cf. EC presentation on those funding Instruments in previous meetings, that can be summarised as following: Co-programmed = CCP like or CSA like; EC contribution only for coordination and transverse activities; No EC financial support for Joint Calls or specific activities.
 - o See also arguments on the different proposed instruments PRO and CONs in four pages document sent by EC in May 2019.
 - o That is why a Co-funded Partnership was developed.
- Why such proposed amount of activities and related global budget seems to be rather (unrealistic) high to me? E.g. within Water JPI knowledge hubs and other activities focused on knowledge exchange were not that successful, why do we think that Water4All will be more successful? Wouldn't it be better therefore to reduce the amount activities compared to Water JPI rather than expanding it, and chose just the successful ones? As announced by EC about the development of Horizon Europe and the partnerships, HE partnerships are replacing the ERANET Cofund funding instrument (no longer available in the future) and are supposed to go beyond the existing partnerships such the JPIs, in terms

of types and levels of activities and engagement. It is also expected to go beyond calls and make progress on.

- These provisions are part of the Partial Agreement on H2020 (December 2018 and followings) and approved by MS. Cf. evaluation criteria for Partnerships in Annex 3.
- The step toward a Co-funded Partnership should be sufficiently transformative, compared to existing partnership “business as usual”.
- BTW, Knowledge Transfer has been considered as very important by Water JPI GB. The KHCEC outputs are evident and it is a pity that we could not agree on funding the second phase of the KHCEC. New business models are under discussion under IC4Water in order to progress on this type of activities.
- What are the important activities between 2021 and 2023? More internal activities in building the Partnership? As presented during the preparatory workshop and announced by the EC when launching the process in June 2019, this proposal was developed for getting the approval of EC (fulfilment of the Partnership criteria – cf. Annex 8 Partial Agreement on Horizon Europe) and of the MS (commitments – by summer 2020). If accepted, the demand of developing a proposal of Partnership will be integrated in the Horizon Europe Work Programme for the first wave and a proposal will have to be submitted on ECAS (same process than COFUND proposal).
- **NEW** - Eligible financial contributions “National/regional funding payed to applicants (beneficiaries at national level) count as financial contributions (category: “costs of providing financial support to third parties”). Can this be national funding through existing funding programmes i.e. something that is not allocated through the calls in Water4all partnership? **Question still to be clarified by the EC. It could be:**
 - Really new in-cash contributions (for new calls); and also
 - National programmes aligned to Water4All activities – e.g. our Thematic Annual Programmes activities (using national calls and clustering nationally funded projects on the same specific topics).
 - We are also asking to have total costs of projects considered for the EC co-funding as in some countries, the civil servants working on specific projects are not “newly” granted but are funded via direct grants to salaries / research infrastructures, etc.

Water4All Commitments

- **NEW** - Do we have any clarifications on what kind of commitments will be requested from the EC and when? Do you consider the engagement of a MS as a firm and final commitment or as an indicative participation (on a budgetary point of view)? The EC announced at NCP workshop that they would request from MS an expression of interest and initial planned investments (global preliminary commitment as they did for PRIMA), to be confirmed later on by annual commitment on the basis of the work plan. They will have a look at past investments and cooperation (such as those under the umbrella of the Water JPI) to assess the level of interest (supposed to go Beyond current partnerships and activities).
- **NEW** - When will the commitments be requested for Partnerships of the first wave (Horizon Europe Work Programmes 2021 and 2022)? As explained during the NCP Workshop, MS will receive the request during the Horizontal Shadow committee of the 28th of May 2020 for Partnership candidates running for both work programmes.
- **NEW** - What will be your participation model? Will it be an “à-la-carte approach”, meaning that the MS will decide on annual basis in which activities (including the calls) they want to participate? (they would have the possibility to participate or not in calls depending on the importance of the call topic for them). This is still pending of EC requests on MS commitments (cf. official MS consultation on commitments to Partnerships) and on possibilities offered by the EC instrument to allow participations of RFOs not involved in the Partnership consortium in activities to be topped-up.
- **NEW** – Will the funders have to declare their commitment for 7 years minimum? EC demand expected to be for the whole duration of the Partnership (7 years of actions + possibly 3 years of monitoring to be able to measure impacts).

- **NEW** – Will in-kind contributions considered for HE partnerships, and Water4All in particular? If so, which ones?
 - o The in-kind participation of several types of partners is proposed in the Water4all document submitted mid of April 2020. We do hope that the EC will accept it.
 - o **TYPES of IN-KIND Contributions:**
 - o the in-kind contributions will have to be monetarised to be added to the in-cash in order to support the decision on the Partnership candidates to be selected for application to EC cofounding.
 - o Reminder: The key criteria for being “selected for applying to a Partnership funded by the EC under Horizon Europe” will be i) fitting the EC’s criteria (cf. Annex 3 of the Horizon Europe Partial Agreement, December 2018), from which the EC evaluation template has been derived); ii) interest of the MS, and therefore their global financial commitments as announced in the upcoming official consultation (summer 2020).
- **NEW** – When is Water4All currently planned for? 2022 as suggested by DG RTD considering the current information coming back from MS. But this is flexible and will depend of the official positions of the MS during the consultation launched end of May 2020.
- What happens if Water4All (or members) is not able to deliver after signing the grant agreement? As for all EC supported projects (such the H2020 CSA or Cofund), signing the GA is binding for all partners (cf. HE financial regulations under discussion)
- Is the national representative also responsible for local and regional commitments? At this stage of information about the overall governance of the Partnerships, what is foreseen can be summarised as following:
 - o MS will have National representatives in the Strategic Partnership Forum (the instance replacing the GPC) and Cluster Programme Committees (replacing the H2020 Societal Challenge programme committees).
 - o As discussing during the ERALEARN Workshop beginning of March 2020, the EC is discussing with MS the possible request to have for each partnership another layer of representation (External Governing Board for integrating EC in decisions or Strategic Steering Board (with MS Ministries, EC and funding bodies).
 - o HE Partnership will have their own Governing board, with representatives of the funding parties.
- Therefore, the responsibilities will be on the funders committing to the Partnership activities.

Water4All Funding

- Is it possible to specify what percentage of budget is Research / Non-research / Coordination? As explained during the preparatory workshop, see slide on budget distribution by Actions Pillars.
- Is the global budget 400 - 450 Mio including the 50 % from the EC Contribution? Meaning 200 - 225 Mio from the member states? Yes, MS contribution could be from national and/or regional budgets, from different stakeholders if eligible.
- **NEW** – Is 50% EC contribution realistic? This is a proposal based on the elements given by DG RTD / Partnership unit (between 30% for partnerships with only joint calls to 70% as for some EJPs under H2020). Considering the types of activities and the level of ambitions, the proposal was set on a 50% basis.
- Does the Commission intend to give a top-up of 50% on all activities (all pillars), including the management costs and secretariats? How will the money of the MS and EC be allocated among the activities? As explained during the preparatory workshop, the EC contribution will be given to the Partnership based on the range of activities proposed (range from 30 to 70% announced by EC since the beginning of the discussions on partnerships). It will then up to the Partnership consortium to distribute this EC contribution as it was the case in the ERANET Cofund.
- **NEW** - What will be the proportion of the top-up of 50 % from COM that will be distributed to the RFOs of MS? It will then up to the Partnership consortium to decide on how to distribute the EC

contribution between the different activities (specific ratio for each activity?), while considering the level of involvement and engagement of each RFO of the Partnership consortium. This discussion will come at a later stage (i.e. application phase, if the proposal is accepted and integrated in the Horizon Europe work programme).

- **NEW** - Is it possible to have in-kind collaboration between public research institutes with top-up, not only between governmental research organizations? As explained during the preparatory workshop, this was a question asked to DG RTD / Partnership Unit in the first version of the Water4All Partnership candidate document. This was important to establish the type of co-funded partnership (several possible models proposed by EC). As they did not answer, we were requested to propose a budget and a funding mechanism in line with what was announced in different instances (e.g. Shadow Committee meetings, ERALEARN Workshop). See Chapter 3.2 of the proposal. If accepted, the in-kind contributions should be monetarized and will count in MS contributions.
- Is it possible to use structural funds or combine e.g. interreg with water4all activities? At this stage, the EC announced the possibility of using structural funds in HE Partnerships – Specific agreement under finalisation. This is why it is mentioned in Water4All and proposed as ways of integrating regional funders in the Partnership.
- **NEW** – How will be manage the integration of regions in such partnership? A balance should be found between integration of such local partners and the manageability of such consortium. A selection should be done for ensuring geographical and topical interests for covering the most important water crisis situations (droughts, resources demands in progress ...) and allowing replication of proposed solutions in other regions presenting the same initial conditions. Definite and aims at the European level should be detailed for such integration.
- **NEW** – About the partners, how regions could integrate with their usual operators (e.g. regional innovation centres managing specific funding programmes)? Based on the current available information, the regions joining the Partnership consortium could integrate them as third parties if they cannot give them a full mandate for joining on their behalf.
- Is it possible to have specific calls for regions? That will be up to the Partnership consortium to decide on this. This could be the way to implement some activities in Pillar D (e.g. D2).

Water4All foreseen Partners (Core, Associated)

- Can international partners participate in Pillar C and D? We would appreciate to participate especially in pillar D so that we can also share some innovations that could be demonstrated in Europe or have access to test relevant European innovations in our countries. I will be an opportunity missed if it only focuses on EU Living Labs Innovations. Yes, we do hope so. The Pillar E (Internationalisation) is seen as cross-cutting to all others (for participation in activities) with some specific actions (new / innovative tools for International Cooperation to be developed and tested). But we don't know yet how it will be possible (the main reason for separating the Pillar E). The conditions will depend on the current discussion on the association status with Horizon Europe and of possible additional bilateral agreement such as yours (ZA – EC). If you look at the Annexes where the actions are detailed, several references to actions in international countries have been added for promoting this approach.
- What is the difference between Core partners (CP) and Associate partners (AP) with regards to eligibility to access funds. For example for pillar B (RDI) if SA is an AP therefore only providing in kind funds (is this right) will SA researchers still be eligible to access the funds for their participation in the projects? The Core partners (who will be part of the Partnership consortium and sign the EC Grant Agreement) will be those funding most activities in cash and in in-kind in line with the Partnership SRIA – SO FUNDERS. The Associated Partners will be those only contributing on specific actions (e.g. only demonstration) in in-kind (e.g. giving access to their research infrastructures or observatories data, testing innovative solutions on their facilities for replicating). The distinction between CP and AP is done on the funding model. So if ZA is providing funds in the Partnership activities (as in the COFUND), ZA will be Core Partner.
- **NEW** - About the partners, is the idea to have Research Ministries and R&I Funding Agencies and also

to include Environmental Ministries and Agencies? Yes, we do hope that other funders will be able to commit to the Partnership work programme and then join the consortium.

- **NEW** - How to manage possible conflicts of interest of some associated partners (preparation vs. participation in open calls)? E.g. Industry is key to achieve the objectives of Water4All. That is one of the reasons the current proposal is based on participation as associated partners with limited role and direct contribution to some specific activities. Cf. chapter 3.3. about the Governance.
- **NEW** - Is there any fee to be full member of the partnership? No as it will be an EC funded project. Nevertheless, active contributions from the partners involved in the Partnership consortia are expected for being able to achieve all objectives (e.g. participation to Partnership meetings for developing SRIA, Implementation plan and taking decisions in Governing Board meetings, acting actively in participating / managing activities proposed).

Water4All operational Implementation:

- Specification of and variable geometry in the foreseen 6 calls – At this stage, it is planned to act as in the Water JPI (develop implementation plan, propose individual action to officialise commitments). Please note that the EC is requesting annual work programmes for the Partnerships, which will be resources consuming compared to our current 3 years IP.
- Can we integrate partners later in the process? It may be difficult according EC declaration at the ERALEARN Workshop (only possibility of withdrawing participation, initial setting of the EC contribution – no possibility of increasing EC contribution during the implementation).
- Is it possible to have a combined secretariat with other partnerships? As it was the case for the JPIs, some activities could be mutualised if common and shared standards, procedures, tools. The EC has tried to propose their submission platform to partnerships. The test has not be conclusive for PRIMA. This is still under discussion with MS and within EC to have a tool flexible enough for all types of calls and in line with the future monitoring criteria. In addition, each Partnership will need to have its own governance structure for managing its activities, which are broader. At this stage, without further details on the content of other partnerships, and considering the nature of activities, this would be difficult.
- How to deal with differences in national eligibility? Would it not be easy to have an European legal entity for (all) partnerships, that carries out the activities with harmonized national eligibility (similar to ERICs for RI?). These are not necessarily interlinked questions.
 - o The ERICs are selected for getting EC funded using EU standards which have been approved by MS and the budget for the ERIC activities is coming from the unique FP budget source.
 - o You can have a legal entity, without mandate on the financial issues raised (e.g. PRIMA foundation).
 - o For having uniform eligibility, it will mean alignment of eligibility to common standards (to be approved by the funders) and transfer of funds from national / regional funders in the structure, which will deal with all issues from call announcement to contracting of all research teams.
 - o As far as we know, this is not approved by the MS.
- It is for partnerships, like JPIs, difficult/impossible to make any arrangement with institutes and countries outside Europe (if we want to), because they are no legal entities. Nevertheless, it is possible to have other partners joining activities via MoU. This was kept as such to keep the necessary flexibility and variable geometry requested by the partners for such Partnership. The next step of integration is then asking for an Article 185, which requests prior commitments to align national and/or regional investments, to pool resources (long-term financial commitments from MS) and critical mass, with regard to the size and the number of programmes involved, the similarity or complementarity of activities and the share of relevant research they cover.
- International cooperation is quite ambitious. There is also overlap with existing national activities in international cooperation e.g. Water Operator Partnerships, it is therefore not clear to me why this should be part of Water4All. As explained during the preparatory workshop, the proposed activities

have to go beyond the current Partnerships activities and be transformative, in a multi-national mode. It's about creating critical mass. This type of actions has been proposed by the International partners contacted during the preparation phase.

- **NEW** – Will Pillar A be an in-kind contribution from all Water4All partners? Part of what is currently proposed in Pillar A, the SRIA elaboration, will have to be launched rapidly as the SRIA should be drafted before the adoption of COM proposals and the launch of the Partnership. This can be considered as an in-kind contribution of Water4All partners.
- **NEW** – Are there possibilities for funding activities in third countries (e.g. Africa)? This is not yet decided, will depend of future association status of the countries. Attention also to existing or under development EU programmes which have such objectives (e.g. PRIMA ...).
- **NEW** – How will the calls be managed and which rules (EU, national/regional) will prevail? This will have to be further confirmed by the European Commission instrument provisions. But as the non-institutionalised co-funded partnership is replacing the H2020 Eranet Cofund instrument, it's considered that the same rules will apply: Everything in common (call content design, call implementation, call evaluation, funded projects monitoring, based on best practices), except funding: each Partnership partner funds its activities and its communities' participation under its own national / regional regulation (so-called virtual common pot).
 - o This is also an occasion to pursue efforts launched in 2008 for aligning national / regional procedures and for implementing best practices and being more efficient for maximising impacts of funding programmes.
- **NEW** – Do you have already defined how the IPRs will be managed? This will be up to the Partnership consortium to define the rules. Nevertheless, in past experiences, the following principles were used for i) R&I projects funded under Joint Transnational Calls under the umbrella of the Water JPI, and ii) the outputs of the Partnership consortium activities by itself.
 - o Each funded project consortium will generate its own results and has an obligation to conclude, in turn of its own CA, to deal with exploitation issues and undertake exploitation actions according to the nature and objectives of the research performed by the consortium. It is up to the owners within each funded project consortium to decide on whether first seek protection for IPR or whether publish, in particular using the OD/OA policies. IPR rules should be set at the funded project level, through the development and signature of multilateral Consortium Agreements.
 - o For the outputs generated by the Partnership consortium by itself, Relevant provisions for Exploitation of Results carried out will be developed in accordance with the Horizon Europe provisions (Partnership consortium binded by EC Grant Agreement with obligations of exploitation as in H2020 regulation). Several rules were previously elaborated which could be used as basis of discussion (Joint Ownership of the Results, Access rights to Results for Exploitation of own Results).
- **NEW** – What will the budget of the Partnership cover for MS representatives to participate in official meetings of the Partnership? This will be up to the Partnership consortium to define the rules of using the EC contribution for such types of expenses (in relation with Partnership management costs) vs. contributions to operational activities. This will be done at a later stage of development of the proposal (i.e. application phase, if the proposal is accepted and integrated in the Horizon Europe work programme).

Water4All Communication documents:

- Will there be a public (better readable) friendly version of the Water4All proposal to spread nationally? A 2-page summary has been established and disseminated since February 2020, in addition to the template document imposed by the EC. During the February consultation, the MS National Contact Points requested more information to clarify the EC template, which has to serve for the official consultation.
 - o What would you like to see in such better readable / friendly version?

Connection to and Coordination with other Partnerships under development

- **NEW** – How this demand from EC and MS should be done? Operationalised? There are several dimensions and related issues in this demand:
 - o Complement HE intervention area work programme and Partnership work programmes
 - o Have a coordinated answer reflected in annual work programme of each Partnership
 - o Ensure that the demands for regulatory environment are properly and completely answered by the different Partnerships' inputs and outputs
 - o Need to coordinate Member States' answers
 - o alignment with national strategies & programmes and related funding with the annual work programme of each Partnership

It will require coordination on the topics (SRIA development) and the activities (implementation Plan, annual work programme).

At this stage, the first discussions with other Partnerships under development (Workshop 28 May 2020) led to some key recommendations:

- collaboration on the basis of the challenges faced ("Challenge approach" vs. cluster approach or global strategic approach) to keep it close to the challenge requirements;
- Keep the approach flexible (no one-size-fits all approach, variable perimeter as some common issues might require other for a of discussion – e.g. operating living labs in cofounded partnership, common data issues,)
- Keep it simple and manageable in terms of objectives for avoiding too many meetings and related administrative burdens
- Investigate if there will be EC requirements and eventually there could be incentive provided by EC to make this happen (e.g. JRC infrastructure under development).

Connection to Mission Boards programmes

- Mission on Oceans Seas and Inland Waters is being disseminated as the "Mission on Oceans" (May be in relation with the profiles of the mission board members who are in majority related to the ocean topic). How will the Partnership and the actions issues by the Mission Board connect? As explained during the preparatory workshop, we are waiting for the effective action proposals of the relevant Mission Boards. Please remember that Missions are not about Research and Innovation by essence, but delivery to the Public. For establishing their proposals, each Mission Board is conducting public consultations. With the Covid19 crisis, this is currently announced as delayed. The EC has recently produced a synthesis document presenting their development status that has been sent to the Shadow Committee Members for their information.

Integration Water JPI/ Water4All

- What will happen with Water JPI, do we put it at sleep for 7 years (and are there still costs involved?) or is it better to wind it up? Please see GB16 Meeting Package – Annex h-a. It will be a decision of the Governing Board.
- What will be the links/synergies between Water JPI GB and Water4All GB? If there is no an 100% overlap between members of Water JPI and Water4all, the Water JPI will be considered as one of the partners to be connected. If there is 100% overlap the question is not valid. However, this is not what it is expected, we are not developing something very different from our functionalities.
- What will be the role of the secretariat JPI/Water4all? The JPI Secretariat should continue on the EC funded projects launched for the implementation of the JPI and the stand alone activities. This will decrease in the future (see ending time of each individual EC supported projects), even more in case

of mutualisation of some central tasks (e.g. unique AB transferred in Partnership). The Water4all partnership will have its own Secretariat team for managing its activities on a daily basis, activities that go further beyond the Water JPI. Synergies between both can be expected.

- What will happen to the Water JPI member fee after 2022? New calculation? **Yes. See proposal in chapter “Interrelations between Water4All and Water JPI”.**