

EDITORIAL

Last December 6th, 2011, the Council of the European Union decided to formally launch our Joint Programming Initiative (JPI). In their [decision document](#), the Council expressed that our JPI contributes to the reduction of fragmentation of efforts by Member States and will step up the mobilisation of skills, knowledge and resources, with a view to strengthening Europe's leadership and competitiveness on Water research and innovation.



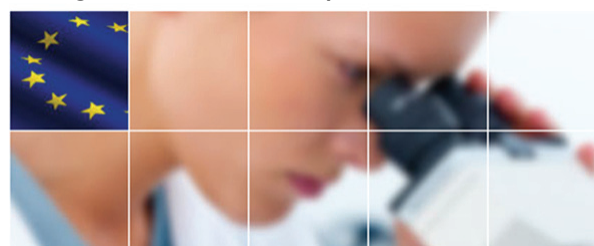
COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

The Council noted that water has been recognized as a growing societal challenge and an innovation priority by the Europe 2020 Flagship Initiative Innovation Union. The European Council issues recommendations including:

- Development of a Strategic Research Agenda resulting in joint calls for proposals or mobilisation of resources;
- Cooperation with the Framework Programme, related JPIs and the Strategic Forum for International Science and Technology Cooperation ([SFIC](#));
- Information exchange on relevant national programmes and reinforcing joint foresight exercises.
- Feeding policy-making at national and Union level with appropriate scientific and technological information; and
- Creation of networks between centers dedicated to water research, among other issues.

THE OPINIONS OF WATER JPI PARTNERS

Our partners were delighted to hear the good news coming from the Council. In December 16th, a meeting for the expected call for a Coordination and Support Action (CSA) for the JPI was held in Madrid. On this occasion, we interviewed a few JPI partners, asking them about their personal views...



Elena, in your opinion, how will this initiative contribute to the sharing of research infrastructures in Europe?

The preparation phase of the JPI Water has already mobilized different research centres and more institutions even at national level. In fact, the need of having one representative in the Governing Board, one in the Executive Board and possibly a member in the Scientific and Technological Board and in the Stakeholders Advisory Group has triggered the establishing of a national network involved in water research and interested in cooperating in this new challenging EU initiative. The main European research infrastructures contributing to the water ERANETs are now taking part in this JPI, which has also strong links to the other European water networks such as [Euraqua](#) and the [WssTP](#). Therefore, this initiative represents a very good occasion to strengthen the European collaboration in water research and share needs, results, experiences and knowledge.

Kata-Riina, do you think the JPI will produce relevant calls for proposals? Yes, definitely. Of course this will depend on how successfully the strategic research agenda is able to raise the research questions that lead to breakthroughs or fill the research gaps in the field of water. To reach this goal will require wide expert consultation and fruitful

cooperation within the European countries and that is what this JPI is aiming at.



Per was asked if he sees possibilities to cooperate with other JPIs. There is an urgent need for cooperation with several other JPIs, as fresh water management is crucial particularly for areas as agriculture and climate (irrigation, run-off, etc), climate change (increasing frequency and intensity of extreme events like floods and drought), coasts and oceans (river discharges into the oceans), cultural heritage (monuments, art and buildings prone to damage by water), urban planning and circulation (water supply and sanitation is crucial for city life, furthermore, cities are very often located close to rivers or lakes, prone to occasional floodings).



Jean Philippe, How do you envisage the water Industry benefited with this initiative? I expect such benefits from two added values of the JPI. First, by joining forces and organising a better coverage of prioritised research objectives, JPI will increase the efficiency of research. Second, close cooperation with the WssTP and an active contribution to a possible "water efficiency" EIP, will act as levers to increase the connection between research and innovation for competitiveness.

Catarina, how do you see the potential of this initiative for activities beyond Europe?

A coordinated water research policy and a common strategic research agenda will certainly highlight the strengths of the Community. On the one hand this will facilitate a coordinated alignment at the international cooperation level. On the other hand, JPI-Water will confer a sense of togetherness to their participants that in turn will imply a stronger position to negotiate the international cooperation programmes in R&D and Innovation.

Neil was asked how he thinks JPI will help researchers and technologists.

The Water JPI will provide an exciting new and powerful framework to enhance the mobility of researchers and technologists both within, and outside Europe. The vision of the JPI is to maximise the benefits of sharing knowledge through the movement of specialists between countries, and between research organisations and organisations that use this knowledge.

Last but not least, Hans was asked about the relevance of the Council decision.

The relevance of the approval is twofold. First, obviously, JPI countries have presented a vision document that answers to the grand challenges around water, like scarcity, droughts and floods. Secondly, it gives us authority to elaborate our vision on water to a strategic research agenda. In the implementation of the Strategic Research Agenda significant benefits will be achieved in terms of synergy, effectiveness and efficiency.

A CSA PROPOSAL IN THE MAKING

We have started our preparations for the expected CSA call on the Water JPI... Stay tuned for more news!



UPCOMING EXTERNAL EVENTS

World Water Forum

The [event](#) will be organized in March 12-17th in Marseille.

ESOF 2012

The Euroscience Open Forum ([ESOF](#)) is Europe's largest, general science meeting. Save the dates of July 11-15, 2012 for this event in Dublin.



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