

Water challenges for a changing world

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EDITORIAL

We hope you had a pleasant summer break and feel full of energy to restart your everyday's activities. It has been a strange summer: hot and sunny weeks in Scandinavia, long periods of cloudy sky and frequent rain in the Mediterranean countries. Not to mention the devastating flash floods, which hit some places in northern and southern Italy. We have experienced indeed the impacts of climate change on our 2014 summer holidays!

Despite this vacation period, the Water JPI activities have gone on intensively: a task force was established to find a new model of governance for this important European intergovernmental initiative and a questionnaire was circulated to gather suggestions among the members of the Governing Board.

In addition, a second task force was busy with the finalising of the Water JPI Implementation Plan. Last but not least, our coordinator asked us in August to provide answers on the national policies and tools to reach alignment of the national research and innovation agendas with the EU strategies, in order to create a unique European Research Area. So we have filled in another questionnaire...

PROGRESS OF THE WATER JPI ACTIVITIES

Three important meetings of the Water JPI took place in Dublin in the first week of this month. The discussions among the participants focused mainly on three topics: the Implementation Plan, the Mapping of European Water Research and Innovation and the update of the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA).

Water JPI Implementation Plan:

The first Implementation Plan of the Water JPI is quickly progressing and the final draft will be available soon. Hopefully this reshaped draft will be a clearer, sharper and useful guidance tool for implementers of national and regional programmes, researchers, technologists and society at large, as it presents a set of timed priority research and innovation actions. These activities have been selected from the new version of Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda in order to accelerate progress in tackling European Water Challenges.

Water JPI Mapping of Water Research:

A renovated effort in mapping European Water Research and Innovation has been ongoing since 2013. This effort will yield its first visible fruit in December 2014, when the mapping report will be published. This report will include:

- A combination of surveys of research and innovation priorities, strategies, funding agencies and performers.
- Interviews of key European persons in water research and innovation; and
- The analysis of scientific publications and patents, providing maps of intensity of efforts.

The mapping report will be a milestone in European analyses of research and innovation.

Water JPI Strategic Research & Innovation Agenda:

At the last meeting, progress towards the next version of the Water JPI SRIA (2.0) was discussed. Arrangements were made to plan for the review of additional documents, discuss the issues, draft the sections, consult with the Advisory Boards and ad hoc experts, and perform an open consultation. The upcoming version of the SRIA will be published by the end of 2015, and represents a continued three-year effort in foresight.

Meanwhile the new updated version of the SRIA (1.0) adopted on 30th June 2014 is published in our [website](#). The Water JPI [position paper](#) on Horizon 2020 Societal Challenge 5 is available for consultation from the Water JPI website.

WATER JPI STRATEGIC RESEARCH AND INNOVATION AGENDA

The development of the Water JPI SRIA 1.0 has been a long process, which started with the publication of the Water JPI [Vision Document](#) in 2011 as well as the consultation of the Water JPI Advisory Boards and experts of the water sector. The SRIA 1.0 provides a framework for future Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) activities and European investments in the water sector, which amount to over 500 M € per year.

The WATER JPI SRIA lays out RDI needs grouped by thematic areas and priorities around these five core themes: **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.**

Focusing on tools and measures to provide effective solutions to these most relevant water challenges, the Water JPI SRIA intends to contribute to boost the competitiveness and growth of the European water sector. A launching event of the SRIA version 1.0 will be held in Brussels on October 21st. During this conference, the Water JPI Implementation Plan covering the JPI activities for the period 2014-2016 will also be presented and discussed.

PUBLIC BOOM FOR THE WATER JPI WEBSITE

The launch of the Water JPI Pilot Call in December 2013 and the information provided on the progress of the evaluation procedure in early 2014 until the final funding decision have considerably increased the visitors number of our [website](#).

The online public consultation on the new version of the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda opened in

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April and the publication of the SRIA 1.0 last June have also contributed to raise the interest in the activities of the Water JPI on present and future water challenges.

Figures are really encouraging and fully rewarding our efforts, with **48,745** website hits from January 2014 to the end of August 2014. In addition, it has been also registered a constant increasing trend of monthly visitors interested in the Water JPI developments.

CLOSER COOPERATION WITH OTHER INITIATIVES ON WATER

Some of the Water JPI partners are representatives of the funding agencies partners in the FP6 ERANET on "**Integrated water resources management**", which supported six European research projects. They will take part in the final conference of the [IWRM-Net](#) scientific coordination project, which will take place in Brussels on next 21-22 October at the CSIC Office in Rue du Trône 62. The projects ClimAware, IMPACT, ICARUS, ESAWADI, WATER-2-ADAPT and Water Cap & Trade have investigated new solutions for integrated water resources management in Europe under three main themes: climate change and adaptation, water scarcity and droughts, economics and social values for IWRM.

The Water JPI coordinator and secretariat will also be at the [Annual Conference](#) of the European Innovation Partnership on Water scheduled for 5th November 2014 in Barcelona. This event will be a very good occasion to interact with the 25 EIP Water Action Groups, the European Commission, the European Water Platform WssTP and other water-related organisations.

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Interactions of soil hydrology, land use and climate change

The Environmental Protection Agency of Ireland has just released the Research Report *STRIVE 118 Interactions of Soil Hydrology, Land Use and Climate Change and their Impact on Soil Quality* available from this [link](#).

The European Commission adopted a Soil Thematic Strategy (COM(2006) 231) on 22 September 2006 with the objective to protect soils across the EU. While the Commission in May 2014 decided to withdraw the proposal for a Soil Framework Directive, the Seventh Environment Action Programme, which entered into force on 17 January 2014, recognises that soil degradation is a serious challenge. It provides that by 2020 land is managed sustainably in the Union, soil is adequately protected and the remediation of contaminated sites is well underway and commits the EU and its Member States to increasing efforts to reduce soil erosion and increase soil organic matter and to remediate contaminated sites.

The study produced a quantifiable hydraulic classification to be used for hydraulic modelling purposes. The research team also combined mathematical and GIS modelling techniques to carry out a risk assessment of the threats to Irish soils, namely surface sealing, erosion, loss of organic matter and landslides.

Launch of on-line soil maps completes the Irish Soils jigsaw

A harmonised soil map of Ireland with an associated web-based soil information system has been unveiled jointly today by Teagasc and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Freely available through a public web site, the Third Edition National Soil Map details the pattern and properties of all Ireland's 213 soil types at a scale of 1:250,000. The Irish Soil Information System is the largest research project funded by the EPA, with a total budget €4.8m. Launching the Irish Soil Information System at Johnstown Castle, Co. Wexford, Prof Gerry Boyle, Director of Teagasc, said: "*The publication of the Irish Soil Information System opens a new chapter for agriculture and for our environment. For the first time, after three generations of soil science, we have a complete picture of the diversity and properties of soils in Ireland. Figuratively speaking, this is equivalent to 'the initial sequencing of Ireland's soil genome.'*" Laura Burke, Director General, EPA, said: "*Our soils are an irreplaceable natural resource that provide ecosystem services, protect biodiversity and act as a major store of carbon. This work will help us understand how this resource can be sustainably managed and how it is impacted by the policy decisions Ireland makes. The Irish Soil Information System forms a rich resource for the agricultural sector, researchers, educators and policy makers as they respond to the most significant challenges of our time: sustainable farming, water quality and Climate Change.*"

The Soil Information System will facilitate more targeted and effective implementation of the River Basin District Management Plans, and will aid in progression towards Tier-3 reporting on greenhouse gas emissions. Improving the evidence base that underpins policy development will result in greater synergies between increased food production and environmental sustainability.

The Irish Soil Information System was funded by the EPA STRIVE Programme, and co-funded and managed by Teagasc, in collaboration with Cranfield University and University College Dublin.

The Irish Soil Information System is available [here](#).

The EPA report from the Irish Soil Information System research project is available [here](#).

Report on Water Innovation Europe 2014

Under the title '*Water In Europe: Green Tape or Blue Gold*', the annual stakeholder conference of the European Water Platform WssTP took place on 25- 26 June in Brussels with over 200 participants from all the aspects of the European water. The [report](#) on the conference results highlights four strategic research priority areas: systemic eco-innovation for a circular economy; nature-based solutions; climate services, and city blueprints for smarter cities and regions. These four strategic research priority areas indicate a huge number of opportunities for a sustainable water sector to support economic growth, resource efficiency and the creation of smart green jobs. The 4 winners of the WssTP Water Innovation SMEs Awards 2014 were:

- Amphiro from Switzerland,
- LG Sound from the Netherlands,
- Oxymer from Ireland, and
- Sansox Oy from Finland

Results of the stakeholder consultation for H2020 SC5

The stakeholder consultation for the Horizon 2020 Societal Challenge 5 (Climate Action, Environment, Resource Efficiency and Raw Materials) closed on 23 June 2014. The short analysis available [here](#) provides the findings. The report from the Expert Advisory Group for the Horizon 2020 Societal Challenge 5 can also be downloaded from [here](#).

Horizon 2020 Mediterranean Report

The Horizon 2020 Mediterranean Report is a joint effort of the EEA and UNEP/MAP (United Nations Environment Programme - Mediterranean Action Plan) resulting from the creation of a regular review mechanism of environmental progress in the three Horizon 2020 policy priorities. These are municipal waste, urban waste water and industrial pollution. This [report](#) also serves as a contribution to the mid-term review of the Horizon 2020 initiative.

European consultation on water reuse

As a follow-up to the [Blueprint](#) strategy to safeguard Europe's water resources, the Commission aims to evaluate the most suitable EU-level instruments to foster water reuse, while ensuring the health and environmental safety of water reuse practices and the free trade of food products. This internet-based consultation is part of the European Commission's efforts to understand the citizens' and stakeholders' views on the need for and possible range of measures, which could be undertaken in order to foster safe water reuse solutions. The consultation is open until the 7 November 2014. Click [here](#) for the questionnaire.

EEA publication on water services

"Performance of Water Utilities beyond Compliance" is a recent [report](#) from the European Environment Agency prepared in cooperation with European water associations representing almost 70,000 utilities for around 400 million citizens. This publication provides updated data on water distribution losses, waste water treatment and energy required for producing, transporting and treating this essential natural resource.

OPPORTUNITIES

Horizon 2020 Societal Challenge 5 Call is open



The revised work programme for 2015 was published on the 22 July 2014. Download the revised Work Programme from [here](#).

Please note the dates for submission of proposals addressing the 2015 topics:

Single stage and the first stage of two-stage topics : 21 April 2015

Second stage of two-stage topics: 8 September 2015

Collaboration with Canadian researchers



The Canadian partners in the initiative [ERA-Can+](#) have organized a series of [webinars](#) on the opportunities to collaborate in Canadian research programmes.

Traineeship in the EU for Japanese students



EU industrial companies have the opportunity to host a Japanese student as a trainee for 8 months, applying to the Vulcanus in Europe programme financed by the Japanese Ministry for Economy, Trade and Industry.

Deadline for applications is next 30 September. More information is available [here](#).

ACQUEAU open call



The autumn session 2014 [call](#) of the EUREKA cluster on water (ACQUEAU) is open. For further information contact [Capucine Beunes-Devauze](#).

Kyoto World Water Grand Prize



This prize aims to find and develop outstanding activities related to water issues around the world. The selection process for this 4th Prize will focus on organisations with a record of innovative activities that may serve as a model for others. The 2,000,000 JPY will be awarded during the 7th World Water Forum in Daegu-Gyeongbuk (12-17 April 2015). More information is available [here](#).

LIFE call for action grants



The first call of the LIFE Programme 2014-2020 is open on the website of DG Environment. Public bodies, private commercial and not commercial organisations are invited to submit their project proposals taking into account this [Orientation Document](#). Deadline for traditional projects is next 16 October at 16:00 (Brussels time); preparatory projects can be submitted until 29 October 2014 16:00 (Brussels time). Details are available [here](#).

Science Foundation Ireland Professorship Programme



The aim of this programme, collaborative with all the Irish Universities, is to attract world class researchers to Ireland in areas of strategic national interest. The Targeted Science Foundation Ireland (SFI) Research Professorship Programme 2014 will be delivered by Science Foundation Ireland and will provide research funding of approximately €5 million for each successful applicant. Some areas, especially in relation to Smart Cities are of relevance to Water RDI. For more information, please go to the SFI website at this [link](#).

Open consultation on Horizon 2020



A [consultation](#) on Science with and for Society Work Programme 2016-2017 is open until next 12 October at the homepage of DG Research and Innovation.

The questionnaire to be filled in by citizens and organizations in order to provide inputs to the European Commission is available [here](#).

ECHA traineeships



The European Chemicals Agency offers 20 traineeship opportunities to European scientific universities graduated. More information is provided [here](#).

Einstein Professorship Programme



The goal of this programme managed by the Chinese Academy of Sciences is to strengthen science and technology links, cooperation and exchange between CAS scientists and distinguished international professors.

For more information click [here](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

International Conference on Hydrosience



This 11th [ICHE2014](#) event will be held in Hamburg from 28th September to 2nd October and will focus on hydro-engineering for environmental challenges.

Workshop on Managed Aquifer Recharge



The FP7 project DEMAU will held a workshop on managed aquifer recharge and emerging micropollutants near Barcelona on next 2 October. The programme of the day is available [here](#).

WETSUS Congress



The Dutch Centre of excellence for sustainable water technology Wetsus will held its annual congress titled "From Knowledge to Business" in Leeuwarden on next 6–7 October. Click [here](#) to see the full programme.

High level conference on European Science



A two-day [conference](#) titled "The future of Europe is Science" will be held in Lisbon on 6-7 October to take stock of European achievements in science over the past 10 years.

Bioeconomy Stakeholders Conference



The 3rd Bioeconomy Stakeholders Conference "From sectors to system, from concept to reality" will be hosted by the Italian presidency of the Council of the EU in Turin on 8-9 October 2014.

For more information click [here](#).

The 8th Shallow Lakes Conference



This event will be held from 12-17 October 2014 in Antalya, Turkey. Details are provided [here](#).

Conference on Sustainable Watershed Management



This international event will be held at Sarigerme in Turkey from 13-17 October 2014. For more information, view the [programme](#).

XII International Exhibition of Water Technologies



This event focusing on technologies for treatment and distribution of drinking water and wastewater treatment will take place in Bologna from next 22-24 October.

Click [here](#) for details.

European River Restoration Conference



The 6th edition of the European River Restoration Conference, integrated with the final event of the SEE River project, will be held from 27- 29 October in Vienna.

More details are available [here](#).



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