

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH *November 2015*

EU-Mexico cooperation

Carlos Moedas flew to Mexico where he signed the implementing arrangement at the Mexican National Council of Science and Technology (CONACYT) headquarters. The Commissioner also attended meetings at Ministry of Energy (SENER) as well as the GEO Ministerial Summit at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Mexico City.



« Our many global and societal challenges are not the challenges of the future. They are already the challenges of today. »

Carlos Moedas

For full speech please visit: <http://ec.europa.eu/commission/2014-2019/moedas>

Dear Reader,

We are pleased to announce that the European Commission has officially set up the EC Scientific Advice Mechanism («SAM») in November. Its aim is to support the Commission with high quality, timely and independent scientific advice for its policy-making activities. This will contribute to the quality of EU legislation, in line with the Better Regulation agenda. Click to read the full [news alert](#).

We are also happy to report that the implementing arrangement signed with Mexico is the 5th agreement signed this year, after Argentina, Japan, China and South Africa. It represents one more step towards an EU-CELAC Common Research Area!

Best regards,

The Editors

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Commissioner Moedas' first mission to Latin America

EU–Mexico enhanced cooperation in Research and Innovation

The momentum and visibility of EU-Mexico research cooperation was increased Commissioner Moedas' first visit to Mexico. His visit started with a very constructive meeting with Dr Cabrero Mendoza, Director General of the Mexican National Council of Science and Technology (CONACYT) At Conacyt headquarters, Commissioner Moedas signed an Implementing arrangement between the European Research Council (ERC) and CONACYT to allow Mexico's most promising young researchers to come to Europe and temporarily join ERC-led research teams. At the signing ceremony were present rectors of major Mexican universities participating in the FP7 and Horizon 2020 programmes. A meeting with Pedro Joaquín Coldwell, Mexican Minister of Energy provided the opportunity to discuss future S&T cooperation opportunities in renewable energies. The Commissioner set out the progress on renewables in Europe and the political goals pursued in the context of the Energy Union. The coordinated geothermal call was mentioned as well as possible further cooperation opportunities important for both sides in the context of the COP21. The first coordinated call between the EU and Mexico on geothermal energy was published in October as part of the Horizon 2020 work programme for 2016-2017, with a total budget of €20 million with each side equally contributing. This call is expected to bring important benefits which range from accelerated technology development and increased knowledge and expertise to enhanced risk reduction. During the first day of the Commissioner's mission he also intervened at the 4th Annual Research Network Meeting of the Global Alliance for Chronic Diseases (GACD). He supported global collaboration against non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and implementation research in order to ensure a fast uptake and scale-up of healthcare innovations adapted to different settings and ensure that knowledge generated by research is actually used in real life. A working lunch with the President of ProMexico (confederation of industries) provided the opportunity to discuss and promote open innovation and Mexican SME participation in European R&I Programmes. On 13 November, Commissioner Moedas attended the GEO (Group on Earth Observation) 2015 Mexico City Ministerial Summit where he underlined the role of the EU in helping global earth observation systems reach maturity, namely through the Horizon 2020 and Copernicus programmes. The Commissioner co-chaired the opening session of GEO accompanied by the President of INEGI, Dr. Eduardo Sojo. During the meeting the Commissioner stated that «This meeting is a sign of our commitment to work together to tackle global challenges. We cannot afford to be the generation who failed in efforts to address these challenges».

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Commission signs Atlantic Ocean Research Cooperation declaration with Brazil and launches coordinated call on bio-fuels

The European Commission and the Brazilian government signed on 17 November 2015 in Rio de Janeiro a joint declaration for Atlantic Ocean Research to enhance marine cooperation between Europe and Brazil. The agreement follows the celebration of the EU-Brazil high level conference which aims to develop common expertise and scientific knowledge on the Atlantic Ocean and its dynamic systems, provide a new momentum for enhancing marine cooperation between Brazil and Europe and discuss how to further engage in joint research projects and improve reciprocal access to infrastructures. Carlos Moedas, European Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, said: "Both Brazil and the EU share common challenges within the Atlantic Ocean. I am certain that today's declaration will advance our future Research and Innovation collaboration and deepen our ties to solve some of the issues that our societies care more about". During his first official mission to Brazil Commissioner Moedas has also launched a coordinated call on bio-fuels together with FAPESP (the Research Funding Agency of the State of São Paulo), CONFAP (the Council of State Foundations for Research) and the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation. In addition, an open call organised by FAPESP has also been announced; this call will allow funding the participation of researchers from the State of São Paulo in projects successfully selected by Horizon 2020 – the EU's Framework Programme for Research and Innovation – While in São Paulo, Commissioner Moedas participated on 16 November in the first Destination Europe event organised in Latin America, which has presented the opportunities offered by the EU and its Member States to Brazilian researchers for carrying out research in Europe.



Photo: Commissioner Moedas and Celso Pansera, Brazilian Minister for Science, Technology and Innovation signing the joint declaration for Atlantic Ocean Research

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12th EU-China Joint Steering Committee in Beijing

The 12th EU-China Joint Steering Committee on Science and Technology Cooperation took place in Beijing on 30 October 2015 under the co-chairmanship of the European Commission Director-General for Research and Innovation Robert-Jan Smits and the Chinese Vice-Minister for Science and Technology (MOST) Cao Jianlin.

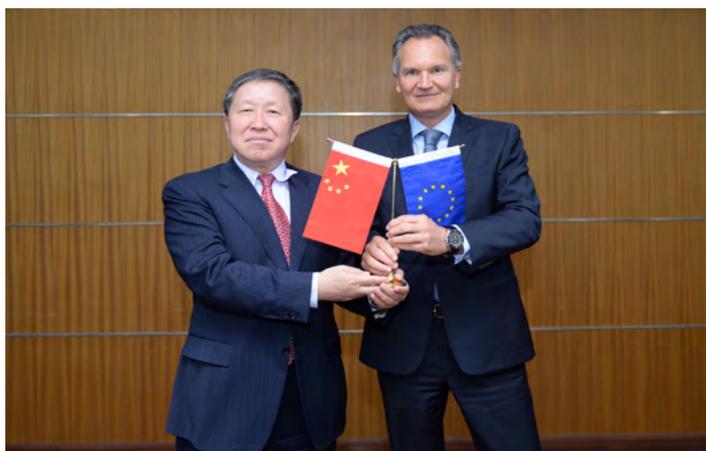


Photo: Director-General for Research and Innovation Robert-Jan Smits and the Chinese Vice Minister for Science and Technology Cao Jianlin

At this annual S&T policy dialogue the two sides reviewed the rich past cooperation and discussed priority areas of mutual interest such as food, agriculture and biotechnology, sustainable urbanisation, environment and climate change, nuclear energy and renewable energy, SME cooperation, research infrastructures and exchange of young scientists.

Substantial progress was made on the new EU-China Co-Funding Mechanism (CFM) for which Implementation Guidelines were agreed, and on reciprocal access to R&D funding programmes. As of 2016, MOST will allocate annually to the CFM up to 200 million RMB - or 28 million EUR - and provide competitive funding to China-based entities participating in joint projects with European partners under Horizon 2020. The CFM will be primarily used for Horizon 2020 topics targeting China (see [China](#) country page) but will also be open to virtually all areas of Horizon 2020.

On 29 October Director-General Smits co-chaired with MOST the 4th Euratom-China Joint Steering Committee on R&D cooperation on Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy. The meeting endorsed the 'Three-Year Report 2011-2014' on the effectiveness of the RD-PUNE cooperation and discussed new bilateral fusion collaborative activities. At the [2015 Research and Innovation Tour of China Beijing Event](#) on 30 October, together with representatives from the EU Member States, the Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology, and the Beijing Municipal S&T Commission, the Director-General addressed about 300 representatives of the

European and Chinese research and innovation communities in China emphasising the new opportunities offered for EU-China STI cooperation by the Horizon 2020 Work Programme 2016-17. Director-General Smits also met with representatives and researchers of Tsinghua University, the Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences and the Natural Science Foundation of China, all important partners in the overall EU-China cooperation, and debated with young innovative entrepreneurs at the Zhongguancun Innovation Street.

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Joint “DRAGON STAR Plus – JPI Urban Europe” Workshop on Sustainable Urbanisation cooperation between China and Europe in Beijing

China-Europe research and innovation collaboration in Sustainable Urbanisation is part of the overall EU-China Urbanisation Partnership, launched by the European Commission and the Chinese government in 2012. As response to the political commitments the European Commission is offering a package of concrete funding opportunities: at EU level with a series of sustainable urbanisation topics targeting China in Horizon 2020 and at EU Member States level with the JPI Urban Europe initiative (see <http://jpi-urbaneurope.eu/>), in order to increase the international visibility and scientific excellence of European urban research, technological development and innovation.

On 28 October, about 70 experts from China and Europe met in the Sino-German Center for Research Promotion in Beijing, to talk over future trends in Sustainable Urbanisation and to discuss efficient ways of collaboration between China and Europe with respect to the current fast urbanisation developments in China, including also the possibilities of future joint calls and systematic exchange of experiences and learning from the past. Future joint aspects in Sustainable Urbanisation between China and Europe will be addressed by the Belmont Forum and JPI Urban Europe in the near future. Additional cooperation instruments and strategies are currently assessed jointly by JPI Urban Europe and Chinese funding agencies and stakeholders, building upon the Strategic Research & Innovation Agenda of JPI Urban Europe, and on the Chinese research priorities and topics. The JPI Urban Europe Research Alliance invites Chinese research organisations to join forces on sustainable urbanization projects. Please see the event report [here](#).

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Fourth Steering Committee Meeting of the Euratom-China RD-PUNE Agreement

The fourth Euratom-China Steering Committee meeting (SC-4) of the «Agreement between Euratom and the Government of P.R.China for R&D Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy» (RD-PUNE Agreement) was held in Beijing on 29 October 2015. The Euratom delegation was led by DG Robert-Jan Smits, and the Chinese delegation by DDG CHEN Linhao, Head of International Cooperation at the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST). The SC-4 meeting aimed at reviewing the activities, state of play and future prospects of four subcommittees - with specific implementing agents - on: Fission Coordinated Actions (FCA) with RTD and CAEA (China Atomic Energy Authority); Nuclear Security and Safeguards (SS) with JRC and CAEA; Fusion Energy Research (FU) with RTD and MOST; and Nuclear Safety (NS) with JRC and NNSA (National Nuclear Safety Authority). The subcommittees' meetings FCA-3, SS-3 and FU-5 were held on the 27 and 28 of October in advance to the SC-4, which endorsed the following main outcomes:

- At FCA-3, RTD and CAEA agreed to complete the parallel coordinating actions between Euratom and the CAEA, to increase Chinese participation in the coming Call under the Euratom WP 2016-2017, to check further modalities of cooperation under specific provisions of the RD-PUNE Agreement by boosting reciprocal participation in R&D programmes of the other Party, pooling modules of ongoing R&D projects or programmes, and exchanging programmatic S&T expertise with technical visits and workshops.
- At FU-5, RTD and MOST recognized that the implementation of the bilateral Fusion Work Programme (2013-2020), composed of five programmatic objectives and associated specific priorities in support to ITER and DEMO, is being consolidated and a new impulse has been given to structuring strategic partnership through several actions launched by the Joint Programming Working Group.

It is expected that the agreed China-EU Co-Fund Mechanism, which also applies to the Euratom Programme, will contribute to increase bilateral nuclear research cooperation.



Photo: participants to Euratom-China 4th Steering Committee meeting

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Closing Conference of the INCO LAB project IMMUNOCAN in Shanghai

The FP7-funded Immunocan Project organised its closing Conference on Immune Biomarkers for Personalised Medicine in Oncology at the Fudan University Shanghai Cancer Centre on 12-13 November 2015. International experts from China, Europe and the USA gathered to discuss the latest achievements and trends on the interactions between tumour development and the immune system and the identification of relevant biomarkers for combining immuno-therapy with other more classic cancer treatments. The Immunocan project was selected further to the FP7 call for INCO-LAB aimed at promoting the European dimension of joint laboratories established in priority international partner countries. It contributed to the opening and expansion of the existing cooperation (since 2006) within the joint institute 'Fudan University Shanghai Cancer Centre-Institut Merieux' by involving Copenhagen University, the Hannover Medical School and the Italian National Institute of Tumor. The project conducted a prospective cohort study on lung, gastric, colorectal and breast cancer involving more than 400 patients and organised several summer schools, conferences and scientist exchanges. Following the opening ceremony which involved interventions from Professor CAO Xuetao Cao, President of the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences, Professor SHAO Zhimin, Director of Fudan University Cancer Institute, Professor GUO Xiaomao, Vice-President of Fudan University, Dr Romain Micol, Coordinator of the Immunocan Project, Axel Cruau, French Consul-General in Shanghai and Laurent Bochereau, EU Delegation in Beijing, a new three-year agreement was signed between the Institut Merieux and the Fudan University Shanghai Cancer Centre opening a new phase in the development of the joint international institute.



Photo: (l-r): At the table, Xiaomao GUO, President of Fudan University Shanghai Cancer Center and Heavy Ion Center - Marc Bonneville, Director of Scientific department, Institut Merieux

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EU-Africa round-table at EXPO Milan

On 18 October 2015 the International Cooperation Directorate of the DG RTD organised an interactive round-table session under the title: "Towards an EU-Africa Research and Innovation Partnership on food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture: Empowering youth and women to be the game-changers in S&T and innovation." The conference gathered representatives of the European Commission and the African Union, the 2 co-chairs of the HLPD expert working group, members of the ERAfrica project, as well as eminent speakers from UN agencies, the Global Development Network, Prolinnova and Orange. The interlocutors described how the long-standing cooperation between Africa and Europe has helped both continents address key issues in terms of food and nutrition security. As Melissa Plath from the Finnish University Partnership for International Development put it, «food security is not a regional problem, affecting Africa only, or Europe, but a global one; so by bringing these two regions together we have the chance to really do something significant towards solving it». Participants emphasized that although women and the young people are the game-changers in Africa, they remain the least represented, as well as those receiving fewer funding opportunities for investment. In connection to that, the gender aspect in the ongoing AU-EU partnerships was highlighted, as well as the need for more inclusive participation of women in leadership positions. Special focus was also put on the incentives that need to be given to African youth in order to engage in agriculture, obtain high-quality training and improve their productivity. In this direction, the role of S&T in addressing various socio-economic problems was further emphasised. For his part, Mohamed Jeenah, Co-Chair of the Expert Working Group of the EU-Africa HLPD, stressed that «what needs to be conveyed is that research can have an impact on the life of women and children, as well as on everybody living in poverty-stricken areas across the globe».



Photo: Cristina Russo, Director for International Cooperation of DG Research and Innovation, presenting the EU- Africa R&I Partnership

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European participation in Science Agora 2015 in Tokyo

The 10th edition of the [Science Agora](#), the largest science communication event in Japan, was open for the first time to international participants. The S&T Section at the EU Delegation with support from several Member States seized the opportunity and organised an ambitious European participation. One of the two European Round Tables («Cyber-Societies of the Future – Views from Europe and Japan») was included among the 5 «Keynote Sessions» of the event, and the Delegation also received one of the 5 prizes given for best booth (among the 127) for the «Europe Light House». The award was for the excellent promotion of scientific exchanges between Europe and Japan, especially among young scientists. The other session dealt with «The role of Public Research for Shaping Future Societies in Europe and Japan». Both sessions assembled top policy makers and experts from both Europe and Japan and attracted considerable audiences. On 14 November, there was an impressive inauguration event with 3 Ambassadors (EU, Greece and Ireland), several EU MS S&T Counsellors, representatives of Japan Science and Technology Agency, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as well as exhibitors and panellists from Europe and Japan. 25 top level scientists and policy makers, from both Europe (11 came all the way from Europe or linked through Skype) and Japan, were involved in the Delegation's various events. Close to 10,000 people (mostly general public, many children) visited Science Agora this year. The «Europe Light House» booth attracted many, thanks to the quality of the posters, the interactive exhibits and the enthusiastic scientists (both from Europe and Japan) and S&T Section staff, who were there to explain the world-class research with light being conducted in European facilities and the cooperation with Japanese counterparts. At a separate «Europe Light Stage», 14 public lectures on light-related research conducted in collaboration at key European research infrastructures were given over the two days by European and Japanese scientists.



Photo: Inauguration of the European participation at the Science Agora 2015

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EU-Africa cooperation

Latest activities towards an EU-Africa Research and Innovation Partnership on Food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture.

2 October 2015 - Brussels

A roundtable on Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA): The role of Private Sector Institutions, Non-Governmental and Philanthropic Organizations was organised by the [RINEA](#) (Research and Innovation Network for Europe and Africa) and [CAAST-Net Plus](#) projects. This round-table aimed to get ideas from non-traditional funders for the long-term implementation of the R&I Partnership. The discussion focused, inter alia, on the need for more market-driven research, enhanced support to African SMEs, the development of a mutually understood language and culture as the basis for future collaboration between the sectors, as well as more strategic communication and information sharing. The increasing involvement of the private sector was also highlighted, with examples taken from investment activities carried out by IBM and the Edmond de Rothschild Group. However, as the participants explained, despite the growing interest in investing in Africa, the biggest challenge remaining is to find excellent projects for funding.

5-6 October 2015 - Bonn

The ERAfrica partners held their second meeting in the framework of the African-European Research and Innovation Partnership, with the primary goal to advance [ERAfrica](#) as an institution for funding parties in the field of STI, based on participatory principles. The partners agreed on the development of a second ERAfrica Call based on Resilience, as well as on promoting the management of a proposal for the H2020 ERA-Net Cofund (SFS-41-2016). The next meeting of ERAfrica partners will take place in South Africa in December 2015.

18 October 2015 - EXPO Milan - See article on page 5.

EC support to the implementation of the R&I Partnership from Horizon 2020

- [EU-Africa Research and Innovation partnership on food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture](#) (ERANET COFUND) - Deadline: 17/02/2016
- [Promoting food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture in Africa: the role of innovation](#) Deadline: 17/02/2016 - 2nd stage deadline: 13/09/2016
- [Earth observation services for the monitoring of agricultural production in Africa](#)- Deadline: 14/02/2017
- [Support to bilateral cooperation on research infrastructures with Africa](#) - Deadline: 30/03/2016

The Pan-African Programme (DG International Cooperation

and Development) will finance the African Union Research Grants with calls expected to be launched early 2016.

Research, Innovation, Science and Technology 19-21 October 2015 - Pretoria

The EU-South Africa Innovation Days organised by the South African Department of Science and Technology (DST) with the support of the EU Delegation to South Africa, encouraged further discussions in five thematic areas: 1) Intellectual Property, 2) Funding instruments for commercialisation, 3) Supporting “knowledge triangle partnerships” between academia, industry and research to boost innovation, 4) Synergy between R&D and development funding, 5) STI measurements for contribution to economic growth. These workshops culminated in a successful Innovation Conference, organised by [ESASTAP Plus](#). The affiliation of South Africa to the Europe Enterprise Network was announced and the participants of the Technology Transfer Exchanges were invited to present their experiences.

EC/NRF Implementing Arrangement

On 26 October 2015 a new initiative was launched between the European Research Council (ERC) and the South African Department of Science and Technology (DST) to provide South African early-mid career researchers with research opportunities in Europe. The agreement was signed by Carlos Moedas, European Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, and Naledi Pandor, Minister of Science and Technology of South Africa. The ERC/NRF initiative - the sixth in a string of similar agreements with non-European counterparts - is open to active holders of National Research Foundation (NRF) grants. The collaboration is intended

to enable South African researchers supported by the NRF Research Career Advancement Fellowships and the Postdoctoral Research Fellowships to undertake research visits to ERC-supported teams.

Upcoming events

- 8-9 December, Pretoria: [Science Forum South Africa](#), under the title: «Igniting conversations about science».
- 16-18 January 2016, Khartoum, Sudan: Horizon 2020 information workshop.
- April 2016 (tbc), Addis Ababa: EU-Africa HLPD, meeting of Senior Officials.
- April 2016 (tbc), Addis Ababa: Stakeholder Conference with focus on EU-Africa R&I Partnership on Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture.

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Photo: © karelnoppe, #77363673, 2015. Source: Fotolia



The EURAXESS Science Slam 2015 winner

The EURAXESS Science Slam India is a competition open to researchers at all career levels starting with MA/M.Sc. candidates (research-based or mixed) - from universities, research institutes or the private sector, in all fields of research including Social Sciences and Humanities, Life Sciences and Engineering, of any nationality and age (18+) who are based in India. This competition is part of the 3rd global EURAXESS Science Slam taking place in the ASEAN, Brazil, China, India, Japan and North America. This year the audience awarded the 1st prize to Mr Souvik Mandal, PhD candidate (Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore) with "How do animals Find the Way Back Home". Souvik will be visiting Brussels in Spring 2016 with Finnair and EURAXESS to meet European Commission representatives and attend a science communication training course with the other EURAXESS Science Slam 1st prize winners from the ASEAN, Brazil, China, Japan and North America. Each winner will visit a research organisation of their choice in the European Union. Competition was really tough this year! Let's see who will be supporting the event in 2016 and most importantly how many of you will be submitting your video and competing for the title and 1st prize in 2016. Stay tuned on the [website](#) page and on [Facebook](#).



Photo: The 6 finalists Selokar Naresh Lalaji, Abhilasha Ashok Kumar, Souvik Mandal, Anbuselvan K.K.N., Sumeet Kulkarni and Varsha V.

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ERC information event in Ukraine

An ERC Information event was held in Kyiv, Ukraine on 27 October, organised by the national NCP coordinators, Yegor Dubynskyi and Stella Shapoval, and the ERC NCP, Yanina Mishchuk. The purpose of the event was to inform potential applicants of the extended funding possibilities provided by ERC, following the association of Ukraine to H2020 in March 2015. About 150 participants had registered, many representing their research groups, departments, Academy institutes or universities, located in Kyiv and other cities (Odessa, Ternopol, Chmelnytski, Kharkiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Kryvvi Rig). Key concepts of ERC funding and data on Ukrainian participation so far were presented, and advice was given on how to prepare proposals. The discussion was lively and reflected tangible interest of the Ukrainian research communities in the ERC. In addition, the visit was used to hold talks at the State Fund for Fundamental Research of the Ukraine (SFFRU) (with Director Borys Grynyov, and Head of the Council Valery P. Kukhar) and at the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (with Vice-President Anatoly Zagorodny) on possibilities to support Ukraine's participation in the ERC from their side. Further activities to follow-up on this first ERC Information event will be considered for 2016.



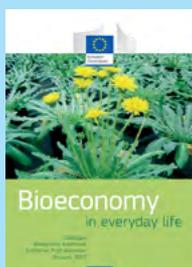
Photo: Alice Rajewsky (ERCEA) and Yegor Dubynskyi (national NCP coordinator) during the ERC Information event.

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HORIZON 2020 - publication

Bioeconomy in everyday life



Whether for food, clothing or consumer goods, in the kitchen or in the garage – many everyday products contain components made from renewable raw materials or are produced using biobased procedures. The bioeconomy has thus made its way into everyone's lives, even though we're not usually aware of it. Discover what bioeconomy in everyday life truly means in this resourceful publication.

It is available for download [here](#)

Fourth Open Innovations Forum in Moscow

The EU Delegation to Russia participated in this year's annual Russian 'Open Innovations' Forum from 28 October – 1 November in Moscow. The forum and technology show 'Open Innovations' is one of Russia's largest international technology gatherings, organised annually since 2012 under the auspices of the Government of the Russian Federation. International guests of honour included the Prime Ministers of France and Finland in 2013 and the Chinese Premier in 2014. This year's highest-ranking foreign guest was the Prime Minister of Serbia. Among other visitors and speakers were Russian and international experts in the field of innovation, representatives of the Government of Russia and of the BRICS (a BRICS science ministerial meeting was held in the context of the Forum), the scientific community, business, technology corporations and non-profit organisations, as well as young Russian start-ups. The EU Delegation to Russia attended several sessions of the Forum (including a session dedicated to research infrastructures of the BRICS countries with the participation of Science Ministers / Vice-Ministers of the corresponding states), and made a presentation on the opportunities available under the Horizon 2020 programme as part of a sub-programme organised by the Russian Ministry of Education and Science

Fifth International Academic Conference on Foresight and STI Policy held in Moscow

The fifth International Academic Conference on Foresight and STI Policy took place at the Russian National Research University – Higher School of Economics (HSE, Moscow) on 18-20 November 2015. The conference was organised under the auspices of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation. Among the speakers of the conference were officials and experts from Russia and other countries. A broad range of topics related to setting and implementing S&T development priorities, international S&T cooperation, development of foresight methodology, and improving S&T policy tools were covered during the event.

In the framework of the conference, a dedicated Information Day on the Horizon 2020 programme was organised, during which the officially appointed Russian National Contact Points (NCPs) made thematically focussed presentations about cooperation and funding opportunities for Russian researchers in the various thematic areas of the Horizon 2020 Work Programme 2016-2017. The EU Delegation to Russia participated in the Information Day with an overview presentation of the Horizon 2020 programme and the co-funding mechanism which has been put in place by the Russian authorities.

Russian – German Forum “Bio-economics and Bio-medicine”

On 17 November, the EU Delegation to Russia took part in the conference «Cooperation between Russia and Germany in bio-economy. Experience in the implementation of research projects in the field of the biotechnology industry», hosted by the German Embassy in Moscow. The conference was organised in the framework of the Russian – German Forum “Bio-economics and Bio-medicine”, held in Moscow and in Pushchino (Moscow region) on 16-18 November. The purpose of the Forum was to extend the cooperation with Russia in industrial bio-technology and bio-medicine. The three-day event was attended by a large delegation from Germany and representatives of the Russian scientific community. The EU Delegation to Russia contributed to the programme of the conference with a presentation on the Horizon 2020 programme with particular focus on bio-related calls under the new Work Programme 2016-2017.



Photo: participants to the conference at the German Embassy in Moscow.

FOR MORE INFORMATION (ALL PAGE)

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How to contribute to the International Research Newsletter?

Should you wish to contribute to the next issue of our publication, kindly send us:

- An article relating your event (maximum 2200 characters – spaces included – with picture – 2500 characters without picture);
- A good quality picture (free of rights).

Do not forget to mention the title of the article and the caption of the picture, and a Commission internal contact point.

Strengthening EU-Eastern Partnership Cooperation in Energy Research and Innovation

On October 12-13, 2015 Belarus hosted the Policy Stakeholders Conference on the European Union - Eastern Partnership Science, Technology and Innovation Cooperation in addressing Energy, one of the major events within the EU-funded IncoNet EaP project. The project's objective is to increase dialogue between the EU and EaP countries in STI in three societal challenges, namely climate change, energy and health. The event has brought together 130 participants which represented 81 organizations from 15 European countries, a number of international organizations (UN family, CEI, Energy Charter, EBRD), as well as from the European Commission and EU energy-related technological and innovation platforms. In his welcome speech, Alexander Shumilin, Chairman of the State Committee for Science and Technology of Belarus highlighted the role of EU-funded programmes in supporting the EaP scientific community in the past and promoting joint EU-EaP efforts in addressing today's societal challenges. George Bonas, the IncoNet EaP scientific coordinator from CeRISS, Greece introduced the goals of the Conference as part of the project activities. The business agenda was opened by Karina Firkavichiute, DG Research and Innovation who described the main directions of research funded by the EU and the tools to support them. The next participants presented the current international strategies, initiatives and programs operating in the EU MS, associated countries and in the EaP region, starting with the UN multilateral initiatives and major projects funded by the EU and ending with bilateral projects between the EU and the Eastern Partnership, as well as national programs in Eastern Europe. The second part of the Conference was devoted to discussing the problems of innovation activity in the EaP countries and the promising areas of cooperation with the EU. EU and EaP countries have already paved the way for joint actions on Energy. Examples were highlighted by projects presented at the conference. There is enough room to further expand synergies in particular by taking advantage of the current opportunities in Horizon 2020. By the end of 2015, the Conference recommendations will be developed to enhance EU - EaP STI cooperation in the energy sector. They will be proposed for inclusion in the existing and emerging programs and instruments to the European Commission, other interested organizations, international donors and national governments in the EU member states and countries of the Eastern Partnership.

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or visit <http://www.scienceportal.org.by/en/news/PSC-Minsk-2015.html>.

CONFAP discusses opportunities for future cooperation with DG Research

On 20-21 October, Ms Zaira Turchi, Vice-President of CONFAP (the Brazilian Council of Research Support Foundations) visited DG Research and Innovation to discuss ways in which cooperation can be broadened and deepened, particularly in the field of energy, health and environment & climate change. Ms Turchi was accompanied by Ms Sandra Gabriel, Financial Director, and by Ms Elisa Natola, advisor to CONFAP on scientific cooperation with the EU. Concerning energy, Ms Turchi met Maria Georgiadou and Thomas Schelcker, from DG RTD Renewable Energy Unit, to discuss the implementation of the EU-Brazil coordinated call on advanced lignocellulosic biofuels (LCE-22-2016) to be co-funded by the Research Support Foundation of the State of São Paulo (FAPESP), CONFAP and the Ministry of Science Technology and Innovation. In the field of health, Ms Turchi had a very fruitful discussion with Rosanna D'Amario, DG RTD Health Strategies and Karim Berkouk, Deputy HoU for Medical Research and Ageing, focusing mostly on the advantages and modalities of a possible participation of CONFAP in the Global Alliance for Chronic Diseases (GACD) as well as in the Global Research Collaboration for Infectious Diseases Preparedness (GLOPID-r). In the area of environment, she brainstormed with Renzo Tomellini, HoU of Strategy in Climate Action & sustainable use of resources, Maria Luisa Tamborra, Deputy HoU, Birgit De Boissezon, HoU for Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and other colleagues from the Climate Action Directorate. In this area, Ms Turchi expressed interest in understanding the objectives and modus operandi of the Belmont Forum as well as the future Horizon 2020 plans for sustainable urbanisation through nature based solutions. On a more horizontal level, together with Domenica Bumma, Policy Officer for Brazil and Piero Venturi, Science Counsellor at the EU Delegation in Brasilia, Ms Turchi discussed the strategy of adopting guidelines to inform and orient Brazilian research entities interested in participating in Horizon 2020 projects, about the possibility of applying for co-funding through the various Research Support Agencies existing in the majority of Brazilian states, and that CONFAP coordinates as a national council.



Photo: (l-r) Piero Venturi, Domenica Bumma, Zaira Turchi and Sandra Gabriel.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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H2020 Information session for Science Counsellors in Brussels

On 22 October, taking advantage of the presence of the EU Research and Innovation counsellors in Brussels for their regular meeting, Director for International Cooperation Cristina Russo invited the counsellors from third country Missions to the EU to an information session on the opportunities for international cooperation offered in the 2016-17 Work Programme of Horizon 2020. The Work Programme 2016-17 covers nearly 600 topics, presenting funding opportunities through a range of calls for proposals and public procurements. Calls and targeted initiatives are open to International Cooperation and will help to boost research and innovation collaboration with countries outside Europe and effectively tackle common societal challenges. The information session was followed by a networking cocktail attended by over 40 counsellors from third countries Missions to the EU as well as EU officials.



Photo: Cristina Russo introducing the presentation of the new Work Programme 2016-17

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Destination Europe: Chicago

October 16th saw the 10th edition of Destination Europe in the USA, and the first time it has taken place in Chicago. Presentations from Germany, Lithuania, Switzerland, Sweden, Poland, the Czech Republic, France and Turkey, detailed the opportunities on offer to researchers from anywhere in the world.

The participation of three countries for the first time was particularly welcome. The national speakers were complemented by presentations from the European Research Council, Marie Skłodowska Curie actions, Euraxess and Horizon 2020.

The stands at the exhibition worked constantly to provide detailed information to participants. Further details on the event, including the presentations, are available on the Destination Europe website.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Upcoming events

EU-SA Programme Information Sharing Session

7 December 2015
Pretoria - South Africa

The ESASTAP Plus project will host a side event ahead of the Science Forum South Africa to be held in December.

Click [here](#) to register to this event
More [info](#) here

H2020 Calls update

Topic: International Cooperation with Mexico on geothermal energy

RIA Research and Innovation action -
LCE-23-2016
Closing date: 16-02-2016 - 17:00
(Brussels local time)

For more information on this call and
other calls click [here](#)



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How to protect rainforests' biodiversity and meet human demand

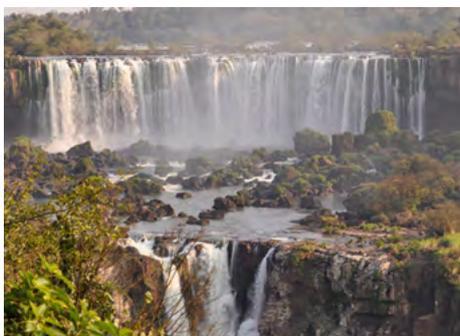
Tropical forests are the natural champions of climate change mitigation. Even though they cover only 7-10% of the Earth's total land surface they hold one of the world's biggest terrestrial carbon stores and are home to over half of the planet's species. Yet little is known about how biodiversity helps mitigate climate change, or whether it is possible to use this biodiversity sustainably to meet human demand. The European Union (EU)-funded project ROBIN is working to answer these questions.

"Most people agree that rainforests and their biodiversity mitigate climate change and need to be preserved. But these forests should also meet the needs of local communities and national demands. ROBIN research team is trying to provide information to help decision makers meet these frequently conflicting needs," explains ROBIN coordinator, Dr. Terry Parr from the United Kingdom's Centre for Ecology and Hydrology.

The benefits tropical forests provide to surrounding populations and the global community are known as ecosystem services. They include the provision of resources (such as food or firewood), carbon storage, water purification, flood and erosion control, and disease mitigation. Often when a forest is damaged or cut down, it is because a landowner has found a single, economically more profitable use for it such as farming, cattle ranching or mining. These decisions, however, usually fail to take into account the other services, such as food, forests provide.

With researchers from twelve organisations in Europe and Latin America (Mexico, Bolivia, Guyana and Brazil), ROBIN project team is working at 15 multi-

functional landscape sites in tropical forest areas in Latin America to understand the trade-offs that often take place when land is used to deliver multiple ecosystem services. Long-term impacts of climate change and land-use change scenarios are also being examined, and the project team is working with local stakeholders – including farmers, foresters, and conservationists – to understand their views and requirements. By combining these approaches ROBIN project has already uncovered new opportunities to maintain and increase biodiversity and carbon stocks that simultaneously deliver a wider range of ecosystem services.



(c) Robin

"We are making recommendations for all levels – local, national and international," says Parr. On an international level, the project is drafting recommendations on how to monitor programmes such as the United Nations' (UN) REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation), which help developing countries conserve forests.

"We want to make sure that private and public resources from funding programmes such as REDD+, which are result orientated, are spent in the most effective ways," comments Parr. Parr describes that at times "an exclusive focus on climate change mitigation can lead to perverse courses of action, such as when forests have been cut down for

biofuels." A more holistic approach – such as the one taken by the project ROBIN – is expected to minimise the risk of such short-sighted acts. "This is the first project that has adopted this holistic approach on such a wide-scale. And that is exactly what a complex problem like climate change mitigation needs," he points out. "It is also what makes us hopeful that our recommendations will have a significant impact."

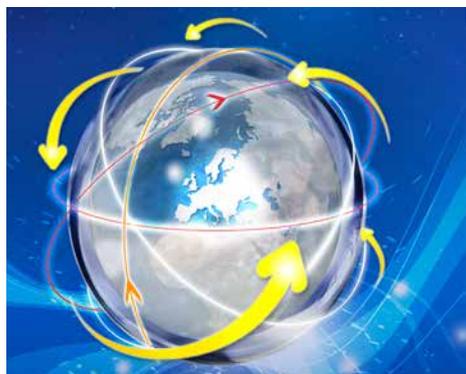
On a national level, governments have already taken note of ROBIN's findings. For instance, Mexican government agencies are implementing a method devised by ROBIN's Mexican partners based on a combination of remote sensing and on the ground surveying to assess the health and functionality of its forest landscapes using an indicator known as "ecosystem integrity".

"At the end of the day both the smaller scale requirements of local communities as well as national and international goals of climate change mitigation need to be met," says Parr. "ROBIN is doing just that by improving our understanding of how much biodiversity is needed to achieve climate change mitigation without neglecting the needs of the communities that depend upon the land and its biodiversity," he concludes.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

visit the [EYD](#) website

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This page provides a regular update on recent Research and Innovation (R&I) policy news from our network of R&I Counsellors in the EU Delegations in Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Egypt, India, Israel, Japan, Korea, Russia, the United States (US) and the African Union (AU).

With a particular focus on international cooperation, different policy related themes are highlighted in relation to different countries to illustrate trends, similarities and different approaches.

Policy News from the Delegations

African Union (AU): The AU's first [Specialised Technical Committee Meeting on Education, Science & Technology \(S&T\)](#) approved the establishment of the «Committee of Ten (Heads of State) promoting Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (STI)», the implementation of the [10-year STI Strategy for Africa](#), the updated African Space Policy and Strategy and other progress; The African Development Bank has approved a [\\$90 million loan for Angola](#) to finance S&T capacity.

Australia: The [third meeting of the Commonwealth Science Council](#) recommended the Government to work to develop a comprehensive National Innovation and Science Agenda; The [Higher Education Legislation Amendment Bill 2015](#) has been tabled, which will guarantee \$A1.5 billion for research programmes (2015-2019); Alan Finkel has been appointed [Australia's new Chief Scientist](#), from 2016.

Brazil: The new National Strategy for STI will include an increase of biomass production; Celso Pansera is appointed new [Minister of STI](#); A [Memorandum of Understanding](#) in Research and Higher Education has been signed with Sweden.

Canada: The plenary of the [Atlantic Ocean Research Alliance](#) focussed on the progress towards a more structured delivery phase; The new Liberal government promises to [strongly support science](#): a [Minister of Science](#) was appointed (Kirsty Duncan), the funding cuts to government ocean-science

and monitoring programmes will be reversed, a Chief Science Officer to advise government will be installed, government research will be more accessible to the public, and the compulsory long-form census will be brought back.

China: The State Council has announced tax deductions related to R&I expenses to stimulate entrepreneurship, piloted in innovation demonstration zones; The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the NSFC plan to establish the «[Grand Challenges China Programme](#)» to develop S&T research cooperation in Global Health and Development.

Egypt: A loan agreement worth EUR 40 million has been signed with the French Development Agency Group for a [20 megawatt solar energy electricity plant](#); A [Higher Education Regulatory Funding Authority](#) will be established with British support; A national technology incubators programme (INTELAQ) to support young innovators, and a National Nanotechnology Network to tackle challenges in energy and other sectors have been launched.

India: The Indian Space Research Organisation has successfully launched the [PSLV-C30](#) satellite and placed the [ASTROSAT](#) satellite in orbit; [India and Germany](#) have signed agreements to strengthen S&T cooperation.

Israel: Agreements have been signed with [NASA](#), the [Italian Space Agency](#), Germany's Fraunhofer Institute (to create a [Global Cybersecurity Centre](#)), and the Chinese Academy of Sciences; The [second High-Tech Conference for Minorities](#) has been held. It promotes entrepreneurship among Israel's Arab community and the integration of Israeli Arabs into Israel's hi-tech industry.

Japan: In preparation of the 5th S&T Basic Plan (2016-20), the reform of Japan's main competitive research fund, [Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research](#), to fund bottom-up basic research in all fields, is now under review.

Korea: Strategies for carbon resources for the response to climate change and to decrease by 37% greenhouse gas emissions until 2030 will be established; The OECD Committee for S&T Policy has held a [Ministerial-level meeting in Daejeon](#); The [19th EU Eco-Innovation Forum](#) explored business opportunities in eco-innovation, presenting the latest trends in the circular economy.

Russia: The [3rd BRICS STI Ministerial Meeting](#) signed the [Moscow Ministerial Declaration](#) with main directions for the mid-term STI cooperation strategy and adopted the [BRICS STI Work Plan 2015-2018](#); The «[5-100](#)» programme has been expanded from 15 to 21 universities, which receive State subsidies to improve their international competitiveness; CIS countries have agreed to establish a «[Joint Institute of Space Research](#)».

USA: An [EU-US agreement](#) has been signed to give the US Government access to Copernicus Sentinel satellites data; The update of the [Strategy for American Innovation](#) has been released, which serves as a gathering document for government initiatives relevant to innovation; The Office of S&T Policy has set out principles for Federal agencies to maximize the value of [Citizen Science and Crowdsourcing](#).

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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