

## JOINT RESEARCH CENTRE – EC

### PROGRESS REPORT<sup>1</sup>

#### on recent developments regarding S&T cooperation in/with the WBC (2<sup>st</sup> half 2012 or - June 2012 / Tirana till December 2012 / Belgrade)

##### **1 Policy actions**

(e.g. essential changes in the political authorities, administrative bodies, agencies, institutions, personnel, development/launch of new national funding programmes, etc.)

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##### **2 Legislative initiatives - development of the legal and strategic framework**

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##### **3 Important events, meetings, training activities, etc.**

#### 97<sup>th</sup> meeting of the JRC Board of Governors 14, 15 June - Copenhagen

Representatives of the following countries also joined the meeting: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey.

#### INSPIRE Conference

Over 1200 stakeholders participated in the INSPIRE Conference 2012 which was held from 22-27 June in Istanbul, Turkey. The theme of this year's edition, which was co organised by the JRC and the Turkish Ministry of Environment and Urbanization, was 'Sharing environmental information, sharing innovation'. Erdogan Bayraktar, Minister of Environment and Urbanisation, opened the event with 20 dedicated workshops, 48 parallel sessions, and more than 200 presenters. This year's INSPIRE Conference was the biggest event to date relating to the INSPIRE Directive.

#### JRC Info Day in Skopje and the Announcement of the MoU

On 26 September 2012, a JRC Information Day was organised in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to enhance scientific cooperation attracting around 180 participants. During this event a Memorandum of Understanding was announced between the JRC and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia foreseeing cooperation on subjects such as energy and environment,

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<sup>1</sup> The progress reports are collected in preparation of the meetings of the Steering Platform on Research for the Western Balkan Countries and will be provided for download from the WBC-INCO.Net homepage ([www.wbc-inco.net](http://www.wbc-inco.net)) about one week before the meeting takes place. Therefore please submit your report to [office@wbc-inco.net](mailto:office@wbc-inco.net) until December 1, 2012.

climate change, health and consumer protection, and natural disasters. The event was opened by Panëe Kralev, Minister of Education and Science, and Vladimir Sucha, Deputy Director General of the JRC.

Following meetings/visits were "additional" to the official programme:

- Visit to the Research Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology
- Visit to the Institute of Earthquake Engineering and Engineering Seismology
- Visit to the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering

The Info Day is financed under the Travel, Accommodation and Conference (TAC) Facility under the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA).

Potential cooperation areas were defined as: Biotechnology (JRC invited relevant scientists to join the workshop in December), Land use modelling (INSPIRE) and Agriculture.

### JRC Info Day in Tirana

On 3 October an Information Day was held also in Albania with around 150 participants to further scientific cooperation between the JRC and Albania. In the margins of this event, Vladimir Sucha, Deputy Director General of the JRC met Myqerem Tafaj, Minister of Education and Science, to discuss possibilities for cooperation.

Following meetings/visits were "additional" to the official programme:

- Visit to the Institute of Public Health
- Visit to the Polytechnic University of Tirana

The Info Day is financed under the TAC – IPA credits.

### The European Day of Science in Podgorica

The European Day of Science took place on 28 September in Montenegro in order to increase awareness about the Joint Research Centre, the framework programmes and other European instruments.

24 – 28 September was devoted to the Open Days of Science with the special focus on "kids" namely, how to make science closer for kids.

### Food Safety Workshop in Istanbul

On 11 October 2012 a workshop on Food Safety was held in Istanbul under the TAC-IPA credits in cooperation with the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey. Scientists from 7 enlargement countries joined the event.

Following scientific sessions were organised:

- Reference Materials for Food Safety and Microbiology
- Food Safety and Quality Control

The workshop is financed under the TAC – IPA credits.

#### Study Visit to Ispra on "energy and environment"

Following the second meeting of the JRC with the enlargement countries in May in Istanbul, the strengthening of cooperation on energy and environment was decided. As a concrete outcome, scientists from the 7 enlargement countries took part in a study visit in the JRC Ispra site on 16 October under the TAC-IPA credits. During this visit renewable energy, biomass and water research were defined as the potential areas of further cooperation.

#### Renewal of the MoU with the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey

The MoU between the JRC and TUBITAK was signed on 5 July 2007 for 5-years. The subject of the MoU was to improve cooperation in selected fields in the competence of the JRC and the hosting of Turkish PhD students and post-doctors in the JRC institutes, with TUBITAK grants (*The Grantholders Programme*). Under the MoU, 35 Turkish researchers were co-selected, financed by TUBITAK, to do research in the JRC Institutes.

Proposed by TUBITAK, the MoU was renewed in October 2012 for a 5-year period and will be announced during the 99<sup>th</sup> meeting of the JRC Board in Turkey.

#### Science support for the Danube Strategy

The Joint Research Centre has launched an initiative to provide scientific support to the Danube Strategy in cooperation with key scientific partners, such as the Academies of Sciences of the Danube Region and the Danube Rectors' Conference. The scientific support focuses on four vertical priorities: environment protection, irrigation and agricultural development, navigability and energy production. As a transversal priority, the initiative also aims to support the development of smart specialisation strategies for the Danube Region. The first steps of this initiative have produced a momentum within the scientific community of the Danube Region and raised strong interest for collaborative work.

The JRC and its scientific partners are currently developing large-scale flagship projects clusters which will address the above-mentioned scientific priorities. Work has already started on one of the flagship projects, namely the setting-up of Danube-wide reference scientific data sets which will allow policy-makers and other stakeholders to access comparable and harmonised scientific data on various issues such as water and soil quality, population, landscapes...etc. All flagship projects will be presented for political endorsement at a high-level conference due to take place in the spring of 2013 in Bratislava. These projects aim to reinforce evidence-based decision-making in the Region and to contribute to the optimisation of the use of EU structural funds

98<sup>th</sup> meeting of the JRC Board of Governors 22, 23 November - Ispra

Representatives of the following countries also joined the meeting: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey.

Enlargement and Integration Action

The Joint Research Centre (JRC) gives scientific and technical support to countries on the road towards EU membership, New Member States and Associated Countries. It supports the transfer of the EU legal framework (acquis communautaire) to national legislation and facilitates scientific and technical exchange.

The JRC offers altogether 40 temporary positions for Seconded National Experts and Grantholders. They are targeted at experts from research organisations, public administration bodies, national enforcement laboratories and scientists from the following countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Faroe Islands, FYR of Macedonia, Iceland, Israel, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Switzerland and Turkey.

There are 7 E&IA Grantholder posts still open for application until 18 January 2013.

In the frame of the Enlargement and Integration Action the JRC offers specialised workshops and advanced training courses within its areas of competence.

The workshops are set up to allow competent organisations in the new Member States, Candidate Countries, Potential Candidate Countries, FP7 Associated Countries, and on an ad-hoc basis European Neighbourhood Policy Countries and Russia to study the scientific and technical methods and techniques underpinning EU policy implementation.

They also provide an opportunity for EU organisations to learn about the methods currently used in those countries and for both parties to discuss how the EU legislation should be implemented in the future

**4 Development of international cooperation and actions on integration into ERA**  
(e.g. new bilateral/international agreements, memberships, support structures, important international projects, programmes, etc.)

**5 Statistics - major changes / updates of relevant statistical data**

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**6 Assessment of the developments and outlook on the next 6 months**

– Study visit of the enlargement countries to JRC Ispra site on "health and consumer protection" – 5 February 2013 (under TAC - IPA)

- JRC-TUBITAK Joint Workshop on "Smart Grids", TUBITAK Marmara Research Centre (Gebze), 27 February 2013 (under TAC - IPA)
- 99<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the JRC Board of Governors, 28 February - 1 March 2013, Istanbul
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the JRC with enlargement countries, Brussels, date tbc (under TAC - IPA)