

# **EU CELAC SOM on S&T**

## **Concept Note**

**Document prepared by the ALCUE NET project as SOM  
Technical Secretariat in collaboration with related bi-  
regional projects and initiatives**

# Introduction

The importance of research cooperation as one of the cornerstones of the European Union and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (EU-CELAC) cooperation, and the consequent need to move towards a Common Research Area based on increased research cooperation, enhanced mobility of researchers and exchange of knowledge and best practice, is a well-established idea and objective within EU-CELAC relations and cooperation mechanisms. At different levels, EU and CELAC officials have expressed a strong commitment towards the establishment of relations with CELAC as a key region for collaboration and emphasized that the already existing instruments will allow moving towards a Common Research Area between the two regions. Areas of common interest include renewable energies, climate services, bio-economy, marine research, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and health, while activity focus will be on mobility of researchers, research infrastructures and addressing global societal challenges. It is expected that this will contribute to boost scientific research and technological development within the CELAC countries, through regional projects with social and productive impact in the already mentioned priority areas.

This document summarizes the results of the efforts undertaken by the working groups of the EU-CELAC Senior Officials Meeting (SOM), supported by ALCUE NET<sup>1</sup> and other EU-funded projects, to further promote the process towards an EU-CELAC Knowledge area and presents concrete suggestions to the delegates of the EU-CELAC SOM to enhance this process.

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<sup>1</sup> ALCUE NET: "Latin America, Caribbean and European Union Network on Research and Innovation": A four and a half year project funded by the 7th Framework Programme of the European Union.

# Part I

## Background information on EU-CELAC Policy Dialogue: Towards a EU-CELAC Common Knowledge Area <sup>2</sup>

Current initiatives and priorities reflect the different decisions adopted since the **Madrid Action Plan**<sup>3</sup>, which identified the instruments and activities to be jointly developed in the areas **Science, Research, Innovation and Technology**, and emphasize as critical objectives those of improving cooperation in research and innovation (R&I), strengthening scientific and technological capacities and infrastructures; providing support to research, innovation and knowledge sharing taking into account the contribution of ancestral and traditional knowledge; improving the use of new technologies and technology transfer underpinning sustainable socio-economic development; and fostering cooperation between both regions with respect to the digital economy and the reduction of the digital divide for improving competitiveness whilst making social inclusion a cross-cutting issue. To this purpose, the Madrid Action Plan endorsed a **Joint Initiative for Research and Innovation (JIRI)**, with the aim to “establish regular bi-regional dialogue on science, research, technology and innovation to consolidate EU-CELAC cooperation and to update common priorities, encourage mutual policy learning and ensure the proper implementation and effectiveness of cooperation instruments”; and designated **Senior Official Meetings (SOM)** with representatives from both regions, as the framework to implement the JIRI, according to annual roadmaps and also to play a central role in stimulating and monitoring EU-CELAC R&I cooperation.

Within this context, five thematic areas were defined as common priorities and have been in place since 2011. In each, a SOM Working Group (WG), co-led by a country from each region, has been established to define common objectives, activities to combine national, regional and bi-regional instruments, to identify relevant indicators to help monitor implementation, and to mobilize stakeholders. WGs report yearly to the SOM the results of their deliberations and suggest possible paths for improved cooperation. Priority areas include Bioeconomy – co-led by Argentina and France; Information and Communication Technologies for meeting societal challenges – co led by Chile and Finland; Biodiversity and Climate Change – co-led by Colombia and France; Renewable energies – co-led by Mexico and Spain; and Health- co-lead by Brazil and Spain. A Cross-cutting WG on "Good practices, finance & Researchers' Careers" was also created - co-led by Mexico and Portugal/Chile and Finland.

As a SOM recommendation, several **initiatives and projects** (INCONETs, ERANETs and thematic projects) have been encouraged to support the work implemented by the SOM WGs. In this context, the **ALCUE NET project** is the main support platform of SOM Thematic WGs in the areas of Bioeconomy, ICT, Biodiversity & Climate Change and Renewable energies. The WG on Health is supported by the **EULAC-Health project**. This structure is complemented by the **ERANet-LAC project**, supporting the Cross Cutting WG, and manages joint calls for projects in areas of common interest and promotes the setting-up of a funding agencies platform, to be created in order to provide long-term sustainability to cooperation efforts.

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<sup>2</sup> Background documents can be downloaded from: <http://alcuenet.eu/policy.php>

<sup>3</sup> The Madrid Action Plan was updated (2013-2015) during the EU- CELAC Summit in Santiago de Chile, January 26th & 27th, 2013.

## Foresight Report “Exploration of the future bi regional cooperation”

Following the SOM on 2014, a foresight exercise was conducted to develop a vision and scenarios for bi-regional cooperation towards 2030. Based on this, and after a consultation process involving a wide array of bi-regional stakeholders, a “Scenario-VISION 2030” has been constructed to be discussed by the 2016 SOM in Brussels. According to the exercise, it is foreseen that bi-regional cooperation in 2030 will take place under a context characterized by a large number of growing global economic, societal, social and environmental challenges, including the unprecedented acceleration in the production of knowledge. Underpinned by these, bi-regional cooperation strives to develop a collective intelligence capacity under new forms of organizations and processes, different than those of the past. By 2030 the main vision of the ALC-UE bi-regional cooperation is that it takes place on equal grounds and the process is overcoming weaknesses at the national and inter-regional levels that include the heterogeneous policy and strategic approaches to STI and overcoming the rhetoric on the importance of STI for development by matching it with the resolve to act. Vision 2030 highlights the collective wisdom of the invention, expressions of multiculturalism and multi-territoriality by strengthening local economies and regional identities.

In 2030 the bi-regional cooperation is innovation-led. However, the mission of the bi-regional cooperation has become to develop innovations for “Wellbeing - Living well in harmony” and solution-oriented innovations that focus on wellbeing and not only on a growth paradigm. A cornerstone of the “Scenario-Vision 2030” is the solution of challenges being faced by local communities. Reaching the “Scenario-Vision 2030” requires the adoption of a set of decisions by SOM, including: a) the transformation of SOM into a bi-regional cooperation “think tank”, opening bi-regional policy dialogues; b) developing or strengthening joint Strategic Research Agendas (in all sciences) that will respond to the great challenges; the adoption of new instruments that will allow, amongst many others the transfer and replication of technology and solutions (living laboratories); Replication / transfer of institutions and institutional frameworks (policy labs); focusing research on potential innovation topics e.g. ICT based; ample and in-depth networking . The inclusion of public and private financial sector is essential. It is convenient to invite the Inter-American Development Bank and the Latin American Development Bank to join the bi-regional cooperation.

## Future perspectives: European-CELAC Interest Group (EU-CELAC-IG) for bi-regional STI cooperation

The EU-CELAC interest group is planned as a successor of the FP7 project ERANet-LAC, which will end in spring 2017. It will ensure the full participation of all countries of both CELAC and EU, including smaller countries, at all levels of work and decisions. ERANet-LAC is supporting the process of the EU-CELAC Joint Initiative for Research and Innovation and the Senior Officials’ Meetings on behalf of the EC. The experiences gained during this process displayed a high interest of different stakeholders in multilateral activities and the need for continuation. ERANet-LAC is presently laying the ground for a long-term commitment of bi-regional stakeholders through the implementation of the *EU-CELAC Platform for Science, Technology and Innovation*. Based on this Platform, the concept of a **European-CELAC Interest Group for STI bi-regional cooperation** suggests a structure, which allows the coordination of joint funding activities such as joint calls, based on common interest - beyond the life time of ERANet-LAC.

## Part II

### General recommendations for SOM discussions

- EU CELAC Partnership as a target region should be boosted to give more visibility to bi-regional Policy Dialogue on R&I based on the progress made and the recognized added value to increase international cooperation activities in H2020 and joint strategic initiatives.
- Reaching the “Scenario-Vision 2030” (Foresight Study) requires the adoption of a set of decisions by SOM.
- Future sustainability of the bi-regional cooperation on R&I after the lifetime of supporting projects could be soon explored i.e. the concept of a so called “EU-CELAC Interest Group” proposed by ERANET LAC as well as the future Governance of the JIRI Thematic Working Groups and the Technical Secretariat to support the Policy Dialogue and SOM Meetings (actual Policy Dialogue structure).
- Roadmap 2016-2017.

### JIRI SOM Working Groups recommendations

The progress of activities on each Working Group (SOM WGs), underlines the strategic contribution to the JIRI Roadmap and the EU-CELAC Common Knowledge Area by a) identifying concrete proposals to be implemented by the WGs in synergy with ongoing related projects and regional and global initiatives in order to update 2016-2017 Activity Plan (Roadmap); b) implementation of the Common Knowledge Area through defining common policies, key strategic priorities, actions, instruments, and common commitments related to Mobility of Researchers; Global societal challenges; transfer of technologies; Research Infrastructure; and Innovation, among others and c) reflections towards HORIZON 2020, focused on upcoming and future calls, participant rules & new instruments and opportunities for CELAC countries.

- Official nomination of EU-CELAC representatives to be involved in each working Group (Include CELAC thematic NCPs officially nominated due to their expertise in cooperation with the EU).

#### **SOM WORKING GROUP ON BIOECONOMY**

- Bioeconomy CELAC Observatory document analyzed and supported by interest countries who wish to have a specific country section under the CELAC observatory.
- Promote the development of the CELAC Observatory by expanding to other CELAC countries. Nomination of national representatives.
- Selection of main institutions (National/Regional/International) collaborating on each observatory pillar (Research, Policy, Market)
- County commitments for future funding requirements beyond ALCUE NET project for the observatory sustainability.
- Establish dialogue with the EU-CELAC SOM cross cutting working group to inform on the priorities the Bioeconomy WG has identified for the observatory activities regarding Capacity Building and Raise awareness, in order to ask for support to priority setting in definition of schemes for joint use of infrastructure and pilot schemes for early career researcher mobility support.

- It is highlighted that cooperation opportunities should focus specifically on the main following issues identified in LAC for cooperation with Europe: (a) adequate regulatory frameworks, in fields such as bio-safety/bio-risk regulation, biodiversity protection, access to genetic resources, regulation of GMOs, protection of property rights and patenting requirements. (b) articulation of the policy initiatives already in place, especially regarding R&D and innovation policies in fields such as clean non-fossil energy, biotechnology developments in agriculture, human and animal health, non-carbon agricultural development, payments for ecosystem services, and improvements in the efficiency and sustainability of the food system. (c) better coordination of the technical and technological capacities that already exist in the countries; (d) policies for bioeconomy SMEs aimed at creating capacities, facilitating entry to concentrated markets and providing adequate financing for innovative start-ups.
- Topics proposal targeting CELAC countries for consideration to H2020 upcoming Working Program/develop Joint Call among specific interest countries.
- Promoting common priority topics identified to develop collaborative projects and integrating initiatives

#### **SOM WORKING GROUP ON HEALTH**

- Validation of future activities and objectives of the JIRI-Health
- JIRI-Health as a pilot initiative for the other SOM thematic groups
- Dissemination of JIRI-Health among the countries not represented in the initiative
- Improve the coordination in each and among the different thematic SOM Working Groups
- Synergies with related thematic initiatives and infrastructures
- Synergies with other bi-regional initiatives
- Proposal of widening country participation of interested countries (e.g. Trinidad and Tobago)

#### **SOM WORKING GROUP ON BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

- Strengthening the dialogue between biodiversity and climate communities through capacity building activities and cooperation projects so that biodiversity community's expectations could be better identified and climate models limitations better assessed. As evidenced in the different workshops, a major barrier to the scientific cooperation between biodiversity and climate change communities seems to be the discrepancy in the data formats, resolution, uncertainties, and access of each community.
- Improving understanding and collaboration between both communities and both regions by promoting common priority topics identified and by integrating incentives. This will help to develop collaborative projects including biodiversity and climate communities, in particular on pilot studies on climate services with high resolution downscaling.
- Facilitating the integration of bi-regional or global strategies into European initiatives agenda (JPIs, ERA NETs) and promoting the access of LAC countries to international networks. Also, the dissemination of appropriate information on the analysis of the bi-regional cooperation to these strategic initiatives will foster joint activities and support to develop the dialogue with policy makers.
- Implementing the first steps of an observatories network platform in LAC countries on biodiversity and climate, as detailed in the concept note on the observatories network platform on the thematic report.

#### **SOM WORKING GROUP ON ENERGY**

- **Opening of research energy infrastructures:** Proposal for a coordination action aimed at opening existing research infrastructures with a view to establish joint structures in the long-term and to keep an 'open door' policy, trying to reinforce EU and LAC researchers access to infrastructures (e.g. ESFRI) - "Common Use and Access to National Infrastructures – Pilot Action"
- **Capacity building activities:** Implementation of the proposal for EU-LAC short term courses in geothermal energy and a Masters in geothermal energy and an international network for geothermal

development in the region -high enthalpy and low enthalpy alternatives- where the Andean Geothermal Center of Excellence (CEGA-[www.cega.ing.uchile.cl](http://www.cega.ing.uchile.cl)) in Chile and the Mexican Center for Innovation in Geothermal Energy (CeMIE-Geo, [www.cemiegeo.org](http://www.cemiegeo.org)) in Mexico could enlarge their training programs and geothermal research development to other entities and universities in the region to perform joint geothermal research.

- **Cooperation and coordination of research activities:** Evaluate the opportunities for EU-CELAC cooperation and coordination of research activities under the national or regional level in the EU Member States and Associated States in the energy domain (The Graphene Flagship, ECSEL JTI includes the “Smart energy”; European Technology Platforms (ETPs); encourage the opening of European initiatives like ERANets and Joint Programming Initiatives to CELAC countries participation.
- Explore the possibilities of implementing a strategic pilot project of bi-regional interest in renewable energy within the framework of the activities of the Ibero-American Programme for Science and Technology Development (CYTED). First steps done through the ALCUENET-CYTED Thematic Meeting with the co-leaders of the Working Group on Renewable Energies, together with the thematic area managers of CYTED, and key thematic experts.
- Promote specific topics for the calls in the next Work Programme of the Horizon 2020 in support to the implementation of the EU-CELAC JIRI in the energy thematic field.
- **Enhanced interaction with regional initiatives in the field and regional thematic nets in the energy field:** In particular with the Regional Observatory on Renewable Energy in LAC initiated as a UNIDO regional Program most notably with regard the implementation of the activities carried out in support of the Working Group on Renewable Energies in the frame of the ALCUENET project linked with to the promotion of cooperation between countries of the region and among energy agents of each country and the development of a tool to share technologies, successful experiences, information on specific projects, existing financing mechanisms, successful legal practices and any information aimed at harnessing the potential of renewable energy technologies to meet the energy needs.
- **Sustainability of bi-regional cooperation on energy ST&I:** Support the establishment of the Platform of Funding Agencies for the implementation of the EU-CELAC JIRI in the frame of the ERANet-LAC project activities, particularly in the energy thematic area.

#### SOM WORKING GROUP ON TIC

- To utilize H2020 calls to foster EU-CELAC SOM ICT WG proposed focus themes. Although there are no calls directed to Latin America in H2020, which might obstruct the development of ICT projects of interest to the whole region, there are possibilities still for participation in H2020 calls in specific topics. A part from the cases of Brazil and Mexico, which are going to issue specific joint calls and whose researchers are not automatically funded by EU, organizations involved in this WG shall disseminate information and motivate their citizens to participate in calls related that address the focus areas of this WG. Participation of LAC organizations can be both as experts and as implementers of pilot solutions. A good guide to orient the participation is the draft “A guide to ICT related activities in WP2016-177”, which shows all the areas in which ICT is/might be involved.
- Renew call for members of ICT WG. A consultation with countries from both regions will be carried out in order to ensure commitment with the activities of the WG. During the SOM2015, a new invitation will be made during the plenary session for manifestation of interest.
- Involve CAC countries with ICT WG and harmonize their priorities with the findings for the rest of LAC. With few exceptions, participation of Central America and Caribbean experts in the activities of the WG has not been enough. This claims for their stronger involvement in events and projects that aim at covering the whole LAC region. In order to reach this aim we should build stronger cooperation with the EC as well for the definition of programs and projects supporting the CAC. In the cases of the themes suggested for ERANet LAC funding CAC was well represented. We should aim at having always same significant participation.

- Update findings of mapping of bi-regional ICT projects. Following the results of the mapping presented in March 2014 for the bi-regional projects and programs, a follow up study should be conducted in order to finalize the mapping for the ICT FP7 projects and finding out whether new projects have been funded under the bi-lateral schemes mapped.

<p><b>SOM WORKING GROUP ON GOOD PRACTICES AND FUNDING MECHANISMS” AND “CAREERS DEVELOPMENT</b></p>
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- Relaunch of a call for participants of the sub working group on International Early Stage Researchers Career Development. During the EU-CELAC SOM 2016 a call for participants to this sub WG will be launched in order to form a core group to start implementing the activities suggested.
- Establish dialogue with the thematic working groups of the EU-CELAC SOM in ICT for Societal Challenges, Bio-economy, Biodiversity and Climate Change, Renewable Energies and Health. During the first half of 2016, the co-leaders of this sub WG will call for participants of the above-mentioned WGs to inform on the priorities they have identified in their WG regarding education and early-career development, in order to give support to priority setting in definition of schemes for joint use of infrastructure and pilot schemes for early career researchers mobility support.
- Promoting links between the thematic working groups, Cross-Cutting issues’ Early-Career researchers’ group and the European Institute of Technology and its’ KICs as well as other EU-lead initiatives such as joint programming initiatives.
- Promoting programmes of early-career researchers development: This activity shall be done by means of stipulating among the participant countries the conditions, focus (considering the priorities defined by the thematic WGS), and funding means of a pilot call to try out the implementation of mechanisms for developing early career researchers. Funding schemes and rules that should be emulated can be, e.g. through Horizon 2020: Marie Skłodowska-Curie Innovative Training Networks (ITN) and Marie Skłodowska-Curie Research and Innovation Staff Exchanges (RISE), ERANET LAC call among participant agencies, etc.
- Establish a roadmap for gathering information on policies of joint access of Early Stage Researchers to national and multinational research infrastructures (open science and access policies).
- Promote the development of a CELAC-EU EURAXESS portal by expanding to other LAC countries the already existing EURAXESS Links Brazil hub for the encouragement of mobility of early career researchers, as well as teaching staff. This shall be discussed among the LAC countries participating in the sub WG by the time of the EU-CELAC SOM2016.
- Promote open science in the EU- CELAC early stage researchers' cooperation initiatives.
- Establishing a sustainable platform for information sharing such as EURAXESS preferably on already existing address.