

Guidelines about functions and responsibilities of the bi-regional working groups agreed during the SOM of the EU-LAC Joint Initiative for Research and Innovation, carried out on 28-29 March, 2011

Four "thematic" working groups are established to develop pilot activities in the following areas related to key global societal challenges:

- Bio-economy (including food security)
- Bio-diversity and Climate Change
- ICT for meeting societal challenges
- Renewable Energies

In addition a **cross-thematic group** is also established on
Good practices of combining different funding sources for joint activities

Members of the working groups:

- Two co-leaders, one from each region, organising the work of each group
- Participation of Senior Officials or representatives from several countries of each region to ensure the bi-regional scope of the cooperation (not required for the cross-thematic WG);
- The involvement of representatives of the relevant ministries and funding agencies is important to ensure appropriate commitment of resources in the thematic groups
- Representatives from the European Commission services are involved in each group
- Thematic experts from both regions with an adviser status in agreement with Senior Officials.

Tasks of the 'thematic' working groups:

Overall definition and development of bi-regional pilot activities

- Step 1 (by end May 2011): Definition of specific issues and objectives on which each thematic group will focus; objectives should be precise, result oriented and sufficiently ambitious to deliver measurable results in medium term. Identification of relevant on-going or planned national, regional and bi-regional (including EU) activities on which the enhanced bi-regional cooperation will be developed. Statement of objectives will be circulated by the co chairs to all Senior Officials in June to allow other countries to join each group.
- Step 2 (by end September 2011): Definition of an implementation plan which includes the modalities of implementation, budget and indicators for measuring progress and results. Where appropriate the need and use of infrastructures as

well as specific actions to promote training, mobility and exchange of researchers will be identified. Where appropriate actions funded through EU programmes (Framework Programme for RTD, External instruments for development) and others will be identified. The scope of the implementation plan covers research as well as innovation at national, regional and bi-regional levels.

- Step 3 (from October 2011): implementation of the plan, adaptation as necessary and regular reporting of progress to co-chairs who will inform all Senior Officials (every other month).

Tasks of the cross-thematic working group on Good practices of combining different funding sources for joint activities

- Step 1: Review concepts, modalities and experiences of how to combine different national, regional, bi-regional and EU or LAC funding instruments. Identify good practices taking into account different objectives and circumstances (by end May).
- Step 2: Share the analysis with other senior officials to take into account their experience and produce a consolidated review of good practices (by early September)
- Step 3: Update good practices in the light of experiences in the thematic groups (by mid 2012).

Characteristics and commitments of the working groups and members:

- The countries participating in each thematic group commit to contribute to the implementation of the supporting projects financially or in kind according to each country's possibilities;
- The groups are open to other countries interested to take part in the activities at later stage (preferably before the start of the implementation of the plan);
- Guarantee that the pilot activities have an innovation component;
- Elaboration of minutes after each working group meeting to be sent to the members and the co-chairs of the SOM;
- Inform the co-chairs about progress of the planned activities in regular intervals (at least every two months (25 May, 25 July, 25 September, ...).

The WG will seek to achieve the above objectives by:

- Identifying and bringing together stakeholders representing industry, researchers and policy makers from EU and LAC, the European Commission and the EU and LAC technology platforms,
- Making an inventory of pertinent past and on-going projects and networks in the region with the objective of seeking synergies where necessary, and building on existing work, Developing relevant background documentation for the identification of:

- What are the current principal policy, institutional and technical limitations & opportunities,
- What are the possibilities for policy coordination (policy components, sharing of experiences and best practices),
- What could be the appropriate instruments for coordinating and financing joint research, technology development and innovation activities
- What would be appropriate criteria for priority setting (identifying the sectors and subsectors to be covered, agreeing on the criteria to select specific R&D areas and selecting those on which specific initiatives will be developed). [COMMENT: the Strategic Forum for International Scientific Cooperation (SFIC) work in Europe could be taken into account in this context].

Coordination between the thematic groups and the “Funding” group:

The working group which deals with the development of funding and learning from good practice feeds the other groups with its inputs, sending developed conceptual documents to the co-leaders of the thematic groups with Cc to the SOM co-chairs.

Cooperation with INCO-NETS:

A strong coordination with INCO-NETS is expected, in the planning of workshops which can help to develop the plans for the implementation of the pilot activities. Joint workshops or back-to-back meetings may be the most cost-effective manner to ensure a productive cooperation and generate tangible results.

Recommendations:

- Participation of the SOM working-group members in the workshops organised by INCO-NETS, when appropriate
- Organise SOM working-group meetings following INCONET workshops (and with some time overlap, if appropriate), to pick up the ideas and recommendations of the workshops immediately in order to include them into the work plans and implementation.