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(Resolutions, recommendations and opinions)

RECOMMENDATIONS

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

of 21 October 2011

on the research joint programming initiative ‘Connecting Climate Knowledge for Europe’

(2011/C 310/01)

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, and in particular Article 181 thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) Climate change is one of the great challenges of our times: the Copenhagen Accord⁽¹⁾ has recognised the 2 °C objective and stressed the need for deep cuts in global greenhouse gas emissions, calling for actions aimed to minimise the impact of climate change.
- (2) The forthcoming 5th Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), expected to be published in 2014, is planning to compile and assess new scientific results with the aim to provide a solid science-based ground for decision-making, with emphasis on future climate projections, regional aspects of climate change and associated impact, assessment of the various pathways for climate change mitigation and the role of each sector, e.g. energy, transport, agriculture, industry.
- (3) The Europe 2020 Strategy makes clear the need to meet the emission targets already set at European Union level and underlines the need to strengthen the resilience of our economies to climate risks and our capacity for disaster prevention and response.

- (4) Research and innovation are at the heart of the above policy objectives. In particular, better climate projections are needed for addressing the potential for future changes in the frequency and intensity of extreme events. Research is also required for assessing the feasibility, implications and implementation of the global targets in Europe and beyond, and for quantifying the regional impacts associated with these targets. Better knowledge is essential for identifying adaptation and mitigation options and assessing their potential benefits, impacts and costs as compared with no action.
- (5) Vulnerability and resilience of society and ecosystems to climate risks are still poorly understood. Linked to this, there is a need to better understand the fundamental processes governing the complex climate system in order to better detect and attribute climate change (human v natural influence) and distinguish between climate change and climate variability.
- (6) Mitigation technologies, concepts and mechanisms are urgently required for ensuring deep carbon emission reductions required by 2050, including research and innovation on renewables, carbon capture and storage, energy and resource efficiency, alternative fuels, land-use change, sustainable mobility, agriculture and forestry, and emission reduction of pollutants affecting human health or the environment.
- (7) Climate services for the production, availability and application of science-based climate projections should be developed. In this respect, research is required for improving and developing long-term observing systems,

⁽¹⁾ UNFCCC (2009) Report of the Conference of the Parties on its 15th session, held in Copenhagen from 7 to 19 December 2009.

data analyses, models and forecast systems across a range of timescales, and support the establishment of successful provider-user partnerships.

- (8) At its meeting of 26 May 2010 ⁽¹⁾, the Competitiveness Council recognised 'Connecting Climate Knowledge for Europe' as an area where joint programming would provide a major added value to reduce fragmentation in the efforts of Member States in the field of research. It therefore adopted conclusions recognising the need to launch a joint programming initiative on the subject and inviting the Commission to contribute to its preparation. The Council also reaffirmed that joint programming is a process led by Member States, with the Commission acting as a facilitator. The analysis of national research activities outlined in the staff working document, confirms that there is a need for better coordination to increase effectiveness and impact of research as well as to exploit synergies with the activities carried out at EU level through the development of a common strategic research agenda.
- (9) Climate change and climate-related research is a key area within the European Union Research Framework Programme, which plays a highly strategic role to support the European Union policy process taking into account the global dimension of climate change. Activities within this joint programming initiative need to be closely coordinated with the 7th European Union Framework Programme and future European Union programmes in this area, in particular the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme on Research and Innovation.
- (10) Joint programming of research on connecting knowledge for climate change would contribute to the coordination of research in this area, and to a fully operational European Research Area on climate change, strengthening Europe's leadership and competitiveness of the research in this field.
- (11) In order to achieve the goals set by this Recommendation, Member States should cooperate with the Commission on exploring possible Commission initiatives to assist Member States with further developing and implementing the strategic research agenda.
- (12) In order for the Commission to be able to report to the European Parliament and to the Council on the progress made by all the joint programming initiatives, Member States should report regularly to the Commission on the progress made on this joint programming initiative,

HAS ADOPTED THIS RECOMMENDATION:

1. Member States are encouraged to develop a common vision on how cooperation and coordination in the field of

research at Union level can contribute to meeting the challenge of climate change mitigation and adaptation, connecting science, policy, economy and society. Full involvement of Member States should be sought, including in particular countries where the effects of climate change are expected to be strong.

2. Member States are encouraged to develop an operational common strategic research agenda establishing medium to long-term research needs and objectives in the area of climate change. It should contain an implementation plan establishing priorities and timelines and specifying the action, instruments and resources required for its implementation.
3. Member States are encouraged to include the following actions, as part of the operational strategic research agenda and of the implementation plan:
 - (a) strengthening exchanges of information on relevant regional and national programmes, research activities and European Union coordinated research programmes, also in view of regularly updating the mapping of European research in the field;
 - (b) exchanging information, resources, best practices, methodologies and guidelines;
 - (c) identifying areas or research activities that would benefit from coordination or joint calls for proposals or pooling of resources;
 - (d) defining the modalities for research to be undertaken jointly in the areas referred to in point (c);
 - (e) ensuring the coordination and the development of synergies with the existing research and innovation schemes in the European Union, e.g. Framework Programme, including Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES) pre-operational actions, climate and climate-related research undertaken by the Joint Research Centre (JRC) and the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)/Climate Knowledge and Innovation Community (KIC); research activities promoted through the Cohesion Policy; other related joint programming initiatives, as well as with the European Union Clearinghouse on adaptation managed by the Commission and the European Environment Agency. Strong links should be developed in relevant climate change areas not particularly addressed by the present JPI, namely in the development of mitigation and adaptation options, as well as risks and opportunities of climate change action;

⁽¹⁾ 10246/10.

- (f) sharing, where appropriate, existing research infrastructures or developing new facilities such as coordinated databanks or the development of models for studying climate change processes and impacts;
- (g) encouraging better collaboration between public and private sectors, as well as open innovation between different research activities and business sectors related to and affected by climate change;
- (h) exporting and diffusing knowledge, innovation and interdisciplinary methodological approaches, in particular regarding policy relevant results;
- (i) feeding with appropriate scientific information the policy-making level at national and European Union level;
- (j) establishing appropriate exchange of information with relevant international programmes;
- (k) creating networks between centres dedicated to climate change research, including centres that are outside the European Research Area;
- (l) reinforcing joint foresight exercises.
4. Member States are encouraged to maintain and further develop a common management structure in the field of climate change, with a mandate to establish common conditions, rules and procedures for cooperation and coordination and to monitor the implementation of the strategic research agenda.
5. Member States are encouraged to jointly implement the strategic research agenda including via their national research programmes or other national research activities in accordance with the guidelines for Framework Conditions in Joint Programming developed by the Council high level group on Joint Programming ⁽¹⁾.
6. Member States are encouraged to cooperate with the Commission with a view to exploring possible Commission initiatives to assist Member States in developing and implementing the strategic research agenda, and to coordinating the joint programmes with other Union initiatives in this field.
7. Member States are encouraged to liaise closely with the Strategic Forum for International Science and Technology Cooperation (SFIC) in developing and implementing a possible international dimension in the strategic research agenda and to ensure coherence with SFIC initiatives with and vis-à-vis third countries.
8. Member States are encouraged to report regularly to the Commission on the progress made on this JPI through annual progress reports.

Done at Brussels, 21 October 2011.

For the Commission
Máire GEOGHEGAN-QUINN
Member of the Commission

⁽¹⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/research/era/docs/en/voluntary_guidelines.pdf