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Surveying, understanding and predicting biodiversity dynamics is really challenging for research. To some extent, this also applies to research managers facing the dynamics of the European Research Area, which has markedly evolved in relation to the new socio-economical and political context of recent years. Though the impacts of BiodivERsA are increasingly recognized by its members, the research community and the European Commission, our consortium is exploring how to take into account the evolution of the European biodiversity research landscape. In this regard, the BiodivERsA database, which has been updated with the support of BiodivERsA partners, represents a very relevant tool, that is now ready to be fully exploited (See on p10).

On a European level the main development is of course the transition from the 7th Framework Programme to Horizon 2020. The Grand Societal Challenges and the JPI's connected to these, are an important anchor point for future activities. We thus promoted contacts with other initiatives in recent months, in particular with a few JPIs. In this context, BiodivERsA and FACCE JPI (Agriculture, Food security, and Climate Change Joint Programming Initiative) have committed themselves to developing a joint call on a topic at the crossroads between their respective priorities: "Promoting synergies and reducing trade-offs between food supply, biodiversity and ecosystem services". The call is expected to be launched in November 2013, with a closing date

of mid-February 2014. Between 10 and 15 countries will participate to this call.

Another strong inflexion within the European Research Area is the will to further promote the science-society/policy interface. BiodivERsA has already increasingly focused on the science-policy interface during the last 3 years, and BiodivERsA partners have developed relevant tools to improve linkages between the research community, stakeholders and policy-makers. Two policy briefs based on BiodivERsA research projects' outputs will be released in September 2013, with the support of the IUCN Brussels communication team (See on p9). These briefs were developed to highlight decisive results obtained through BiodivERsA research projects, while addressing strategic issues raised by the European Commission. BiodivERsA partners have also committed to improving the integration of stakeholders' engagement in biodiversity research projects. The Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), one of the UK partners in BiodivERsA, has lead the development of the BiodivERsA guidelines on stakeholder engagement in research projects, which analyses the ways stakeholders are actually involved in biodiversity research projects and intends to provide guidance for research teams responding to BiodivERsA calls on how to involve them in their projects.

Last but not least, supporting the pan-European integration of research on biodiversity and associated

ecosystem services remains of paramount importance. Since biodiversity is a common goods and since biodiversity issues often cross borders, this is a major topic in which European cooperation can have true added value. This cooperation becomes even more critical at a time where resource-efficiency is increasingly looked for and redundancies are less and less acceptable. Since 2008 and included the fifth call to be launched in late 2013, BiodivERsA partners will have committed over 50M€ to support scientific excellent and policy relevant projects on biodiversity research. Furthermore, the development of the call co-branded with FACCE-JPI demonstrates the capacity of BiodivERsA partners for adapting themselves to the new European research landscape and priorities.

It is time for BiodivERsA partners to think about the future. During the last General Assembly (June 2013, in Spain), partners have stated their determination to further strengthen BiodivERsA's role in the future, beyond the end of its second phase (2010-2014). We hope to continue to pursuing BiodivERsA's overall goal: to build a sustainable funding platform for innovative and interdisciplinary biodiversity research responding to pressing societal and policy needs at the European level.

Xavier Le Roux
Coordinator of BiodivERsA

Pre-announcement of the 2013-2014 Call for Proposals: A joint action between BiodivERsA and FACCE-JPI

Following several months of interactions, the **BiodivERsA ERA-Net** and the **FACCE-JPI** have decided to launch a joint call for research proposals on: **Promoting synergies and reducing trade-offs between food supply, biodiversity and ecosystem services**

planned to be launched in November 2013, with a closing date in mid-February 2014.

Scientific teams will be invited to form transnational research consortia with teams from minimum 3 countries participating to the call.

The research proposals will be evaluated across criteria of scientific excellence and policy relevance/ stakeholder engagement (what is it? [Click here](#)). It is also expected that the European scope of the projects will provide added value to the research carried out.

Countries that expressed a preliminary interest are: *Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Lithuania, The Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and Turkey* (countries with confirmed participation will be known during the summer).

This pre-announcement will be updated regularly on both FACCE-JPI and BiodivERsA websites up to the publication of the call to inform potential applicants on the scientific themes of the call and the actual participation of countries



FACCE-JPI

The Joint Programming Initiative on Agriculture, Food Security and Climate Change (FACCE-JPI) brings together 21 countries who are committed to building an integrated European Research Area addressing the interconnected challenges of sustainable agriculture, food security and impacts of climate change. FACCE-JPI provides and steers research to support sustainable agricultural production and economic growth, to contribute to a European bio-based economy, while maintaining and restoring ecosystem services under current and future climate change.

For more information: <http://www.faccejpi.com/>



Results from the fourth BiodivERsA call on invasive species and biological invasions

As part of BiodivERsA's strategy to integrate biodiversity research in Europe, 12 BiodivERsA members launched a joint call on "Invasive species and biological invasions" in November 2012. This call addressed the following themes, across all ecosystems and organisms:

- > Demonstrating and characterising the impacts of biological invaders
- > Understanding mechanisms of biological invasions and levers for mitigating and/or reversing the impacts of biological invaders
- > Evaluating the interactions between biological invasions and other global environmental changes
- > Biological invasions and public perceptions
- > Biological invasions and adaptation

Based on the ranking list established by an independent Scientific and Policy evaluation panel, **BiodivERsA Call Steering Committee has shortlisted the top 9 research projects, for a total amount close to 8 Millions €.** The final list of funded projects will be known upon national decisions by BiodivERsA partners, in October 2013 at the latest. The 9 shortlisted projects encompass a range of pressing scientific and societal issues :

DIARS - Detection of invasive plant species and assessment of their impact on ecosystem properties through remote sensing. Participating countries: BE (coordinator) FR, DE

EXOTIC - EXperimentally Orientated genomics to Tackle Insects adaptive Challenges during bio invasions: the ladybird *Harmonia axyridis* as a model species. Participating countries : FR (coordinator) BE, DE

FFII - Forecasting Future Invasions and their Impacts. Participating countries : SE (coordinator) FR, DE

GC-INVAMOFECT - Global change and invasive mosquitoes as infectious disease risks in Europe. Participating countries: FR (coordinator) AU, DE

INVAXEN - INVASive biology of *XENopus laevis* in Europe: ecology, impact and predictive models. Participating countries : FR (coordinator) BE, DE, PT

PROBIS - Heterogeneity of patterns and processes along biological invasion successions. Participating countries : FR (coordinator) DE, SE, TK

RESIPATH: Responses of European Forests and Society to Invasive Pathogens. Participating countries : SE (coordinator) AU, BE, BG, DE, FR, NO, PT, SE, TK

SalmInvade - Causes and consequences of invasions of aquatic ecosystems by non-native salmonids. Participating countries : SE (coordinator) FR, DE, NO

WholsNext - Climate change and escaping ornamentals: Predicting the next generation of European plant invaders. Participating countries : DE (coordinator) AU, FR



Kick-off meeting for the projects funded through the BiodivERsA 2011-2012 call

On June 13 and 14 2013, BiodivERsA organised a Kick-off meeting in Almeria (Spain) to launch the **research projects funded through the 2011-2012 call on “biodiversity dynamics: developing scenarios, identifying tipping points and improving resilience”**. This call financed nine research projects for a total amount close to 8.8M€.

Additional information about the call implementation and results can be found in a specific brochure which can be downloaded from the BiodivERsA website ([Click here](#)). The projects presented during the event are listed below:

BUFFER – Partially protected areas as buffers to increase the linked social-ecological resilience. Presented by Joachim Claudet, project PI (National Centre for Scientific Research, CNRS, CRIOBE, FR)

CoForTips – Congo basin forests: tipping points for biodiversity conservation and resilience of forested social and ecological systems. Presented by Claude Garcia, project PI (Centre for International Cooperation in Agronomic Research for Development, CIRAD, FR)

EC21C – European Conservation for the 21st Century. Presented by Early Regan, project PI (University of Evora, PT)

FISHCON – Biodiversity scenarios for fragmented landscapes; freshwater connectivity and the future of fish diversity. Presented by Anders Finstad, project PI (Institute for Nature Research, NO)

LIMNOTIP – Biodiversity dynamics and tipping points in our future freshwater ecosystems. Presented by Lars-Anders Hansson, project PI (University of Lund, DE)

REGARDS – Resilience of marginal Grasslands and biodiversity management Decision Support. Presented by Sandra Lavorel, project PI (National Centre for Scientific Research, CNRS, FR)

SIGNAL – European gradients of resilience in the face of climate extremes. Presented by Jürgen Dengler (University of Bayreuth, DE)

TIPPINGPOND – Tipping points, biodiversity resilience and ecosystem service: Pond as model systems. Presented by Luc De Meester (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, BE)

TipTree – Scenarios for forest biodiversity dynamics under global change in Europe: Identifying micro-evolutionary scale tipping points. Presented by Sylvie Oddou-Muratorio (Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique, INRA, FR)

In addition to the presentations by project leaders, two keynote speakers framed the discussions and brought their own experience about the topic of the call: **Dr. Jan PLESNIK**, Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection of the Czech Republic and **Dr. Mikel BECERRO**, The Bites Lab, Natural Products and Agrobiolgy Institute, Spanish Scientific Research Council - CSIC, Tenerife, Canary Islands.

For more information about this call and the presentations made during the kick-off meeting, [click here](#).



BiodivERsA strategic agenda updated

Since 2010, the BiodivERsA network has been developing a strategic vision to better identify the pressing issues in the field of biodiversity research. In 2011, this resulted in the development of BiodivERsA's common strategic agenda which is now updated every year. This agenda keeps BiodivERsA's partners abreast of the biodiversity research that is needed to respond to the major societal challenges relating to biodiversity and ecosystem services. The 2013 update of the agenda is built upon research and biodiversity strategies and priorities that exist at agency, national and international levels, allowing the identification of common thematic priorities among BiodivERsA partners. These thematic priorities have been divided in three groups, of which the first two are described below :

Main priority

- > Invasive species with a particular focus on alien invasive species (*selected for the 2012-2013 call*)
- > Biodiversity dynamics : developing scenarios, identifying tipping points , and improving resilience (*selected for the 2011-2012 call*)
- > Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, and their valuation (*selected for the 2010-2011 call*)
- > Promoting synergies and reducing trade-offs between food supply, biodiversity and ecosystem services (*selected for the 2013-2014 call - joint call with FACCE-JPI*)
- > Biodiversity and Health
- > From soil biodiversity to soil functioning and services in a global change context
- > Improvement of habitats connectivity, functioning green infrastructures, diversifying landscapes

High interest

- > Biodiversity and climate change
- > Biodiversity and policy, how to improve development and implementation of European biodiversity protection
- > Conserving traditionally managed European habitats and landscapes

In addition, BiodivERsA partners are working on a mechanism to better promote early career biodiversity researchers within BiodivERsA calls.



Science-society and science-policy interface

BiodivERsA continuously promotes science-society and science-policy interactions at different levels within a range of project activities:

- > Upstream, by mapping the way stakeholders engage in biodiversity research projects (BiodivERsA report to be published soon); by defining calls for research proposals that tackle **both scientific and societal issues and are policy relevant**.
- > During funded research projects' life, since most projects funded by BiodivERsA promote **effective interactions and collaborations between scientists and stakeholders**.
- > Downstream, by promoting the knowledge brokerage and dissemination to key stakeholders and policy makers ; by participating to important events **bridging the gap between biodiversity research and stakeholders/policy makers**.

Below, we highlight three main activities recently developed in this context.

BiodivERsA promotes stakeholder engagement in research projects

Apart from funding joint calls together, BiodivERsA partners pursue a set of other activities, which include horizon scanning activities and the development of best practice and guidelines documents. The Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), one of the UK partners in BiodivERsA, has lead the development of the BiodivERsA guidelines on stakeholder engagement in research projects, principally intended to provide guidance for research teams responding to BiodivERsA calls on how to involve stakeholders in their research projects.

BiodivERsA will soon publish a first version of guidelines on stakeholder (including policy-maker) engagement in research projects, which will continuously be developed in the coming year, leading to the final version of the guidelines to be published in April 2014.

These guidelines provide fruitful insights on best practice in stakeholder engagement both for researchers preparing project proposals (to BiodivERsA calls but not only) and also provide a set of standard, yet quite detailed, criteria for evaluation committee members looking to assess the quality of the stakeholder engagement approach in a given proposal.



Photo: example of a BiodivERsA project consultation, presently working on the completion of their data-sheet for case studies. Courtesy of the VITAL project.

These hands-on guidelines have been prepared based on a set of consultations covering BiodivERsA partner practices, effective engagement practices in BiodivERsA-funded projects and stakeholder approaches used in other relevant initiatives outside of BiodivERsA, notably thanks to a workshop planned by JNCC on April 23rd-24th, 2013 involving BiodivERsA-funded project teams.

The first two BiodivERsA policy briefs are available

In addition to promoting research projects that are both scientifically excellent and high relevant to society and policy, the BiodivERsA network takes an extra step in science-society interfacing of the research it funds by promoting the communication of key research results of BiodivERsA-funded projects towards policy-makers. This further demonstrates the high pertinence of BiodivERsA's work and of the research it funds across Europe.

The BiodivERsA partners are pleased to announce the upcoming publication of the first two BiodivERsA Policy briefs! This work, coordinated on behalf of BiodivERsA by the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, has mobilized IUCN Europe – Brussels, who act as interpreters of key BiodivERsA-funded research results, linking the new knowledge to major European policies.

The first Policy brief ([click here](#)) focuses on Wildlife diseases, acknowledging their increase and

the threat they pose to Europe's biodiversity, and proposing policy recommendations using the *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis* (*Bd*) fungus as an example. This 4-page brief is building on the BiodivERsA-funded RACE project



([click here](#)), lead by Dr. Matthew Fisher, which has carried out research on the *Bd* fungus and has quantified its threat in Europe while improving knowledge on the key causes of its spread. One of the final outcomes of the project is

a European Threat Abatement Plan soon to be released. The alarming data revealed by the project show the need to address the problems posed by the increasing spread and impact of wildlife diseases in Europe by developing and adopting adequate policy action, for which the brief proposes precise recommendations.

The second Policy brief ([click here](#)) is focusing on the conservation of threatened insects in the context of changing land use and climate. This brief is building on the BiodivERsA-funded CLIMIT project ([click here](#)), lead by Dr. Josef Settele.

These two Policy Briefs are part of a series of briefs aiming to inform policy-makers on the key results of the biodiversity research projects funded by BiodivERsA and provide recommendations to policy-makers based on research results. The series of BiodivERsA Policy Briefs can be found at www.biodiversa.org/policybriefs.

BiodivERsA will co-organise a workshop part of the Conference "Enhancing Biodiversity through best practices and linking research to policy"

The topic of the annual Conference on Sustainable Development of the European Parliament Intergroup on "Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development" is "Enhancing Biodiversity through best practices and linking research to policy". The conference will be hold on Tuesday 24 September 2013, at the European Parliament in Brussels.

The aim of this conference will be to foster multi-stakeholder discussion on issues linked to biodiversity conservation and sustainable development issues more broadly. It will seek to give space to pragmatic and practical presentations, and to allow experience and knowledge sharing between European and global policy-makers and stakeholders in order to engage further all actors in finding sustainable solutions to some of the most pressing

issues of our time.

The conference will last one full day, divided into one high-level plenary session in the morning, 4 workshop sessions throughout the day, and a plenary session in the afternoon bringing together all workshop participants to present key conclusions of their working groups and debate.

BiodivERsA will co-organise the second workshop on "Research and Innovation for nature and livelihoods". For BiodivERsA, participation to such an event contributes to promote science-society and science-policy interactions, capitalizing on the new knowledge produced by research funded by BiodivERsA and the way to interface science-society-policy in each of these projects.

The BiodivERsA database, and analysis of the competitive funding landscape for biodiversity research in Europe

Objectives and contents

One of the objectives of the BiodivERsA consortium is to produce a comprehensive 'map' of the current state of biodiversity research in Europe to improve the identification of existing gaps and future needs for new research programmes, new facilities, as well as detecting potential barriers for successful cooperation. Contributing to this end, BiodivERsA has developed a database holding information about :

- funding programs and associated calls for research proposals on biodiversity and associated ecosystem services in Europe; this includes thematic programs devoted to biodiversity, thematic programs including biodiversity issues, and blue sky programs where biodiversity research applications are eligible; grants, fellowships and studentships are also referenced. Focus is on competitive funds only, excluding e.g. funding by national institutes of the part of the scientific community they are in charge of, or schemes that fund local research teams only.
- research projects on biodiversity and associated ecosystem services funded through these programmes
- research institutes and other organisations (including stakeholders) involved in the projects funded, and researchers leading the projects.

Besides allowing the analysis of the funding landscape for biodiversity research, the profile of funded research and the possible complementarities of biodiversity research priorities among countries and agencies in Europe, this database will also help scientists to identify potential resources and network opportunities to further develop their research. In addition, it will help at finding scientific expertise for specific policy questions. As such, the BiodivERsA database is a valuable tool for strategic cooperation and expertise in the large, fragmented domain of research on biodiversity and associated ecosystem services.

The BiodivERsA database presently includes **122 organisations that fund** biodiversity research, **605 annual calls within 216 different funding programmes** (including the biodiversity-relevant programmes of the European FP6 and FP7, and BiodivERsA ERA-net calls), **6546 research projects**, **2860 research organisations**, and **5879 persons**. Those data span the **2000-2014 time window**, and currently cover **17 countries**: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, and the UK.

The database will be officially launched in September 2013 (<http://data.biodiversa.org>). Upon registration and acceptance of the data user agreement, information in the database will be available to anyone interested in biodiversity research funding in Europe.

Funding of the competitive funding landscape for biodiversity research

BiodivERsA has now used this database to analyse selected features of the European funding landscape for biodiversity research. Since obtaining extensive information on all the competitive funding sources in a given country is hardly reachable, we mainly focused on the funding derived from the **Framework programme at the European scale, and on BiodivERsA's funding agencies at the national one**; the latter represent major players within their corresponding country. Though such an analysis does not allow for a complete between-country comparison, it can still elucidate some major trends in the funding of biodiversity research in Europe.

The major objectives were to:

- underline the level of funding encompassing a multitude of funding schemes
- analyse temporal funding trends for the period 2005-2011
- compare the level of funding by national agencies versus the Framework programme (through several key schemes) at the European scale

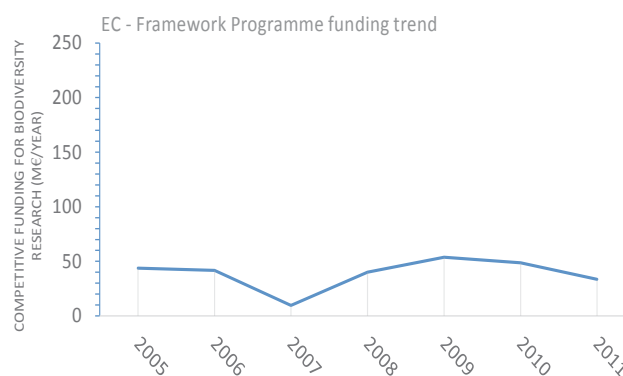
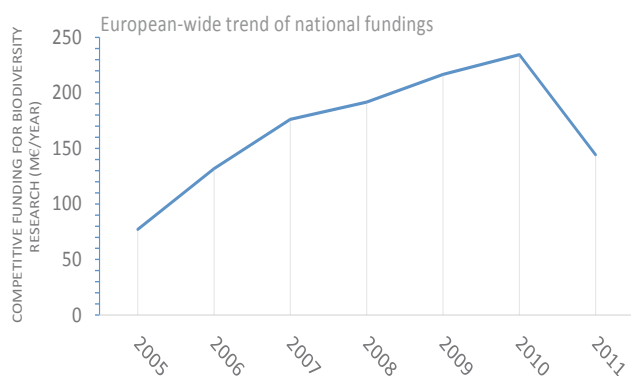
Results will be spread in booklet format by the end of this summer, and reveal some interesting trends. When assessing the temporal evolution of annual funding for the national agencies aggregated (see Figure), a steady increase of funding was observed until 2010, followed by a strong decrease (-37.7%) from 2010 to 2011. Concurrently, EC-Framework Programme funding for biodiversity research showed highest values in 2009, followed by a decrease thereafter (-9.2% from 2009 to 2010; and



-31.0% from 2010 to 2011). The analyses showed that the contribution of EC to biodiversity research funding through major Framework Programme themes over the 2005-2011 was lower than the joined contribution of national agencies: 18.8% vs 81.2% respectively. These trends demonstrate that (i) biodiversity research funding in Europe is largely dependent on national funders, and (ii) after a period of increased funding (2005 to 2009), biodiversity research may have entered a period (after 2010) of marked decrease of funding in Europe. Analysis of funding for 2012 and 2013 will be needed to confirm the second conclusion.

This kind of mapping activity will help a large range of stakeholders (researchers, institutes, funding agencies and policy makers) in getting a more comprehensive view of biodiversity research funding in Europe.

Figures - Temporal evolution of the annual competitive funding for biodiversity research aggregated for the 14 national agencies studied from 11 countries (left panel) and for the EC through 4 main schemes, i.e; FP6 "Sustainable Development, Global Change and Ecosystems", "Support for coordination of activities" and "Policy Support" themes, and the FP7 "Environment" theme (right panel).



BiodivERsA identified as a success story by DG Research & Innovation

DG Research & Innovation has recently published an article explaining how the BiodivERsA ERA-Net takes an active part in the protection and management of biodiversity across Europe and beyond ([click here](#)). The identification as success story by the EC builds on several achievements made by the consortium over the past 3 years.

➤ First, BiodivERsA produced a comprehensive 'map' of the current state of biodiversity research in Europe. This included an analysis of national and international research strategies ([click here](#)), the creation of a database of more than 6,600 projects funded at national or European levels ([click here](#)), to be launched in September 2013, and an analysis of how these projects were funded and how various stakeholders were involved ([click here](#)).

➤ Secondly, this mapping allowed for the creation of a common research agenda, which is updated annually, focusing on key topics of common interest on a pan-European scale and eliminating the duplications and inefficiencies resulting from the previously fragmented approach.

➤ The third achievement of the BiodivERsA project was to use this agreed agenda as the basis for a series of annual «calls», focusing on a specific theme and inviting relevant multinational biodiversity research projects around Europe to apply for funding. By the end of the second project phase

(October 2014), it is estimated that BiodivERsA will have allocated funds of approximately €34 million to qualifying projects.

Clearly, this represents a remarkable leverage effect of 17 times the EC's original investment.

If non-monetary contributions involved in projects are included, this leverage rises to an even more impressive 25 times. Finally, the accomplishment which is considered most important is the dissemination of research results coming from BiodivERsA funded projects to policymakers within and outside Europe. As such, BiodivERsA is identified as key knowledge broker and provider to knowledge mobilisation tools such as the European KNEU project and the IPBES.

BiodivERsA's partners, June 2013, Almeria



BiodivERsA partner profile



The Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) is the national research council in the Netherlands. NWO promotes quality and innovation in science. NWO receives budget for science funding from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and almost all other government ministries. NWO manages this indirect government funding and ensures it is allocated to the best scientific talent and the best research proposals. NWO's statutory duties are: to advance the quality of scientific research and initiate and encourage new research developments; to allocate research funding; to facilitate the transfer of knowledge from research initiated and encouraged by NWO for the benefit of society; and to focus on university research and to coordinate scientific research strategy where necessary.

To do so, NWO wants to support talented creative researchers in developing their own ideas. Next to this, NWO aims to increase the contribution science makes to society, for example by investing in research inspired by society's needs, including the economic priority areas defined in the national top sectors. Additionally, NWO aims to strengthen international cooperation and promote access to high-quality research facilities. NWO is involved in various international research agendas and partnerships, connecting science in the Netherlands with science in Europe and the world.

In the BiodivERsA network, NWO is represented by the Division for Earth and Life Sciences (NWO-ALW). Where possible cooperation with other relevant research areas/NWO divisions (e.g. Social Sciences) is sought. Many of the topics in the field of earth and life sciences are relevant on global level and thus naturally based on international cooperation. Biodiversity is one of these topics in which international cooperation can have true added value. Collaboration is possible in joint calls on topics with European/global relevance but also on a

more strategic level, e.g. in the alignment of national research agendas.

Biodiversity is pointed out as one of the research field with specific interest for NWO-ALW. Biodiversity research is funded through open competition (including early career programmes) and general thematic programmes (e.g. polar research, marine research). Additionally several biodiversity specific programmes have been organised in cooperation with the ministry of Economic Affairs since 2000, the latest in 2011.

By participating in European projects like BiodivERsA, NWO hopes to contribute to the creation of the European Research Area. NWO-ALW has set itself the objective of increasing the funding available for researchers to participate in international partnerships. Therefore NWO-ALW contributes (financially and scientifically) actively to initiatives aimed at joint research programming. NWO-ALW contributes to the effective use of the funding instruments available in Europe by strengthening the quality of the research by means of peer review.

In BiodivERsA2 NWO is responsible for WP4, working towards a sustainable research funding platform for biodiversity in Europe. With the end of the second phase of BiodivERsA coming up and Horizon 2020 to get started in 2014, the time is right to think about the future. We hope to continue the good cooperation with all BiodivERsA partners for the benefit of biodiversity research.



*Martijn Los, Policy Officer
Earth and Life Sciences*



Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research

● www.nwo.nl

BiodivERsA partner profile

The Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness, MINECO, has the competences on scientific/technical research, development and innovation, and constitutes today the main actor in the Spanish national landscape of Research and Development funding.

The Ministry develops its activity in the framework of the Spanish Strategy for Science, Technology & Innovation 2013-2020, which responds to an overall vision of the national RDI system and defines its objectives and the specific scope and areas of action. Setting the administrative instruments and financial mechanisms to achieve those objectives are the tasks of MINECO, which structures and directs its effort through its State Plan for Scientific/Technical Research and Innovation 2013-2016.

The State Plan constitutes the instrument to pursue the completion of public policies on RDI and is addressed to agents responsible of a) carrying out RDI activities, b) management of RDI activities, and c) RDI services providers. All different players of the national RDI arena (public research centers, technological centers and platforms, stakeholders, enterprises and businesses associations, social agents, etc.) participated on its elaboration. Its design happened to overlap with the debate and definition of the future EU framework program for RDI activities, Horizon 2020, and thus considers the big challenges and opportunities addressed by EU and Member State policies.

The State Plan revolves around four national programmes (State Program For The Promotion Of Talent And Its Employability, State Programme For The Promotion Of The Excellence On Scientific And Technical Research, State Programme Of Enterprise Leadership On RDI, State Programme On RDI Oriented To The Societal Challenges) that are in turn deployed in a total of 18 subprogrammes developed according to the thematic focus and nature of RDI activities. The grant of public funding follows a competitive process in which the selection of proposals is made according to scientific/technical criteria and, that being the case, according also to the technological, corporative and commercial feasibility of the proposals. These assessments are driven through transparent standardized proceedings based on peer review evaluations.

In this context and, in particular, the field of biodiversity, from 2004 more than 121 M€ have been invested and 1075 national projects have been financed within the subprogramme on Systems and Organismal Biology. Other related subprogrammes, relevant from the point of view of the mentioned Spanish Strategy and the Horizon 2020 perspectives, focused on agriculture (940 projects, 115 M€ since 2004) and forestry (139 projects and 14 M€).

Beyond its national commitment MINECO also



Esteban Manrique, ERA-Net coordinator - Estrella Fernandez Garcia, Assistant Deputy Director for International Projects - Guillermo Morales Rodriguez, ERA-Net manager

holds the direction of international relations and the Spanish representation in programmes, fora, international organizations and EU initiatives on RDI, having been an active promoter of the European Research Area since its beginnings. To date MINECO has participated in 40 ERA-NETs investing more than 28.6 M€ in joint transnational calls.



Francisco Pugaire, BiodivERsA2 scientific manager

Within the BiodivERsA framework, MINECO has been involved in the development and implementation of the joint calls taking part eventually in two of them and setting up the base for a fruitful participation of the Spanish scientific community. The Ministry also leads the task 2.4 of the ERA-Net conducting an analysis of the European biodiversity landscape of research infrastructures and aiming ultimately at the development of a strategy for cooperation with and integration of research infrastructures in BiodivERsA research programmes.



Upcoming activities

Upcoming workshops and events:

- Joint activity to raise biodiversity among the policy agendas, 24 September, Brussels
- Staff exchanges in Bulgaria (26-27 September) and Portugal (17-18 October)

Upcoming activities for the next joint call:

- Launch of the 2013-2014 call co-branded with FACCE-JPI on «Promoting synergies and reducing trade-offs between food supply, biodiversity and ecosystem services»

Upcoming publications

- Brochure presenting the BiodivERsA database for European and national biodiversity research : programs, projects and funding. The brochure will include analyses profiling research funding in this domain
- Two policy briefs
- Brochure on stakeholder engagement in biodiversity research projects

BiodivERsA partners

FRB, France (Coordinator) - FWF, Austria - BeISPO, Belgium - BNSF, Bulgaria - ETAG, Estonia - ANR, France - MEDDE, France - ONEMA (observer), France - DFG, Germany - PT-DLR, Germany - VM, Hungary - RCL, Lithuania - NWO, The Netherlands - RCN, Norway - NCN (observer), Poland - FCT, Portugal - MINECO, Spain - FORMAS, Sweden - SEPA, Sweden - MFAL, Turkey - DEFRA, UK - JNCC, UK - NERC, UK.

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