

## WssTP Position Paper on Green Paper

"From Challenges to Opportunities:  
Towards a Common Strategic Framework for EU research and innovation funding",  
(Brussels, 20/06/2011)

### About WssTP

*WssTP is the European Technology Platform for Water. Since 2004, WssTP has been developing a vision, a SRA and Implementation Document. Based on these three documents, WssTP has been proactive in involving industries and other stakeholders in this common vision. WssTP has successfully identified the key research activities and the gaps to be filled throughout the water cycle. Today, WssTP consists of 62 members, 315 contributors and a network of more than 700 individuals from Industry, Academia, Research, Policy Makers & Water Utilities. WssTP has produced 2 Recommendation Reports to address the FP7, 10 thematic reports on specific research and technology developments, 5 Scientific Publications since 2008. WssTP also successfully initiated the EUREKA Cluster on Water- ACQUEAU, to boost innovation and market driven solutions for the water sector. WssTP represents a key mechanism to further coordinate research, demonstration and pilot projects (using FP7 as well as LIFE+ funds) in the water sectors and allied fields.*

### Executive Summary of WssTP Position

#### **Build on existing initiatives: Create a Water Fund**

WssTP was created to stimulate a collaborative, innovative, visionary and integrated Research and Technology Development strategy for the European water sector.

WssTP advocates launching a "Water Programme" under the future research programmes of the European Commission. A successful programme will ensure that there is commonality and alignment of strategic goals between the different funding mechanisms promoted by the Commission.

#### **Water, a vector for innovation**

In a period in which the EU is focusing more on innovation, it has to be stressed that the water sector is a good vector for innovation, particularly in the key issues of resource efficiency, renewable energy from water, adapted systems to natural and water processes, adaptation and design of the city of tomorrow, and provision of better services to citizens through ICT.

#### **Concrete steps to create a water fund**

A coordinated Programme and Fund for water will ensure:

- Research that is better targeted to meet Europe's societal challenges
- A greater involvement of end-users in research and innovation projects which is a key for the water sector today.
- An efficient transfer from research to technology development and from applied research to demonstration and to the market.
- A more efficient framework and consistent rules of application for water stakeholders
- A reduction in replication of research (ie waste)

**The combination of efforts from WssTP, the JPI on Water, EWA, EUREAU, EWP and the decision to launch an EIP would efficiently deliver a strong coordinated, integrated and innovative "Water Programme" for Europe through better financial framework conditions to water innovation.**

*(Cf. WssTP Position Paper on future FP 8: "BOOSTING RESEARCH AND INNOVATION FUNDINGS FOR WATER", WssTP 20-04-2011.)*

**Please see in priority, p. 8, answer to question 15 on ETP.**

## Answers to Questions

### **4.1. Working together to deliver on Europe 2020**

*1. How should the Common Strategic Framework make EU research and innovation funding more attractive and easy to access for participants? What is needed in addition to a single entry point with common IT tools, a one stop shop for support, a streamlined set of funding instruments covering the full innovation chain and further steps towards administrative simplification?*

From an industry or SMEs point of view, getting access to EU funding appears complicated due to the variety of schemes, the image of the EU being heavy and complicated in access to funding or the need to be connected to access to 'Brussels' funding. The major problems are time, understanding, dedicating one or several person to those issues for a limited return on investment (success rate, practical advantages of EU collaboration in terms of financial return versus networking).

"One stop shop" to entry all EU funding instruments represents a clear added value to enterprises. The other major challenge for a successful use of such an instrument would be information on this instrument including training at local level and an easy understandable tool with simplified picture of the EU complexity at several scales. It needs to explain the EU level and its links with national, regional and local scale with a well referenced index of topics so that stakeholders can understand major challenges and focused topics addressed within a call. The EU should avoid new tools and focus on integrating existing tools... (cf. WssTP Position Paper on "Simplifying the Implementation of the Research Framework Programmes", 04-07-2010 and WssTP Position Paper on "Public consultation on Community innovation policy", 16-11-2009)

*2. How should EU funding best cover the full innovation cycle from research to market uptake?*

WssTP would like to highlight the importance to promote innovation to develop new markets opportunities and technologies developments. In the field of water management, boosting research and innovation means to sustain research activities to identify needs and gaps; to extend bottom-up and market driven by developing a user approach; and to support coordination activities between all the stakeholders from the water research community.

In the water sector, there is a gap to fund large scale applied research i.e. demonstration sites, testing prototypes and integration of results from past, on-going and future research.

*3. What are the characteristics of EU funding that maximise the benefit of acting at the EU level? Should there be a strong emphasis on leveraging other sources of funding?*

For WssTP members, major benefits of acting at the EU level have been:

- stronger cooperation that enabled to develop new networking opportunities and therefore business opportunities;
- the creation of networks of experts on scientific focused topics and the creation a community of researchers;
- the exchange of best practices and learning experiences from different situations and solutions.

To develop other sources of funding can be encouraged based on an integrative approach of funding research project. It means that funded EU projects should be encouraged to find other sources of funding from other funding sources (local funding, partnership, with a particular commitment to ensure the continuity of the project once the EU funding has been granted.

*4. How should EU research and innovation funding best be used to pool Member States resources? How should Joint Programming Initiatives between groups of Member States be supported?*

“Joint programming could meet the analysis of the EC and be a structure for reaching cooperation on research, because its aim is achieving structuring effects in order to increase the efficiency and impact of public efforts on research. It asks member states to define and implement coordinated research agendas with multiannual commonly decided activities and funding mechanisms.” (Vision Document, JPI Water).

According to this vision, WssTP is of the opinion that on a mission level, JPI and WssTP have a lot in common. Both entities are to increase the efficiency and impact of European research and technology development. So when it comes to programming of basic research, technology development, validation, demonstration and marketing it would be beneficial to have strong links between JPI and WssTP.

While the JPI focuses on public-public cooperation, WssTP explores complex interactions between public and private agents. Additionally, most of the programmes making part of this JPI focus on Research, with interests in development and innovation. Complementarily, WssTP focuses on innovation, although it treasures relevant research and development capacities.”

WssTP has identified three major gaps: “more integration, coordination and innovation”. We believe that the JPI on water is positively seeking for a greater coordination and integration of research for the European water sector. In terms of integration it should suggest avoiding duplication in funding projects and research, which should be the aims and core guiding principle of JPI.

**The coordination of water research agendas will support a stronger competitiveness for the water sector.**

*5. What should be the balance between smaller, targeted projects and larger, strategic ones?*

To pull research, a balance is needed to ensure every type of research is supported. Today, the emphasis for research has been put on large-cooperation project (FP7), targeted projects (CIP, FP7), and demonstration sites for EU policy (LIFE). There is therefore a need for larger projects at applied level.

In this regard, WssTP believes that a key for success is “integration” which means avoiding designing new tools with complex structures that are duplications of existing initiatives. Based on the description of the Innovation Union and the EIP, WssTP appreciates the new approach driving a shift towards more innovation, based on ‘pooling forces to achieve breakthroughs’.

The balance between smaller, targeted projects and larger strategic ones should be based on complementarities, continuity and integration of results of research project (i.e. continuity within societal challenges such as ‘water’). This approach suggested supporting research based on cross-cutting issues (grand challenges i.e. horizontal research) with key enabling topics (vertical topic / sector oriented research).

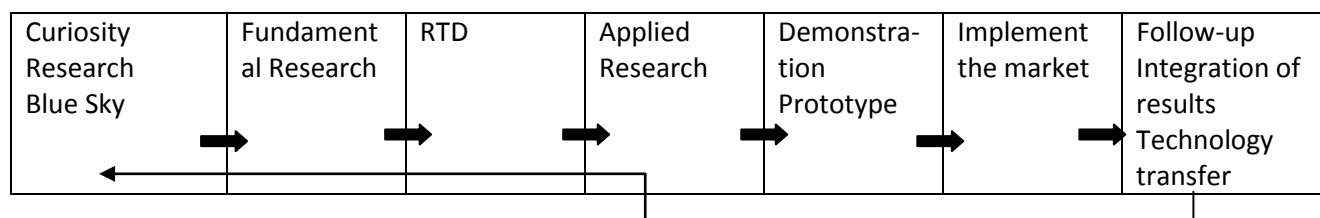
6. How could the Commission ensure the balance between a unique set of rules allowing for radical simplification and the necessity to keep a certain degree of flexibility and diversity to achieve objectives of different instruments, and respond to the needs of different beneficiaries, in particular SMEs?

The Commission should consider developing one-type call covering the research and innovation cycle and that would be integrative and managed with a strong coordination of different DGs, MS and stakeholders. From fundamental to applied research and integration of results, the EC should ensure that funding cover the complete cycle based on integrated added value of EU research which includes the follow-up of projects and integration of results with a stronger focus on knowledge and technology transfer. Such follow-up should support innovation and interest from SMEs who need support to ensure the follow-up and continuity of their activities to put forward the development of their products and / or services.

The water sector is broad, fragmented and diverse. It consists of a number of different stakeholders from public institutions and utilities, industries, consultants and service providers; NGO's and trade associations, universities, research entities and citizens. The variety of actors and interests is a key challenge to build a strong European research for the water sector and to transfer and apply the outcomes of the research to local and regional users. As an ETP, the WssTP is a useful tool to accelerate knowledge and technology transfer, facilitating the coordination and communication efforts, enhancing synergy effects and mobilizing resources. In order to increase the industrial, commercial and societal impact of R&D projects, it is of paramount importance to involve stakeholders in the process of designing R&D projects and to make sure that the projects are of practical use. Methodologies for economic analysis of measures and impacts of R&D projects (such as patents, market development, societal impact) should be used to optimise the R&D investment.

As the federating body, the WssTP has built a network of experts to address the full spectrum of research, from basic to applied research through effective demonstration to successful commercialisation and will oversee efficient knowledge transfer along the whole knowledge chain, overcoming the traditional fragmentation of the water sector. It supports effective engagement with a range of businesses, regulators and academic institutions, as well as collaboration with public and private entities. (cf. Updated SRA, WssTP 01-06-2010)

The EU should remember that implementation of research is too long “the typical length of time needed to complete the development cycle (in the water sector) is 10 years” (FP6, Fundetec). Many barriers remain: regulation, integration of results, fragmentation of markets and sector, etc. (cf. WssTP Position Paper on future FP 8: “BOOSTING RESEARCH AND INNOVATION FUNDINGS FOR WATER”, WssTP 20-04-2011.)



*Time for integration, implementation and adaptation*

*(From implementation on the market, social integration and acceptance, measuring impacts, identifying new gaps, identifying common interest to defining new research and vision)*

*7. What should be the measures of success for EU research and innovation funding? Which performance indicators could be used?*

EU should consider different types of criteria and adapt them depending on the topic. However, to adopt an integrated approach should be encouraged. Grading successful innovative projects shouldn't be based only on the capacity of projects to create jobs, economic values or market.

In terms of innovation, economic and technological criteria are indeed the more classical criteria as drawn in the EU Innovation scoreboard including employment, investment and return of investment, efficient management of assets, entrepreneurship, capacity to create new markets and products, capacity to create a technological breakthrough or number patents... If ensuring that the EU is the most competitive provider of a specific product (niche), longer term investment should be integrated. If education and the capacity to attract young people in a sector is a good indicator to grade innovation, the EU should consider the environment pillar more thoughtfully in its evaluation criteria. Today, sustainable development, the shift to low carbon economy, eco-innovation, resource efficiency, adaptation to climate change represent the key shift towards new economic and societal development. It will clearly introduce a shift in boosting technological breakthroughs and setting new standards worldwide.

It means to include the protection of environment, the preservation of one's natural patrimony. The state of natural resources should be criteria of wealth and innovation. In the water sector it would concretely introduce a shift towards a more innovative sector based on service and user perspective. In the water sector, new research policy should support approaches driven by customer and demand; cost evaluation and water pricing particularly to develop tariff related to environmental challenges and sustainability. It calls to support research and innovation based on the adequacy between production, demand and the environment ("contractual" research) along with societal challenges. Such an approach also calls for strong coordinated environmental policy at the EU level to favour investment in environmental technologies.

*8. How should EU research and innovation funding relate to regional and national funding? How should this funding complement funds from the future Cohesion policy, designed to help the less developed regions of the EU, and the rural development programmes?*

To better integrate funding to regional and national funding, the EU should focus on the existing schemes already in place:

- JPI for the alignment of Research agendas that should support the definition of calls and topics of national, regional and local calls and topics.
- EUREKA Network based on a network of national agencies and ministries that attribute funds by major topics (EUREKA clusters and umbrellas) and by specific targets (EUROSTARS for SMEs).
- EU funding that supports the implementation of the EU policy (LIFE+)

Specific grant for EU project should be developed to encourage the alignment at the local level and also, to create the demand from stakeholders that will further support such an alignment from MS and regional / local authorities.

Another interesting initiative should be supporting the application of existing technologies, supporting the implementation at the concrete small size scale in particular for rural areas or for agricultural purposes. The major need appear for water concerns is implementing existing technologies, changing habits, training and follow-up with a long term digressive type funding to support the implementation and support the changes and adaptation to new innovation or environmental technologies.

## 4.2. Tackling societal challenges

### *9. How should a stronger focus on societal challenges affect the balance between curiosity-driven research and agenda-driven activities?*

The water sector represents an interesting example for such a concern. Water is a transversal good which is linked to all major societal challenges but that will need focused activities to be put as a priority for more funding and policy support.

Indeed, major global drivers affect the water sector. These challenges, if addressed proactively and responsively, could offer tremendous innovative opportunities. These drivers are shared across the EU: the demographic growth and urbanisation; globalisation and wealth growth; spatial and temporal pressure (coastal cities, tourism); and Climate Change. In this regards, water needs to be one of the highest priorities of the Commission. (cf. Updated SRA, WssTP June 2010)

In such, a stronger focus on societal challenges will boost integrating water as key and vital challenges across various economic and societal researches and funding resources. It will mean more agenda driven activities in a sector relatively dependent from the policy; research is mainly utilities driven. In the water sector, research is traditionally defined at the local level by utilities; research and development should more focus on demand and user driven approaches. It could further unleash potential in terms of services; adjusting water prices and balancing water demand and supply. In many regards, Europe is not the best market to invest in new research and the regulation on innovation is very complex. There is a stronger need to create framework regulation, to find the good regulation and to strengthen the dialogue in order to push competitiveness and technological capacities. Private and Public Partnership should be developed as well as innovation focusing on services. (cf. Position of WssTP on "Public consultation on Community innovation policy", 16-11-2009).

### *10. Should there be more room for bottom-up activities?*

The European Commission should fully integrate more bottom-up activities. As an Industry driven platform, WssTP clearly supports a stronger involvement from industries in new European policies such as the EIP if it aims at boosting innovation and a market-driven approach.

WssTP believes that a stronger commitment to bottom-up activities in the water sector by the Commission would change the approach of water stakeholders towards research, more innovation, and market driven solutions. It will encourage a shift in considering introducing new innovations. In the water sector, research is traditionally defined at the local level by utilities; research and development should more focus on demand and user driven approaches. It could further unleash potential in terms of services; adjusting water prices and balancing water demand and supply. In many regards, Europe is not the best market to invest in new research and the regulation on innovation is very complex. There is a stronger need to create framework regulation, to find the good regulation and to strengthen the dialogue in order to push competitiveness and technological capacities. In this regards, funding schemes encouraging private and public Partnerships should be developed as well as innovation focusing on services. Overall, prioritisation of funding research should be based on bottom-up approach (consultation of stakeholders).

### *11. How should EU research and innovation funding best support policy making and forward-looking activities?*

EU research and innovation should raise awareness of the necessity at the Member State level to invest in research and innovation with a long term vision agreed by all Member State. In line with the Innovation Policy, the research and innovation agendas of each Member State should work towards alignment with the EU policy towards the Lisbon Agenda (3% of PIB for Research and Innovation).



*12. How should the role of the Commission's Joint Research Centre be improved in supporting policy making and addressing societal challenges?*

There is a lack of interconnexion of knowledge at the EU level. One role of the JRC could be to address the interconnexion of research and innovation to better support policy making and addressing societal challenges. It should work at:

- Vertical level in order to identify great challenges and bring consistency in addressing those challenges. Ensure that a same vision is shared on key issue i.e. Climate Change, Energy Efficiency, Water, Health and ageing, etc. The JRC should bring recommendation in identifying next challenges (vision approach) and therefore complement the policy making process of the EU.
- Horizontal level in order to identify cross-cutting issues that could implement sharing technologies between different sectors. For instance, the use of new technology for nutrients can be applied for water, health, animal health, food sectors. This activity should be complementary to EU initiatives that support the coordination of stakeholder among one's sector such as ETP and new instrument, the JPI.

*13. How could EU research and innovation activities attract greater interest and involvement of citizens and civil society?*

EU research and innovation activities should develop awareness campaign showing the capacity of the EU to be innovative particularly to young European people. It should underline:

- Innovation as a key value
- Concerted action as a key and major strength of the EU. Today, the EU is the only region worldwide that aims at building the cooperation of 27 different countries and more regional and local disparities. In such a concerned, the water sector has a long tradition of being fragmented and particularly took lessons on developing a common vision to pull together forces for better water management.
- Key societal challenges that also underline the tradition of the EU to look forward for the benefit of the citizens such as health, environmental protection, preserved way of life, citizens' voice...

#### **4.3. Strengthening competitiveness**

*14. How should EU funding best take account of the broad nature of innovation, including non technological innovation, eco-innovation and social innovation?*

Based on balanced approach, the EU should integrate balanced approach of the broad concept of innovation.

The result-based funding approach identified during the FP7 mid-term revision was a very interesting shift that should support innovation and new scientific initiatives. If it aims at promoting excellence and if it works towards bottom-up approach, the new funding schemes of the European Commission will represent good opportunities to fund new services and technology developments. (Position Paper on "Simplifying the Implementation of the Research Framework Programmes", WssTP 04-07-2010)

*15. How should industrial participation in EU research and innovation programmes be strengthened? How should Joint Technology Initiatives (such as those launched in the current Framework Programme) or different forms of 'public-private partnerships' be supported? What should be the role of European Technology Platforms?*

The need for more flexibility; for stronger cooperation and strategy confirm the importance of ETPs. Many ETPs have been successful tool to support the coordination of different stakeholders and the need for enabling structure and framework to enable innovation. In this regard, WssTP is a successful ETP.

*WssTP has been proactive in involving industries and other stakeholders in this common vision. WssTP also successfully initiated the EUREKA Cluster on Water-ACQUEAU, to boost innovation and market driven solutions for the water sector. WssTP represents a key mechanism to further coordinate research, demonstration and pilot projects (using FP7 as well as LIFE+ funds) in the water sectors and allied fields.*

WssTP believes that there is still a gap in financing for the transfer of research results into applied research and large scale demonstration sites. The funding of identified demonstration cases is still inadequate. Today, there are few opportunities to expand such funding in the short term despite LIFE+, KICs, CIP, FP7 and ACQUEAU programmes.

There is a gap in funding for applied research at the demonstration scale in order to disseminate new and innovative technologies throughout Europe and set the worldwide standards of tomorrow. WssTP advocates significant funding for demonstration sites through the future EU budget and action plan. For example, in March 2011<sup>1</sup> our stakeholders identified the need to fund 24 demonstration sites in 12 countries at a total cost of €640M, with a contribution of €225M from the Commission. It calls for the creation of "a water fund" that will overcome these gaps and will create an enabling framework to coordinate funds allocated to water research with other key challenges that involve directly or indirectly water in their scope. Such a programme need to be more than a collection of projects but needs to integrate all "water" projects within a Programme which sets longer term objectives aimed at meeting society's Grand Challenges.

*(Cf. Position on the EU Financial Perspectives 2014-2021, WssTP 3-05-2011)*

**The combination of efforts from WssTP with other initiatives such as the JPI on Water, EWA, EUREAU, EWP would efficiently deliver a strong coordinated, integrated and innovative "Water Programme" for Europe through better financial framework conditions to water innovation.**

**Traditionally, ETPs have been put at the center of major initiatives launched by the EC to boost innovation and coordination of stakeholders on key challenges (JTIs, Recovery Package, PPPs). This shows the relevance of WssTP to be a major actor included in the future Common Strategic Framework.**

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<sup>1</sup> WssTP, Position Paper on future FP8: "Boosting Research and Innovation Fundings for Water", April 2011.



*16. How and what types of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SME) should be supported at EU level; how should this complement national and regional level schemes? What kind of measures should be taken to decisively facilitate the participation of SMEs in EU research and innovation programmes?*

Regarding SMEs, WssTP supports the conclusion of the FP7 mid-term revision:

- Unclear regulation or lack of regulation.
- Difficulties for networking and finding partners particularly from Eastern countries.
- The understanding of procedures, time and cost for preparation of call proposals.
- The image of FP being heavy in procedures, time consuming, too academics (mainly for industries) and limited in access (mainly for SMEs and new comers that feel they can't access funding if they don't have access to "Brussels")

Bring research to the market by involving SME should support successful existing initiatives targeting SMEs such as the CIP and the EUREKA Programme (EUROSTARS).

(cf. Position Paper on "Simplifying the Implementation of the Research Framework Programmes", WssTP 04-07-2010; Position Paper on "Public consultation on Community innovation policy", 16-11-2009; Position Paper on future FP 8: "BOOSTING RESEARCH AND INNOVATION FUNDINGS FOR WATER", WssTP 20-04-2011)

*17. How should open, light and fast implementation schemes (e.g. building on the current FET actions and CIP eco-innovation market replication projects) be designed to allow flexible exploration and commercialisation of novel ideas, in particular by SMEs?*

WssTP supports initiatives targeting SMEs such as the CIP and the EUREKA Programme (EUROSTARS). They should be brought further. As a success story and the perspective that it might increase, the EU should consider to avoiding major risks:

- Be specific and stick to clear objective
- Be consistent with the EU policies
- Target innovation and applied research
- Create incentives to boost innovation in environmental technologies to involve all stakeholders
- Avoid creating new schemes without including previous, at least, ensure coordination with existing funds
- Avoid too complex application processes

(Cf. WssTP answers to "Consultation on "a possible successor to the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP), 04-02-2011" and "Consultation on "a future EU financial instrument for the environment (continuation LIFE+), 15-02-2011".)

*18. How should EU level financial instruments (equity and debt based) be used more extensively?*

RSFF and grants are interesting tools. In the water sector, they should consider supporting funding for long-term investments of public infrastructures including implementing new infrastructures (in developing countries or countries where water and sanitation access is still not reached i.e. Romania, Bulgaria) and managing the infrastructures (70% of the water price and Europe is facing an increasing urbanization with ageing infrastructures.

Urban areas around the world suffer from old and deteriorating water infrastructures that are very vulnerable to failure due to aging, damage from excavations or over-loading. It is a technological and financial challenge to maintain and upgrade them in such a way that quality water can continue to be delivered to all sectors and wastewater can be adequately collected and treated. The International Water Association (IWA) suggests an annual pipeline replacement rate of at least 1.5% in order to

stabilise the leakage level in a water distribution system and containing the loss of “non-revenue water”. The World Business Council for Sustainable Development estimates that the total costs of replacing aging water supply and sanitation infrastructure in industrial countries may be as high as €170 billion per year.

On the other side, many regions in low income countries of the world, and/or in rural or peri-urban areas, are not equipped today with central water supply and sewer networks. The financial needs to install basic facilities in these regions are high. The historical solutions of central infrastructures, proven in high income countries, may not always be technically appropriate or financially optimised in other circumstances. While existing water reuse options have to be further developed and implemented, the need for smaller scale, adaptable, local infrastructure systems is immense. (Cf. Updated SRA, WssTP 01-06-2010).

This type of challenges should call for the development of new type of financial instruments.

*19. Should new approaches to supporting research and innovation be introduced, in particular through public procurement, including through rules on pre-commercial procurement, and/or inducement prizes?*

In many regards, Europe is not the best market to invest in new research and the regulation on innovation is very complex. There is a stronger need to create framework regulation, to find the good regulation and to strengthen the dialogue in order to push competitiveness and technological capacities. It means to concretely study and forecast what could be the benefits of developing standards in water services to better communicate and provide services to citizens. In this regard, developing ICT for water applications represents a key innovative potential.

*20. How should intellectual property rules governing EU funding strike the right balance between competitiveness aspects and the need for access to and dissemination of scientific results?*

#### **4.4. Strengthening Europe's science base and the European Research Area**

*21. How should the role of the European Research Council be strengthened in supporting world class excellence? 22. How should EU support assist Member States in building up excellence?*

The EU should foster its policy towards promoting “Innovation” as a key value and establish evaluation criteria and policy driven regulation to push for more innovation and excellence. (Cf. questions 11 & 14; Position Paper on “Public consultation on Community innovation policy”, 16-11-2009)

*23. How should the role of Marie Curie Actions be strengthened in promoting researcher mobility and developing attractive careers?*

WssTP is not legitimate in answering such a question.

*24. What actions should be taken at EU level to further strengthen the role of women in science and innovation?*

WssTP is not legitimate in answering such a question. The EU should consider successful initiatives to promote the role of women in science based on the experience of key international organizations such as the UNESCO or industries or academics known to promote the role of women within their strategy.

*25. How should research infrastructures (including EU-wide e-Infrastructures) be supported at EU level?*

The EU should avoid developing new tools and focus on the integration of existing tools to allow the integration and appropriation of such research infrastructures.

*26. How should international cooperation with non-EU countries be supported e.g. in terms of priority areas of strategic interest, instruments, reciprocity (including on IPR aspects) or cooperation with Member States?*

In 2009 and 2010, WssTP participated to events related to international cooperation. If international cooperation can be of interest to our members to exchanges practices, WssTP consider that international cooperation should focus on knowledge and active cooperation to encourage the implementation of European technologies and develop new markets worldwide. To achieve our vision, to “be regarded as the global leader in the provision of sustainable water services”, it means to be able to set up cooperation of strategic interest and avoid technology transfer that could damage European industries and academics.

*27. Which key issues and obstacles concerning the ERA should EU funding instruments seek to overcome, and which should be addressed by other (e.g. legislative) measures?*

Efficient governance is vital for the European competitiveness. WssTP would plead for governance based on “simple and flexible structures”, clear understanding of “the decentralised operational responsibilities” not only for “effective ownership” but also among involved parties. The new EU funding instruments should be based on a close collaboration between existing bodies promoting water research and innovation e.g. a stronger collaboration both within and between DGs within the European Commission and European water organisations such as WssTP.

Today, a number of initiatives are converging to address Europe’s water challenges: to strengthen the involvement of water stakeholders (including industries) behind a common vision (WssTP); to better coordinate water research at the Member States level (JPI on Water Challenges); to boost technology development and applied research (ACQUEAU, CIP); and to improve the implementation of European policies and promote research to create jobs and growth (Funding tools: LIFE+, FP7).

In this regard, WssTP believes that a key for success is “integration” which means avoiding designing new tools with complex structures that are duplications of existing initiatives. Based on the description of the European Innovation Partnership, WssTP appreciates the new approach driving a shift towards more innovation, based on ‘pooling forces to achieve breakthroughs’.

In this regards, **WssTP strongly advocates for the creation of integrated, coordinated and innovative “Water fund” under the future FP8 and under the EIP initiative for a Water Efficient Europe.**