

WssTP Workshop:
Bridging Water, Industry and the Agrifood sector
-Innovations for jobs & growth in Europe-
16 June 2016

Wrap up of the Workshop – Working Group Water and Agri-Food and Working Group Water and Industry

Aim of the workshop:

- To encourage and support green growth innovation in water, agrifood and industrial sector in order to create jobs and economic growth
- To explore successes and failures in triple helix collaboration in cross-sectoral innovation
- To set the action agenda's of the two WSSTP working groups to support jobs creation and green growth

Mainly by sharing experiences and jointly exploring existing innovation barriers

Durk Krol, chairman of the WSSTP, [explains that the WSSTP aims to:](#)



WssTP Workshop:

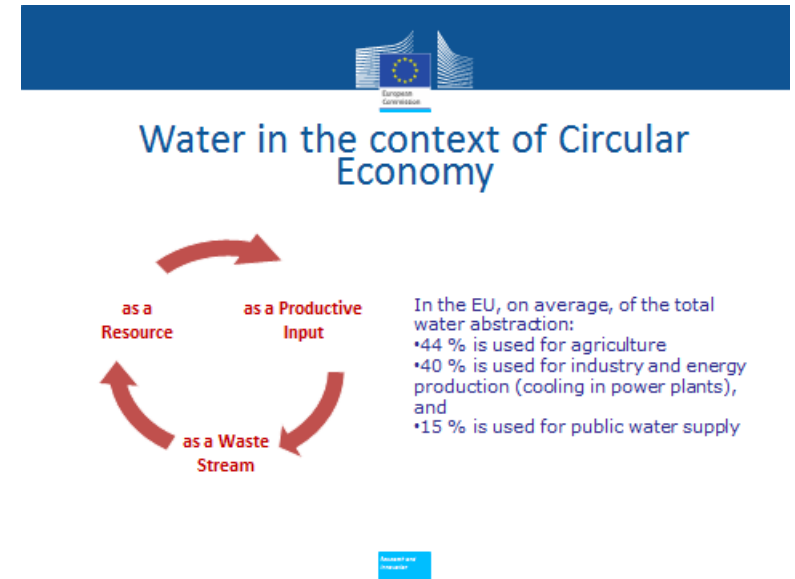
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Panagiotis Balabanis, DG Research and Innovation [introduces](#) ways to accelerate innovation in Europe. He explains the systemic approach to foster innovation and emphasizes the important role of water in relation to the circular economy. DG Research and Innovation supports the development of the circular economy by:

- Demonstrating the economic and environmental feasibility of the circular economy by H2020 programmes
- Addressing regulatory barriers by innovation deals – [Expression of interest open](#)
- Supporting finance by InnovFin



Nikolaus Fleischmann, EIP Water, [talks](#) about the tools and instruments that are available at EIP water to foster innovation in the water sector in Europe. EIP Water is one of the European Innovation Partnerships that aims to streamline, simplify and coordinate existing instruments and initiatives and complement them with new actions if needed. EIP Water provides [marketplace services](#), for matchmaking. Other tools are tailor made approaches to financing, business development, policy consultations, liaison with other initiatives of the European Commission, liaison with other sectors, inventory of innovation hubs, foster participation of local level actors. It was mentioned by the participants that legislation does have different timescales then innovation.

Two keynote speeches are invited to tell more about their entrepreneurial innovation experiences. Ingrid Coninx describes [the experiences of KIEMT](#) (Author of presentation: Jeroen Sluijsmans) in the development of the Bioeconomy Innovation Cluster in the regions of Gelderland and Overijssel (the Netherlands). This is a partnership that started in 2008 between 6 universities and laboratories, 2 provincial governments and several municipalities as well as intermediary organisations and many companies. Aspects that contributed to the success:

- Community of practice to connect people, to stimulate sharing knowledge and identifying opportunities
- Funding by public parties
- Liaison with the government to foster fundraising and political commitment
- Shared facilities as living labs – to connect partners and accelerate technology development

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Aspects that hamper the innovation process:

- Change in political parties
- Stop of funding of the community of practice
- Funding gap between R&D and implementation – there is not financial support for testing and piloting easy accessible/available (valley of death)
- Universities are occasionally connected

Els Berckmoes tells about [the Fertinnowa project](#), where growers collaborate to achieve sufficient irrigation water, of high quality. While knowledge and innovative technologies are available, it seems that they are often not implemented by growers. Fertinnowa includes 23 partners in 9 European member states. They work together to list bottlenecks experienced by growers as well as solutions. Next, technologies will be evaluated and the selected technologies are implemented on the farms. And last, information and practical experiences are disseminated.

Next, a roundtable was organised to explore success strategies and needs for innovation support by sharing experiences of 5 regional innovation tracks

- [Reuse of waste water of a freezing company in agriculture](#) – Belgian case, presented by Dominique Huits, INAGRO
- [Reutilisation of treated waste water for irrigation. A demonstrator in South of France – French case](#), presented by Claire Wittling Serra from IRSTEA
- [Manure valorisation](#) – Dutch case, presented by Roel Beunk, Groot Zevert.
- [Smart Tillage](#) – presented by Alwin Gerritsen, coordinator of Smart Tillage, Alterra Wageningen UR
- [WaterProtect : enabling sustainable use of agrochemicals in agriculture](#), presented by Piet Seuntjens, VITO

To structure the outcomes of the roundtable, we make use of the seven functions of innovation systems, as they are also mentioned in the [Reflection paper on Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems in Transition](#)

Factors that support innovation success:

- Function #1: Knowledge development and diffusion:
 - Support out of the box thinking
 - Partners in the collaboration with specific, required, expertise – having the right expertises on the table
 - Scientific evidence
 - Sharing knowledge, making use of online tools such as EIP Market Space to be aware of similar cases and opportunities in different countries
- Function #2: Influence on direction of search and identification of opportunities:
 - Close contact with potential users – co-design of the product
- Function #3: Entrepreneurial experimentation and management of risk and uncertainty
 - Passionate people
 - Building the business case: main financial provider brings together partners to build the financial construction and to share risk

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- Subsidies from local/regional entities to help research enters and association to open cooperation with industries and enterprises
- Being able to experiment – no legislation that hampers experimentation phase
- Having an intermediary organisation available that support by establishing linkages and sorting out the regulatory issues
- Function #4: Market formation
 - Strategic communication; Build image and a strong story – use arguments to convince and get support – communicate with issues that are relevant to society and politics
 - Showcases to show that it can work and to attract the attention
- Function #5: Resource mobilisation
 - Collaboration with partners that provide for instance equipment for free in return for other benefits – it is not always about money
 - Good partner with an extensive network and contacts at the European level
 - Build, use and maintain the network – in particular informal relations with people are useful
- Function #6: Legitimation
 - Involve politicians to get support and align with their political ambitions
 - Communicate the added value and the advantages to the local communities and to the relevant stakeholders. Highlight 3 types of advantages:
 - Economics
 - Environmental
 - Societal
- Function #7: Development of positive externalities

Needs to support innovation success

- Function #1: Knowledge development and diffusion:
 - It is important that knowledge of an innovation process is shared, communicated and coordinated between different public authorities
 - It is also needed that local/national government helps to create channels of dialogue between citizens, industries and research centres; to enhance cooperation between research and industry
 - There need to be better learning mechanisms between different countries in order to avoid starting from zero time after time
 - Set up a risk evaluation system, coordinated at the European level. The sharing of experiences could be facilitated by a website.
 - Need to connect research partners and industrial partners in the most time efficient way
- Function #2: Influence on direction of search and identification of opportunities:
- Function #3: Entrepreneurial experimentation and management of risk and uncertainty
 - In some stages of the innovation process, it is needed that a public authority takes over the potential risks.
 - Demonstration projects help to test good water quality and in this way, to build support

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- More living labs should be financed in triangle type of cooperation
- Increase terms of funds taking into account the need of experimenting the first pilot to other interested economic sectors
- Harmonisation of definitions in different level of governance – European, national, regional, provincial level) and adoption of it in the legislation.
- Function #4: Market formation
 - The risks of treated wastewater on food safety is currently exaggerated. Evidence and communication are needed to connect the perception with reality
- Function #5: Resource mobilisation
 - Assist in ways to find the right people
 - Diversify calls in a more clear way
- Function #6: Legitimation
 - The authorisation of the government to do the real on-site experiment.
 - Political support is needed when innovation processes do not completely fit within ongoing regulation
 - This was probably also caused by to limited political support and the initiative would be helped by intermediaries that link the different worlds of science and government in a more effective way.
- Function #7: Development of positive externalities
 - To connect in legislation: the ruling/controlling agency is more strict than policymakers that develop the ambitions – be creative to connect existing rules and policy goals
 - Overview of problems and available technologies

List of potential actions to put on the working group's action agenda:

- Knowledge development and diffusion; collaboration
 - Support in better and more reliable knowledge on quantity and quality of used water
 - Information should be more accessible to all levels of society. Bring in the idea to build EU info points in each region divided into topics. I.E: contact point for water opportunities at EU level
 - Collect regions with similar challenges across Europe and identify common solutions
 - Split up the working group in sub groups to work on very specific topics
 - Workshops together with other networks: f.e. wssTP meets food drink Europe
 - There is a need for integrating technological, economical, legal and administrative / governance / organisational issues and approaches.

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- Work on language and shared understanding
 - Working towards common/harmonised definitions through public consultation – to contribute to policymaking
 - In the triple helix, participants have to cope with different languages and cultures and with different time frames. Some kind of intermediary is required. The Kickstarter Initiative could be an example.
- Experimentation and market formation:
 - Assist in transforming EU legislation to support green economic growth
 - Give an overview of national diversity on legislation among EU member states: what does work well where? What is where allowed?
- Resource mobilisation
 - Agricultural water problems are more blurry than industrial ones. The suggestion is to claim more money into funding solutions to problems instead of subsidies for food production
 - Supporting/optimising the development of investment programs for green growth
 - Lobbying for more diversified calls with clearer goals
 - Make it easier that members of wssTP can make use of each others resources
- Legitimation:
 - Become a unite and affordable voice in the EU arena
 - Investigate the existing links between EIP Water and EIP Agri and enhance cooperation between WssTP and EIP
- Resource mobilisation
 - WssTP WGs could come up with an idea of call and create a Water Programme as it was existing in the past
 - Get access to European instruments as for instance innovation deals – to make WSSTP members clear how to participate in these instruments and vice versa: what members want to join to take part in the innovation deals
 - Developing high level meetings to put the financial valley of death on the agenda, join forces to create new financial instruments

Generic actions:

- Innovation ombudsman that is independent and tackle innovation problems
- When having meetings, being strategic about who to invite and what method to use: f.e. out of the box thinking