



Fostering partnerships and national embedding for ERA-NET actions with impact

The European PLATFORM initiative calls for increased interaction and collaboration between European Research Area Networks (ERA-NETs), other European research policy platforms and national research and innovation authorities to tackle issues facing bioeconomy research today and tomorrow. Recommendations are aimed at maximising synergies, operational interactions, and high-impacting contributions to coordinate and collaborate across country and institutional borders.

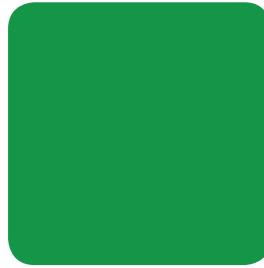
The context for European research and research programming has changed considerably in the last decade. The launch of Horizon 2020 has added to the dynamics of the environment as experienced by national programme managers and their European networks. We have the new ERA-NET Cofund instrument. There are less funds in many countries, and stronger push towards working across sectors and disciplines, along value chains, and with stakeholders. As such, these are all driving forces behind increasing the interactions and collaborations. Also, these developments cause a shift for the ERA-NETs from strategic, analytical and networking activities towards a focus on call implementation.

Efficiency, synergy, and inclusiveness

Both on a national and European level, reduction of administrative burdens, and costs, as well as an overall rationalisation of funding are seen already. Sharper choices on participation in networks and calls are expected in the coming years. ERA-NETs can synergise their calls for cost-efficiency and better service to the scientific community.

In PLATFORM the networks can pursue this collectively. PLATFORM also fosters explorations





towards aligning research from different nations e.g. by collaborative programmes between ERA-NETs involving more countries, funders, disciplines and/or sectors. Also commitment from new member states is important. Opportunities for increasing their participation in the ERA-NETs should be investigated more.

Policy and programming partnerships

Recommendations to increase interaction and collaboration include strengthening the connections between bioeconomy ERA-NETs and various European policy platforms. These are the Horizon 2020 Programme Committees, the Standing Committee on Agricultural Research (SCAR), the Bioeconomy Panel, the European Research Area and Innovation Committee (ERAC), and, for those with overlapping focus, the European Initiative for Agricultural Research for Development (EIARD), the European Innovation Partnership initiatives (EIPs), and the Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs). As a result the ERA-NETs can contribute more to strategy and policy, and the mentioned policy platforms can contribute more to coordination among national programmes including call implementation.

Read more in the full report 'Recommendations on interaction and collaboration between ERA-NETs, European research policy platforms and national research and innovation authorities'. This paper constitutes Deliverable 4.5 of PLATFORM and is part of work package 4 Common Vision and Strategy. The main objective of this work package is to define the strategic position and dimension of ERA-NETs within the European Research Area and to provide recommendations for high impact cooperation and collaboration of ERA-NETs with other actors in the knowledge based bioeconomy. All reports can be found on the website:

www.era-platform.eu

About the European Bioeconomy and ERA-NETs

The transition towards a bioeconomy, and the potential of research and innovation to produce 'more and better-quality', contributes to square the circle of ensuring food security, reducing the carbon footprint, recycling natural resources, and new jobs and competitiveness. The European Commission and more and more Member States capitalise on the bioeconomy aiming to secure a competitive food market and to optimise primary production in a global context and in a sustainable way.

More than 30 European Research Area Networks (ERA-NETs) in the bioeconomy sectors have been funded under FP6 and FP7. Through coordination and collaboration between national research programmes, these networks contribute to meeting the challenges Europe faces on the path towards a sustainable bioeconomy, be it in the area of agriculture, forestry or the marine, and on topics ranging from biotechnologies, application of ICT and robotics, organic food and farming, forest-based materials, statutory plant health, rural development, infectious diseases of livestock, or plant sciences.

PLATFORM, the FP7 project 'Platform of Knowledge Based Bioeconomy Relevant ERA-NETs' offers mutual learning and networking opportunities to the ERA-NET actors and has developed into a robust forum for funders and programme managers. PLATFORM facilitates increased coordination and cooperation among the networks, for maximising synergies and rationalisation in the area of the bioeconomy.