



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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RECH 165

NOTE

From: Presidency
To: Delegations

Subject: Results of research-related Presidency conferences and ministerial meetings
- Information from the Presidency

Delegations will find, in annex, a note from the Presidency on the above-mentioned topic.



Excellence Revisited – The Value of Excellence

18-20 April 2012, Aarhus University

Number of participants: 350

Purpose of the conference: The objective of the conference was to:

- Discuss what excellence is, why excellence is important and how excellence is created, supported and applied at every link of the innovation and research chain.
- Discuss ways for Europe to stimulate excellence.
- Exchange ideas on how Europe can perform excellent research and how it is transformed into innovative solutions.

The conference brought together policymakers, stakeholders, researchers, senior university administrators and students.

Output/recommendations from the conference:

The Aarhus Declaration on Excellence.

Next steps:

- General dissemination of the Aarhus Declaration among relevant institutions, organisations and bodies and ensure wide dissemination of the declaration through social media.
- Ensure that Denmark remains a driver for the promotion of the declaration both in national and international policy settings and other contexts.
- Encourage Danish institutions to use the declaration actively in their own strategies.
- Ensure consolidation of the declaration within the group of consecutive EU presidencies.
- Assessment of how the dissemination of the declaration to national levels outside Denmark can be done effectively.
- Plan of relevant events, e.g. Euroscience Open Forum (ESOF) in Dublin, June 2012 and AAAS Annual meeting in Boston, February 2013.

For more information on the conference please visit the conference website <http://www.excellence2012.dk/>.

Bioeconomy in Action

26-28 March 2012, Axelborg, Copenhagen

Number of participants: 330

Purpose of the conference: The purpose was to start the discussion on how to implement the boosting of bioeconomical growth in Europe in a smart and sustainable way - bringing the bioeconomy from strategy to action. To include and integrate as well policy and stakeholder-aspects, the conference was split into a high-level policy and partnering conference on the first day, and included on the second day academia, industry and governmental bodies. The third day offered a site visit to Inbicon biorefinery and Pyroneer to see examples of bioeconomy in practice.

Output/recommendations from the conference: The conference had a widespread attendance. It delivered a *Copenhagen Declaration for a Bioeconomy in Action* based on conclusions, statements and discussions from the conference. This declaration contains concrete action points to ensure that Europe will benefit from the full potential of the bioeconomy – in brief:

1. The concept of the bioeconomy should be stronger integrated into European policies.
2. A level playing field must be created for the different uses of biomass.
3. There is a need for new ways of highly committed partnering between all stakeholders: citizens, consumers, academia, industry, primary producers, and policy makers.
4. The activities of the Lead Market Initiative (LMI) for Bio-based Products (including public procurement, labelling and certification schemes for bio-based products) should be continued and implemented.
5. The perceived conflict between food and non-food production from arable land could be overcome by using agricultural crop and forestry residues and bio-degradable waste as well as selecting alternative feedstock.
6. Resource efficiency and sustainability, especially regarding soil, nutrients, water and biodiversity is overly important.
7. With respect to resource efficiency and sustainability, common standards for life cycle assessments as well as agreed methodologies for sustainability criteria must be developed.
8. Successful bioeconomy initiatives already exist in many Member States. The experiences in building the bioeconomy as a highly cross-cutting endeavour should be shared in order to implement the basis for bioeconomy throughout Europe. The delegates welcomed the proposal of the Bioeconomy Strategy to create a Bioeconomy Panel.
9. New pilot, demo-plants and scaling up facilities, particularly biorefineries, are needed
10. A common bioeconomy strategy is needed to assist global cooperation, to stimulate European industrial and scientific competitiveness, as well as European contribution to improving global environmental sustainability and social inclusiveness.

Next steps: It is the common hope that the conference and declaration will help building new partnerships and taking initiatives to bring the bioeconomy in action in Europe - reaching out globally in a strategic way. There are now initiatives for a common Nordic initiative, and also The White House has recently published a National Bioeconomy Blueprint. The conference website <http://bioeconomy.dk/> will be updated on news within the field.

International Conference on Research Infrastructures (ICRI 2012)
21- 23 March 2012, Copenhagen, Denmark

Number of participants: 600

Purpose of the conference: The purpose of the Conference was to make specific recommendations on how international cooperation for research infrastructures (RI) can be most effective in the future. ICRI 2012 will provide input to the implementation of the next EU Framework Programme – "Horizon 2020", supporting the strengthening of a global ecosystem of research infrastructures. For more information please visit the conference website <http://www.ereg.me/ehome/31679/50320/>.

Output/recommendations from the conference:

1. The need to invest better in research and innovation to stimulate sustainable growth, boost competitiveness and create jobs.
2. The importance of RI to tackle global societal challenges such as health, climate change and energy as well as to carry out research and train researchers.
3. That new approaches are required to deal with the exponentially increasing amounts of data in all fields of science. Appropriate e-infrastructures are required to tackle grand challenges by supporting data and compute-intensive research.
4. A global exchange of views on common priorities, leading to the identification of potential for global collaboration on RIs, including discussions around the decision-making and prioritisation processes.
5. Stakeholders and policy makers to engage in dialogue to share experience and exchange best practice on governance, efficient management (including financial and human resources management), and cost containment in the planning, implementation and operation of large scale RIs.
6. RIs to put in place an access policy based on excellence, thereby attracting the very best researchers from around the globe.
7. Support for e-infrastructures that provide open access to publications and data, as well as services for computing and data management so as to optimally support global cooperation, crossing of disciplines and building mutual trust.
8. An enhanced dissemination strategy to raise citizen awareness to maximise the economic and social impact of global RIs and to strengthen links with industry.
9. Policy makers, funders and the science community to put in place governance structures that are effective and efficient, in view of the intrinsic complexity of building, operating and funding research infrastructures. Existing governance and legal frameworks (e.g. ERIC) can be used as a starting point when drawing up governance structures to meet cross-border and international needs.
10. A global exchange of knowledge and capacity building between RIs by focusing on and facilitating the training and mobility of personnel involved in the planning, implementation and operation of RIs, including managers and scientists, but also technicians and engineers.

Next steps:

1. That the excellent networking and cooperative spirit generated during the conference be maintained via dialogue and joint initiatives, such as future International Conferences on Research Infrastructures, with partners from across the globe.
2. Putting in place an international framework to facilitate the training and mobility of personnel involved in RIs.
3. Nurturing and developing e-infrastructures, including interoperable data infrastructures to ensure open availability of reliable scientific data for use and re-use across disciplines.
4. The setting up of a dedicated network of policy makers from across the globe, capable of proposing and taking forward initiatives to facilitate and stimulate the setting up of new Global RIs, the operation of existing ones, including global e-infrastructures. Such a forum can build upon the achievements of the Group of Senior Officials, as well as use the coordinated approach of intergovernmental fora such as ESFRI and GEO.

Science in Dialogue – Towards a European Model for Responsible Research and Innovation
23 to 25 April, University of Southern Denmark, Odense

Number of participants: 160

Purpose of the conference: The overall purpose of the conference was to discuss science's role in society and society's role in science in order to create a better mutual understanding between the two. The conference also focused on developing networks and exchanging good examples and best practices of cooperation between science, innovation and the wider society. The second day of the conference saw the participants working in workshops to develop suggestions for actions under the heading Responsible Research and Innovation. The workshop themes ranged from ethics in science and innovation to engagement of stakeholders in the development of research agendas.

Output/recommendations from the conference: Among the sentiments expressed at the conference were:

- The concept of Responsible Research and Innovation which emphasises science's social responsibility should be widely used in the development of Horizon 2020.
- Stakeholders in society should be consulted in the prioritisation of research agendas.
- Society's innovation capacity can be heightened through the involvement of citizens, NGOs and the private sector in the production of knowledge.
- Fruitful answers and solutions to the great societal challenges are dependant on cooperation between science, innovation and stakeholders in society such as the public sector and NGOs.
- Researchers and entrepreneurs have a responsibility to regard their research and development in a societal context.

Additionally, around 20 suggestions for action were produced by the conference participants during workshops. These suggestions ranged from making cooperation with stakeholders obligatory in parts of Horizon 2020 to suggestions for open innovation processes that would benefit both companies and citizens.

Next steps: A conference report e.g. containing the 20 suggestions for action will be produced and widely distributed. The report will also be available at the conference website, www.scienceindialogue.dk, along with a number of other documentation items. The outcomes of the conference will also be presented and reflected upon in a dedicated session on Responsible Research and Innovation at the Euroscience Open Forum in Dublin in July 2012.