



**European Co-operation in
the field of Scientific and
Technical Research
- COST -**



Brussels, 19 November 2007
COST 241 (Presse 269)

**169th MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF SENIOR
OFFICIALS
FOR SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL RESEARCH (COST)**

Vilnius, Lithuania, 15 - 16 November 2007

The 169th meeting of the COST Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) was held in Vilnius, Lithuania on 15 - 16 November 2007, chaired by **Prof. Francesco Fedi**, the President of the CSO.

The welcoming address was given by **Ms Virginija BUDIANE**, Vice-Minister of Education and Science of Lithuania.

P R E S S

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The meeting was preceded by a joint meeting with the Chairs of the nine COST Domain Committees¹, who had been invited to present the most important success stories of their Domain as well as their views on the most promising and interesting fields for future research activities.

Final Review of COST contract in FP6

Ms Jeanne Monfret, the Chair of the High Level Panel set up by the Commission to carry out the final review of the COST contract during FP6, presented the Panel's Final Report to the Committee.

The Committee was pleased to note that the Report underlined the high customer satisfaction of the current users of COST, which presently functions very well at the operational level, and took note of the practical and constructive recommendations to further improve COST operations.

The Committee agreed upon a COST Statement² in response to the Report, and in particular concerning the recommendations contained therein about legal status, governance, strategy and science management in COST, in which the Committee:

1. *confirms the commitment of COST to continue to be a flexible, fast, effective and efficient tool to network and coordinate nationally funded research activities at project level, bringing good scientists together under light strategic guidance and letting them work out their ideas, thus contributing to overcome the fragmentation of research in the ERA, and will keep the role of COST under review in the light of the developments in ERA;*
2. *confirms its decision to appoint the European Science Foundation (ESF) as the legal entity for the provision and management of the scientific, technical and administrative secretariat for COST under the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7);*

¹ Biomedicine and Molecular Biosciences (BMBS), Chemistry and Molecular Sciences and Technologies (CMST), Earth System Science and Environmental Management (ESSEM), Food and Agriculture (FA), Forests, their Products and Services (FPS), Individuals, Societies, Cultures and Health (ISCH), Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), Materials, Physical and Nanosciences (MPNS) and Transport and Urban Development (TUD)

² COST Statement as set out in doc. COST 239/07.

3. *considers the present governance of COST in the three levels of Committee of Senior Officials (supported by its JAF Group), Domain Committees and Management Committees of Actions with the scientific, administrative and technical secretariat provided by the ESF to be the most appropriate at present;*
4. *recalls that the nomination of the representatives in the COST Committees, in particular in the CSO, is the sole and unique prerogative of each COST State;*
5. *recalls that, in line with the 2003 Ministerial Declaration that "CSO remains the decision-making body of COST", the CSO has both a governance and strategic role;*
6. *recalls the thematic reorganization in 9 COST Domain Committees decided in 2006 and will consider in due course, after an evaluation of the current structure, future restructuring if deemed necessary;*
7. *will build upon the above statements and upon a re-examination of the legal status and of the governance of COST in the draft Declaration to be considered by the COST Ministerial Conference planned for the second half of 2009; and to this end, has appointed a rapporteur to examine these matters;*
8. *invites the European Commission to forward this Statement to the members of the Panel which will be formed by the European Commission for the mid-term review of the EC-ESF contract for COST in FP7.*

Re-examination of legal status and governance of COST

In view of the COST Ministerial Conference planned in the second half of 2009, the Committee agreed to re-examine the legal status and the governance of COST and appointed **Professor Raoul Kneucker**, Chair of the High Level Panel for the Mid Term Review of the EC-ESF contract for COST during FP6, as the Rapporteur, with the task to present to the CSO by 30 April 2008 at the latest a preliminary report on possible solutions for the legal status and governance of COST.

Streamlining COST procedures

The Committee adopted simplifications to the procedures with a view to further expediting the launching of COST Actions. The Committee also approved measures to facilitate the participation of European RTD organisations in COST Actions.

25 new COST Actions approved

Following the Open Call for new Action proposals and the selection process with the involvement of External Expert Panels, the Committee approved the following list of 25 new Actions to be launched:

Biomedicine and Molecular Biosciences (BMBS)

BM0701: Antibiotic Transport and Efflux: New Strategies to combat bacterial resistance (ATENS)
(FR proposal)

The main objective of the Action is to create a framework that involves collaboration between experts in the many fields of science necessary for understanding efflux-mediated resistance at the molecular and genetic levels and to translate this knowledge into the development of diagnostic tests and antimicrobials that will, in the future, help control MDR infectious diseases throughout Europe.

BM0702: Urine and Kidney Proteomics (EL proposal)

The main objective of the Action is to catalyze translational research in kidney diseases via standardization in all aspects of urine and kidney proteomics analysis from specimen collection and databasing up to data processing and analysis.

BM0703: Cancer and Control of Genomic Integrity (FI proposal)

The main objective of the Action is to advance knowledge on mechanisms that protect healthy cells from transforming into cancer cells.

BM0704: Emerging EMF Technologies and Health Risk Management (UK proposal)

The main objective of the Action is to create a structure in which researchers in the field of EMF and health can share knowledge and information on electromagnetic fields (EMF).

Chemistry and Molecular Sciences and Technologies (CMST)

CM0701: Cascade Chemoenzymatic Processes - New synergies between Chemistry and Biochemistry (IT proposal)

The main objective of the Action is to increase the innovative potential of biocatalysis by promoting the multistep catalytic concept, thus bringing this methodology closer to the application sphere.

CM0702: Chemistry With Ultrashort Pulses and Free-Electron Lasers: Looking for Control Strategies Through “Exact” Computations (ES proposal)

The main objective of the Action is to establish an interdisciplinary European programme to develop new computational tools and to combine them with state-of-the-art quantum-chemistry methods to investigate the new chemistry that arises when molecules and, in particular, chemical reactions are exposed to ultrashort xuv and x-ray laser pulses.

CM0703: Systems Chemistry (DE proposal)

The main objective of the Action is through investigating autocatalytic reaction systems within supramolecular, prebiotic and other fields of chemistry to develop methods for their integration into dynamic supersystems.

Earth System Science and Environmental Management (ESSEM)

ES0701: Improved constraints on models of glacial isostatic adjustment (UK proposal)

The main objective of the Action is to place improved constraints on models of glacial isostatic adjustment through the development of state-of-the-art surface velocity measurements with the consequent production of new ice mass change estimates for the major ice sheets.

ES0702: EG-CLIMET European Ground-based observations of essential variables for CLimate and operational METeorology (UK proposal)

The main objective of the Action is the specification, development and demonstration of cost-effective ground-based integrated profiling systems suitable for future networks providing essential atmospheric observations for both climate and weather.

Food and Agriculture (FA)

FA0701: Arthropod Symbioses: from fundamental studies to pest and disease management (EL proposal)

The main objective of the Action is to enhance the development of arthropod-symbiosis into commercially available products of benefits to society.

FA0702: Maternal Interaction with Gametes and Embryos (UK proposal)

The main objective of the Action is to establish a network of European researchers working on different aspects of maternal interaction with gametes and embryo in different species to advance towards creation of a so called "Interactome" map of cell-to-cell interactions as well as endo- and paracrine interactions between gametes, embryos and female reproductive tract during different stages of reproductive cycle and pregnancy at health and under disturbed maternal nutrition and metabolism.

Forests, their Products and Services (FPS)

FP0701: Post-fire forest management in Southern Europe (PT proposal)

The main objective of the Action is to develop and disseminate scientifically-based decision criteria for post-fire management, applicable from stand-level to landscape-level planning.

FP0702: Net-Acoustics for Timber Based Lightweight Buildings and Elements (CH proposal)

"The main objective of the Action is to improve the acoustic behaviour of timber based lightweight buildings as well as to develop effective prediction models and measurement schemes."

FP0703: Expected Climate cHange and Options for European Silviculture (ECHOES) (FR proposal)

The main objective of the Action is to mobilise and integrate the existing scientific knowledge for European forest policymakers and managers who have to make decisions on adaptation to and mitigation of climate change.

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

IC0701: Formal Verification of Object-Oriented Software (DE proposal)

The main objective of the Action is to develop verification technology with the reach and power to assure dependability of object-oriented programs on industrial scale.

IC0702: Combining soft computing techniques and statistical methods to improve data analysis solutions (SP proposal)

The main objective of the Action is to strengthen the dialogue between the statistics and soft computing research communities in order to cross-pollinate both fields and generate mutual improvement activities.

IC0703: Traffic Monitoring and Analysis: theory, techniques, tools and applications for the future networks (IT proposal)

The main objective of the Action is to increase the quality and the impact of European research in the field of Traffic Monitoring and Analysis (TMA).

Individuals, Societies, Cultures and Health (ISCH)

IS0701: Comparative Analysis of Enterprise Data: Industry Dynamics, Firm Performance, and Worker Outcomes (HU proposal)

The main objective of the Action is to enhance international collaboration to produce cross-country comparative research using improved data to study the firm-level sources of economic growth and the consequences of the growth process for workers.

IS0702: The Role of the EU in UN Human Rights Reform (NL proposal)

The main objective of the Action is to increase and consolidate knowledge of the ongoing process of institutional, structural, and procedural reforms of the United Nations human rights system, so as to recommend standpoints for the European Union in this process working towards strengthening the protection of human rights world-wide.

IS0703: The European Research Network on Learning to Write Effectively (ERN-LWE) (FR proposal)

The main objective of the Action is to improve our understanding of how written production is mastered and how this learning process can be made more effective for each and every European citizen, especially children at school and adults in the workplace.

IS0704: An interoperable supranational infrastructure for digital editions (Interedition) (NL proposal)

The main objective of the Action is to produce a 'roadmap' or 'manual' conceptualizing the development of a technical infrastructure for collaborative digital preparing, editing, publishing, analyzing and visualizing of literary research materials.

Materials, Physical and Nanosciences (MPNS)

MP0701: Composites with novel functional and structural properties by nanoscale materials (Nano Composite Materials-NCM) (AT proposal)

The main objective of the Action is to form a European-wide scientific and technology knowledge platform on the topic of nanocomposite materials in order to advance the R&D, the use, and the exploitation of these innovative materials in Europe with a special focus on SMEs.

MP0702: Towards functional sub-wavelength photonic structures (PL proposal)

The main objective of the Action is to establish active links between European laboratories working in the field of artificial materials for photonics applications, where the structural dimensions are at or below the wavelength of light.

Transport and Urban Development (TUD)

TU0701: Improving the Quality of Suburban Building Stocks (IT proposal)

The main objective of the Action is the development and dissemination of knowledge and tools to assess and promote the refurbishment of existing suburban building stocks.

TU0702: Real-time monitoring, surveillance and control of road networks under adverse weather conditions (FR proposal)

The main objective of the Action is to understand better the impacts of weather on freeways/motorways as well as on urban networks highway operations and to develop, promote and implement strategies and tools to mitigate those impacts.

World-wide interest towards COST

COST continues to raise interest far beyond the borders of its Member States. The Committee welcomed 38 requests for participation in ongoing COST Actions of institutions from Australia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, China, Colombia, Georgia, Japan, Moldova, New Zealand, Russia, South Africa, Tunisia, Ukraine and USA.

Next Collection date for new proposals

The Committee agreed that the next collection date for preliminary proposals for new COST Actions would be on 28 March 2008¹. The Call will be shortly published in the Official Journal of the European Union.

Next CSO meeting

The next meeting of the COST Senior Officials Committee is scheduled for 12 - 13 March 2008.

For further information call the COST Secretariat at 02-285.68.96 or consult website <http://www.europa.eu/cost>

¹ Submissions on-line: <http://www.cost.esf.org/index.php>