

*News on EU Research Policy and Programmes*

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## **EU POLICY**

### **Nice Treaty Agreed**

After negotiations which went on into the early hours of the morning, the Heads of State and Government of the EU15 meeting in Nice, managed to reach an agreement on reforming the decision-making structures and procedures of the EU. This reform is widely perceived to be necessary in order to ease the eastward expansion of the Union in the coming decade. The new proposals, however, will not enter into force until 2005.

The summit agreed that future European Council decisions by qualified majority vote would require a 73% share of the total votes (255) votes, plus a 62% minimum representation of the total EU population.

The new system will give Germany, France, Italy and Britain 29 votes each. Spain will have 27 votes; the Netherlands, 13; Greece, Belgium and Portugal, 12; Sweden and Austria, 10; Denmark, Finland and Ireland, seven, and Luxembourg, four. As the accession countries begin to join, Poland, the biggest applicant, will have 27 votes. Romania will have 14; the Czech Republic and Hungary, 12; Bulgaria, 10; Slovakia and Lithuania, 7; and Latvia, Slovenia, Estonia and Cyprus 4 each, and, finally, Malta, with 3 votes. This 'double majority' rule strengthens the position of the large states, and particularly that of Germany, as it allows any combination of Germany and two other 'big' states to block a decision, regardless of the number of other countries ranged against them.

At German insistence, a new Intergovernmental Conference was also set for 2004, when these arrangements and other contentious issues such as the composition of the EC will be looked at in further detail.

The Nice Council also discussed briefly issues related to science and technology, by taking note and approving progress achieved in the construction of a 'European Area of Research and innovation' (sic) and in the establishment of eEurope, and calling for greater assistance for the mobility of researchers and students.

#### **FURTHER INFORMATION:**

Commission Press Release DOC/00/30 of 11/12/2000

available from <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cqi/questen.ksh?>

CORDIS Press Release 15975 of 11/12/2000 available from

<http://dbs.cordis.lu/news/en/home.html>

"El Pais" of 12/12/2000

### **Science, Society and the Citizen**

A recent EC Communication looks at various topical issues that are causing growing concern to individuals and policy-makers alike and are encompassed under the general heading of "Science, society and the citizen". The central focus is how to implement research policy around the real aims of society and fully involve society in seeing through the research agenda.

How should we manage risks? What implications arise from adopting the precautionary principle? How can ethical issues and the ethical consequences of

technological progress be taken into account, at the same time as the need for freedom of research and access to knowledge? What needs to be done in order to underpin the dialogue between science and society, to improve the public's knowledge of science, to increase the interest of the young in scientific careers, and to expand the role and place of women in science and research?

The document sets out to:

- spark a debate on these issues at European level by providing a frame of reference for discussion;
- put forward suggestions for action, based on succinct analyses, in the various areas at national, regional and European level;
- seek proposals for new ways of thinking about these issues and actions that could be taken.

The EC will use the outcome of the debate this document stimulates as the basis for policy initiatives designed to lead to concrete actions.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/area/science-society-en.pdf>

## **Research and the Precautionary Principle**

In between the late-night haggling, the recent Nice Council produced Resolution on the Precautionary Principle, which clarifies the role that scientific research and expertise is expected to perform in situations where a possible harmful effect is detected, but where preliminary scientific evaluation proves inconclusive.

The European Council recognises the importance of scientific evidence in decision-making, and sustains the need for public authorities to have the backing of suitable research facilities and scientific committees. It affirms that those responsible for the scientific assessment of risk must be in permanent contact with, but functionally separate from those responsible for risk management. Risk management, it claims is the responsibility of public authorities, and must be carried out on the basis of a political appraisal of the desired level of protection.

Finally, the Council considers that all decisions taken in accordance with the precautionary principle must be subject to constant review and re-appraisal on the basis of developments in scientific knowledge. In consequence, the Council believes that where, the principle has been applied, additional research should be conducted in order to reduce the level of uncertainty.

FURTHER INFORMATION: Nice European Council, Presidency Conclusions, available from <http://ue.eu.int/newsroom/news.cfm>  
CORDIS Press Release 15961 of 07/12/2000  
available from <http://dbs.cordis.lu/news/en/home.html>

## **The Precautionary Principle in Fisheries Policy**

The introduction of the precautionary principle in EU policy-making continues apace, with the adoption of a new Communication on the application of the precautionary principle in the setting of Total Allowable Catches (TACs) for fish species. The

process of setting annual TACs has long been judged as unsatisfactory, both in terms of protection of this important biological resource and of the economic impact on fish producers of the fluctuations which often occur from year to year.

The EC believes the precautionary principle, according to which a lack of certainty is not a sufficient argument for postponing difficult decisions, is the only answer to the dilatory attitude which has so often characterised decision-making in fisheries.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/fisheries/news\\_corner/press/inf00\\_32\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/fisheries/news_corner/press/inf00_32_en.htm)

### **New structure of DG Research**

Following from the European Research Area Communication and the nomination of Achilleas Mitsos as Director General, the DG Research has undergone an internal re-organisation. This is aimed at increasing the DG's operative effectiveness and better preparing it for the more openly political role that Commissioner Busquin would like to see it play in the future.

Details which have begun to emerge indicate that the new structure comprises twelve directorates: four concerned with development and implementation of the ERA agenda, two each for the main thematic areas of research (quality of life, competitive growth and ecosystem preservation), and one each for socio-economic research and internal resources. The Directorate for International Co-operation has now been dissolved and the different desk officers are expected to be re-allocated to the different thematic directorates. The political dimension of this work is to be done by two units attached directly to the Deputy Director General.

Although this re-organisation does provide some indication of the DG's priorities over the coming years, it does not necessarily reflect the shape of the coming 6<sup>th</sup> FP. The structure of the latter will have to be decided through a prolonged negotiation between the European Council, the EP and the EC.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

None available

### **DG Research on ERA**

At a recent meeting of research liaison officers, Richard Escritt, the Director of the Political & Strategic Co-ordination Directorate within DG Research provided a summary of the EC's approach to the European Research Area (ERA).

He stated that there had been some scepticism about ERA, but this largely was concerned with two questions – is it necessary? And is it feasible? Comparisons between the EU and the USA mean that the answer to the first question 'has to be a clear yes'. In the USA a common legal system and similar attitudes to a culture of innovation have facilitated research, in his view, that was something that ERA seeks to emulate. The EC's ERA Communication had already received overall political endorsement and the interest of key players and there is evidence that progress is already being made to achieve the objectives of ERA.

He noted that certain instruments would need to be re-examined in the Sixth Framework Programme. In particular:

- ◆ The project to programme level approach
- ◆ Large-scale projects and longer-term funding
- ◆ Reinforcement of existing instruments
- ◆ Variable geometry
- ◆ Synergies with other funding instruments – e.g. the Structural Funds and the European Investment Bank
- ◆ Decentralisation

Escritt confirmed the current expectations that the EC's proposals for ERA and the Sixth Framework Programme will be announced in late February or early March 2001, with adoption of the specific programmes by mid-2002.

FURTHER INFORMATION: None

### **EC Co-operation with the World Health Organisation**

The EC and the World Health Organisation (WHO) have signed an agreement to strengthen and intensify their co-operation in the field of health.

The areas of co-operation include:

- ◆ generating, collecting, processing and disseminating authoritative information and data on health;
- ◆ developing methodologies and tools for health monitoring and disease surveillance and effective responses to, in particular malaria, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, emerging diseases and anti-microbial resistance threats;
- ◆ strengthening communicable disease surveillance and improving responses;
- ◆ exchanging information and sharing experience on the evaluation of health effects, in particular on safety and health protection against physical, chemical and biological agents
- ◆ promoting health related RTD
- ◆ mobilising and co-ordinating, where appropriate, resources for health interventions and co-operating in emergencies such as those resulting from natural catastrophes

One of the top priorities in this strengthened co-operation will be the reduction of tobacco consumption through the implementation of a framework convention on tobacco control.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Commission Press Release IP/00/1465 of 14/12/00

available from <http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh>

### **Directive on the Deliberate Release of GMOs into the Environment**

The European Council and the EP have jointly the text of a proposed directive on the deliberate release of genetically modified organisms (GMOs). The agreement will have to be agreed by both institutions by an absolute majority in the Parliament and qualified majority in the European Council, before it is definitively adopted. The

agreed text allows for increased accessibility of the public to information, including the establishment of registers recording the location of all GMOs grown and concerning the phasing out of antibiotic resistance markers in GMOs.

**FURTHER INFORMATION:**

European Council Press Release 480 - No: 14519/00 of 13/12/00,  
available from: <http://ue.eu.int/en/summ.htm>

**Commission proposes registry to run ".eu" domain**

The EC has adopted a proposal to create a registry to run the Internet top level domain ".eu". The EC's proposal would create the legal framework for the new Registry and for the development of the necessary public policy measures for the operation of the Registry. In particular the EC would be responsible for developing and adopting policies regarding speculative and abusive registration of names and alternative dispute resolution procedures. Such policies would be adopted after consulting the Member States through an Advisory Committee and consulting the Registry itself.

**FURTHER INFORMATION:**

Commission Press Release IP/00/1444 of 12/12/2000  
available from <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh?>

**Green Paper on the Security of Energy Supply**

The EC has adopted a Green Paper on the security of energy supply, covering the geopolitical, economic and environmental stakes involved in securing the European Union's energy supply.

The Green Paper outlines the plan of a long-term energy strategy, looks at a wide variety of different options to decrease the EU's dependence on imported energy sources by looking at ways of reducing overall energy consumption in the EU and increasing energy production from renewable and less-contaminating sources. The aim of this policy is to double the share of new and renewable energies from 6 to 12% in the energy balance and passing from 14 to 22% for electricity production between now and 2010.

**FURTHER INFORMATION:**

Commission Press Release IP/00/1368 of 29/11/00  
available from <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh>

**Intangibles in Innovation Policy**

Today's economies are dominated by knowledge-intensive services and the manufacture and sale of knowledge-intensive products. Indeed, at the level of the firm, recent estimates suggest that 50-90 % of the value created by a firm come, not from management of traditional physical assets but from management of intellectual capital. This, according to a new report by DG Enterprise's High Level Expert Group on the Intangible Economy challenges the models of classical economics and contemporary accounting procedures.

The report states, among other things, that better integration between public and private research is required, leading to a 'recognition that publicly funded R&D needs re-orientating towards smart individuals and companies linked to networks that produce results, rather than propping up sclerotic organisations and R&D 'brands' that are past their prime'.

**FURTHER INFORMATION:**

CORDIS Press Release 15959 of 07/12/2000 available from

<http://dbs.cordis.lu/news/en/home.html>

EU Observatory on Intangible Assets: <http://www.eu-intangibles.net/>

### **Community Action Programme to Combat Discrimination**

Details of the new Community Action Plan to Combat Discrimination have now been published. The aim of the Programme is to promote measures to combat direct or indirect discrimination based on racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. The Programme will run from 1 January 2001 to 31 December 2006 and will involve three strands:

- ◆ Analysis and Evaluation (of existing policies and legislation)
- ◆ Capacity Building (of NGOs working in the area of combating discrimination)
- ◆ Awareness Raising

**FURTHER INFORMATION**

OJ L303 volume 43 of 2/12/00,

available from [http://www.europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/oj/2000/l\\_30320001202en.html](http://www.europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/oj/2000/l_30320001202en.html)

### **RESEARCH NEWS**

#### **'Arabidopsis thaliana' De-Coded**

A group of researchers from Europe, the USA and Japan has announced the first complete sequencing of the genome of '*Arabidopsis thaliana*', more commonly known as thale cress or mouse-eared cress. 114 researchers from 15 countries collaborated to analyse the plant's five chromosomes, whose sequence is to be published on CD-ROM by 'Nature', to go with a special issue on *Arabidopsis*.

This discovery will provide the basis to develop tools not only for genetic manipulation but also to improve traditional selective breeding techniques. It is also hoped that knowing the locations and functions of '*Arabidopsis*' genes will help researchers to identify similar human genes and learn more about the causes of disease.

**FURTHER INFORMATION:**

Cordis Press Release No. 15996 of 14/12/00 available from

<http://dbs.cordis.lu/news/en/home.html>

### **Therapeutic Cloning – Commission Response to UK Parliament Decision**

Following the UK Parliament decision to extend the nation's laws on embryo research to allow some therapeutic cloning, Philippe Busquin, the EC Commissioner for Research stated that he was 'glad to see that Parliaments and politicians are discussing research publicly and are thus giving science its proper place on the political agenda.' He also noted that such 'advances in genetics and in life sciences ... hold many prospects for improving our health and fostering economic and social development.'

The EC views the result of the vote in the British Parliament as an example of cultural diversities in Europe expressing themselves in a democratic way. The EC has no intention to legislate or harmonise in the field of ethics and respects this diversity of cultures and points of views in Europe.

Members of the EP also considered the issue of stem cell research recently. They voted in favour of setting up a temporary committee to examine human genetics and related technologies in modern medicine. The 36 members will examine the ethical, legal, economic and social issues related to new developments in the medical field.

**FURTHER INFORMATION:**

Commission Press Release IP/00/1501 of 20/12/00

available from <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/guesten.ksh>

CORDIS Press Release 16034 of 20/12/2000

available from <http://dbs.cordis.lu/news/en/home.html>

### **TSE Research Co-ordination**

A group of TSE (transmissible spongiform encephalopathies) experts has met in Brussels to examine current European research in this field and suggest ways for improving its impact. Improving co-ordination of national and Community research activities in this field is expected to be one of the most promising ways forward.

The Council of Research Ministers requested the establishment of a group with national experts whose mission is to make an inventory of research undertaken in Europe; encourage the exchange of information between research groups and to identify research activities to be reinforced and new actions to be launched. The EP has also called for more research, especially in relation to diagnostic tests for TSEs. A preliminary report is due to be delivered at the end of February 2001.

**FURTHER INFORMATION:**

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### **Renewing the Scientific Steering Committee**

The EC has renewed the mandate of the Scientific Steering Committee (SSC) and the eight specialised scientific committees advising the EC on issues related to consumer safety and public health.

The SSC will continue to be chaired by Prof. Gérard Pascall, with Prof. Albert Osterhaus and Vittorio Silano as co-chairs. A total of 151 independent scientists have been appointed members of the specialised scientific committees out of a total of 483 candidates who applied. The Scientific Steering Committee (SSC) and the specialised scientific committees were set up in the current format in 1997 in response to the BSE crisis. Their objective is to prepare scientific advice to the EC guided by the principles of independence, transparency and excellency. The members of the scientific committees are appointed in their individual capacity.

**FURTHER INFORMATION:**

Commission Press Release IP/00/1454 of 14/12/2000 available from

<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh>

The full list of members of the eight scientific committees is available on

[http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/dat/2000/c\\_338/c\\_33820001129en00160021.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/dat/2000/c_338/c_33820001129en00160021.pdf)

More information about the Scientific Steering Committee is available at:

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/health\\_consumer/library/press/press71\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/health_consumer/library/press/press71_en.html)

### **European Initiative for SMEs**

The EC has recently provided funding for a project to provide economic and technological intelligence to SMEs. The aim of the project, entitled "Partners for Life" is to offer SMEs with targeted information on technological and market trends in the field of life sciences and to support their participation in European life sciences research projects. Partners for Life is a network of expert organisations from 18 countries, co-ordinated by the Austrian Bureau for International Research and Technology Co-operation.

**FURTHER INFORMATION:**

[http://www.bit.ac.at/partners\\_for\\_life.htm](http://www.bit.ac.at/partners_for_life.htm)

Sabine Herlitschka, Co-ordinator, tel +43 1 5811 616103

### **COST Launches Nine New Actions**

A recent meeting of the COST Committee agreed to launch nine new Actions in the course of this year. These are aimed at a number of different research issues in the fields of materials, environment, plant science, social science, medicine and cultural heritage. The list of new actions is as follows:

**COST 529:** "Efficient lighting for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century"

**COST 530:** "Life-cycle inventories for environmentally-conscious manufacturing processes"

**COST 628:** "Life-cycle assessment of textile products, eco-efficiency and definition of best available technology (BAT) of textile processing"

**COST 849:** "Parasitic plant management in sustainable agriculture"

**COST 850:** "Bio-control symbioses (symbiotic complexes for biological control of pests)"

**COST A19:** "Children's Welfare"

**COST A20:** "The impact of the Internet on the mass media in Europe"

**COST B18:** "Corpus cavernosum EMG in erectile dysfunction"

**COST G8:** "Non-destructive analysis and testing of museum objects"

Action **COST G3** "Industrial ventilation" was extended for a further 15 months

**FURTHER INFORMATION:**

Council Press Release Conseil/00/392 of 04/12/2000

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**Using Lasers to Assess the Condition of Fragile Works of Art**

Frescoes and icons are particularly fragile works of art because they consist of layers of water-based paint applied to either plaster or wood. As a result of an EC funded project, art restorers have several new high-tech options to aid in their assessment of the structural conditions of such fragile works of art. Currently the main diagnostic method is through visual inspection, or by tapping the surface of the painting and feeling the resulting vibrations and listening to the sounds. However, through the LASERART project a consortium of Italian, Greek and British researchers have developed a series of non-intrusive measurement techniques to diagnose the state of frescoes and icons. The new techniques offer many advantages over current procedures. They do not require the painting to be touched, restorers do not need to use scaffolding and the measurements are quick and the results can be completely automated and stored in a computerised database.

**FURTHER INFORMATION:**

<http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/research/growth/gcc/in-action-laser.html>

Professor E Tomasini, University of Ancona, [Tomasini@mehpl.cineca.it](mailto:Tomasini@mehpl.cineca.it)

**European Mars Mission has landing site**

The landing site for the European Space Agency's (ESA) Mars Express lander, Beagle 2, will be landing on the Isidis Planitia, a large flat region overlying the boundary between the ancient highlands and the northern plains. This region was chosen because it appears to be a sedimentary basin where traces of life might have been preserved

**FURTHER INFORMATION:**

[http://www.esa.int/export/esaCP/GGGJDUPCWGC\\_index\\_0.html](http://www.esa.int/export/esaCP/GGGJDUPCWGC_index_0.html)

**ESA Selects New Studies**

The European Space Agency (ESA) has selected five new missions for preliminary feasibility studies, following a call for ideas for 'Earth Explorer Core Missions' in July of this year. The missions will focus on atmospheric chemistry, earth clouds aerosol and radiation, surface processes and ecosystems changes, water vapour and wind in the atmospheric troposphere and stratosphere and a water vapour lidar experiment in space. The five missions will be presented to the user community at a workshop in Granada, Spain in October 2001.

The proposals follow four other studies that were completed in late 1999 and led to the selection of the first two Earth Explorer Core Missions to be implemented.

These were the 'Gravity Field and Steady State Ocean Circulation Mission' and the 'Atmospheric Dynamics Mission'

**FURTHER INFORMATION:**

European Space Agency Press Release 77 of 6/12/00, available at:

<http://www.esa.int>

### **New Space Programmes Approved**

The ESA has given the green light to the Vega Small Launcher Development and P80 Solid Propulsion Stage Demonstrator programmes. The first of these projects, Vega, is intended to target the market for small payloads of up to 1500 Kg; the latter aims to develop solid-propellant technology to improve the performance of ESA's Ariane 5 rocket and the first-stage of the new Vega launcher. Vega's maiden flight is expected in 2005.

**FURTHER INFORMATION:**

European Space Agency Press Release 78 of 19/12/00, available at:

<http://www.esa.int>

### **ESF Governing Council**

The recent meeting of the Governing Council of the European Science Foundation agreed an increase of 6.0% compared to the 2000 budget. The Assembly approved the following budget proposal for 2001: a general budget amounting to 5.8 MEuro; a provision of 1.52 MEuro for EURESCO, and a consequential call of 5.1 MEuro.

Four countries which already had seats re-nominated their members: Professor Max Kaase, Vice President (Germany), Dr. Daniel Cadet (France), Professor Mario Rinaldi (Italy) and Dr. Richard Dyer (United Kingdom). Two vacancies remained due to the departure of Vice President Professor Gustav Björkstrand and Professor Gunnar Öquist.

**FURTHER INFORMATION:**

<http://www.esf.org>

## **EDUCATION, TRAINING AND CULTURE**

### **Memorandum on Lifelong Learning**

Following the European Council at Lisbon in March 2000, the EC has produced a memorandum on lifelong learning, with the aim of developing a coherent overall strategy for education and lifelong learning in Europe. The memorandum proposes six main themes as the basis of an open debate on how to put lifelong learning into practice:

- New basic skills: gaining and renewing skills for sustained participation in the knowledge society
- Raising levels of investment in Human Resources

- Innovation in teaching and learning: effective teaching and learning methods and contexts for lifelong learning in all the different aspects of life
- Valuing learning - the need for understanding and appreciation of participation and outcomes especially non-formal and informal learning.
- Guidance and information – provision of easy access to good quality information and advice about learning opportunities for all ages.
- Bringing learning closer to home - providing lifelong learning opportunities as close to learners as possible

The collection and analysis of outcomes from consultation will be the subject of a EC Communication towards the end of 2001, which will set specific objectives and outline concrete points for action. Meanwhile the work to develop indicators and benchmarks and to identify good practices will continue.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/life/index.html>

### **Evaluation Reports on 'Second Chance' Schools**

The EC has published the results of an external evaluation exercise into the achievements of 'second chance' schools and what lessons could be learned in terms of the methodological and pedagogical approaches.

Although, for various reasons, the reports cannot be considered as an 'end report' but more as a "stage report", the results of the Second Chance Schools so far are rather encouraging. Experience, as confirmed by the external evaluation reports, suggests that the second chance schools are succeeding in placing young people back on a pathway of learning and, consequently, social and professional rehabilitation.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/2chance/evaluation\\_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/2chance/evaluation_en.html)

## **EXTERNAL COLLABORATION**

### **EC-US Co-operation Programme**

The EC has approved 13 proposals to be funded following the fifth call for projects under the EC/USA HE/FE cooperation programme. Following the call for proposals launched in January 2000, 56 eligible proposals were assessed by US and EC external evaluators and by staff of the US Department of Education and of the EC. Over 800 EC and US students are expected to take part in transatlantic mobility schemes established within consortia

This year's selection is the last of the current programme, which comes to an end on 31 December 2000. The EC is in the process of concluding a new Agreement for the period 2001-2005, which is expected to be signed in December 2000.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/ec-usa/joint\\_selection.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/ec-usa/joint_selection.html)

## **Health, AIDS and Population in Developing Countries (1990-1999)**

The Development DG has published a review of EC-funded activities in health, AIDS and population in developing countries. Since projects and programmes under this heading have been managed by a number of different units and services and through a wide variety of different financial instruments, the true scale of the European Community's involvement in this area has not been readily apparent. This report is a first step towards gaining a greater overall understanding of the scope of support the EC has been providing to health interventions over the past decade and provide a useful platform to strengthen policy and strategy development. It would also be a useful foundation for a through-going health sector evaluation to be carried out in the near future.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/development/sector/social/pfolio3011\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/development/sector/social/pfolio3011_en.htm)

## **EVENTS and AWARDS**

### **Green Week Conference**

In order to publicise the presentation of the new EU Environmental Action Programme (2000-2009), the EC has organised a series of events collectively known as "Green Week", which will take place in Brussels between April 24-28, 2001.

The events will include a conference which will focus on the presentation of the strategic approach of the new Environment Action Programme. The week will also involve a number of thematic conferences, seminars and workshops on the priority issues targeted in the new Environmental Action Programme, such as preventing climate change, protecting nature, environment and health, use of natural resources and management of wastes.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/greenweek/grwkconf.htm>

### **European Awards for the Environment**

The first winners of the European Awards for the Environment for particularly innovative firms in the field of sustainable development have been announced. The four award winners are as follows: The Danish company Brødrene Hartmann won the management award for sustainable development for developing a global lifecycle-based management model. The Belgian company Agva-Gevaert won the product award for sustainable development for developing a chemicals-free medical imaging system. The Austrian company Lenzing Lyocell won the technology award for sustainable development for "European development starting a new era in cellulose fibre production", and finally the British company ENTEC UK won the international partnership award for sustainable development for its support for environmental management and assessment projects in Egypt

FURTHER INFORMATION:

<http://www.eu-environment-awards.org/>

## **NEW PUBLICATIONS and ON-LINE RESOURCES**

### **EU-US Biotechnology Forum Report**

The EU-US Biotechnology Consultative Forum presented its report at the recent EU-US Summit. The purpose of this Forum, which brings together twenty independent experts from the EU and US, is to examine the broad range issues of concern in biotechnology in the European Union and United States. The report looks at the overall context in which debate on biotechnology has tended to become polarised, at principles and possible improvements in regulatory systems, and at biotechnology in the context of sustainable agriculture in the developing and developed worlds.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

[http://europa.eu.int/comm/external\\_relations/us/biotech/biotech.htm](http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/us/biotech/biotech.htm)

### **International Collaboration in Space Science**

The ESF has published the results of a study by its European Space Science Committee. The study was undertaken by the ESSC at the request of the European Space Agency (ESA) and seeks to (i) broaden the base of international collaboration; (ii) identify fruitful areas for such collaboration, such as large astronomical missions and solar system studies involving multiple spacecraft; and (iii) propose a coordinating body involving the major world space agencies which could address collaboration on large missions and coordination of the more focused smaller scale activities in space through the harmonisation of their programmes.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

The "Future of International Collaboration in Space Science" Report

<http://www.esf.org/ftp/pdf/Pesc/essc.pdf>

### **Co-operation with the NIS**

DG Research has published a brochure with information on the different opportunities for scientific collaboration between researchers in the EU and the Newly Independent States (NIS). The brochure aims to provide an introduction to the relevant Programmes in FP5, such as the Copernicus initiative dedicated to NIS, and to other opportunities provided by INTAS, the International Science and Technology Centre (ISTC) in Moscow and the Science and Technology Centre in Ukraine (STCU). Finally, and while not strictly speaking EU programmes, the COST and EUREKA initiatives which also stimulate European S&T co-operation.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

"EU Co-operation with the NIS in Science and Technology" is available from

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/nis/en/index.html>

### **Cordis**

Cordis is the Community Research and Development Information Service. It is a web-based service which provides information on EU R&D programmes and related issues. Web site: <http://www.cordis.lu>

### **EUR-Lex (Official Journal C and L Series)**

This web site provides information on European Union Law. It includes electronic copies of the Treaties and recent copies of the Official Journal of the European Communities (OJ). The OJ, published daily in eleven languages, consists of two related series, the L series (Legislation) and the C series (Information, notices and preparatory EU legislation), a supplement and an annex. EUR-Lex provides free access to the C and L series of the Official Journal for a period of 45 days following publication. (The OJ issue with the Euro exchange rates (L 359, 31/12/1998) is permanently available in PDF format in EUR-Lex).

Web site: EUR-Lex <http://www.europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/index.html>

Official Journal C & L <http://www.europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/oj/index.html>

Treaty of Amsterdam <http://www.europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/treaties/index.html>

### **Europa**

Europa is the European Union's official Server. It contains links to the European Parliament, the European Council, the EC and other EU institutions, and contains information on EU policies listed by subject area.

Web site: <http://www.europa.eu.int/index-en.htm>

### **Rapid**

RAPID is a database giving a daily view of the activities of the European Union as presented by the Institutions in their press releases.

Commission Press Releases are available at:

<http://www.europa.eu.int/rapid/start/cgi/questen.ksh>

### **GLOSSARY**

**COST** European Co-operation in the field of Scientific and Technical Research is a framework for scientific and technical cooperation, allowing the co-ordination of national research on a European level.  
<http://www.netmaniacs.com/cost/>

**'Council'** 'Council' refers to the 'Council of Ministers', the principle decision-making body within the European Union. It has both executive and legislative powers, the latter in some cases exercised jointly with the European Parliament (co-decision procedure). The Council is composed of one representative at ministerial level from each Member State. Which Ministers attend each Council meeting varies according to the subject discussed, e.g. The Minister of Science in the UK attends the Research Council.

<http://ue.eu.int/en/summ.htm>

Culture 2000	First European Community Framework Programme in support of culture, which runs from 2000-2004 (inclusive). <a href="http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/culture/index_en.html">http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/culture/index_en.html</a>
CVCP	Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals (UK) <a href="http://www.cvcp.ac.uk/">http://www.cvcp.ac.uk/</a>
EC	The European Commission - made up of 20 Commissioners nominated by the Member States - both initiates proposals for EU legislation and executes EU policies and actions. <a href="http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/index_en.htm">http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/index_en.htm</a>
EESD	Energy, Environment and Sustainable Development (FP5) <a href="http://www.cordis.lu/fp5/">http://www.cordis.lu/fp5/</a>
eEurope	eEurope A political initiative of the EC to allow Europe to benefit fully from the Information Society. <a href="http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/information_society/eeurope/documentation/index_en.htm">http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/information_society/eeurope/documentation/index_en.htm</a>
EP	The European Parliament - which is made up of elected representatives (MEPs) from all the Member States. It shares decision-making power with the Council in a number of areas including research and education. <a href="http://www.europarl.eu.int/sg/tree/en/default.htm">http://www.europarl.eu.int/sg/tree/en/default.htm</a>
ERA	European Research Area. On 18 January 2000, the EC issued a Communication entitled "Towards a European Research Area" which proposed ways in which research in Europe could be more effectively organised and coordinated. <a href="http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/research/area.html">http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/research/area.html</a>
ESC	European Economic and Social Committee is a consultative body made up of representatives of Europe's employers' organisations, trade unions, farmers, consumer groups and professional associations. <a href="http://www.ces.eu.int/">http://www.ces.eu.int/</a> Press Releases: <a href="http://www.ces.eu.int/en/acs/fr_acs_press_rels.htm">http://www.ces.eu.int/en/acs/fr_acs_press_rels.htm</a>
ESF	European Science Foundation. <a href="http://www.esf.org/">http://www.esf.org/</a>
ESF	The European Social Fund <a href="http://europa.eu.int/comm/dg05/esf/en/index.htm">http://europa.eu.int/comm/dg05/esf/en/index.htm</a>
Eureka	Eureka is a Europe-wide network for Industrial Research and Development. <a href="http://www3.eureka.be/Home/">http://www3.eureka.be/Home/</a>
FP (FP5, FP6)	The EU's Framework Programme for Research and

Technological Development. The Fifth Framework Programme (FP5) was adopted in 1998 and will run until 2002, when the next framework programme (FP6) is expected to supersede it.

FP5 is composed of four thematic programmes (see QoL, IST, Growth, EESD) and three horizontal programmes (see INCO II, Innovation and SMEs, and IHP).

<http://www.cordis.lu/fp5>

Green Paper	Green Papers are communications published by the European Commission on a specific policy area. Primarily they are documents addressed to interested parties who are invited to participate in a process of consultation and debate. In some cases they provide an impetus for subsequent legislation.
Growth	Competitive and Sustainable Growth (FP5) <a href="http://www.cordis.lu/fp5/">http://www.cordis.lu/fp5/</a>
IHP	Improving Human Potential Programme (FP5) <a href="http://www.cordis.lu/improving/home.html">http://www.cordis.lu/improving/home.html</a>
INCO II	Confirming the International Role of Community Research (FP5) <a href="http://www.cordis.lu/fp5/">http://www.cordis.lu/fp5/</a>
INDU	The European Parliament Committee on Industry, External Trade, Research and Energy (FP5), also known as ITRE <a href="http://www.europarl.eu.int/committees/en/default.htm">http://www.europarl.eu.int/committees/en/default.htm</a>
INNOVATION and SME	Promoting of Innovation and Encouragement of SME Participation (FP5) <a href="http://www.cordis.lu/fp5/">http://www.cordis.lu/fp5/</a>
INTAS	International Association for the promotion of co-operation with scientists from the New Independent States of the former Soviet Union. <a href="http://www.intas.be/mainfs.htm">http://www.intas.be/mainfs.htm</a>
IST	Information Society Technologies Programme (FP5) <a href="http://www.cordis.lu/fp5/">http://www.cordis.lu/fp5/</a>
MEDIA	The MEDIA Plus Programme (2001 - 2005) is to be introduced as a follow-up to the Media II programme which ends in December 2000. The programme aims to strengthen the competitiveness of the European audiovisual industry. <a href="http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/dg10/avpolicy/media/index_en.html">Http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/dg10/avpolicy/media/index_en.html</a>
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation <a href="http://www.nato.int/">http://www.nato.int/</a>
PHARE	The Phare Programme is the European Union's instrument for financial and technical co-operation with the countries of central and eastern Europe.

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/enlargement/pas/phare/index.htm>

QoL	Quality of Life Programme (FP5) <a href="http://www.cordis.lu/fp5/">http://www.cordis.lu/fp5/</a>
RTD	Research and Technological Development
TACIS	The Tacis Programme aims to forge closer economic and political links with the former republics of the Soviet Union and Mongolia (also known as New Independent States (NIS)) <a href="http://europa.eu.int/comm/dg1a/tacis/index.htm">http://europa.eu.int/comm/dg1a/tacis/index.htm</a>
Treaty of Amsterdam	The Treaty of Amsterdam was signed in October 1997 and entered into force on 1 May 1999. <a href="http://www.europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/treaties/index.html">http://www.europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/treaties/index.html</a>
White Paper	White Papers are documents containing proposals for Community action in a specific area. They often follow a Green Paper.

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