



Newsletter July 2016

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The partners

Full members

French Foundation for Research on Biodiversity, France - coordinator
 Austrian Science Fund, Austria
 Belgian Science Policy Office, Belgium
 The Research Foundation - Flanders, Belgium
 National Science Fund Bulgaria, Bulgaria
 Estonian Research Council, Estonia
 Academy of Finland, Finland
 French National Research Agency, France
 French Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy, France
 New Caledonian Economic Development Agency, France
 Guadeloupe Region, France
 French Guyana Region, France
 Reunion Region, France
 German aeronautics and space research centre, Germany
 German Research Foundation, Germany
 Ministry of Agriculture, Hungary
 Research Council of Lithuania, Lithuania
 Research Council of Norway, Norway
 National Science Centre, Poland
 Portuguese national funding agency for science, research and technology, Portugal
 Regional Fund for Science and Technology, Portugal
 The Executive Agency for Higher Education, Research, Development and Innovation Funding, Romania
 Slovak Academy of Sciences, Slovakia
 Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness, Spain
 Regional Government of the Canary Islands, Spain
 Swedish Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning, Sweden
 Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, Sweden
 Swiss National Science Foundation, Switzerland
 The Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research, The Netherlands
 Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock, Turkey
 Joint Nature Conservation Committee, United Kingdom

Associate member

Latvian Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, Latvia

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BiodivERsA's Twitter Account

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BiodivERsA's activities via
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BiodivERsA: an enlarged consortium, reinforced strategy, and well identified priorities for the coming years

In 2016, the BiodivERsA members are further reinforcing the European Research Area on biodiversity, ecosystem services and Nature-based solutions. This involves a range of activities, from the successful implementation of a large joint call to fund research projects, to the enlargement of the consortium, the development of a shared Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA), and activities to promote the brokering and transfer of knowledge from funded projects.

First, we are pleased to announce the results of the 6th BiodivERsA call, jointly launched with the European Commission, on the two following themes: "Understanding and managing biodiversity dynamics to improve ecosystem functioning and delivery of ecosystem services in a global change context: the cases of soils and sediments, and land, river- and sea-scapes (habitat connectivity, green and blue infrastructures, and naturing cities)". On behalf of the BiodivERsA consortium, I would like to thank all the research teams that participated in this call, and congratulate the teams of the selected projects. Thanks a lot to the Evaluation Committee members and the external reviewers for their high quality contribution that ensured a thorough and fair evaluation process. Finally, great thanks to the Call Secretariat and to all BiodivERsA agencies participating to the call. Their support and flexibility in terms of funding made this call possible and contributed to its success. Pending funding decision, the top ranked 26 research projects will be funded. They all reach scientific excellence and have strong plan for engaging stakeholders and clear societal relevance. These projects correspond to a total amount of over 34 million euro, and gather teams from 13 European countries participating to the call as funders. This success encourages BiodivERsA partners to continue launching ambitious calls in the coming years, possibly again co-funded by the European Commission.

Second, the BiodivERsA consortium is continuously enlarging. Last year Latvia joined BiodivERsA as Associate Member. In June (2016), both the Academy of Finland and Slovak Academy of Sciences joined BiodivERsA as full members. This allows BiodivERsA to reinforce its geographical coverage of the European research community.

Third, BiodivERsA has just adopted the draft version of its SRIA. This SRIA frames the major challenges to be tackled by BiodivERsA, as well the broad type of research it supports. This strategic document will encompass the biodiversity, ecosystem-services and nature-based solutions domain. In this newsletter, you will learn more about the approach used by BiodivERsA to develop this very important document, defining a common vision and shared priorities among BiodivERsA partners.

Fourth, BiodivERsA is developing a range of activities to promote the brokering and transfer of knowledge from funded research projects. This includes the synthesis of key results relevant to feed the IPBES assessments, and the production of a new set of policy briefs. Together with the set up of its Advisory Board composed of top scientists and major stakeholders, this will reinforce BiodivERsA's capacity to promote science-society and science-policy interfacing throughout the whole research process.

It only remains for us to wish you a pleasant reading!

The Coordination Team

Xavier Le Roux,

BiodivERsA Coordinator and CEO, FRB

Hilde Eggermont,

BiodivERsA Vice-Chair, BelSPO

Henrik Lange,

BiodivERsA Vice-Chair, Swedish Ministry of Environment

Results of the JPI Evaluation process

Joint Programming Initiatives (JPIs) have been designed to address the main societal challenges that Europe has to face, like urbanisation, food production and climate change. These challenges require cooperation between national research funding agencies, ministries and the European Commission so that national research programmes are sufficiently structured to align with societal needs at the European scale. Such a cooperation is also key for research results to be effectively translated into new solutions that are applicable beyond the national level.

In June 2015, the European Commission (EC) set up an Expert Group to enquire and evaluate the performance of the 10 existing JPIs, plus four particularly mature P2P networks that also aim at addressing particular societal challenges (BiodivERsA, E-Rare, SET Plan, and Metrology 185). The consultation involved all of the main stakeholders: the Chairs of the concerned initiatives, EC, the High Level Group of the Joint Programming and the Member States and Associated Countries.

The Expert Group considered a framework with eight indicators enabling a qualitative assessment with respect to their progress towards impact on the societal challenges. Indicators used are 1. positioning within the European societal challenge landscape; 2. international research leadership (i.e. work beyond the European level); 3. driving demand for innovative solutions; 4. variety of joint actions and instruments that are either used by, or developed by, the JPI, and mobilization of co-investment and alignment actions; 5. investment in

joint research and innovation projects; 6. share of total national investment in the subject that is coordinated through the JPI; 7. degree of national alignment; 8. sustainability of the JPI infrastructure).

Very interestingly, results show that some of the more mature ERA-nets – including BiodivERsA – are performing better than the JPI average on many of the indicators (Fig. 1). BiodivERsA seems to score particularly well for indicators 1, 4, 5 and 6 defined above.

Results thus confirm that the BiodivERsA ERA-net reached a level of maturity and efficiency comparable to, or even extending beyond, that of full-fledged JPIs. It also shows that upgrading BiodivERsA into a JPI-like too would be very adequate to tackle the ‘Biodiversity and Nature-based solutions’ grand challenge as it would avoid that the efficiency of pan-European cooperation in this important field becomes restricted by the type of European tool used to support cooperation. At the same time, efficient links will have to be developed with key other JPIs, research infrastructures and other relevant international initiatives, as already planned by BiodivERsA3.

The final report presenting the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the expert group is [available here](#).

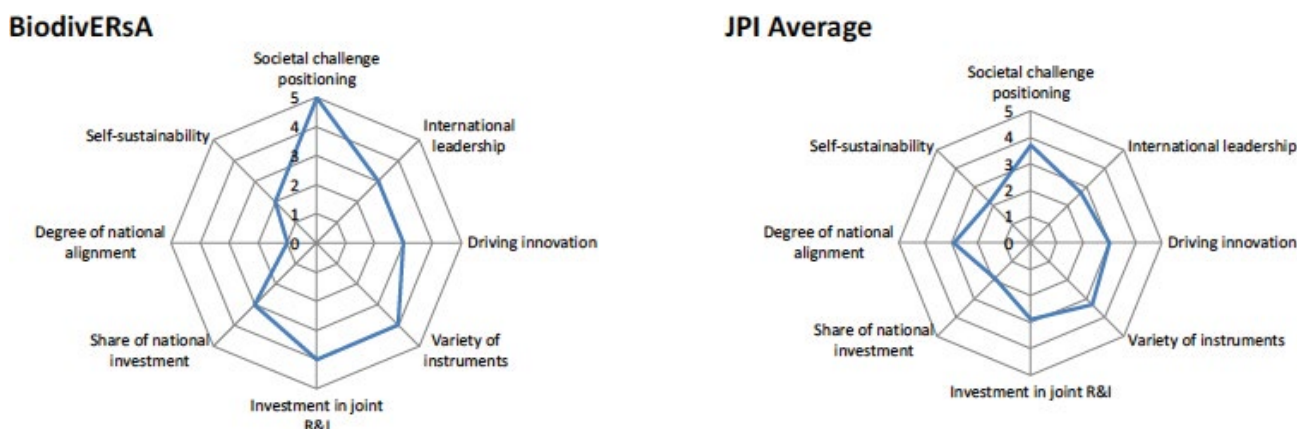


Fig. 1: Performance of BiodivERsA for each of the 8 indicators (left), compared to the average performance of the 10 JPIs (right)

Results of the BiodivERsA 2015-2016 call: 26 pan-European projects recommended for funding for over 34M€

BiodivERsA is pleased to announce that the results of the latest BiodivERsA joint call for research proposals, jointly launched with the European Commission in May 2015, are available.

This call addressed the two following themes:

- Understanding and managing the biodiversity dynamics of soils and sediments to improve ecosystem functioning and delivery of ecosystem services (Theme 1); and
- Understanding and managing biodiversity dynamics in land-, river- and sea-scapes (habitat connectivity, green and blue infrastructures, and naturing cities) to improve ecosystem functioning and delivery of ecosystem services (Theme 2).

A total of 122 full proposals were submitted and reviewed by both an independent evaluation committee and external reviewers. The proposals were evaluated against the three following predefined criteria: (i) scientific excellence, (ii) quality of the project implementation and (iii) societal impact, with a predefined highest weight for scientific excellence.

Based on the scores obtained on these three criteria, the Evaluation Committee established a ranked list of projects.

Strictly following this list, the Call Steering Committee – composed of BiodivERsA members participating to the call – has shortlisted the 26 top-ranked research projects for a total funding amount of over 34 million Euro.

The 26 shortlisted projects combine scientific excellence and excellent policy/societal relevance (including stakeholder engagement approach). They cover a wide range of disciplines (from social sciences to natural sciences), and address a range of pressing scientific and societal issues.

Out of the 26 projects, 9 focus on Theme 1 and 17 on Theme 2.

More information on the projects funded under the 2015-2016 BiodivERsA call will be published on the [BiodivERsA website](#).





List of 26 projects recommended for funding

BEARCONNECT - Functional connectivity and ecological sustainability of European ecological networks - a case study with the brown bear

BIO-TIDE - The role of microbial biodiversity in the functioning of marine tidal flat sediments

BIOGEA - Testing BIOdiversity Gain of European Agriculture with CAP greening

BIOINVENT - Generic bio-inventory of functional soil microbial diversity in permanent grassland ecosystems across management and climate gradients

BIOVEINS - Connectivity of green and blue infrastructures: living veins for biodiverse and healthy cities

CLIMARCTIC - Climate change impacts on Arctic soil and lake microbiomes

CROSSLINK - Understanding cross-habitat linkages between blue and green infrastructure to optimize management of biodiversity, ecosystem services and multiple human uses

DIGGING_DEEPER - Agro-ecosystem diversification: digging deeper

ENABLE - Enabling green-blue infrastructure in complex social-ecological regions - system solutions to wicked problems

FUNGREEN - Functional connectivity and green infrastructure

GREENFUTUREFOREST - Scenarios for a sustainable future forest green infrastructure

IMAGINE - Integrative Management of Green Infrastructures Multifunctionality, Ecosystem integrity and Ecosystem Services: From assessment to regulation in socio-ecological systems

INFRAGECO - Inference, fragmentation, genomics and conservation

MARFOR - Functional Variability and Dynamics of Responses of Marine Forests to Global Change

ODYSSEUS - Between Scylla and Charybdis - managing connectivity for freshwater fish

OSCAR - Optimising the configuration of woody riparian buffer strips along rivers to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem services

PERCEBES - Tools for the transition to spatial management of coastal resources: the stalked barnacle fishery in SW Europe.

REPEAT - REstoration and prognosis of PEAT formation in fens – linking diversity in plant functional traits to soil biological and biogeochemical processes

RESERVEBENEFIT - Evaluating and managing connectivity in a network of Marine Protected Area to maintain genetic diversity and deliver fish beyond protected limits

SOILCLIM - Managing soil biodiversity and ecosystem services in agroecosystems across Europe under climate change

SOILFOREUROPE - Predicting European forest soil biodiversity and its functioning under climate change

SOILMAN - Ecosystem services driven by the diversity of soil biota – understanding and management -

SPONFOREST - Unraveling the potential of SPONTaneous FORest ESTablishment for improving ecosystem functions and services in dynamic landscapes

URBANGAIA - Managing urban Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure to increase city resilience

URBANMYCOSERVE - Understanding and Managing Urban Ectomycorrhizal Fungi Communities to Increase the Health and Ecosystem Service Provisioning of Urban Trees

WOODNET - Connectivity patterns and processes along a gradient of European landscapes with woody vegetation and spatial heterogeneity

For more information on the funded projects, consult the [BiodivERsA website](#).

BiodivERsA's Advisory Board up and running!

BiodivERsA has achieved a major step in implementing its approach to interfacing science with society and policy by building its dedicated Advisory Board. The board is composed of scientists and stakeholder representatives (see composition below) and will work to advise on the strategic aspects of BiodivERsA's activities and will participate to the evaluation of BiodivERsA achievements. In particular it is currently contributing to the preparation of the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) of the network, which is the strategic plan for the development of the BiodivERsA activities over the coming years, in terms of strategic orientations, thematic priorities, other activities to support research and communication and dissemination of outputs. It will suggest ways to improve BiodivERsA's communication and activities, and even propose new ones.

The Board held its first meeting on January 7th and 8th, 2016. This meeting was an opportunity to present the

BiodivERsA network to the board members, including past and present activities as well as ambitions for the future of the collaboration between national and local programmers and funders of research on biodiversity and nature-based solutions. It was also an opportunity to start working with key suggestions for the BiodivERsA SRIA under development.

The second meeting of the Board, held on May 23rd and 24th, 2016, allowed members to make comments and suggestions this time on the SRIA prepared by the Biodiversa Coordination Team and partners. Board members had prepared some precise points as well as broader discussions on the inclusion of social sciences or the approach and inter-linkages between biodiversity and nature-based solutions, which were very positively received by the SRIA writing team and more generally by BiodivERsA partners.

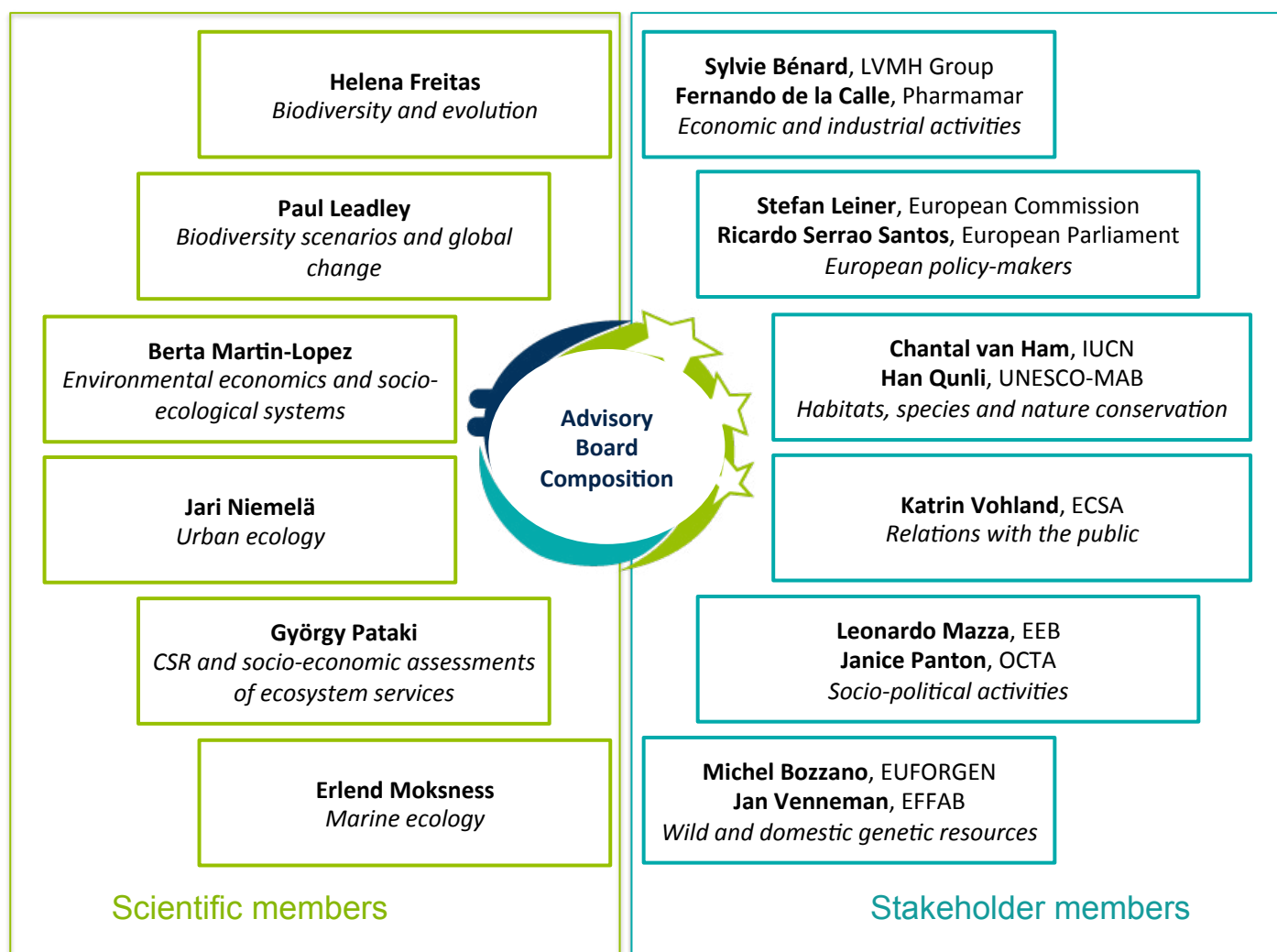


1st meeting of the Advisory Board, group picture

"The work of the Advisory Board is very interesting and stimulating. It gives the members a chance to discuss biodiversity research in Europe and make a significant contribution to the development of this research theme. In particular, the preparation of the BiodivERsA Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda is very rewarding. The strength of the Board is that it is composed of a diverse group of experts from various scientific backgrounds (including both natural and social scientists) and also – importantly – from several stakeholder backgrounds. The members of the Board are all enthusiastic and willing to contribute to the success of BiodivERsA."

Jari Niemelä, Chair of the Advisory Board

Composition of the Advisory Board



For more information on the Advisory Board and its members, please consult the [BiodivERsA website](#).

Development of the first BiodivERsA Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA)

In 2016, BiodivERsA partners worked together to develop the first BiodivERsA Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA). This document defines a common and forward-looking vision as well as shared priorities among BiodivERsA partners in the field of biodiversity, ecosystem services and nature-based solutions to overcome the relative fragmentation within this research field. It will frame the domain covered by BiodivERsA, identify the main challenges that BiodivERsA aims to tackle, as well as the type of research BiodivERsA will support in the future.

This SRIA will be endorsed for 5 years and will be complemented by an implementation plan, which will be updated on a more regular basis (e.g. every two years). This latter document will present the specific activities that BiodivERsA will implement, as well as topics to be addressed in future BiodivERsA calls to deliver the main objectives identified in the SRIA. BiodivERsA partners will work on the development of this additional document in late 2016, with the objective to endorse it in early 2017.

The SRIA development process

The contents of the SRIA are built on the outputs of the different activities implemented within BiodivERsA, such as: mapping of the research landscape and trends in the type of research funded in Europe; mapping of the research infrastructures in Europe; analysis of strategic documents identifying gaps and needs for

European research on biodiversity, ecosystem services and nature-based solutions; analysis of the strategic and foresight views of the BiodivERsA partners; and analysis of specific research needs and priorities for BiodivERsA members from the overseas. These different inputs were complemented by the BiodivERsA Advisory Board who also had the opportunity to make suggestions in terms of BiodivERsA activities and priority topics for inclusion in the SRIA document.

The first draft SRIA was prepared by the BiodivERsA coordination team in close collaboration with the Executive Board, gathering work package leaders and three representatives of the General Assembly. It was then discussed with all BiodivERsA partners, during a two-days workshop in April. The Advisory Board was consulted again in May to review, comment and react on the draft SRIA. The BiodivERsA General Assembly adopted the revised version in June.

Over the summer 2016, BiodivERsA will launch a broad consultation of research organisations and scientists associations and societies, stakeholders and policy makers, to offer the possibility to a large range of actors to react and comment on the SRIA. The feedbacks received will be analysed by the end of 2016 and the updated version of the SRIA will be published.



Latest events of the BiodivERsA3 network

First BiodivERsA workshop to identify research priorities for the European overseas

Over the last month, BiodivERsA organized several events to help the development of the SRIA. After a meeting of all BiodivERsA partners on 31 March – 1st April to discuss about the first draft SRIA, BiodivERsA organised a specific workshop to discuss overseas specific issues.

Organized on 4-5 April and gathering overseas actors, this workshop aimed at discussing about specific research needs and priorities for overseas countries and territories (OCTs) and overseas regions (ORs) in the field of biodiversity, ecosystem services and nature-based solutions. The outputs of this workshop will contribute to feed the BiodivERsA SRIA and ensure that overseas specificities are well taken into account.

Organized back-to-back with the Net-Biome final conference, this workshop was an opportunity to discuss research priorities with a wide range of actors (funding organisations, researchers from the Net-biome funded projects, stakeholders, etc.).

To support this discussion, an analysis of the following documents was performed: The 2011-2020 Strategic Plan of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Netbiome CSA and ERA-NET Netbiome strategic documents, and the United Kingdom Overseas Territories biodiversity strategy. This analysis, which was circulated to the participants before the meeting, allowed a first identification of research needs and priorities in overseas; they were also integrated in the BiodivERsA SRIA.

The participants stressed the fact that OCTs and ORs are “natural laboratories” scattered across biogeographically gradients and across socio-ecosystems, with a small research community. Specific needs arise from this situation, which should be taken into account for the different activities to be implemented.

Specific needs identified include the need for capacity building and networking activities as well as mobility programmes to promote local scientists and reinforce the local science scene overseas. The participants also stressed the importance to have activities for increasing the participation of local stakeholders and for raising awareness (notably through knowledge transfer) of local policy makers but also of young people about the importance of biodiversity issues. The need to reinforce cooperation with neighbouring countries was also mentioned, notably as it could be a mean to maximise the mobilisation and success of overseas research teams in calls for research proposals that would go beyond Europe.

In sum, this workshop was a great opportunity to discuss with a wide range of overseas actors and allowed the identification of specific needs and priorities for OCTs and ORs. The outputs of this workshop have been taken into account for the development of the BiodivERsA strategic SRIA.



BiodivERsA as observer during the 4th plenary of the IPBES

The 4th plenary of the Intergovernmental Platform for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES-4) meeting was held in Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) from February 22nd to 29th, 2016, involving 97 states, 7 UN bodies and specialized agencies, 3 convention bodies, 7 intergovernmental organisations, and 42 accredited non-governmental organisations, of which BiodivERsA. Indeed, following its application in 2015, BiodivERsA has been officially approved as an “IPBES Observer”.

BiodivERsA thus took part in the Plenary, joining contact groups to observe the states’ delegates’ negotiations of the reports and assessments, and taking part in the work of the network of IPBES stakeholders during the Plenary. In addition, BiodivERsA participated to the “Stakeholder Days” organised on February 20th and 21st, prior to the plenary meeting, in particular to discuss how to best coordinate IPBES stakeholders in the network and prepare the Stakeholders Statement for the opening plenary of IPBES-4. Participation to the IPBES Stakeholder Days and to the IPBES-4 Plenary was a key step for BiodivERsA in developing its cooperation with the Platform. It was an opportunity (i) to make the best use and promotion of BiodivERsA funded project’s results in thematic, regional and global assessments, as well as (ii) to learn about knowledge gaps and potential needs for future research and new knowledge identified

in the IPBES context, and to best take them into account for future BiodivERsA strategic activities.

Major outputs of this meeting include the adoption of the Summary for Policy Makers (SPM) of the thematic assessment on pollination, pollinators and food production, as well as the SPM of the methodological assessment on scenarios and modelling of biodiversity and ecosystem services. In addition, a number of scoping reports for future assessments were approved, such as the scoping report for the Global assessment, for the thematic assessments on scenarios and modelling of biodiversity and ecosystem services, Invasive Alien Species, and for a methodological assessment on the conceptualization of multiple values of nature and its benefits. Delegates present during this Plenary also convened on future work to be implemented in terms of capacity building, knowledge foundations and indigenous and local knowledge, and decided on the way forward for the catalogue of policy tools and methodologies.

BiodivERsA is now in a good position to interact with the IPBES, feeding its assessment for Europe and Central Asia and its topical assessments by synthesising and brokering key pieces of new knowledge gained by BiodivERsA funded projects.



4th session of the IPBES plenary in Kuala Lumpur

BiodivERsA's latest publications

BiodivERsA/ALCUE-Net brochure and publication: mapping the collaboration between Europe and Latin America/Caribbean for research on biodiversity

BiodivERsA and ALCUE-Net¹ have worked together to map the collaboration between researchers from the European Research Area (ERA) and the Latin America & Caribbean (LAC) regions.

This analysis looks at co-publications involving authors from the ERA and LAC, as well as the evolution over time of the joint publications, the disciplines involved, the environments they cover and their geographical footprint. Two analyses were performed: one for the biodiversity domain² and one for the more specific biodiversity and climate change domain³.

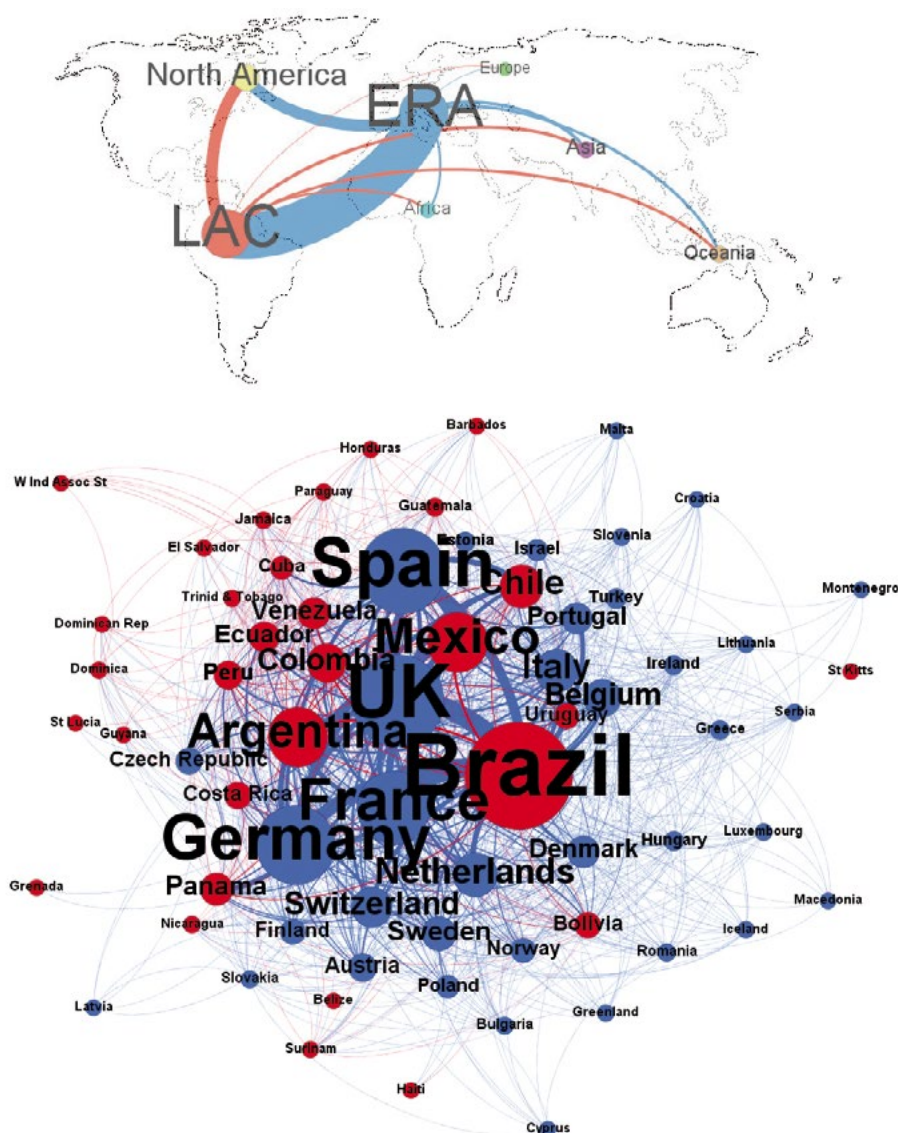


Fig. 1: Cooperation network between countries from the ERA and LAC. Top: Collaboration (i.e. co-publications) of ERA-LAC researchers involving researchers from other continents. Bottom: Visualisation of the ERA-LAC research network in terms of collaboration between countries. Disc size corresponds to the number of countries to which a country is linked, weighted by the number of publications represented by each link.

¹ ALCUE-Net is the Latin America, Caribbean and European Union Network on Research and Innovation

² Dangles O., Loirat J. & Le Roux X. 2016. Mapping the collaboration between Europe and Latin America/Caribbean for research on biodiversity. ALCUE-Net BiodivERsA report. 24 pp.

³ Dangles O., Loirat J., Freour C., Serre, S., Vacher J. & Le Roux X. 2016. Research on biodiversity and climate change at a distance: collaboration networks between Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean. *PLoS ONE* 11(6): e0157441. [Doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0157441](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0157441)

Over the last 10 years, the number of papers on biodiversity involving ERA-LAC collaboration has grown exponentially (from 200 papers in 2000, to over 1100 papers per year in 2013) and has increased faster than for other domains. This is also true for the biodiversity and climate change domain (from 7 papers in 2003 to 110 papers per year in 2013). From the ERA perspective, the number of collaboration with LAC countries was comparable to collaboration with Asia, Africa and Oceania. However the importance of ERA-LAC co-publication tended to increase over the last 10 years, from 2.5% of all ERA co-publications in 2003 to 7% in 2013 for the whole biodiversity domain. From the LAC perspective, the number of co-publications with ERA countries is equally important than the ones with Northern America (ca. 18.7%) and was stable over the last 10 years.

This analysis also led to the identification of the importance of collaboration that exists between the different ERA and LAC countries ([Figure 1](#)), the countries most frequently leading the collaboration and the research organisation mainly involved in the ERA-LAC research collaboration.

This first collaboration between ALCUE-Net and BiodivERsA aimed at giving a better view of the research landscape of ERA-LAC collaboration with the final objective to promote coordinated action to strengthen a bi-regional dialogue on science between ERA and LAC countries. Hopefully, this will pave the way to future joint activities.

The brochure is available on the [BiodivERsA website](#).

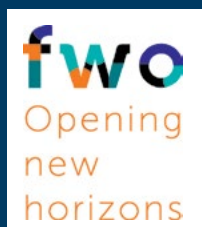
The paper published in PLOS One is [available here](#).



Partners profile

In the context of its third phase (2015-2020), BiodivERsA has extended its network to better cover European biodiversity research both thematically and geographically.

You will discover in this newsletter the profile of two organisations that joined BiodivERsA in early 2015: one located on the mainland (The Research Foundation - Flanders) and one located overseas (the Regional Government of the Canary Islands).



The Research Foundation - Flanders (FWO)

The Research Foundation - Flanders (FWO) is the agency supporting ground-breaking fundamental and strategic research at the level of the universities of the Flemish Community. The FWO also stimulates cooperation between the Flemish universities and other research institutes.

The FWO funds excellent and promising researchers as well as research projects following an inter-university competition, based on an evaluation process that is carried out by national and international experts. The selection follows a bottom-up principle and is conducted on an inter-university basis.

Expert panels are the beating heart of the FWO. They evaluate the applications for fellowships and research projects. There are 30 subject specialist panels and 1 interdisciplinary panel. Most panels are composed of 16 members, the majority of which are not affiliated to a Flemish university. The panels meet twice a year and submit scientific advice to the Senate and the Board of Trustees.

With a budget of about € 320 million, FWO has multiple funding schemes:

- Funding for individual researchers (through pre- and postdoctoral fellowships, bench fees and grants);
- Funding for research teams (through funding of research projects, support to ERA-Net Action, Big

Science, Bilateral agreements, SBO, etc.);

- Supporting mobility, international contacts and collaborations (through travel grants, sabbatical leaves, scientific research communities, organisation of conferences in Belgium, international coordination actions, collaboration agreements, etc.);
- Attracting excellent researchers, active abroad, to Flanders (through the Odysseus and, Pegasus programmes);
- Awarding scientific prizes
- Supporting research Infrastructure

Researchers are provided with every opportunity to deploy their talents in a broad array of disciplines. Additionally, a great importance is placed on the valorisation of scientific breakthroughs, especially for Strategic Basic Research.

Currently FWO is involved in 33 ERA-networks covering a large range of scientific domains. Within this context, FWO is a partner of BiodivERsA3 and participates as a funding partner to the BiodivERsA 2015-2016 co-funded call. This opened the door for Flemish researchers to participate in this call and enabled them to join international consortium of researchers.

For more information, please [click here](#).

The Regional government of the Canary Islands (GOBCAN)

The Canaries archipelago is located in the Central Eastern Atlantic Ocean, and administratively is a Spanish Autonomous Community and a European Outermost Region (RUP), with a total terrestrial area of 7,447 km² and 2,128,647 inhabitants in 2015.

The Canarian Agency for Research, Innovation and Information Society (ACIISI) is the body within the Regional Government of the Canary Islands (GOBCAN) in charge of the competences related to public policies and programs in research, technological development, innovation and society of information. It is also responsible for ensuring the administrative coordination in the assigned matters, in accordance with the guidelines agreed by the corresponding bodies, and between them and other public entities, national and international authorities.

It has functions in the fields of:

- Innovation, research and information to society
- Development of the human innovative capacity, and scientific and technological infrastructures
- Supporting the Commission of Science, Technology and Innovation of the Canary Islands Government.
- Some of the most important innovation activities implemented by ACIISI are the:
- Management of grants and subsidy programs for the development of R&D projects by the Canary Islands system of science, technology and business
- Implementation of activities to support business innovation and technology-based entrepreneurship through innovation centres
- Evaluation of the innovative activity and the penetration of knowledge-based economy in the Canary Islands

The Smart Specialization Strategy of Canaries 2014 - 2020 (RIS3) has set out the current fundamental priorities for the archipelago. The socio-economic valorisation of the RDI, the marine/maritime sciences, the biotechnology and biomedicine associated to biodiversity and tropical diseases, and green/blue growth and sustainability

through a bio-economy based on the Canary Islands biodiversity, are identified among these priorities and echoed BiodivERsA priorities.

Based on the RIS3, GOBCAN supports research and innovation through the ACIISI by means of different funding tools (e.g. calls for better formation of research personnel to do a doctoral thesis, support for researchers' mobility, etc.)

INTERNATIONALISATION

The Canary Islands collaborate with the neighbourhood areas through diverse research programs like the latest MAC-Interreg 2014-2020 territorial cooperation call, which includes Mauritania, Senegal and Cape Verde as well as Madeira, Azores and Canaries islands. This programme addresses key issues for this area, e.g. to potentiate research and technological development, adaptation to climatic change, conservation and protection of the environment and promotion of resources efficiency.

At the European level, GOBCAN/ACIISI was involved in the NetBiome network since its beginning. It first participated to the ERA-Net NetBiome and contributed as a funding institution in the 2010 call, and then in the Net-Biome-CSA.

Since 2015 GOBCAN/ACIISI has also joined the BiodivERsA3 ERA-NET and participated in the 2015 COFUND Call., with the main objective to make the local research institutions competitive in the international funding arena, in order to conserve and manage its biodiversity richness, leveraging the different stakeholders' capacities and knowledge through their involvement in consortiums with mainland European teams and other Overseas' actors.

Within BiodivERsA3, GOBCAN/ACIISI explicitly participates in two tasks dedicated to the integration of the overseas programs and funders into the BiodivERsA database and the identification of overseas specific needs and priorities, and as co-leader of the first task of WP9, dedicated to the launching of additional joint calls.

For more information, please [click here](#) (ES) or [here](#) (EN).

Upcoming activities and events

Regarding the BiodivERsA SRIA

- **June 2016:** adoption of the 1st version of the SRIA by BiodivERsA partners
- **Over the summer 2016:** launching of a broad consultation on the SRIA
- **By the end of 2016:** update of the SRIA according to the outputs of the consultation and adoption of the first version of the SRIA
- **Early 2017:** adoption of an implementation plan

Regarding BiodivERsA 2015 joint call

- **Early June:** final list of projects selected for funding published
- **Between October 2016 and March 2017:** beginning of the funded projects
- **Early 2017:** kick-off meeting of funded projects

Other activities

- **21-22 June 2016:** BiodivERsA partners General Assembly
- **6-7 July 2016:** Meeting with the Belmont Forum
- Update of the BiodivERsA database of research programmes and projects
- Development of a new series of policy briefs

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