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EARTO Comments on the Joint Technology Initiatives in Horizon 2020

In view of the upcoming European Parliament reports on the Joint Technology Initiatives, EARTO members would like to share their experiences regarding the five Joint Technology Initiatives: Cleansky, ECSEL, Fuel Cells & Hydrogen (FCH), IMI and Bio-Based Industries. In our understanding, the JTIs were built up to exploit the potential of EU funding for specific industrial sectors in a better and more efficient way than it could be done through the implementation of regular framework programmes projects. As such, they became important instruments of the EU R&I Policy for the European Commission to align and leverage with national/regional level actions. EARTO members, RTOs, are actively supporting the industry and the European Commission in ensuring that the research performed within the JTIs have an impact and effective returns for industry as well as in defining long-term R&D strategy for such sectors.

Initiative	Comments
General Comments	• Focus on industrial participation is well understood and justified. The JTIs aim at ensuring that the topics for research projects are defined as practical as possible by beneficiaries, the future users and especially by the industry of a specific sector. However in some cases, the industrial focus has undermined scope and limited participation from other type of stakeholders. • Alignment of the financing rules for JTIs with the general H2020 rules is appreciated, implementation of those processes and formalities should be kept straightforward, consistent and transparent. • On the other hand, it is comprehensible that there is a certain need to eventually adapt the rules of participation in specific cases. This is already the case for a number of project types under the FP7 where specific regulations in the Annex III of the grant agreement apply (e.g. "research for the benefit of SMEs"). However, this kind of deviations should be limited to what is absolutely necessary and based on objective and rational reasoning. In that respect the current JTIs were more or less successful. • Ultimately, the rules for participation, and so its attractiveness for the participants should always be at least comparable with the regular projects of the framework programmes. If a negative deviation is to be implemented (e.g. IPRs provisions, finances, etc.), it has to be justified how the disadvantages for the participants will be compensated. We would recommend that for all specific deviations foreseen, the EC would run public consultation and that deviations may only be allowed in very specific cases only when clearly appropriate. • Overlapping between the different JTIs and contractual PPPs should be avoided or minimized.

Cleansky	• The Cleansky initiative has been very successful since it has created a really structuring effect:
	  ○ It has helped speeding up technological breakthrough developments, to bring technologies to a higher level of maturity, and shorten the time to market for the new solutions, offering the possibility to test them even on full scale demonstrators. E.g. creating new methods for analysis and new sensing methods, in the phase of uptake from the industry
	  ○ It is based on the long-term commitment and the technical leadership of the main R&D players (industry and research organizations) of the aeronautical sector, which assures the link between research and potential further application of the results to aircraft
	• Regarding its functioning, this JTI has a simple mode of finances and has a strong accordance with administrative procedures and regulations of FP7 can be observed.
	• However, there are some improvements possible in relation to the relationship with the Topic Managers of the different ITDs (Implementation Technological Demonstrator):
	  ○ The level of information on the ITD and cross-ITD relationship could be improved.
	  ○ Further efforts could be made on communicating on how the research developments are implemented within the ITDs and the results finally obtained results and the relationship of projects with other ITDs, if any.
	  ○ IPR issues between consortium & Topic Managers may need further clarification to avoid unnecessary discussion.
	  ○ Topic (call) information could be further disseminated to avoid that the underestimation of the proposal's budget leading to problems during the project execution.

ECSEL	• ECSEL would need particular attention to fit in the very streamlined market of microelectronics (where Asia excels) and Smart Systems market (more fragmented), with particular attention to manufacturing. Here two main type of platforms could support this:
	  ○ One more industrial oriented – streamlined platform,
	  ○ One with research providers to allow new disruptive ideas to emerge.
	• On the JTI functioning, the following points were noted:
	  ○ With its financial mode, it is crucial that the national public administrations of each country allocates sufficient national funds for the successful implementation of the selected priorities.
	  ○ Improvements could be made to further balance the participation of the Research, Education and Industry stakeholders.

Fuel Cells & Hydrogen	• The topics considered are quite closed to Demonstration (high Technology Readiness Levels), space could be made for research on lower TRLs scale as already noted in the draft Energy and LEIT Work Programmes. • The unreliable regulation on funding rates (Article 15.3 of the FCH-Statutes) has negative consequences as it usually leads to a more or less strong downward adjustment of the funding rate after the evaluation procedure. Consequently, there is no reliable basis for calculations and planning when a proposal is submitted by participants which brings issues during the project implementation phase.

IMI	• EARTO considers IMI as least suitable model for future JTIs, particularly because of the way it was set up and its administrative handling. Negotiations at the start based on regulations which were not compatible with FP7 caused tremendous efforts. Results of the negotiations did not take into account the interests of all participants. A continuation of IMI should implement clear modifications in the criticized areas:
	  ○ IMI was implemented with strong deviations from FP7 rules, especially on IPR (see EARTO position paper on this issue). Until today there is no convincing explanation for many of these changes.
	  ○ A large part of the participants experienced during the set-up phase of the IMI regulation, the IMI governance and e.g, calculation of in-kind-contributions of industry partners, a lack of transparency.
	  ○ Despite the restriction in the Council regulation, the calls topics published showed a trend from pre-competitive research to competitive research topics. This as well is cause for concern.
	  ○ The structure is very inflexible and the access to participation unclear: Further communication efforts would be necessary to allow various interlocutors to discuss the R&I programme.
	• However, EARTO members welcomed the change on the Initiative's funding model for overhead costs to include a reimbursement based on actual costs (See EARTO position paper from 2011).

Bio-Based Industries	• The coexistence of the JTI on Bio-Based Industries with the activity "Sustainable Bio-Based Industries" under Societal Challenge 2 of Horizon 2020 will have to be addressed to ensure that calls address the main challenges identified in the Specific Programme and in JTI's strategic research agenda without overlaps and duplication. • In addition, possible overlaps with the PPP SPIRE should be avoided when addressing the different technology fields.