

Mr. Alan Seatter  
Deputy Director General  
European Commission  
Environment DG  
B - 1049 Brussels

February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2012

### Concerns : EIP-Water Efficiency

Dear Mr. Seatter,

In conclusion of the second stakeholder consultation for the candidate European Innovation Partnership on Water, the Resource Efficiency Alliance, would like to offer the following comments.

1. The EIP Water Mandate should be linked with the green growth in the context of poverty eradication agenda. Its mandate should reflect the need of a platform as the EIP to facilitate innovation in the water value chain management, including new types of public-business-civil society partnerships, towards *a circular economy and good life for all*.

In this respect, we don't think that the EIP Water should be a copy and paste of the EIP on *Active and Healthy Ageing* designed to bridge the 'death valley' gap for technologies and to disappear in five year times. Indeed, the focus on innovation is moving from the enterprise to transnational level. Innovation is more than a process; it is an ecosystem with multiple stakeholders that enables innovation to thrive. The EIP on Water should be the '*innovation ecosystems 2.0*' we need.

The EIP Water should have a mandate till 2020 when an assessment should be done before deciding if the initiative should be dissolved or receive a new mission.

The EIP Water should reflect the innovations deriving from the *transformation agenda* related to systemic changes, new business models addressing i.a. the nexus water-food-energy, sustainable consumption of water, promotion of non-conventional water resources in conjunction also to a new regulatory framework

**The Resource Efficiency Alliance c/o European Partners for the Environment**

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Members: *European Partners for the Environment (EPE), European Water Partnership (EWP), the European Committee of Environmental Technology Suppliers Associations (EUCESTA), the Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (MIO-ECSDE)*

recognizing water as a common good, market pricing and market actors accountability as well as the development of new technologies.

2. The Steering Committee, in its composition itself, should demonstrate innovative approaches.

The Committee should reflect the 'water value chain', the demand side as well as the supply side. Regarding the 'demand side', Cities and Citizens group active on sustainable consumption millennium goals should be involved.

The Committee should reflect a 'global perspective' by having representatives of Countries which have a clear green growth agenda and are looking for co-operation with Europe in the field of water, as China<sup>1</sup> and Morocco.

3. The Task Force should focus the efforts i.a. on four issues which all related to one single question : which '*systemic innovation*' are needed and could be provided by the EIP Water to be more '*efficient*' in the three fields suggested by the Commission (urban, rural, industry) ?

How can the public and private innovation flows be more efficient ? A SWOT (strength, weaknesses, opportunities and trends) analysis should be the starting point. EWP, in charge of INNOWATER, is offering its support.

How to address societal innovation and water consumption ?

How to engineer new financial partnerships to be more efficient ? EUWI, GWP and OECD could be of assistance.

How to be more efficient at Global level ? EUCETSA offers to contribute. Networks having programs funded by EuropeAid in third Countries as SHIFT-Asia, ICLEI and GWP should also be consulted.

4. Innovation Site/Partnership. Regional Platforms. The EIP should i.a. have a regional platform to work in close co-operation with the existing initiatives and projects such as the Horizon 2020 for the de-pollution of the Mediterranean Sea and the Sustainable Water Integrated Management (SWIM) in the Mediterranean. MIO- ECSDE is offering to contribute

As the Commission states : *The innovation sites are (large scale) projects, focused on finding solutions for indentified challenges by putting into practice the multidisciplinary approach of bringing together actors from technological, financial, organizational and management perspectives (partnering and symbiosis), and*

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<sup>1</sup> We should keep in mind that china has since twenty years on Advisory Council on Sustainable Development with non Chinese, as the European Commission representative, as Members.

*testing the solutions. Outcomes and lessons learned in the innovation sites will help designing demand-driven measures capable of boosting innovation in water management and to identify and address technological, economic and regulatory barriers.*

#### 5. Innovation Partnership. China-EU

This is highly needed as far as Europeans partnerships initiatives and business development outside the EU. China here is suggested as a pilot. Why ?

- European Companies and Institutions are literally “queuing up” in Chinese Ministries with ironical comments of Chinese officials
- There is no co-ordination between Member States Embassies on issue as water efficiency and EU-China Co-operation

As Europe competitiveness on global market depends on a much stronger co-ordination of the value chain, the Innovation Site ‘*Water Efficiency Partnership with China*’ would be composed of European Companies, Ministries, Research Institutes, Public and Private Financial Institutions, EU Agencies, Cities networks.

The Innovation Site ‘*Water Efficiency Partnership with China*’ should have a platform based in Brussels and Beijing.

The EU Diplomatic services in China should have an Innovation Site ‘*Water Efficiency Partnership with China*’ desk officer.

In designing the *Water Efficiency Partnership with China* the Commission should :

- Draw conclusions, from a methodological point of view deriving from the Horizon 2020 for the de-pollution of the Mediterranean Sea initiative.
- Review initiatives funded in China on Water efficiency by the EU under EuropeAid and the Member States.

Best regards,



Raymond Van Ermen.

cc. William Neale, Cabinet Commissioner Potočník.

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