

JOINT COMMUNIQUE

VIIIth Joint Steering Committee Meeting of the Bilateral Agreement on Science and Technology between the European Union and Brazil

November 29th 2017

The eighth meeting of the EU-Brazil Joint Steering Committee on Scientific and Technological (S&T) Cooperation was hosted by the European Commission in Brussels on 29 November 2017.

The Brazilian delegation was led by H.E. Benedicto Fonseca Filho, Director of the Department of Science & Technology of the Brazilian Minister of Foreign Affairs. It included representatives from the Ministry for Science, Technology, Innovation and Communication (MCTIC), the Brazilian National Development Bank (BNDES), the National Research Council (CNPq), the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation (FIOCRUZ), the National Institute for Aeronautics (ITA), the Funding Agency for Studies and Projects (FINEP), the National Council of State Funding Agencies (CONFAP), the National Centre for Monitoring and Warnings of Natural Disasters (CEMADEN) and the São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP).

The European delegation was led by Maria Cristina Russo, Director for International Cooperation of the Directorate General for Research and Innovation of the European Commission and included representatives from the European External Action Service, the European Commission Directorates General for Research and Innovation; Communications Networks, Content and Technology; Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs; and Education, Youth, Sports and Culture, the Joint Research Centre (JRC) and the European Research Council (ERC).

The meeting marked the 10th anniversary of the entry into force of the Science & Technology (S&T) Agreement between the EU and Brazil that both parties have agreed to renew for five more years, considering the good results achieved and the progress made.

It was acknowledged that the EU Research & Innovation (R&I) Framework Programme, Horizon 2020, is a central vehicle for cooperation and both sides must strive to optimize framework conditions for cooperation. In this regard, the ongoing co-funding mechanism established by eight State Funding Agencies with the support of the CONFAP was praised as well as the good results presented by FAPESP.

The sides will continue to work and look at ways to improve the current co-funding mechanism and how to complement it, by enhancing cooperation opportunities also with the federal funding Agencies, CNPq and FINEP, with the support of the MCTIC. In this sense, both sides agree to pursue discussions aiming at an administrative arrangement involving all relevant actors, in order to further support EU-Brazil cooperation in STI.

Both parties welcomed the willingness of the Brazilian National Development Bank (BNDES) to start a dialogue with the European Commission in areas of mutual strategic interest.

Both sides also agreed on the importance of promoting and disseminating the existing opportunities for cooperation throughout the European and Brazilian research community and will prepare a rolling calendar of common activities.

The meeting also confirmed the engagement of both sides to support researchers' international mobility. In this regard, the increasing Brazilian participation in Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions was welcomed. In addition, both sides noted the positive progress of the implementing arrangement facilitating Brazilian researchers to join teams of European Research Council grantees. Also, the Brazilian side expressed its interest in assessing possible joint initiatives in terms of trilateral academic mobility cooperation.

The flagship initiatives published in the Horizon 2020 Work Programme 2018-2020 targeting cooperation with Brazil were positively acknowledged. Both sides agreed to continue to join forces to tackle global challenges, increase the impact of research and promote new breakthroughs in the following key areas:

- Marine Research: Both sides will continue the good work on marine research and innovation, stressing the need to implement and support the European Union-Brazil-South Africa Atlantic Ocean Research and Innovation Cooperation, as launched by the Belém Statement. The All Atlantic Ocean Research Alliance Flagship was welcomed as another concrete opportunity to continue the already fruitful collaboration of the marine scientific communities. In this sense, the Brazilian Delegation welcomed the flexibility displayed by the European Commission concerning marine research collaboration in the framework of Horizon 2020. Both sides also agreed to set off the implementation process in spring 2018 with the first plenary meeting of the EU-Brazil-South Africa Atlantic Ocean Research and Innovation Cooperation to be held in Brazil.

- Health: The importance of stepping up cooperation on health research, including through the international flagship topic on non-communicable diseases targeting CELAC countries was highlighted. The possibility to start a dialogue on neurosciences was also discussed and Brazil committed to appoint an interlocutor for that dialogue, while cohort studies and big data were presented as areas to be further explored. The Brazilian involvement in the three ongoing projects addressing research on Zika and the support given by the Global Research Collaboration for Infectious Disease Preparedness (GloPID-R) and Global Alliance for Chronic Diseases (GACD) were commended. Both sides also welcomed the appointment of representatives of FIOCRUZ as Brazilian National Contact Points of Horizon 2020 for health issues.

- Transport/Aviation: Both sides agreed to enhance the research policy dialogue on transport, in particular aviation, bringing the existing cooperation to a higher level. In this sense, the four flagship initiatives in transport were welcomed as concrete opportunities for cooperation.

- Nanotechnology will continue to be a key priority area for cooperation, in particular nanosafety. In this sense, the parties agreed to strongly encourage EU -Brazil cooperation under the nanosafety flagship of Horizon 2020. New areas, such as regulatory science for medical technological products will also be explored.

- Sustainable urbanisation: The good results of the projects on nature based solutions for resilient cities under the EU-Brazil Sector Dialogue Facility were also praised and it was agreed to continue the joint work in this area. In this sense, the active Brazilian involvement in the EU-CELAC task force on sustainable urban development was encouraged.

- Energy: both parties agreed that the successful implementation of the on-going coordinated call on advanced biofuels is of paramount importance to the EU-Brazil bilateral cooperation. This is also an important contribution to the EU-Brazil collaboration under the global initiative Mission Innovation, and in particular to its Innovation Challenge "Sustainable biofuels".

- Information and communications technologies: Both sides welcomed the ongoing coordinated calls on information and communication technologies and reaffirmed their interest in exploring prospects for future cooperation in that area in the context of the tenth meeting of the dialogue on Information Society to be held in Brasília on 5-7 December 2017.

- Other priority areas: Both sides welcomed continuous collaboration in the field of fusion energy research under the EURATOM agreement as well as successful collaboration with the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission. New policy dialogues in space research on satellite navigation (Galileo) and Earth observation (Copernicus) and research infrastructures will be explored, as well as in environmental research, where several common activities are in place, including in the context of Joint Programming Initiatives or multi-lateral cooperation, such as the Belmont Forum or GEO.

Both sides took note of recent achievements such as the signature of the Implementing Arrangement between the European Commission and CONFAP allowing for Brazilian researchers to temporarily join research teams funded by the European Research Council, as well as the signature of the Belem Statement on Atlantic Ocean Research and Innovation between the EU, Brazil and South Africa. The cooperation between the Joint Research Centre, the Brazilian Ministry of National Integration and the Brazilian Ministry of Science, Technology, Innovation and Communication on smart specialisation was also underlined as a successful and promising area of bilateral cooperation.

The two sides welcomed the prominent role attributed to S&T cooperation in the latest EU-Brazil Joint Committee meeting that took place in Brussels in September 2017. This is seen as a sign of the strong commitment that the EU and Brazil have towards cooperation in science, research and innovation, being instrumental for smart and sustainable development.

Finally, both sides agreed to continue to work closely in an open and constant dialogue on all priority areas and look forward to the next Joint Steering Committee meeting that will take place in Brazil.