



The Agricultural Research for Development (ARD)
Dimension of the European Research Area (ERA)

**Task 4.1:
Identification of consolidated mechanisms for
resource allocation for ARD sub-programmes.**

**Deliverable D.4.1 “A position paper on consolidated mechanisms
for resource allocation for ARD sub-programmes”.**

**Final version
26.08.2008**

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Abbreviations

ARD	Agricultural Research for Development
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
DAC	Development Assistance Committee, a sub-organisation of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), responsible for development issues and development policies
DANIDA	The Danish International Development Assistance
EC	European Commission
ERA	European Research Area
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
SC	Steering Committee
WP	Work Package

Executive Summary

The ERA ARD project aims to implement **Transnational Joint Research Activities** in order to contribute to the reduction of fragmentation of research in the partner countries etc in line with objectives of the ERA ARD project. The area of “**Food and Energy**” has been selected by the Steering Committee as the first ARD Sub-programme.

A prerequisite for launching transnational research activities is to get a better understanding of the **resource allocation mechanisms** put in place by each partner to support its ARD programme.

The Task Manager and Work Package Leader (DK) led a review of the different mechanisms in the participating countries, in order to improve understanding of resource allocation mechanisms, in particular the funding mechanisms and the legal and administrative constraints, which can limit the implementation of jointly funded activities. The aim was to identify possible procedures for consolidated resource allocation mechanisms for future transnational research activities.

A questionnaire supported by a request for supplementary information and a period of electronic consultation resulted in the collection of a considerable amount of data from the ERA ARD Consortium Member countries.

Whilst all partners have replied, 14 replies cannot be considered as a very solid data set. However, clearly a lot of relevant and important information was included in the answers. The process of collecting information and the ensuing discussion at the workshop and electronic consultations have been very important in getting a better understanding of the resource allocation mechanisms as practiced in the ERA ARD Consortium Member countries.

A deeper and more tangible understanding was really achieved during the phase of developing call documents including the Call Text, the Call Frameworks & Principles, the Applicant's Guidelines and others.

The main conclusions from the review include information that no ERA ARD Net countries have ARD programmes addressing Food & Energy and surprisingly few have actual ARD strategies.

The review confirmed that **Bioenergy is a relevant topic** for a single call for transnational research activities aiming at **partnerships between ERA ARD Consortium members and partners from countries on the “DAC List of ODA Recipients”**.

The projects should have a **maximum of 36 months**. The **1 stage application** should be written in **English** and **submitted electronically**.

Funding will be based on the so-called **virtual common pot model** and embedded in **national rules and regulations** of the participating countries. A concern was expressed that **administrative costs** must be covered.

A **consortium agreement** should be a pre-requisite for approval of project proposals and there was complete agreement that a **dissemination strategy** must be an integral part of each proposal.

1. Background

The European Research Area (ERA) has as its core message the need to overcome the traditional fragmentation of research efforts in the EU through better coordination and cooperation. In this regard, the Sixth Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP6) introduced a specific programme "Integrating and Strengthening the European Research Area" from which the ERA-NET Scheme is financed.

The ERA-NET Scheme is about the coordination and cooperation of national and regional programmes and as such, it aims at the national and regional programme makers and managers. These are, in most countries, either working in the Ministries or working in national funding agencies, which implement programmes on behalf of their governments.

The ERA-NET on **Agricultural Research for Development** entitled **ERA-ARD** was launched in April 2005 and mobilises 14 European countries including all the major European contributors to ARD.

There are **two strategic objectives** of the ERA-ARD project:

- By improving synergies between the European national ARD programmes, increase the effectiveness and efficiency of European research planning, funding and implementation to fight poverty and hunger and to support a more rapid and sustainable development in the poorest countries in the world.
- By improved cooperation and coordination of national ARD programmes, strengthen Europe's contribution to, and impact on, regional and global ARD systems.

The overall objectives of the project will be achieved through **5 Work Packages** (WP). Each WP is divided into tasks. A WP Leader will manage each WP and task managers each task.

WP1: Systematic exchange of information and best practices (NL)

WP2: Strategic activities (CH)

WP3: Implementation of joint activities (AU)

WP4: Transnational research activities (DK)

WP5: Project coordination and management (CIRAD)

2. Introduction

The ERA ARD project aims to implement **Transnational Joint Research Activities** in order to contribute to the reduction of fragmentation of research in the partner countries etc in line with objectives of the ERA ARD project. The area of “**Food and Energy**” has been selected by the project Steering Committee as the first ARD Sub-programme.

The objectives of Work Package 4 are:

- (i) To develop tools and mechanisms to implement joint transnational ARD programmes.
- (ii) To implement transnational activities for one ARD sub-programme.

WP 4 is divided into 3 tasks:

- 4.1 Review of funding mechanisms (DK)
- 4.2 Implement transnational activities for one selected ARD sub-programme (DK)
- 4.3 Joint monitoring and evaluation of sub-programme (CH)

A prerequisite for launching transnational research activities is to get a better understanding of the **resource allocation mechanisms** put in place by each partner to support its ARD programme.

The Task Manager and Work Package Leader (DK) led a review of the different mechanisms in the participating countries, in order to improve understanding of resource allocation mechanisms, in particular the funding mechanisms and the legal and administrative constraints, which can limit the implementation of jointly funded activities. The aim was to identify possible procedures for consolidated resource allocation mechanisms for future transnational research activities.

An early draft of this report provided an input to workshop 5 held in Copenhagen, Denmark on 12th September 2007 and used inputs from responses to a questionnaire answered by all consortium partners and follow-up electronic communication, as well as information from other tasks completed during the ERA ARD project and also information from other ERA nets and also the EC.

The report is now presented as Deliverable **D.4.1 “A position paper on consolidated mechanisms for resource allocation for ARD sub-programmes”**.

After sections covering the background (Chapter 1) for the report and this introduction (Chapter 2), there is a brief description of the methodology used (Chapter 3) followed by a presentation of the results of the questionnaire (Chapter 4). The task manager has drawn some conclusions (Chapter 5) and recommendations (chapter 6).

3. Methodology

The Task Manager developed a draft questionnaire and circulated it to several project participants requesting comments for improvements. Project colleagues provided valuable comments. After improvements were made the questionnaire was distributed to country representatives in the 14 consortium member states.

Replies were received over quite a lengthy period of time – end of February to beginning of June 2007 - but resulted in **all** 14 consortium member states providing completed questionnaires.

The questionnaire, found as an annex to this report, was divided into three main sections:

- A. Program development phase (including development of new programs)
- B. The *project* application phase including procedures for calls, evaluation of application etc.
- C. Administrative procedures related to *program and project* management and administration

The data was keyed into a simple excel spreadsheet. There are two types of questions: firstly the type requiring a simple yes or no or a cross, indicating a positive response to a list of possibilities and a second type requiring text or names. The first is clearly easier to analyse and report. The information in the text answers is of very varied detail and more difficult to summarise. However, an attempt has been made to provide a useful summary of the information.

Food and Energy has been termed a *sub-program* in the ERA ARD project. This terminology has created uncertainty, as some countries do not have thematic programs or sub-programs. In the questionnaire the term “ARD program” has been used and “ARD – Food & Energy” is used to denote Food and Energy activities within ARD. It is hoped that mechanisms of cooperation are found that extend beyond the lifetime of the ERA ARD project. Therefore, calls should be understood to be within the lifetime of a program or sub-program not just the ERA ARD project. These points were explained in the instructions to the questionnaire.

Some information gathered during activities under tasks 1.2 and 1.3 of the ERA ARD project is relevant to this review and has been included where relevant.

A request for “Supplementary information” was sent to ERA ARD Consortium Members. Four questions were asked regarding:

- The use of the Virtual Common Pot as a funding mechanism for the first call
- The use of funds to cover costs from Southern partners
- Constraints in terms of specific topics to be addressed in the first call

- Necessity of a Letter of Intent or Memorandum of Understanding to be signed at an early stage by the funders

Again response was slow, possibly indicating a great deal of uncertainty of transnational research funding especially when targeting Southern countries.

The process of collecting information and the ensuing discussion at the workshop and electronic consultations have been very important to getting a better understanding of the resource allocation mechanisms as practiced in the ERA ARD Consortium Member countries. However, a deeper and more tangible understanding was really achieved during the phase of developing call documents including the Call Text, the Call Frameworks & Principles, the Applicant's Guidelines and others.

4. Results

This chapter includes a presentation of the information provided in the answers to the questionnaire by the consortium members. Whilst all partners have replied, 14 replies cannot be considered as a very solid data set. However, clearly a lot of relevant and important information was included in the answers.

The task manager has allowed himself certain latitude for interpretation of some answers. For example some countries have answered that they do not have specific ARD programmes. However, some have then answered subsequent questions as being not applicable whilst some have just not answered. In this case interpretation is that there are no pre-implementation studies.

The degree of detail provided varies considerably from country to country. The information in the text answers has been summarised or listed where relevant.

Responses to the questionnaire that have included countries with economies in transition have been accepted ensuring a broad understanding of geofocus. This accommodates the interpretation of developing countries often practiced in new EU countries. Several countries have agreements with specific countries.

Responses from Italy only relate to CGIAR support.

Responses from NL are very limited as their assumption is that there will be no Food & Energy Programme.

The following is a presentation of some of the results following the three sections in the questionnaire, but clustering some of the answers in related aspects. In chapter 5 an attempt is made to draw some conclusions.

A. Program development phase (including development of new programs)

Thematic programs (A 1-3)

It would appear from the 14 answers for questions related to thematic programs that whilst 8 countries have thematic programs, some countries answering that they have no thematic program do have programs addressing research rather than specifically agricultural research. No countries have ARD programs addressing Food & Energy specifically. Most countries have programs aimed at general capacity development, mobility of scientists, support to networks and the like as well as research projects. The countries providing support to the CG system consider this support to be a program. The new EU countries either have very small programs (LT) or have projects rather than programs (Hu), as they do not have such a large volume of ARD as yet. UK provides some support to organisations outside the UK e.g. International Foundation for Science and FARA (e.g. the new SCARDA program).

Strategies (A4-5)

Only 4 of the 14 countries answered that they have an ARD strategy (Be, ES, Fr, UK). However, some countries have program strategies and some strategies are embedded in research strategies rather than an agricultural strategy as such i.e. they are at a higher level of aggregation. Both the Belgian and Spanish strategies relate to CGIAR support.

Not surprisingly, 2 of the larger countries answered that they have a strategy related to ARD - Food & Energy (De and Fr). As these countries also answered that they do NOT have Food & Energy programs it must be assumed that the strategies foresee a program being developed. CIRAD has indeed a special unit called "Biomass and Energy". The unit's aim is to respond to energy supply difficulties in developing countries by improving procedures tailored to individual situations and to local biomass availability, and by analysing the conditions for their use in tropical environments. Its research covers thermo-chemical biomass processing technologies for fuel production, decentralized electricity generation and biofuel production, keeping a watchful eye on the possible impact of those techniques on the natural environment. http://www.cirad.fr/ur/biomasse_energie

Biomass and Bio-fuel is on the agenda of BMZ in Germany to evaluate the impact of agriculture in developing countries.

It would appear that the focus of support is changing and ARD is part of a broader concept for support in many countries so that the "A" is disappearing e.g. UK/DFID's support to "Growth and Livelihoods" which covers economic growth, agricultural productivity, transport and energy systems. DFID are running a consultation process aiming at formulating a new research strategy rather than a strategy for Agricultural research for development.

It would be useful if each country produced a paper describing the role of research in development cooperation.

Program development (A7-16)

In general most countries use general project cycles phases. Ideas for new programs often come from ministries' own advisors. A concept note may be prepared, feasibility studies possibly undertaken; a full proposal would then be made before either contract negotiations in some form possibly after a tendering procedure. Some countries mention a bottom up approach to program formulation, but the extent is somewhat unclear and not very precise.

Although the time needed for program development varies, in general about 1 year is cited as the time needed although longer for larger programs

Not all countries carry out pre-implementation studies for ARD in general although several answer no as they have no ARD program as such. If there is a Pre-Implementation study it is carried out by an external body. CIRAD's Biomass and Energy Centre have carried out a Pre-Implementation study on Food and Energy.

In general program development must adhere to relevant national strategies for development assistance or cooperation.

Some countries have a geofocus e.g. LT focuses on Ukraine, Hu on Vietnam and Dk on 15 partner countries. Others focus on CG target countries e.g. Be.

The UK invests 90% of funds for LDCs in 25 target countries each with a specific bilateral agreement.

Rules of tendering must be respected i.e. project and programs over 150.000 euro must be sent out to tender.

When asked to respond to the degree of (political) influence (strong, weak or absent) on the design phase answers indicate that Ministries have the strongest influence but scientists and NGOs also had a considerable influence.

It is usually staff from a Ministry who writes ARD program texts, but ad hoc working groups often back them up and may include scientists or other specialists.

The final decision about funding is usually political in the end after several steps including experts providing comments to proposals. In principle it is often a minister or head of DG, Agency or the like who makes the final decision. This may depend on the size of the programme.

Implementation of a transnational call (A17-19)

When asked to respond to their perception of how easy or difficult it would be to implement a transnational call using responses were divided regarding a virtual common pot (i.e. when funding money will not cross the border of countries and national funding will be effectively earmarked for national activities and participants.). However, all respondents foresee difficulties in using a real common pot for Transnational calls for Food & Energy. A barrier could be the problem of earmarking funding and requirements for tendering.

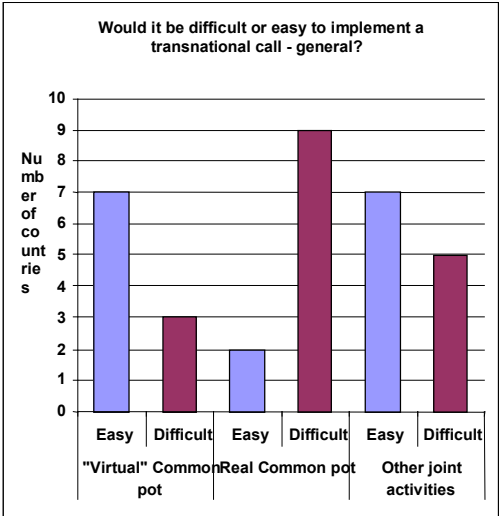


Figure 1 Responses to Question A17

Respondents indicated that further requirements for implementation of an ARD – Food & Energy call would mainly be covered by the next steps in the process. This would especially be the need for a decision at national level that Food and Energy is a topic to be supported. A clear definition of the topics to be addressed is necessary including aims and objectives of the call etc. In addition, attention was brought to the need for partner agreements.

Barriers for cooperation (A20-22)

When asked what the main barriers between European partners might be the respondents showed considerable caution and indicated that legal constraints, no financial flexibility, different views on ownership, lack of financial resources and limited administrative capacity in the smaller member countries are likely to provide constraints. There may also be difficulty in aligning interests of the larger and the smaller EU countries to avoid large country dominance.

There is a general concern about the degree to which the topics identified are demand driven and also the balance between the Northern and Southern interests in Food and Energy.

The barrier for cooperation within the specific area of Food and Energy is the fact that countries do not have specific ARD related Food and Energy programs. In addition, there are very few experts on Food and Energy in relation to ARD. This may provide interesting challenges for cross-sectorial collaboration.

Collaboration with other countries (A6, 11, 23-24)

In general there is cooperation between various ministries within each country although it is mentioned that this could be strengthened. There is also a degree of cooperation with other European countries mainly in terms of information about funding from other EU organisations e.g. EU Framework Programs. Lithuania and Ukraine publish calls simultaneously for the Lithuanian State Program on Cooperation with Ukraine.

The UK tries to bring added value to their programs by running internal consultations with regional specialists, e.g. DFID's Africa Regional Team in order to bring added value.

There were only a few responses to the question of which countries in Europe would be most attractive to cooperate with on activities within ARD – Food & Energy, as it would depend on the specific topic.

Austria might be attractive for SI

Denmark might be attractive for SI

Switzerland might be attractive for AU

France might be attractive for BE, HU, LT, SI

Germany might be attractive for AU, BE, HU, LT, SI

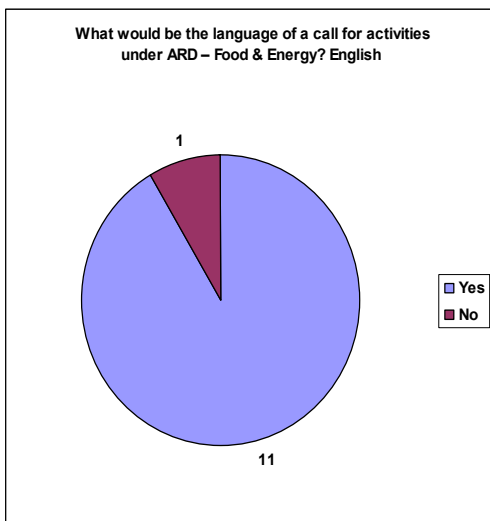
UK might be attractive for BE, HU, LT

Equally there were only a few responses to the question of the most attractive partners outside Europe. There were however, several countries interested in countries with the so-called emerging economies – China, Brazil and India.

B. The *project* application phase including procedures for calls, evaluation of application etc.

Calls + project preparation + submission (B.1-3, B5, B12)

Most answers indicated that after identification of the topics a proposal stage followed by peer review and evaluation leading up to approval and initiation should be used. A few answers indicate that a pre-proposal should be used as part of a two-stage proposal process. Likewise a few answers indicate that they would rather use a one-stage proposal process as this saves time.



The call language is most often English (11 out of 12 responses). However, CH respects French and German as call languages. Several countries (CH, DE, FR) accept French or Spanish if targeting countries using these languages. In Slovenia the call must also be in Slovenian.

The same is the case for project applications.

Figure 2 Responses to Question B2

In three countries (CH, DE, DK) there are some funds available for project preparation especially for larger projects (CH, DK).

The media for submission of proposals depends a little on the programme. However, out of 12 responses 7 replied that an electronic submission is obligatory and 9 answered that a paper submission is obligatory.

There are legal constraints for electronic submissions in 3 countries (Be, LT, SI), especially if proposals contain information of commercial interest (LT).

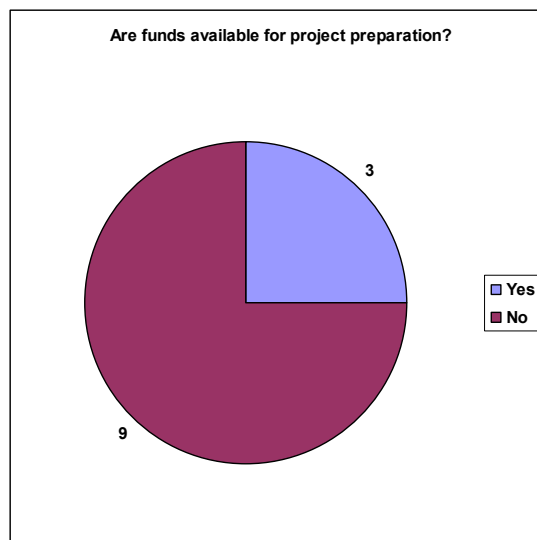


Figure 3 Responses to Question B2

Interest in types of project activity + Eligibility (B4 + B13)

Partners were asked what degree of interest (considerable/limited/absent) they have for certain types of project activity.

In general the greatest interest was for supporting research projects as well as mobility of European or Southern scientists. Interest for support to projects addressing infrastructure or purchase of equipment was very limited.

In general both universities and research institutions are eligibility for participation in a joint call. Industry may also be eligible (DK), but only if financial contribution is provided from their side.

Farmers' organisations and NGOs were also named as possibly being eligible.

Evaluation (B6-11)

Normally the funding agencies and ministries responsible for the funding are also responsible for evaluation, but they may engage outside experts. Of the 13 responses only Hun and IT do not make use of external experts.

Selection of evaluators is usually based on thematic experience and scientific excellence. The applicants may suggest Peer reviewers. If they are found not to be acceptable the ministries will find others.

The names of the evaluators are publicly known only in DK and IT.

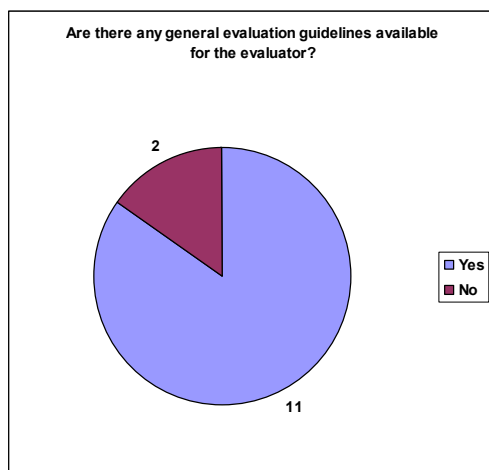


Figure 4 Responses to Question B9

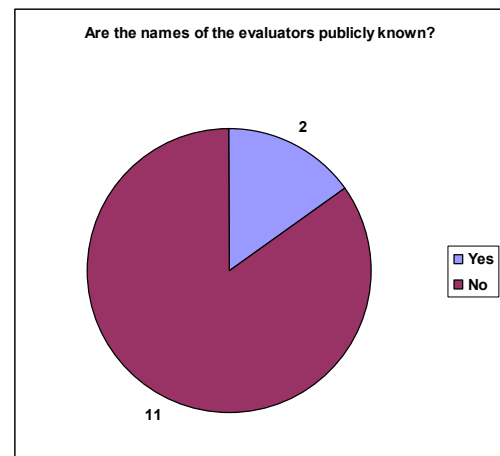


Figure 5 Responses to Question B8

In 11 of 13 responses the partners indicated that general evaluation guidelines are available. In UK there are no general guidelines available, but rather guidelines specific to a certain call.

In general evaluation criteria are available (11 out of 13 answers). Some of the answers provide useful links.

C. Administrative procedures related to *program and project* management and administration

Responsible Office (C1 + C10)

Management of Food and Energy activities will in general be the responsibility of one of the agencies or offices within the ministry or ministries responsible for ARD. However, this will depend on the exact programme.

The office responsible for monitoring, reviewing and evaluation is usually one that is embedded in the ministries funding the programme/projects. In some cases use of external evaluators is made. Alignment of Monitoring and evaluation methods between partners must be developed when embarking on transnational activities.

The frequency of monitoring, reviewing and evaluation would depend on the duration of the programme or project and which ministry provides funding. Monitoring is more likely to be once a year, whereas a review would be carried out mid-term. Evaluation is likely to be after the project. However, answers to this question demonstrate a need to be very clear what is meant by these project-cycle terms. A description and the frequency should be described in a consortium agreement.

Legislative and administrative constraints (C2-4)

It may be assumed that there are certain legislative or administrative constraints to the implementation of transnational activities.

Partners were asked if there is any legislation against payments of non-residents. Out of 13 replies, 3 countries (DE, Hu, LT) replied that there are. However, in Hungary there appears to be a difference between 2 ministries. In Denmark there is a stipulation that the main applicant must be from DK.

In general, however, there were very few comments indicating general legal and administrative constraints, as this would have to be considered once call details etc are known.

Framework for program (C5-9)

Most research providers have to cover some or all of their administrative costs and costs of using facilities. In 7 of 10 cases these are reported to be covered by an overhead on project budgets. However, this is not the case in HU, LT and SI.

According to several replies, the duration of Food and Energy activities is likely to be about 36 months. Whether this is due to this figure being the often-used figure for research projects or if it is a figure that is reasonable for such projects is unclear. Belgium indicated that a 4-5 year cycle is necessary for scientific quality and CH indicated that more could be possible.

Only 8 countries replied when asked about the frequency of calls for Food and Energy. Germany could foresee several possibilities. There was no clear picture as the answers varied from continuous without deadlines (De) to there being only 1 call in 3 countries Au, Fr, Sl. Four countries indicated once a year (Be, De, Es, PL).

It appeared difficult to get information about a total national budget for Food and Energy until more details are available. Nevertheless, Be indicated 200.000-300.000 euro per year but this would relate to the frequency of calls (see above). France, however, indicated that an amount of 2 m. euro would be available.

6 countries (Au, Be, Es, Hu, Lt, PL) indicated that a Consortium Agreement is a prerequisite for implementation.

There was complete agreement that project applications should include a dissemination strategy. This implies that this requirement should be included clearly in the call. A specific budget line could be used for dissemination.

Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) is addressed in most countries legislation. However, there may be a need for harmonisation for transnational activities.

Supplementary Information

Four of the 14 ERA ARD Consortium Members did not reply to the request for supplementary information even after reminder.

Re.: The use of the Virtual Common Pot as a funding mechanism for the first call
All respondents replied positively to the idea of a virtual common pot.

Re.: The use of funds to cover costs from Southern partners

All respondents expressed willingness to support scientist from their own countries, three expressed willingness to support countries from other European countries and four to support scientist form Southern countries.

However, at a later stage when asked to confirm the willingness to support other European countries, none replied positively and only France and Switzerland confirmed willingness to support scientists form Southern counties. At the time of writing this report final decisions are awaiting fro a couple of countries.

Re.: Constraints in terms of specific topics to be addressed in the first call

The responses did not indicate constraints but rather suggestions to be included in the topics to be addressed by the Call.

Re.: Necessity of a Letter of Intent or Memorandum of Understanding to be signed at an early stage by the funders

No clear picture emerged form response to this question – some prefer an early Letter of Internet others did not find it necessary.

5. Conclusions

The following conclusions were made from responses to the questionnaire. In addition, some tentative implications and questions to be addressed in connection with developing a coordinated call for Transnational Joint Research Activities for ARD - Food & Energy are listed.

A. Program development phase (including development of new programs)

No countries have programmes addressing Food & Energy specifically. This means that new ground has to be broken. Biofuels is a booming sector for reasons such as concern for energy security, effect on Greenhouse Gas emissions and strains on natural resources. However, there has been limited research and development of biofuels in relation to developing countries with the exception of biofuels production in Brazil.

There is a changing paradigm for ARD. This may have implications for ministries, which are potential funders of ARD - Food & Energy.

The size of programs that are supported by the various consortium members varies considerably. This is likely to have implications as to the volume of contribution to an ARD – Food & Energy call by the members. However, this first transnational activity under the ERA ARD project should be considered as a pilot project and is likely to be limited in size. This is generally also the experience from other ERA nets.

It is important the new EU countries have an opportunity to be included in the call.

Germany and France have strategies related to ARD – Food & Energy. Switzerland has recently published a valuable Issue Paper “Biofuels, Opportunity or threat to the poor?”

There is clearly an opportunity for ERA ARD to bring ARD onto the biofuel agenda.

Well-known program or project cycles are followed, but not all countries carry out pre-implementation studies.

As the first call will most likely be a pilot project, there is likely to be a valuable contribution in terms of knowledge and experience so that further development can be made.

Program development is likely to take 1 year and timing in relation to budget allocation at national or ministerial levels is crucial.

EU rules of tendering with 150.000 EURO, as a ceiling must be respected.

It is clear that using a common pot as a funding form is not perceived as very easy, however, a virtual common pot, (i.e. when funding money will not cross the border of countries and national funding will be effectively earmarked for national activities and participants) is not perceived as presenting such a problem.

The barriers between European partners for an ARD program, whether real or “only” perceived, must be addressed. In order to do this ownership is important and accessing experience from other ERA net projects should be ensured to avoid mistakes that others have already made. It is important that a degree of balance between the larger and the smaller EU countries is achieved in the preparation and implementation phases, to avoid large country dominance.

There are very few experts on Food and Energy in relation to ARD. This may provide interesting challenges for cross-sectorial collaboration.

The country focus is of great concern. It would appear that there are 3 groups of countries:

- Countries with emerging economies especially China and Brazil
- Countries from the former Soviet (NIS countries)
- Countries from least developed countries (LDCs) and low-income countries

Very few countries specified preferred European partners. A geo-focus for partner countries in the south should be identified.

B. The *project* application phase including procedures for calls, evaluation of application etc.

In general a standard program and project cycle is followed and a 2-stage application process used. However, there are situations in which a 1-stage application is more advantageous. This may be the case when little time is available or when there are unlikely to be many applicants.

The call language should be English, but may also have to be in Slovenian, as national legislation requires this. Publishing the call in French or Spanish would require more time and resources. Applications should be in English giving access to a wider number of peer reviewers.

As a pilot project for Food and Energy is not likely to be a large project, it would seem unlikely that participating countries would allocate funds for preparation. This could be a good investment if larger projects are to be funded.

Electronic submission of applications should be used although national legislation would have to be respected and paper submission also made in some countries. The

possibility of special conditions existing would have to be investigated when coordination of calls is being practiced. If commercial interests are likely to be included in the application special conditions should prevail to protect interests and information.

There is likely to be considerable interest in research projects, but also projects involving mobility of both European and Southern scientists should be considered. It is likely that universities and research institutions are eligible to apply for funds, but inclusion of other stakeholders such as farmer's organisations, NGOs etc. may improve the value and relevance of some projects.

Some good evaluation criteria and so-called scoreboards are available and these should provide a sound basis for adaptation to needs of an ERA ARD coordinated call. Indeed this is already built into the ERA ARD project in task 4.3. An open and transparent strategy for publication of evaluator's names could be desirable as a call is likely to include several countries. However, this is not at present practised in many countries.

C. Administrative procedures related to *program and project management and administration*

It is likely that an ARD – Food & Energy Coordinated Call Steering Committee through the Call Secretariat, will ensure monitoring, evaluation etc. However, these have to meet the requirements of the national systems.

Most respondents to the questionnaire could not answer questions of legal and administrative constraints until details of the call are known. Therefore, it will be necessary to allow time for all partners to consider the implications in terms of administration when the details of the call are known.

It is essential for research providers to cover their administrative costs by receiving overheads on the project budget.

A pilot project can be considered a learning process and as such it might be wise to make the project a 1-phase project of 36 months from signing contracts. This would be a minimum to ensure a chance for scientific quality. However, as it is hoped that other countries might also wish to "buy into" the process a second call within the same thematic area might be made after 1 year.

A Consortium Agreement has become fairly standard for many project consortia and this should also be ensured for a Transnational Joint Research Activity.

A dissemination strategy must be required as an integrated part of an application. This implies that this requirement should be included clearly in the call. A specific budget line could be used for dissemination.

Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) is addressed in most countries legislation. However, there may be a need for harmonisation for transnational activities.

The size of the contribution to a funding pot is a contentious issue as there is a great deal of inequality between the larger and smaller EU countries.

6. Recommendations

The following are the main recommendations made to the ERA ARD Steering Committee:

- Food & Energy would be able to be included in many countries either as ARD or RD
- Changing ARD paradigm must be considered
- New EU countries and smaller countries generally have smaller programs > Imbalance between larger and smaller EU countries – roles must be considered
- 1-year program development should be maximum
- A virtual common pot should be used
- Geofocus – decision on emerging economies, Southern countries or NIS countries or all

- 1 stage application for the 1st Call
- Call and application language - English
- Electronic submission to be accepted
- Open procedure for evaluation and evaluators should be adopted
- Task 3.2 Monitoring, evaluation and Impact Assessment methods to be adapted and used

- Frequency of administrative procedures should be included in consortium agreement
- Sub-contracting should be accepted and would provide an easy way of covering costs of partners from the South
- 36 month project period from initiation
- Overheads (at least 20%) must be included to cover administration costs

The ERA ARD Steering Committee agreed with most of these points firstly at the 4th Steering Committee meeting in Maribor, Slovenia in October 2007 and at the 5th meeting in Madrid, Spain in February 2008. The official launch of the Call is expected to be on 1st September 2008.

Annexes

Questionnaire

**“The Agricultural Research for Development (ARD) dimension
of the European Research Area (ERA)”
ERA-ARD net**

To all participants in the ERA ARD net project

Work Package 4 Transnational Research Activities.

Task 4.1: Identification of consolidated mechanisms for resource allocation for ARD sub-programs.

In the following I will briefly introduce an activity, which will contribute to task 4.1. It is a questionnaire, which I would kindly ask you to ensure is completed by the relevant person(s) at the relevant ministry or agencies or other funding bodies and return to me as quickly as possible and by 1st March at the latest.

Introduction

Task 4.1 involves collection of information on relevant elements of development and implementation of national ARD programmes including existing mechanisms for ARD resource allocation (including financial, human, infrastructure etc.) and legal and administrative constraints. ERA-ARD partners must come to a common understanding of the respective framework conditions so that ways to synchronise and, to some extent, harmonise calls under different national ARD programs may be identified. Common calls within identified areas must then be developed.

This information and a preliminary draft position paper on consolidated mechanisms for resource allocation for ARD sub-programs will be presented at Workshop no. 5 of the ERA-ARD project, later in 2007. Subsequently, the Steering Committee will seek agreement on procedures for financing collaboration and tools for managing activities for transnational ARD programs (Milestone 7) in general and for the topic “Food and Energy” in particular, which was selected by the Steering Committee in Brussels in October 2006.

Food and Energy has been termed a *sub-program* in the ERA ARD project. This terminology has created uncertainty, as some countries do not have thematic programs or sub-programs. In the questionnaire the term “ARD program” has been used and “ARD – Food & Energy” is used to denote Food and Energy

activities within ARD. It is hoped that mechanisms of cooperation are found that extend beyond the lifetime of the ERA ARD project. Therefore, calls should be understood to be within the lifetime of a program or sub-program not just the ERA ARD project.

It is hoped that information will be generated describing the general situation for ARD programs, but also information that can be applied directly to the “Food and Energy” theme. If your country does not have thematic programs, please note this in the questionnaire and provide answers as appropriate and relevant as possible as such information will be of value in general terms.

In order to identify mechanisms for resource allocation for ARD programs, I hereby request you, as a partner on the ERA ARD project, to provide information regarding the existing mechanisms for ARD resource allocation in your country that you consider relevant related to implementation of transnational activities. Based on this information and assisted by electronic consultations I will review the information in detail with the aim of identifying possible procedures for consolidated resource allocation mechanisms for future transnational research activities. Special attention should be given to the funding mechanisms and the legal and administrative constraints that would limit the implementation of jointly funded activities.

The exercise is a prerequisite for launching transnational research activities. If you have other information, comments or ideas please feel free to send them to me.

I believe that it is necessary to get an understanding of the following three phases: the *program* development phase (including development of new programs), the *project* application phase including procedures for calls evaluation of applications etc. and lastly, administrative procedures related to *program and project* management and administration. Any legal and administrative constraints, during any of the phases should be highlighted. I have thus divided the questionnaire into three sections.

Please complete the questionnaire and return it to me by **Thursday 1st March 2007** at the very latest. The deadline is short, but I hope that you find the questionnaire short and simple. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any queries, questions or comments.

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Collection of Information – a questionnaire for task 4.1

A. Program development phase

(including development of new programs)

A.1. Does your country have thematic programs as such for ARD?

Yes No

A.2. Does your country have a thematic program for ARD – Food & Energy?

Yes No

A.3. Apart from thematic programs, what sort of programs does your country implement within ARD? (Eg. general capacity building programs, mobility of scientists, support to infrastructure etc.)

A.4. Does your country have an ARD strategy? (Please provide references and links)

Yes No

A.5. Strategies: ARD – Food & Energy

Does your country have a Food & Energy strategy related to developing countries i.e. within ARD? Or does an ARD Strategy make specific mention of Food & Energy?
(Please provide references and links)

Yes No

A.6. Do you have any cooperation on calls in general

With other funding agencies in your country

Yes No

With other European countries

Yes No

With other Non-European countries or international organisations

Yes No

Please provide information, references or contacts in order that the agency may be contacted and it may provide information about experience gained.

Collection of Information – a questionnaire for task 4.1

A.7. Programming elements

Please list the elements contributing to program development (including development of a new program) including a description where possible (eg. decisions involved, identification, pre-implementation studies, budget matters etc. as well as the Ministry and office responsible, from the first idea till the final step of signing.)

A.8. How long does the program development phase or development of a new program usually take from the idea stage until resources are made available for ARD activities?

A.9. Pre implementation studies - general

Are pre-implementation studies in general undertaken during the program development phase? If so who carries out such studies?

Yes No

A.10. Pre implementation studies – ARD – Food & Energy

Have any pre-implementation studies been undertaken for Food & Energy related to developing countries i.e. within ARD? If so who carries out such studies? Please give name of the studies and possible websites.

Yes No

A.11. Relations to other countries

Does the design and thematic content of programs and sub-programs in your country take into account information on any other national, regional or international program?

Yes No

A.12. Program design

Please list any fixed rules for a program design and development procedure? (eg. number of partners, geofocus of partners, thematic focus of programs, steps to be taken etc.. Please provide references where appropriate)

Collection of Information – a questionnaire for task 4.1

A.13. Political influence

How strong is the (political) influence of the different groups during the design process of an ARD research program? Mark with an X.

Ministry	strong <input type="checkbox"/>	weak <input type="checkbox"/>	absent <input type="checkbox"/>
Research council	strong <input type="checkbox"/>	weak <input type="checkbox"/>	absent <input type="checkbox"/>
Scientists	strong <input type="checkbox"/>	weak <input type="checkbox"/>	absent <input type="checkbox"/>
NGOs	strong <input type="checkbox"/>	weak <input type="checkbox"/>	absent <input type="checkbox"/>
Experts from abroad	strong <input type="checkbox"/>	weak <input type="checkbox"/>	absent <input type="checkbox"/>
Others			strong <input type="checkbox"/>

A.14. Who normally writes the text of ARD programs? Would it be the same person who prepares a new ARD program?

A.15. How much time would be required to commit resources to ARD – Food & Energy?

A.16. Who would make the final decision about funding of ARD – Food & Energy?

A.17. Would it be difficult or easy to implement a transnational call - general? (Mark with an X)

“Virtual” Common pot ¹ :	Easy ² <input type="checkbox"/>	Difficult ³ <input type="checkbox"/>
Real Common pot	Easy ² <input type="checkbox"/>	Difficult ³ <input type="checkbox"/>
Other joint activities ⁴ :	Easy ² <input type="checkbox"/>	Difficult ³ <input type="checkbox"/>

¹ i.e. funding money will not cross the border of countries and national funding will be effectively earmarked for national activities and participants.

² e.g. ... because the process does not need to follow complicated and long lasting processes.

³ e.g. ... because the process has to follow completely or partly a specific program design and initiation procedure

⁴ Please specify (e.g. human mobility, infrastructure, etc.) and elaborate.

any further comments

Collection of Information – a questionnaire for task 4.1

A.18. Would it be difficult or easy to implement a transnational call for activities within ARD – Food & Energy? (Mark with an X)

“Virtual” Common pot ¹ :	Easy ² <input type="checkbox"/>	Difficult ³ <input type="checkbox"/>
Real Common pot	Easy ² <input type="checkbox"/>	Difficult ³ <input type="checkbox"/>
Other joint activities ⁴ :	Easy <input type="checkbox"/>	Difficult <input type="checkbox"/>

¹ i.e. funding money will not cross the border of countries and national funding will be effectively earmarked for national activities and participants.

² e.g. ... because the process does not need to follow complicated and long lasting processes.

³ e.g. ... because the process has to follow completely or partly a specific program design and initiation procedure

⁴ Please specify (e.g. human mobility, infrastructure, etc.) and elaborate.

any further comments

A.19. What else would be required for the implementation process of a transnational call for ARD – Food & Energy?

A.20. What do you expect to be the main barriers for cooperation between European partners for an ARD program in general?

A.21. What do you expect to be the main barriers for cooperation between European partners and Southern partners for an ARD program in general?

A.22. What do you expect to be the main barriers for cooperation for activities within ARD – Food & Energy?

A.23. Which countries in Europe would be most attractive to cooperate with on activities within ARD – Food & Energy?

Collection of Information – a questionnaire for task 4.1

A.24. Which countries outside Europe would be most attractive to cooperate with on activities within ARD – Food & Energy?

Collection of Information – a questionnaire for task 4.1

B. The *project* application phase including procedures for calls evaluation of applications etc.

B.1. What are the steps during the call, proposal and evaluation phase of projects? (eg. pre-proposals, draft proposals, hearings, full proposals, peer review etc. Please indicate if the steps are mandatory or optional)

B.2. What would be the language of a call for activities under ARD – Food & Energy?

English Yes No

Please specify others:

B.3. In which language do you expect project applications under ARD – Food & Energy to be written?

English Yes No

Please specify others:

B.4. Degree of interest of different types of activity under ARD – Food & Energy

Infrastructure	considerable <input type="checkbox"/>	limited <input type="checkbox"/>	absent <input type="checkbox"/>
Equipment	considerable <input type="checkbox"/>	limited <input type="checkbox"/>	absent <input type="checkbox"/>
Mobility of European scientists	considerable <input type="checkbox"/>	limited <input type="checkbox"/>	absent <input type="checkbox"/>
Mobility of Southern scientists	considerable <input type="checkbox"/>	limited <input type="checkbox"/>	absent <input type="checkbox"/>
Research projects	considerable <input type="checkbox"/>	limited <input type="checkbox"/>	absent <input type="checkbox"/>
Others (name)	considerable <input type="checkbox"/>	limited <input type="checkbox"/>	absent <input type="checkbox"/>

B.5. Are funds available for project preparation?

Yes No

Please describe the conditions:

Collection of Information – a questionnaire for task 4.1

B.6. Which office is responsible for evaluation of project applications?

B.7. How are the evaluators selected?

B.8. Are the names of the evaluators publicly known?

Yes No

B.9. Are there any general evaluation guidelines available for the evaluator?

Yes No

If yes, please specify with links to relevant documents:

B.10. Are there any evaluation criteria available? (e.g point scoring system)

Yes No

If yes, please specify with links to relevant documents:

B.11. Does the office responsible for evaluation of project applications make use of external experts from consultancy companies or research institutions?

Yes No

Please give examples:

B.12. What proposal submission system is used?

Electronic optional obligatory

Paper optional obligatory

Are there any legal constraints to electronic proposal submission?

Yes No

If yes please describe:

Collection of Information – a questionnaire for task 4.1

B.13. Which type of institutions or organisations will be eligible to participate in a joint call?

Universities	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Research Institutions	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Industry	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Others, please name				

B.14. Should a Non-Disclosure Agreement between participating countries regarding project proposals be a pre-requisite?

Collection of Information – a questionnaire for task 4.1

C. Administrative procedures related to *program and project* management and administration

C.1. Which office will manage activities within ARD – Food & Energy?

C.2. Does any legislation forbid payments to non-residents? i.e. are your countries' funds restricted to residents of your country?

Yes No

If yes, please describe:

C.3. Legal constraints - general

Briefly describe any other legal constraints that may limit the implementation of transnational ARD activities in general.

C.4. Administrative constraints - general

Briefly describe any administrative constraints that may limit the implementation of transnational ARD activities in general.

C.5. Would your program cover overhead costs?

Yes No

If yes, what is the overhead rate expressed for example as % of salary or total costs:

What should these overheads cover?

C.6. What would the duration of individual activities within ARD – Food & Energy likely to be? (in months)

Collection of Information – a questionnaire for task 4.1

C.7. What would the frequency of calls be for activities within ARD – Food & Energy?

- Continuous without deadlines
- Once a year
- Twice a year
- Only one call
- Other

C.8. What is the total national budget likely to be for activities within ARD – Food & Energy? (in EUROS)

C.9. Would a consortium agreement be a pre-requisite for entering into transnational activities within ARD – Food & Energy?

- Yes No

C.10. Which office would be responsible for monitoring, reviewing and evaluation of activities within ARD – Food & Energy?

- Monitoring
- Reviewing
- Evaluation
- Others

C.11. How often would monitoring, reviewing and evaluation of activities within ARD – Food & Energy be carried out?

- Monitoring
- Reviewing
- Evaluation
- Others
-

Collection of Information – a questionnaire for task 4.1

C.12. Should project applications include a dissemination strategy?

Yes No

If yes, please describe any conditions?

C.13. What are the rules and procedures pertaining to intellectual property rights? (Please add name and source of relevant documents and of the legal background)

Collection of Information – a questionnaire for task 4.1

Extra information, please

Independent European expert

The project document prescribes participation of three independent European experts in research funding in workshop 5.

I would, therefore, like to ask you for the name and contact details of independent European experts on research funding who could attend WS 5.

Name and contact details of person who completed this questionnaire:

Name:

Position:

Contact details:

Please now return this questionnaire to Alex.PercySmith@AgrSci.dk