EUROPEAN COMMISSION

European Research Area

GOVERSCIENCE CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS SEMINAR

Brussels, 9-10 October 2008

PROCEEDINGS

Interested in European research?

Research*eu is our monthly magazine keeping you in touch with main developments (results, programmes, events, etc.). It is available in English, French, German and Spanish. A free sample copy or free subscription can be obtained from:

European Commission
Directorate-General for Research
Communication Unit
B-1049 Brussels
Fax (32-2) 29-58220
E-mail: research-eu@ec.europa.eu
Internet: http://ec.europa.eu/research/research-eu

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General for Research
Directorate L – Science, Economy and Society
Unit L.3 – Governance and Ethics

Contact: Viviane Willis-Mazzichi

European Commission
B-1049 Brussels
E-mail: viviane.willis-mazzichi@ec.europa.eu

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

GOVERSCIENCE CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS SEMINAR

Brussels, 9-10 October 2008

2009

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR RESEARCH
SCIENCE, ECONOMY AND SOCIETY

EUR 23912 EN

EUROPE DIRECT is a service to help you find answers
to your questions about the European Union

Freephone number (*):
00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11
(*) Certain mobile telephone operators do not allow access to 00 800 numbers
or these calls may be billed

Cataloguing data can be found at the end of this publication.

Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 2009

ISBN 978-92-79-11296-6
DOI 10.2777/64742

Pictures: Cathy Pouret

Printed in Belgium
PRINTED ON WHITE CHLORINE-FREE PAPER

Table of Contents

- Facilitator: **Henning Banthien** – IFOK
- Rapporteur: **Tamsin Rose** – Tamarack Ltd
- Seminar coordinator: **Viviane Willis-Mazzichi**, Unit 'Governance and Ethics', Directorate-General for Research, European Commission

Foreword

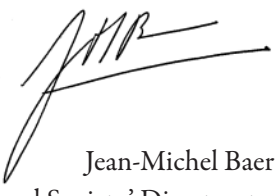
We have spent too long abiding by a vision of science where researchers and citizens live apart. It has not always been like this in the history of Europe. After more than a century of striving to institutionalise the divide between those who know and those who do not know, we have to reinvent ways to build a common world.

In the Ljubljana Process – towards a full realisation of the European Research Area (ERA) which was launched in 2008, the Council of the European Union considered that civil society should actively engage in ERA governance with universities, research organisations and businesses. Civil society is a lot more than an undifferentiated recipient of research results. Societal groups, such as those represented in this GoverScience-CSO seminar, show that there are other ways to get involved, such as rendering research findings meaningful for people, contributing to research agendas or embarking on research projects with researchers.

It is not a question of turning citizens into researchers but of building different bridges between research and civil society with a more diverse vision of knowledge and values. Knowledge and innovation are not solely the privilege of research and values are not only championed by civil society. The societal challenges we have to face are complex and more collaboration between citizens' organizations and research institutions will help progress towards valid solutions.

Take the example of climate change, public health or poverty. Inventing new technologies is not enough to overcome the existing problems. All of us as citizens have to have a better grasp on what is at stake, how to adapt our way of life and of caring for the environment and the society we will pass on to our children and, then with a renewed appreciation of the situation, can we consider what technology will be needed to respond to these challenges.

The Science in Society Programme was designed to create spaces and conditions for citizens and researchers to meet and find ways to combine their efforts. The GoverScience seminar is one of these spaces. Its participants showed that there is new ground to explore towards more knowledgeable European democracies and more policy-relevant European research.



Jean-Michel Baer
Director 'Science, Economy and Society' Directorate,
Directorate-General for Research

Executive summary

The 7th Framework Programme for Research (FP7) promotes forms of collaboration between research organisations (ROs) and civil society organisations (CSOs) which offer a unique combination of knowledge production and proximity to citizens' concerns. However, it is a big challenge to turn differences in objectives, skills and methods into opportunities for innovation and policy change. This was the theme of the GoverScience-CSOs seminar held on 9-10 October 2008 in Brussels.

If mutual learning provides the cement of such partnerships, valuing the diverse identities of the partners builds up their strength. CSO-RO partnerships bring about changes in scientific culture and advocacy practices which can be encouraged at local, national and European levels as follows:

- **setting up bridging facilities** involving CSO networks, research bodies and public authorities; Fora, platforms or contact points where potential partners meet, relevant knowledge is exchanged and capacity built to manage research projects involving different types of partners;

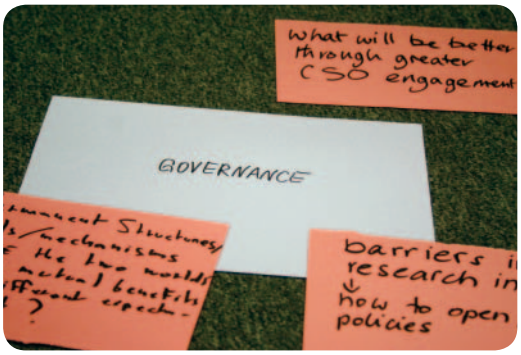
- **establishing better incentives and rewarding researchers** for their investment with communities and CSOs; this also implies a rethink of the interface between scientific excellence and societal relevance;

- **shaping the funding schemes to fit CSO-RO partnerships**; giving more room to mutual learning, participatory processes; designing multi-disciplinary/experience approaches; treating partners equally in terms of responsibility and financial support;

- **opening doors in research programmes**; installing channels/structures to discuss research needs/issues with civil society actors; planning two-stages calls and assigning a part of the budget to CSO-RO partnerships;

- **making the most of CSO-RO project outputs**; prizing their capacity to interest scientists as well as civil society actors and policy-makers, broadening the evaluation systems to encompass public participation and social innovation alongside conventional science and technologies.

I – The purpose of the GoverScience-CSO seminar



Science is more and more important in the everyday lives of people but research organisations (RO) and civil society organisations (CSO) ([1]) tend to inhabit different worlds. The former strive to generate new knowledge, hoping that society will make the most of it. When CSOs find out about research findings and use them, it is often ad-hoc and random. Public authorities, researchers and civil society organisations increasingly view these casual occurences as unsatisfactory.

New forms of collaboration between the spheres of science and civil society that are emerging in the countries of Europe and beyond, merit being better known, explored and amplified. This is central to the mandate that the Member States formulated for the programme 'Science in Society' (SiS) within the 7th EU Research Programme (FP7).

The SiS programme promotes a better understanding of the relationship between science and society and, more specifically, has developed schemes which bring together CSOs and ROs such as:

- CSO capacity building;
- cooperative research processes and;
- research for the Benefit of Specific Groups (BSG-CSO).

CSO Capacity building

It encompasses preparatory activities that meet the needs and interests of CSOs which plan further participation in research. Eligible activities include mapping/assessing of research findings, identifying research topics; exploring forms of cooperation with research centres. The scheme was used in the Science in Society Work Programme – SIS.

([1]) In this context a CSO is defined as a non governmental, non profit organisation that does not represent commercial interests, pursuing a common purpose in the public interest.

Partners of projects funded under these schemes were invited to the GoverScience-CSO seminar to discuss the dynamics of partnerships between CSOs and ROs, exchange experiences across sectors and countries and formulate suggestions for future activities. The projects involved came from three FP7 programmes: Science in Society, Social Sciences & Humanities and Environment (see list in Annex 2).

Cooperative research processes

It encourages partnerships between researchers and non-researchers (policy-makers, CSOs, business, etc) on issues of common interest. The partners combine their skills, knowledge and understanding of the issues at stake in order to produce concrete solutions and/or substantiate possible options. These processes entail mutual learning. The scheme was used in the Science in Society Work Programme – SiS.

Funding scheme for the Benefit of Specific Groups – BSG-CSO

This supports partnerships between CSOs and research organisations in undertaking research. It gives more emphasis on training and requires an enhanced outreach strategy.

The research results can be jointly owned by the participating CSOs, or if owners are not the participating CSOs, the latter must be given full rights to use and disseminate the results.

The BSG-CSO scheme can be used in all FP7 Work Programmes. In 2007 and 2008 projects were funded under two Work Programmes: Social Sciences and Humanities – (SSH) and Environment (ENV).

II – Exploring CSO-RO ways of knowledge production

Joint CSO-RO projects require investment from both sides in order to understand each other's context, jargon and culture. The seminar participants drew on their experience to consider a number of issues which were clustered around four questions to be discussed in small groups:

- why? – incentives for cooperation;
- how and what? – types of collaboration and joint activities;
- who and when? – governance and relevance;
- what for? – impact of the partnerships.

Why? – Incentives for cooperation

Expectations are high, as are the challenges that CSOs and ROs must often address in order to collaborate fruitfully with each other, starting with building trust and dealing with differences in goals.

What is expected from CSO-RO partnerships?

When CSOs engage with researchers they look for support and credibility for their causes. They seek to strengthen their advocacy or bring scientific expertise into the services they provide. CSOs work on issues such as sustainable development, renewable energy, combating diseases, rural development, food safety, minority rights and social conflicts. CSOs seek more active engagement to define the research questions rather than just being recipients of research results.

Research projects with CSOs as partners may contribute to exploring alternative future scenarios, for instance on the use of natural resources and the functioning of democracies. Comparing different visions may attract the interest of academics that also seek concrete opportunities to illustrate and test scientific theories. Researchers may find sufficient reward in the new knowledge they then produce, but they tend to look beyond this for greater societal relevance for their research. Collaboration with CSOs uncovers new channels to frame and spread research outputs, achieving a greater impact on policy-making.

Finding mutually beneficial goals

This starts with clearing up any misunderstandings. Some CSOs may be critical of government agendas, or, they may be concerned that universities are seeking a CSO partner in order to tap into new funding schemes rather than because they are committed to similar values and goals. CSO-related activities are often perceived as being less prestigious or even negative for

Insight from participants on why they created a CSO-researcher partnership:

- 'We want to develop a user-led agenda for research, a map of what matters'
- 'Explore alternative scenarios on the use of natural resources'
- 'Give alternative research agendas space and a voice'
- 'Bring results back to civil society and spread knowledge through new channels'
- 'More scientific data and tools for use in advocacy activities'
- 'Learn new methodologies/ways of thinking'
- 'Confer greater credibility on other forms of knowledge'
- 'We would like to clarify the values which underlie normative research'

a researcher's career, compared to mainstream academic research. CSOs may also be seen as partial or biased – perhaps too close to their cause, seeking practical results rather than an open-minded scientific enquiry.

This first phase requires face-to-face meetings and it is crucial to establish trust between the potential partners to spark off the preparation of a joint project. Then new challenges occur. There can indeed be differences in the analysis of situations which CSOs and ROs plan to study. Scientific disciplines develop concepts and methods to shape and select the facts they value. In doing so, they put aside elements which might be of relevance for CSOs, such as the externalities in economy, the placebo effects in drug development or social perceptions in biotechnology.

There can also be a mismatch between the short and long term outputs. The time necessary to conduct research does not easily fit into the shorter timescales of advocacy and policy-making. This raises awareness among partners about the way their activities are framed and what could be seen first as a difficulty may turn into an opportunity to reconsider their usual working context and to innovate.

To overcome these challenges, the seminar participants stressed the importance of a good fit between the mission of the CSOs and the fields of activity of the researchers involved. Questions raised by CSOs often do not relate to a single scientific discipline but call for a multidisciplinary approach. CEECEC for instance aims at analysing case studies on sustainable development which CSOs selected. They use tools developed in ecological economics, a transdisiciplinary approach which combines social, economic, biophysical, cultural and ethical issues.

Joint projects require that the participants develop means to deal with their differences. Making funding available for a preparatory phase which explores CSOs and ROs differences in vision and goals would help strengthen future research partnerships. At the European level, this was the purpose of the CSO capacity-building projects. CAPOIRA, INRE, PSx2, STACS, EURADE, CEECEC and STEPS encompass workshops between researchers and CSOs in fields such as rare diseases, renewable energy, biotechnology, agriculture, disabilities, public health and sustainable development.

How partners work together

Partnerships often start from personal networks and then endeavour to extend their community of interests, using existing relationships. 'Matchmakers' for researchers exist at national and European level, such as the FP7 National Contact Points. CSOs, which are becoming more and more involved in European policies, have developed as a 'third' sector alongside the state and business, nurturing the dynamic of participative democracy. Their networking however occurs mostly in policies other than research and experience varies between countries in terms of the development, roles and engagement of CSOs.

There are still few matchmakers trained to understand the specificities of both types of partners, ROs and CSOs. Researchers may find it difficult to identify appropriate CSO partners, and may need guidance to figure out their capacities or representativity. And CSOs may be discouraged from spending resources on contacting the wide range of European research centres looking for someone who is prepared to spare the time to listen to them.

Some CSO capacity-building projects include matchmaking activities. For instance INRE, coordinated by the Bulgarian Agency for renewable energy, organised meetings between CSOs and research organisations in countries around the Black Sea. STEPS operates in a similar manner in the sector of public health in the 12 newer Member States.

Common design to fit multiple purposes

Within the partnership, all partners have to create a common vocabulary and build a multi-faceted but shared vision. As explained in PSx2 final report: 'The challenge of working together has been to go through a process of mutual learning, considering different ways of approaching problems and expectations about our own work ... leading us to accept the basic controversial nature of any current definition of participation in science and to explicitly include a question on the definition of participation in science in the questionnaire submitted to the CSOs ([2]).'

CSOs look for practical impact from projects to which citizens can easily relate and which will influence policy-making. They may want campaign and advocacy perspectives to be included in the research agenda and the project design. This can challenge researchers to be more strategic in their approach and require them to gain experience of participative research activities before or during the course of the projects.

It is therefore crucial at the design stage, to clarify the roles that each partner is expected

([2]) *www.participationinscience.eu/psx2/finalreport.php – 'Participatory science and scientific participation' – p. 3 and 7.*

to play and the resources of time, knowledge and funds that they can bring to the project. The administrative, managerial and budgetary aspects of CSO participation are also key issues to be settled at this stage.

The project coordinator plays a major role, ensuring that the CSOs' requirements are adequately expressed and met. Furthermore, the process of developing the project should be iterative and allow some flexibility in its implementation. This gives the partners opportunities to check the project's progress against their respective objectives and change its course when appropriate. For instance PSx2 and STACS had to adapt their initial planning and INFOCON, FAAN and ESDinds incorporate iterative phases in their work plan.

Who takes decisions, when and at what level?

Governance is a relatively new term which includes questions about who takes action and decisions, when and at what level. These questions can be applied to all aspects of research: institutions, structures, processes, research agendas, programmes and projects. In the context of CSO-researcher cooperation it is important to review who is involved, at what stage, with which purpose and how this corresponds to the plurality of stakeholders.

A new outreach mandate for universities and CSO networks

There is a growing trend for universities to be expected to work more with community groups and CSOs. When considering the modernisation of universities ([3]), the Commission noted that 'communication between scientific specialists and non-specialists is much needed but often absent'. It invited universities to 'a much clearer commitment to ... structured dialogues with alumni and citizens in general and with local/regional players.'

Seminar participants called for permanent structures with dedicated staff to bridge the divide between CSOs & academia. These would raise awareness among CSOs and researchers and foster their participation – although it should be recognised that not all CSOs will want to get involved in research, nor academics in CSO partnerships.

In many different sectors of European policy, CSOs which are active at local level look for links at regional, national and European level, forming structured networks to circulate information. The resulting CSO networks have a role to play by developing dialogue with universities and other research bodies, and providing a transparent mechanism to identify CSO partners.

The CSO capacity-building project, EuRADE which is coordinated by the European Disability Forum, illustrates well the type of alliances which can be developed between CSO networks and universities. Inspiration can also be found in some existing models which bridge the gap between CSOs and academics:

([3]) COM(2006) 208 final – 'Delivering on the modernisation agenda for universities: education, research and innovation' – chapter 7 – 'Activate knowledge through interaction with society', p. 8-9.

science shops (Europe, USA, Canada), knowledge mobilisation structures in universities and CURAs ([4]) (Canada), ...

Better rewarding the researchers

The work of researchers is framed by their predecessors and controlled by their peers. Engaging with CSOs and the wider public is frequently considered, as an extra-curricular activity or a sideline occupation that scientists may develop once retired. Those who are persevering along this path often find greater personal reward than institutional encouragement.

In order to make partnership with CSOs more attractive there needs to be a review of the professional implications for scientists, including their career opportunities and a revaluation of the concept of scientific excellence which is used to assess their practices. Researchers' reputation and success are by and large measured by their publication output, or by the funding that they attract for their department.

Additional elements could be used to highlight the ability to forge relationships with other stakeholders, such as civil society organisations, to take on board their questioning and knowledge, conduct fruitful discussion and provide elements of responses. The success of the scientific knowledge produced could also be demonstrated in terms of relevance to expressed societal needs.

Some inter-disciplinary curricula seem to provide a more fertile ground to nourish these innovative career paths. National and EU financial support for researcher-CSO cooperation can act as a catalyst to the revision of indicators of status in the academic world and therefore provide incentives to researchers.

What impacts for CSO-RO partnerships?

The value of such partnerships is that they can make policy alternatives visible and challenge existing norms, broadening perspectives beyond technological approaches. Partnerships nourish dialogue and help CSOs to carry out bottom-up research, building on their personal networks.

Increased synergy between CSOs and researchers contributes towards better quality projects. The research analysis is more carefully connected to the societal issues at stake, and there is a higher probability that the results will be widely understood and used. CSO-researcher partnerships therefore deliver greater credibility and a sense of ownership.

([4]) Communities-Universities Research Alliances – http://www.sshrc.ca/web/apply/program_descriptions/cura_e.asp

The EU could play an important role in making such collaborations better known: a conference for CSOs to showcase the Science and Society programme, an open access publishing initiative to highlight results of projects.

Metrics revisited

Knowledge and other outputs produced by CSO-academic partnerships do not really fit into the current methods of managing and evaluating research. For example, the OECD indicators on patents or numbers of spin-off companies for research results are not appropriate measures for the success of researcher-CSO collaboration.

This implies inventing a new approach to what counts as research results, encompassing social know-how and innovations, as well as conventional science and technologies. At the same time, the existing research framework could be screened through a 'social audit' to identify how other knowledge sources are included.

III – Shaping the future

On the second day of the seminar, the participants built on the results of the first set of working groups and formulated suggestions to improve CSO-researcher cooperation at EU and national level. They organised their discussion into four groups:

- Preparatory phase
- Enhancing skills
- A new approach to research
- Valorisation of the outputs

Preparatory phase

People's platforms…

Research policy, as other public policies, complies with institutional democratic rules and is enriched by regular consultations with stakeholders. For instance, the European Commission set up the European Health Policy Forum to serve as an information and consultation mechanism involving patient organisations, health professionals and other stakeholders ([5]).

In research, contrary to policy areas such as environment, health or employment, civil society actors are rarely seen as relevant stakeholders. Scientists and their organisations obviously come first. The priorities of industry, a major player, are well expressed through the European Technology Platforms ([6]) which are, in theory, open to all relevant stakeholders, but very few have significant CSO participation. Furthermore, some civil society groups have been critical of Technology Platforms allowing commercial interests to have too much influence over research priorities.

In order to increase CSO involvement in research policy, there should be dedicated channels to discuss and identify research needs. The initiative for a platform for CSOs should come from civil society groups themselves in order to develop mechanisms which reflect the differences in CSO typology and cultural frameworks. A good example is the European Social Science Forum, which was a coalition to provide input into the preparation for FP7. Another source of inspiration is the UN network of regional centres of excellence on sustainable development – often hosted by universities and involving hundreds of NGOs.

… And people's web

The huge diversity of CSOs and the need to involve grassroots organisations requires work at all levels with a range of tools to collect research priorities. The internet offers many opportunities, such as using a social network approach to create a user community, and an internet platform for knowledge mobilisation.

The INFOCON web-platform ([7]) is designed to approximate different transnational stakeholders' communities in an interactive, interconnected online environment where users can disseminate their profiles, activities, proposals and projects. STACS created and interactive European platform for communication between CSOs and scientists on common research issues ([8]).

There is some duplication between initiatives to create an online space for CSO-researcher exchanges. The European Commission could foster a single portal. Some tools already exist, e.g. SINAPSE, which provides scientific data for policy development, and the CORDIS website featuring partner search capabilities.

([5]) *http://ec.europa.eu/health/ph_overview/health_forum/health_forum_en.htm*
([6]) *http://cordis.europa.eu/technology-platforms/home_en.html*
([7]) *www.infocon-project.org*
([8]) *http://www.citizens-science.org/*

Testing the water

Virtual exchanges must be complemented by face to face contact. Many partnership projects are created on the basis of existing relationships. A pre-project mechanism that provides funding to build partnerships would help at local and university level. It would allow the potential partners to prepare the various elements that a project encompasses, in terms of research issues to address, capacity, economic management, administration and experience of contracting. All CSO capacity-building projects offered CSOs and researchers opportunities to meet and discuss possible collaboration.

Another possibility would be to include a pre-application phase within specific funding programmes. It would enhance the quality of proposals and improve value for money for the European Commission. For instance, The URBACT ([9]) or SOCRATES ([10]) programmes and the FP7 programme dedicated to SMEs ([11]) include pre-application phases. There is also much progress to be made in order to improve the geographical balance, perhaps by providing incentives to include newer Member State participants through specific evaluation criteria.

In Canada, the government funds Communities – Universities Research Alliances (CURA). Who could play a similar brokerage role at local and regional level in the European Research Area? Could national research councils or equivalent agencies take on this function?

Enhancing skills

Combining expertise and experience

The CSOs are often seen as the weaker partner. If they require specific knowledge to crystallize questions for research from their policy or advocacy environment, they also have skills to share and an ability to detect societal concerns and values from which researchers can learn. A key to success in CSO-RO projects is two-way flow of knowledge.

Furthermore most CSO-RO projects are trans-disciplinary in nature and combine a range of nationalities, skills, interests and approaches. CREPE, FAAN and CEECEC illustrates well this blend of complementary skills and knowledge. In CEECEC ecological economists and environmental activists joined forces to analyse concrete case studies relating to tourism, forest exploitation, water management, etc. CREPE and FAAN consist of cooperative research on agri-environmental issues for the former

([9]) *http://urbact.eu/*
([10]) *http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc78_en.htm*
([11]) *http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/capacities/research-sme_en.html*

and alternative agro-food networks in the latter. CAPOIRA is another example where health professionals, research and patient organisations have complementary knowledge to share relating to rare diseases.

In this perspective, CSO/RO projects can benefit from an integration stage which gives them time to develop a common language and working methods. The iteration step is critical, allowing in particular the CSOs to re-evaluate the role they want to play in the project and opportunities to make decisions. This will in turn impact on the method and indicators designed to monitor the projects.

Adapting the funding schemes

The major funding scheme for research ([12]) within FP7 is configured for research organisations. The stages of the project as described in the application form follow the usual practices of this type of organisation. Not much room is given to in-depth dialogue between participants of a different nature, the mutual learning process it implies, as well as an extended outreach strategy. This is reflected in the budget were the bulk of the funded activities is dedicated to research as such and the resources that CSOs are requested to put in such projects tend to be underestimated.

This situation mirrors the research provisions at national level. GoverScience-CSO participants stressed that application forms should be adapted to more closely reflect the vital activity of building a solid CSO-researcher partnership. The evaluation framework would also need to be adapted to value dialogue and activities to enhance partnership. Some national initiatives, still very few, are following this path, such as the PICRI – institutions- citizens' partnerships in France ([13]) and the university-community alliances in Canada.

The European Research Programme (FP7) introduced a new funding scheme for the benefit of specific groups which targets CSOs, BSG-CSO. Although it has to abide by the FP7 financial rules, it nevertheless gives more room to training and dialogue with a wider public, which benefit from a higher funding rate than research. INFOCON and ESDinds are pioneering this funding scheme in two fields of great interest for civil society, sustainable development and human conflicts.

([12]) Collaborative Project scheme.
([13]) http://www.iledefrance.fr/recherche-innovation/picri/

Applying foro EU funding by a CSO-researcher partnership allows the collaboration to take place but comes at a price of heavy administrative burdens. Simplifying the complexity of application and implementation processes would help. Reviewing the financial rules to allow a fair treatment of all partners remains a key issue for the robustness of the partnerships. To allow contribution in kind rather than in cash would be useful, particularly for CSOs. Small CSOs may suffer serious cash flow problems if bureaucracy delays the start of a project or interim payments. Unlike academic partners or SMEs, CSOs are often not able to ease their cash flow by accessing matching funds from Member States' resources for research.

Opening doors in research programmes

The infrastructure and incentives put in place to encourage CSO-researcher partnership should operate at local, regional, national and European levels. This could include agencies designed to encourage CSO participation, capacity building, modification of funding schemes to provide greater flexibility and simpler administration.

Particular attention should be given to co-financing levels which enhance CSO participation. In the EU Research programme (FP7) the differences in the funding rates of research activities ([14]) deters research organisations from partnering with CSOs, as they tend to prefer partners which generate more funding for the project.

The European Commission and the Member States could foster such developments in several ways. Exploratory 'calls' can contribute to developing national contact points, funding pre-project meetings, seed grants of up to €75 000 for preparatory work (with no commitment to fund the resulting proposals).

The EU could also engage with national research councils/bodies to promote CSO-researcher collaborations. With appropriate support, universities could create dedicated posts to act as bridges with community groups. CSO umbrella organisations have a role to play in sharing opportunities with their members and increasing the interest of CSOs to work with researchers.

EU research funds have a crucial capability to prioritise CSO-researcher partnerships as a means of ensuring the societal concerns are integrated into research. At present, very few European funded research programmes offer clear financial support for CSO engagement (e.g.; through the BSG-CSO scheme) and a part of research funding could be directed towards this type of collaboration.

([14]) FP7 rules for participation: 75 % for non profit research organisations; 50 % for civil society organisations; other activities than research and demonstration (training, dissemination activities) can be funded at 100 %.

Drawing the best from the multiple outputs

One major goal of many CSO-RO partnerships is to achieve change in the policy context. CSOs' and researchers' abilities complement each other to amplify policy impact. Researchers are often perceived as respected providers of new knowledge, but which is less relevant for the public. CSOs, on the other hand, are remarkable facilitators. They bring into the projects their ability to establish trustworthy dialogue with citizens, for instance through the social services and activities they carry out. They act as relays in both ways, to voice public concerns and to translate research into a knowledge framework which matters for citizens.

Such collaboration and impact should be better valued within the academic and policy environments. The challenge is to foster new communities of interest and related tools to assess the impacts.

New metrics could be conceived to assess CSO-researcher collaboration and their variety of outcomes, including evidence of benefit. Potential indicators might include outreach to communities, meetings with affected groups, trainings and workshops. Elements that could be measured are levels of social inclusion, sustained impact on the ground and multiplier effect in terms of more project ideas.

The European Union could assist through establishing academic reward schemes for CSO-researcher collaboration, such as an annual prize and a publishing initiative to showcase the results of projects.

IV – Perspectives of civil society involvement in FP7

The Environment and Social Sciences – Humanities programmes were the first to pioneer the new funding scheme BSG-CSO. They were actively involved in the GoverScience-CSO seminar and shared with the participants their views on the perspectives of civil society participation in research.

Sustainable Development

The ENV Programme for environmental research includes a section dealing with tools and indicators to support decision-making in sustainable development. This area of research has been among the first to use the civil society funding scheme. The first year of FP7 featured a more general call for research projects on sustainable development, which addressed the needs of CSOs. In the 2008 work-programme the call was dedicated to the area of indicators for sustainable development. Two projects were funded from the first call, and the second call resulted in three successful projects related to the ecological footprint, indicators on good governance and fair trade.

A new approach has been used for the 2009 ENV Programme. The topic is called 'Enhancing connectivity between research and policy-making in sustainable development'. In this new call, researchers, and actors involved in research, whether from the academic world or civil society, should work together with policy-makers to ensure that existing research (results) are brought into the policy-making. This is done by applying a collaborative method to bridge the gap between research and policy. The expected outputs are very concrete: the project partners should be able to demonstrate how the research was actually used in policy development and/or implementation.

The Commission intends to continue exploring the best use of the civil society funding scheme within the Environment theme.

Social Sciences and the Humanities

The SSH Programme is an obvious fit for the issue of the participation of civil society organisations in research. Although CSO participation is a valued part of democracy, the role of civil society is still being debated in theory and practice of democracy.

The representational issue is important because in democracies some groups are likely to be more represented than others. CSOs derive their legitimacy from the fact that they often represent forgotten social sensitivities in politics (the consumer in agricultural policy or the local population in environmental policy) and that they therefore enrich democracy. The same would hold for research in SSH: who are the civil society organisations that would engage with researchers? Which social reality would they convey?

The efficiency issue has relevance because the goal is a meaningful exchange between CSOs and researchers. For researchers, civil society is an object of science rather than a co-partner of science. Researchers tend to produce (and reproduce) a 'normal science', i.e. routinised work that can be of little relevance to civil society or which can even be detrimental to civil society. The 'rediscovery' of civil society through direct exchange is a welcome opportunity to enrich the objectives and theories of SSH.

For this, two instruments can be used in the SSH programme. The first is the 'social platform', designed to put together CSOs and researchers in order to jointly define future research agendas. There is currently one such social platform on cities and a second platform on families should start work in 2009. More platforms will follow in the coming years.

The second instrument is the BSG-CSO funding scheme which has already been ued for topics such as 'societal models in the medium to long-term perspective', 'conflicts, peace and human rights' and 'independent media and democracy in Europe'. Future themes should be identified not only relating to social issues but also to broader economic questions where the voice of citizens is often too little heard.

Science in Society

The development of European societies largely depends on their capacity to create and use appropriate knowledge. The SiS Programme encourages debates and reflection on research systems and their interactions with society. Among others, it deals with ethical issues, open access to scientific publication, citizens' involvement in science, gender issues, scientific culture and education.

The SiS programme took initiatives to encourage the participation of civil society actors in research activities, such as CSO capacity building, cooperative research processes. It also conceived the funding scheme Research for the Benefit of Specific Groups which can be used in principle in all FP7 areas. In addition it provides support to other FP7 Work Programmes to integrate civil society actors and concerns in their activities.

In 2009 a call for proposals was launched to foster a deeper and more systematic engagement of research bodies with civil society groups and the wider public. Research bodies are invited to design PER (Public Engagement in Research) action plans on issues of societal concern which requires further knowledge. The proposals should also include exchange of practices between Member States and associated countries ([15]).

([15]) i.e. the candidate countries, Israel and Norway.

V – In conclusion

The seminar highlighted the potential benefits for both sectors of closer collaboration and partnership. It outlined the respective contexts for CSOs and researchers: different values, concepts, priorities and timeframes. For both sectors there is an interest in finding ways of working together – CSOs need scientific research to work more effectively, and research organisations can achieve greater impact by working with CSOs.

However, neither the academic environment nor the policy-making cycle is sufficiently conducive to joint work between CSOs and researchers. Research strategies should address both the process of building relationships between CSOs and researchers, as well as the results of such partnerships. A political signal from the EU, echoed at national level and accompanied by changes to the financing environment for research could foster the engagement of academics and CSOs.

Annexes

Annexes

Annex 1 – List of participants

Felippe Angeli	Internationalist Review	INFOCON
Banthien Henning	IFOK	Facilitator
Tom Bauler	ULB – Université Libre de Bruxelles	CEECEC
Dace Beinare	Skalbes	STEPS
Thomas Blumenfeld	Internationalist Review	INFOCON
Urszula Budzich-Szukala	Polish Rural Forum	FAAN
Dominique Donnet-Kamel	INSERM – National Institute for Health and Medical Research	CAPOIRA
Maria Paula Ferretti	ZERP Zentrum für Europäische Rechtspolitik – Universität Bremen	PSx2
Jenny Franco	TNI – Transnational Institute	CREPE
Eric Gall	FSC – Fondation Sciences Citoyennes	STACS
Laura Greco	A Sud	CEECEC
Katrin Gruber	IMEW – Institut Mensch, Ethik und Wissenschaft GmbH, Berlin	STACS
Willem Halffman	Twente University	CREPE
Marie Harder	Brighton University	ESDinds
Haly Healy	CEECEC cordination Unit	CEECEC
Jo Jewell	EPHA – European Public Health Alliance	STACS
Sandra Karner	Inter-Univ. Research Centre for Technology, Work and Culture, IFZ	FAAN
Matteo Lener	CDG – Consiglio Dei Diritti Genetici	PSx2
Les Levidow	Open University	CREPE, FAAN
Shane Lynam	Eurordis – European Organisation for Rare Diseases	CAPOIRA
Joan Martinez-Alier	UAB – Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona	CEECEC
Mark McCarthy	UCL – University College London	STEPS
Alberto Merolla	CDG – Consiglio Dei Diritti Genetici	PSx2

Luminita Micioi	ENERO – Centre for Promotion of Clean and Efficient Energy	INRE
Claudia Neubauer	FSC – Fondation Sciences Citoyennes	STACS, CREPE
Angel Nikolaev	BSREC – Black Sea Regional Energy Centre	INRE
Marusca Perazzi	Minority Rights Group International	INFOCON
Leida Rijnhout	VODO – Vlaams Overleg Duurzame Ontwikkeling	CEECEC
Tamsin Rose	Tamarack Limited	Rapporteur
Jana Schildt	Université catholique de Louvain	INFOCON
Supriya Singh	CSE – Centre for Science and Environment, India	CEECEC
Sandra Tavares-Moreira	EDF – European Disability Forum	EuRADE
Anastasca Toneva	AE21 – Association Energy 21	INRE
Ismael Velasco	BASED UK Baha'I Agency for Social & Economic Development	ESDinds
Helen Wallace	GeneWatch Management (UK)	FAAN, PSx2

European Commission DG Research

Jean-Michel Baer	L – Science, Economy and Society
Paraskevas Caracostas	L – Science, Economy and Society
Philippe Galiay	L3 – Governance and Ethics
Philippe Keraudren	L2 – Economic, social sciences and humanities, prospective
Sara Kjellstrand	I2 – Sustainable development
Angela Liberatore	L3 – Governance and Ethics
Viviane Willis-Mazzichi	L3 – Governance and Ethics

Annex 2 – List of Projects

CSO capacity building

STACS – Science, technology and civil society – Civil Society Organisations, actors in the European system of research and innovation

March 2006 – April 2009
www.citizens-science.org/

STACS explores the feasibility of future academia-civil society partnerships in different research areas (agriculture, health, nanotechnologies, free software, biomedicine) and how to optimise the interaction between science dynamics and needs/concerns of society. More specifically STACS aims to:

1) give CSOs the possibility of attending and contributing to capacity building sessions on selected scientific issues of high societal relevance;

2) explore the possibilities of drafting common research projects between CSOs and public research laboratories (nursery workshops);

3) create an interactive European platform (website) allowing communication between CSO and scientists on common research issues;

4) improve the understanding of CSOs of the European research system;

5) contribute to the elaboration of better conditions for future European policy support on societal relevance of research.

Coordinator:

FSC – Fondation Sciences Citoyennes, France

Partners:

EPHA – European Public Health Alliance

FSFE – Free Software Foundation Europe, Sweden

RSP – Réseau semences paysannes, France

DEMOS – Building everyday democracy, United Kingdom

IMEW – Institut Mensch, Ethik und Wissenschaft, Germany

CAPOIRA: CApacity-building for Patient Organisations to participate in Research Activities

January 2006 – June 2008
http://www.eurordis.org/article.php3?id_article=1224

Capoira address the needs of patient organisations in health research and foster their participation in research activities. More specifically:

1) to develop in 3 Member States (IT, DK, ES) a capacity-building module on clinical trial protocols based a pilot project developed by EURORDIS and INSERM;

2) to organise a European Conference 'Gaining access to rare diseases research resources' aimed at increasing the capacities of patient representatives to understand health research activities at EU level and act as catalysers for the development of research on their own disease.

Coordinator:

EURORDIS – European Organisation for Rare Diseases

Partners:

INSERM – Institut National de la Santé et de la Recherche Médicale, France

FEDER – Federación Española Enfermedades Raras, Spain

UNIAMO – Federazione Italiana Malattie Rare, Italy

RDD – Rare Disorders Denmark, Denmark

INRE – Involving NGOs in Renewable Energy Research

January 2006 – December 2007
http://www.inre-project.eu/index.html

INRE aims to support the collaboration of CSOs and research institutions from Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia, and FYR-Macedonia in renewable energy research. INRE more specific objectives are:

1) to identify research needs of CSOs engaged in the promotion of renewable energy and assess them (importance, availability of information and research capacity);

2) to identify research areas of common interest for CSOs and research institutions, including the assessment of the relevance of research institutions' priorities to CSOs' needs and the capacity of research institutions to meet CSOs' research needs;

3) to train researchers and CSOs on FP7 objectives, scope and rules for participation and help them identify opportunities for funding.

Coordinator:

BSREC – Black Sea Regional Energy Centre, Bulgaria

Partners:

AE21 – Association Energy 21, Bulgaria

ENERO – Centre for Promotion of Clean and Efficient Energy, Romania

PSx2: Participatory Science and Scientific Participation: The role of civil society organisations in decision-making about novel developments in biotechnologies

February 2006 – October 2008
http://www.fondazionedirittigenetici.org/psx2/psx2/

In PSx2 five CSOs and four academic partners worked together to design, conduct and analyse a survey on the role of CSOs in research in biotechnology applied to agriculture, in particular regarding GMOs (genetically modified organisms) in ten European countries. The interviewed CSOs were invited to describe:

- their experience in the GM debate; and
- their views/perceptions on what participation in science mean and cover;
- their expectations about CSOs' participation in agricultural biotechnology research.

Coordinator:

CDG – Consiglio Dei Diritti Genetici, Italy

Partners:

ZERP – Zentrum für Europäische Rechtspolitik, Universität Bremen, Germany

GENET – European NGO network on Genetic Engineering, Switzerland

GeneWatch, United Kingdom

CRII GEN – Comité de Recherche et d'Information Indépendantes sur le Génie Génétique, France

ELF – SA – Eestimaa Looduse Fond (Estonian Fund for Nature), Estonia

Uni-Caen – Université de Caen Basse Normandie, Institut de Biologie Fondamentale et Appliquée (IBFA), Laboratoire Œstrogène et Reproduction, France

DBVBAZ – University of Perugia, Department of Plant Biology and Agro-environmental and Animal Biotechnologies, Genetics and Breeding Section, Italy

CSIS – Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Cientificas, Department of Compared politics, Spain

EURADE – European Research Agendas for Disability Equality

February 2008 – July 2009
http://www.eurade.eu/

EURADE's purpose is to build the capacity of disabled people's CSOs to participate in FP7 and other relevant research initiatives. It builds capacity by stimulating research participation in the domains of discriminations, a current priority area of European and global policy development. It will enable EDF and its member organisations to:

- identify and articulate the research priorities of disabled people's CSOs with current research;
- provide research knowledge and skills for CSOs; and
- identify opportunities for larger scale collaboration with European research partners in priority areas.

Coordinator:

EDF – European Disability Forum

Partners:

University of Leeds – Centre for Disability Studies, United Kingdom

University of Maastricht – Centre for Human Rights, Netherlands

CEECEC: CSO Engagement with Ecological Economics (EE)

April 2008 – October 2010
http://www.ceecec.net/

Through a trans-disciplinary approach, EE emphasizes the social, economic, biophysical, cultural and ethical issues at stake in the management of human economies and their interactions with the natural world. CSOs have a large stock of environmental knowledge gained from their grassroots experience and activism. Yet there is a growing demand from CSOs for access to expertise and methods for applying EE to their work.

CEECEC aims to enable CSOs to engage in and lead Ecological economics (EE) research through a number of coordinated activities. The overall focus is on case study based on CSOs needs and interests, whereby CSOs and academics identify and explore key issues for activism and policy-making in areas such as water management, forest exploitation, tourism, high speed train, rural development, industrial pollution and natural reserves In addition, options for future research cooperation will be explored in order to apply EE methods, tools and indicators to CSOs work.

Coordinator:

Universitat Autónoma de Barcelona, Spain

Partners:

Centre for Science And Environment, India

Centre pour l'Environnement et le Développement, Cameroon

Accion Ecologica, Ecuador

Ecological Society Endemit, Serbia

A Sud-Ecologia e Cooperazione, Italy

VODO – Vlaams Overleg Duurzame Ontwikkeling, Belgium

IFF – Universität Klagenfurt, Austria

Grupo de Ecologia del Paisaje y Medio Ambiente, Universidad de Buenos Aires – Facultad de Arquitectura, Diseño y Urbanismo, Argentina

Foundation of the Faculty of Sciences And Technology – New University of Lisbon, Portugal

Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium

SERI – Nachhaltigkeitsforschungs und -kommunikations GmbH, Austria

Instituto Rede Brasiliera Agroflorestal, Brazil

SUNCE – Association for Nature, Environment and Sustainable Development, Croatia

STEPS – Strengthening Engagement in Public Health research

January 2009 – June 2011
www.ucl.ac.uk/public-health

STEPS is designed to increase CSO participation in the development of public health research in each of the twelve new Member States and in Europe as a whole. The European Public Health Association (EUPHA) will engage its member national public health associations and the Latvian Public Health Network (LPHN) the health CSOs in each country.

EUPHA and LPHN will hold national workshops between these national partners to address the development of public health research, taking a particular theme relevant to their own perspectives and generating discussion among citizens through their organisations and national media. UCL, the coordinator, will promote the engagement of national ministries of health. Learning drawn for comparisons will be shared across the new Member States, with European and international level alliances.

Coordinator:

University College London, United Kingdom

Partners:

European Public Health Association, Netherlands

Skalbes, Latvia

Cooperative research processes

CREPE: Co-operative Research on Environmental Problems in Europe

May 2008 – June 2010
http://crepeweb.net/

The CREPE project will empower and resource CSOs to participate in co-operative research on agri-environmental issues, as a means to achieve these subsidiary aims:

1) capabilities: To strengthen CSOs' capacity to participate in research, while engaging with diverse perspectives and expertise;

2) co-operative research methods: To design, implement, evaluate and thus test the methods used for co-operative research in this project;

3) agri-environmental issues: To analyse diverse accounts of 'the environment' in relation to agricultural methods, technologies, innovations and alternatives;

4) priority-setting: To relate research more closely to societal needs, as a means to inform policy debate and research priorities for Europe as a 'Knowledge-based society';

5) solutions: To suggest alternative solutions related to different understandings of societal problems, agri-environmental issues and sustainable development.

Coordinator:

Open University Milton Keynes – OU, United Kingdom

Partners:

University of Twente, Netherlands

FSC – Fondation Sciences Citoyennes, France – also coordinator of STACS

TNI – Transnational Institute, Netherlands

CDG – Consiglio dei Diritti Genetici, Italy – also coordinator of PSx2

FEC – Food Ethics Council, United Kingdom

FNCA – Fundación Nueva Cultura del Agua, Spain

FRCIVAM – Fédération Régionale des Centres d'Initiatives pour Valoriser l'Agriculture, France

FAAN: Facilitating Alternative Agro-Food Networks: Stakeholder Perspectives on Research Needs

February 2008 – March 2010
http://www.faanweb.eu/page/what-co-operative-research

FAAN engages CSOs in co-operative research and research agenda setting on Alternative Agro-Food Networks (AAFNs). 5 academic institutions and 5 CSO partners carry out literature review, design and conduct participatory action research (focus group discussions, scenario analysis workshops) on following issues:

- how AAFNs are defined by social, political, commercial and cultural frameworks involving motives beyond direct material interests in practice;
- how current policies facilitate or impede the development of AAFNs;
- how alternatives may be complementary or oppositional to conventional agro-food networks;
- how AAFNs contribute to regional development;
- how AAFNs link different types of innovation as a basis to broaden EU research policies on the 'knowledge based bio-economy'.

Coordinator:

IFZ – Inter-University Research Centre for Technology, Work and Culture, Austria

Partners:

VCA – Via Campesina Austria, Austria

Open University Milton Keynes – OU, United Kingdom

GW – GeneWatch, United Kingdom

Szent István University – Institute of Environmental and Landscape Management, SZIU, Hungary

Védegylet – Protect the Future, Hungary, VPFH, Hungary

AR – Agrocampus Rennes – Rural Economy and Public Policy Department, France

FRCIVAM – Fédération Régionale de Bretagne des Centres d'Initiatives pour Valoriser l'Agriculture et le Milieu Rural, France

NCU – Nicolaus Copernicus University – Institute of Sociology, Poland

PRF – Polish Rural Forum, Poland

Research for the benefit of Civil Society Organisations – BSG-CSO

INFOCON – International Civil Society Forum on Conflicts

April 2008 – March 2011
www.infocon-project.org

INFOCON is a research project which results from extensive discussions between groups or individuals representing transnational communities (TC), CSOs working in the field of minority rights or conflict resolution and leading scholars in various disciplines. It aims to create a better understanding of how TC CSOs can help in preventing and resolving conflicts in Europe and beyond. It strives to attain the following objectives:

1) provide recommendations and strategic tools for CSOs, in order to increase their efficiency and involvement in policies related to TCs;

2) shed new light on past research results on TCs and their impact on conflicts and address the gap between civil society knowledge and academic expertise;

3) produce new insights into the dynamics and potential role of CSOs in different conflicts, by elaborating comparisons of TCs across Europe and the world;

4) elaborate policy recommendations at the European, national and local level in order to enhance current conflict policy and to use the leverage and opportunities that TC CSOs offer in the field of conflict and peace.

Coordinator:

Stichting Internationalist Review, Netherlands

Partners:

Civil society organisations:

Stichting Mondiale Samenleving, Netherlands

NAVEND – Zentrum für Kurdische Studien e. V., Germany

Wzw SOS Rwanda Burundi Asbl, Belgium

Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants, Belgium

Minority Rights Group International, United Kingdom

AKAGERA – RHEIN e.V., Germany

Kosova young Lawyers, Kosovo

↓

Coordinating Council for Albanians in the Netherlands, Netherlands

Zentrum für Türkeistudien, Germany

Research organisations:

Centre de Politique Comparée –Université Catholique de Louvain, Belgium

UNIKENT – Kent University – Conflict Analysis Research Centre, United Kingdom

Centre for International Development Issues, Faculteit der Sociale Wetenschappen, Stichting Katholieke Universiteit, Netherlands

Université de Liège (ULg), Centre d'Études de l'Ethnicité et des Migrations, Belgium

Institut für Entwicklung und Frieden, Universität Essen, Germany

Université Laval, Institut Québécois des Hautes Études Internationales, Canada

Institut d'Études Politiques de Lille, France

ESDinds: Development of indicators & Assessment Tools for CSO Values-based projects in Education for sustainable development (ESD)

January 2009 – January 2011
http://www.brighton.ac.uk/sdecu/research/esdinds/

In ESDinds, five CSOs engaged in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) projects investigate with academic assistance how to develop more useful indicators to measure the impact of value/behaviour change elements in their ESD projects, at project level. In consultation with all the CSOs, researchers will develop indicators relevant to their projects, combining the on-the-ground knowledge of the CSOs with their knowledge of academic and national level indicators. CSO will host the researchers in their field work and provide guidance and feedback on the usability and efficacy of the indicators as they are developed.

During the development process, findings will be distributed to a further 50-80 CSOs who are engaged in similar educational programmes. They will be invited to test out these new indicators and assessment tools and offer feedback.

Coordinator:

Brighton University, United Kingdom

Partners:

ECI – Earth Charter Initiative, Sweden

EBBF – European Baha'I Business Forum, France

ARC – Alliance For Religions and Conservation, United Kingdom

BASED-UK – Baha'I Agency for Social & Economic Development, United Kingdom

PT – People's Theater e.V., Germany

Arthur Lyon DAHL – Switzerland Univerzita Karlova v Praze – CUEC, Czech Republic

European Commission

EUR 23912 – GOVERSCIENCE – CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS SEMINAR DRAFT REPORT

Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities

2009 — 40 pp. — 21 x 29.7 cm

ISBN 978-92-79-11296-6
DOI 10.2777/64742

KI-NA-23912-EN-C

Why should civil society organisations (CSO) and research organisations (RO) cooperate? And if they find enough incentives to engage in partnership, how can they work together, who takes decisions and what results do they expect from their collaboration?

New forms of collaboration between the spheres of science and civil society are emerging that the Seventh European Framework Programme for Research supports through different schemes: CSO capacity building, Cooperative Research Processes and Research of the Benefit of Specific Groups (BSG-CSO).

This publication reports on the discussion of pioneers – members of civil society organisations, mediators, scientists and researchers – who engaged in these schemes. They explored together new ways of knowledge production and suggested from their experience how the future of such collaborations can be shaped.

Publications Office
Publications.europa.eu

ISBN 978-92-79-11296-6
9 789279 112966