

Joint Statement by the European Commission and New Zealand Following the Inaugural Joint Science and Technology Cooperation Meeting

The European Commission and New Zealand convened the inaugural EC-NZ Joint Science and Technology Cooperation (JSTC) meeting at the New Zealand Ministry of Research, Science & Technology in Wellington on 23 November 2006. The meeting was conducted under the 1991 Arrangement for Cooperation in Science and Technology between the Commission of the European Communities and the government of New Zealand.

This meeting coincided with the agreement between European Commissioner for Research, Janez Potočnik, and New Zealand Minister of Research, Science and Technology, Steve Maharey, subject to a mandate from the European Council, to work towards a substantial Science & Technology Cooperation Agreement as a way to reinforce the cooperation started under the 1991 Science and Technology Cooperation Arrangement between the European Commission and New Zealand.

Dr. Alessandro Damiani, Head of Unit, International dimension of the Framework Programme, European Commission Research Directorate-General and Dr. Helen Anderson, Chief Executive of New Zealand Ministry of Research, Science and Technology led the respective delegations for the JSTC meeting.

The European Commission team included representatives from the European Commission Research Directorate-General and the European Commission Delegation to NZ. The New Zealand team included representatives from the Ministry of Research, Science & Technology, Foundation for Research, Science & Technology, Royal Society of New Zealand Tertiary Education Commission and Ministry of Education.

The two sides reviewed EU-NZ cooperation under the Sixth Framework Programme for Research and Development (FP6), noting that this had increased significantly over the level of EU-NZ cooperation under FP5, and discussed initiatives to further enhance EU-NZ cooperation under the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Development (FP7).

All New Zealand research funding programmes are open for the participation of European researchers. EU-NZ cooperation in New Zealand research programmes is particularly strong in areas of Food, Agriculture and Biotechnology, Environment, Health and ICT.

Initiatives to stimulate EU-NZ cooperation under the Framework Programme include the recent establishment of a co-funded platform to Facilitate Research cooperation between Europe and New Zealand (FRENZ), an exchange of delegations in the field of food, agriculture and biotechnology research and a major New Zealand ICT research delegation attending IST 2006. A large delegation of NZ health researchers will travel to Europe in early 2007.

The two sides agreed that, in addition to the strong cooperation under the Food, Agriculture & Biotechnology theme they would seek opportunities to significantly enhance EU-NZ cooperation in various areas including the health, ICT and Environment themes of the FP7 Specific Programme Cooperation and to increase the mobility of researchers between the EU and New Zealand under the Marie Curie Actions of the People Specific Programme.

EC and NZ participants agreed that periodic meetings would help ensure the realisation of the potential that has been identified for enhanced EU-NZ cooperation under FP7. The EC will host the next meeting.