



Research and Innovation
in the service of Economy and Society
EU Neighbourhood and the Black Sea Region

RInES

29 & 30 May 2014
Thessaloniki Concert Hall
Thessaloniki, Greece



THESSALONIKI DECLARATION

We, scientists, policy makers, and representatives of private enterprises from EU, European Neighborhood, Black Sea region and the European Commission were summoned in Thessaloniki to discuss future challenges within the framework of “Research and Innovation in the service of Economy and Society” (RInES) Conference.

In doing so, we acknowledge:

- The ancient-long importance of the Mediterranean and Black Sea regions as corridors for growth and prosperity for all people living in the three continents that border them
- The strong interconnection of energy, water and food supply and the associated environmental impacts as a driver for international cooperation and synergy
- The complex marine environment of the Mediterranean and Black Sea regions and its importance on health, food, energy and economic growth
- The energy technologies that are vital for fulfilling Europe's objectives for 2020 and 2050, including the development of a new generation of low/zero footprint carbon technologies
- The need for environmental awareness and protection to the benefit of socio-economic progress
- The emerging opportunities for innovation, sustainable development and job creation in maritime sectors such as fisheries, aquaculture, renewable energy, transport and tourism
- The need to address existing and emerging challenges and opportunities and develop innovative integrated business solutions spanning the entire Energy Chain: from energy sources and carriers to transformation technologies and processes through transport and distribution networks leading to smart uses and sustainable applications with beneficial impacts on human health, the environment and the economy.
- The need of reinforcing international cooperation with support of networking initiatives towards common policies and approaches on key issues

Therefore, taking into consideration:

- the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP),
- the Black Sea Synergy,
- the Horizon 2020 The EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation and the opportunities provided therein on International Cooperation,

- the priorities identified during the Conference regarding two sectors of high importance to meet the societal challenges not only of HORIZON 2020 but also the European Neighbourhood and the Black Sea region countries

We propose to build initiatives and programmes on the following two pillars:

Clean Energy Corridors: The Back Bone of a Regional Growth Strategy

Recognize the growth potential, map out all regional Energy Corridors (energy sources and carriers, transformation processes, grids and pipelines, land, sea and air transport routes and logistics) and promote research that valorizes these regional assets towards products with sustainable and smart uses and beneficial impacts on health, the environment and the economy.

Exploit the geographical characteristics, natural and human resources of the region to generate a new growth paradigm, rooted in interdisciplinary research, development and innovation, leading to new business and job creation along the entire Clean Energy Corridor.

Unlock the regional potential for excellence and innovation by strengthening and extending key research infrastructures that are required for the support of business growth in low/zero carbon technologies. These act as added value/knowledge nodes where several technologies and industrial applications are crossed and combined.

Support projects in the region, aiming at demonstrating the market potential of innovative low/zero carbon technologies, processes and management practices engaging all stakeholders of the triple helix.

Communicate a coherent vision and its supporting scientific and technological base to the citizens of the region and build the basis for a smart specialization strategy on all scales.

Marine Research and Maritime Strategy

Foster cooperation between EU, European Neighborhood and Black Sea countries on both scientific and industry projects and develop multidisciplinary educational programs aiming to create the necessary highly skilled scientific workforce

Support existing and future research infrastructures, which are indispensable for sustaining both marine research and maritime activities

Promote innovative environmental monitoring, with technologically advanced methods, to bolster good environmental status and support policy making

Build bridges between marine research and industry by commercializing products and services; use marine spatial planning as a powerful tool for sustainable economic growth and job creation

Disseminate environmental information and engage the general public, to advance a knowledge-based society in the region