

ENLACE information: News about Central American – EU S&T cooperation

Dear Sirs,

The ENLACE partners are pleased to inform you on the ongoing project activities as well as on important news about Central American – EU cooperation in the area of Science and Technology. **ENLACE - Enhancing Scientific Cooperation between the European Union and Central America** is a project funded by the European Commission, under the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7), www.enlace-project.eu.



1. Activities of the ENLACE project

- International Seminar “EU, Caribbean & Central America cooperation in Research and Innovation”
- NCP Staff exchange
- Success stories of the travel grant scheme
- Information and dissemination events in Central America
- Foresight: Experts’ Dialogue on ICT

2. Breaking news

- ENLACE Contributions to the LAC – SOM

1. Activities of the ENLACE project

- The *International Seminar “EU, Caribbean & Central America cooperation in Research and Innovation”* took place in Brussels, Belgium on the 5th of October, 2011. The seminar, jointly organized by the ENLACE and EUCARINET projects with the support of the European Commission (DG Research and Innovation), aimed at fostering cooperation in research and innovation among the EU, Central America and the Caribbean. Fruitful discussions on building capacity between Caribbean and Central American research officers, European Commission officers, project partners and R&I stakeholders on the upcoming challenges in the four areas of high importance for the two regions: Knowledge Based Bio Economy, Energy, Environment and ICT was the major outcome in the morning session. The afternoon session was devoted to discussions on the possible models and strategies to foster the involvement of the private sector and industry from the Caribbean, Central America and the European Union in research and innovation. This session involved key stakeholders such as the European Enterprise Network, the Centre for the Development of Enterprise and the Caribbean and Central American Embassies in Brussels.
- *NCP Staff exchange*: From the 10th to the 11th of October 2011, APRE hosted Ms. Rosa Maria Amaya (National coordinator and INCO NCP – Guatemala) and Mr. Carlos Meza (ENERGY NCP – Costa Rica) for a specific NCP training. The NCPs got in close contact with NCPs’ daily work through presentations of good practices, and specific issues related to FP7 and particular programmes/themes. During the two days, the hosted NCPs also were provided with additional information on partner search tools, communication channels and funded NCP networks. Moreover, the invited NCPs participated in a special training on services marketing organised by Help-Forward in Athens from the 12th to the 14th of October. The special training aimed to provide ideas, tools and techniques for promoting innovation related services to clients. The staff-exchange provided to both sides an insight view of the NCP offices, the problems faced, and the challenges and has set the basis for a closer future collaboration.
- *Success stories of the travel grant scheme*: In the course of the second call of the ENLACE travel grant scheme, 14 researchers from Central America were selected to participate in international

conferences in Europe. Among them, Dr. Pablo Hernández Hernández, researcher at the Philosophy Research Institute and Dr. Jorge Cortés Núñez, researcher at the Center for Research in Marine Biology and Limnology (CIMAR), both of the University of Costa Rica (UCR). Dr. Hernández presented two of his research works at the XXXII Congress of the German Association of Romance Studies celebrated at the Humboldt University of Berlin. Due to the qualitative discussion within the section's congress participants, they decided to publish a book with all the presentations and discussions. Dr. Hernández' paper "The Visualization of Political Violence in Latin America" will serve to present the topic and to connect the various discussions. Dr. Núñez made an outstanding contribution to the World Conference on Marine Biodiversity 2011, held in Aberdeen, Scotland. He won the prize for the "Best Digital Object in the Taxonomy" for his presentation of a video, describing the study of marine biodiversity done by CIMAR in Costa Rica.

- *Information and dissemination events in Central America:*
 - *Training Workshop in Guatemala City:* In August 2011, the second training workshop titled: "Training for participation in research projects of the Seventh Framework Programme of the European Union" took place in Guatemala City. The objective was to train researchers from the public and the private sector in the preparation of proposals and the search for partners to participate in the calls of the FP7. It was organized by the National Secretariat of Science and Technology (host of the Guatemalan National Contact Point) with the support of CSUCA and ENLACE. The activity was divided into three parts: 1) general information on FP7, 2) a panel on "Opportunities for Guatemala in FP7" and 3) a presentation of successful proposals, internet search and practical exercises. The main speaker and instructor was Dr. Rita Torres Pascacio from CONACYT Mexico.
 - *ENLACE presentation at UNACHI, Panama:* In October 2011, the Autonomous University of Chiriqui (UNACHI) held its annual event called "Encuentro Científico-UNACHI". The university's research centers (from different disciplines) presented their work and the researchers informed the community about their activities. Additionally, Clotilde Arocha, Vice Chancellor for Research and Postgraduate Studies of UNACHI, gave a report on the realized activities, including a presentation of ENLACE, the activities (e.g. the travel grant scheme) and results of the project. Representatives of the National Bureau of Science, Technology and Innovation of Panama participated in the event to monitor the results of funded projects.
- *Foresight: Experts' Dialogue on ICT:* In May 2012, the Fourth Experts' Dialogue on ICT will be held in Guatemala City. This dialogue will be organized by ENLACE with the aim of identifying research lines and scientific priorities of mutual interest that can open new joint cooperation opportunities between the European Union, Central America and the Caribbean. More information will be released soon.

2. Breaking news

- *ENLACE Contributions to the EU-LAC Senior Officials Meeting:* The context of the bi-regional dialogue between EU and Central America and of the policy dialogue on science, innovation and research priority setting has been changed by the adoption of the Madrid Action Plan (at the EU-LAC Summit of 18 May 2010) and the outcomes of EU-LAC Senior Official Meeting (EU-LAC SOM) held in Brussels on 28th-29th March 2011. During the meeting, the functions and responsibilities of the bi-regional working groups were agreed and a roadmap was finalised. ENLACE, together with EUCARINET and EULARINET, has to contribute to this new policy context with the "EU-LAC Joint Initiative for Research and Innovation". During the preparatory meeting of the EU-LAC SOM four thematic working groups were established to develop pilot activities areas related to key global societal challenges. Each working group has two co-leaders, one from each region (Europe and LAC). So far the following countries have expressed their interest to lead the thematic working groups:
 - Bio-economy (including food security) – Argentina and France

- Bio-diversity and Climate Change – Colombia and France
- ICT for meeting societal challenges – Chile and Finland
- Renewable Energies – Mexico and Spain

Events organized by ENLACE and other INCO-NETs will provide support to the working groups and they will provide pilot activities that could be implemented as joint activities of the working group that will be funded jointly. The events will be converted in concrete proposals for the Senior Officials Meeting in Santiago de Chile in March 2012. The report produced after the ENLACE 3rd Experts' Dialogue (October 2011) will be sent to the Senior Officials.

To be regularly informed about the project's activities as well as about important highlights concerning Central American – EU S&T cooperation, please visit the ENLACE website: www.enlace-project.eu.

Kind regards,
The team of the ENLACE project