

Asian-European R&D Scientific Cooperation on Biotechnology in the EU Framework Programme 7.

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The biotechnologies are an important group of technologies for the world. Industrial, agricultural biotechnologies provide enormous opportunities to address today's global challenges. The history of European support for international research has been long, and in FP7 international support is fully integrated into the whole of the research-funding programme. Whether through ordinary projects, or through specific targeted topics, the involvement of partners from outside Europe is not only welcome but is actively promoted. With a view to strengthening international cooperation, a series of actions have been implemented in order to coordinate research in the field of biotechnologies. These include defining specific topics and the twinning of on-going projects between European and other partners. In some cases the general opening of the work programmes to participants from outside Europe has become even more comprehensive, involving coordinated calls between Europe and third countries. One such call has been the recent successful call coordinated between India and Europe, from which a number of joint projects are being funded.

Support to the knowledge-based bio-economy includes all areas of biotechnology. The programme includes the production of biomass, exploitation for bio-fuels and bio-products, marine biotechnology and emerging areas such as bioinformatics, nanotechnologies and synthetic biology. Socio-economic and ethical aspects are also included.

While in 2010 we will be readdressing our policy on research for the bio-based economy to update it for the future, we can be sure that the global challenges we need to address will ensure that international cooperation on the basis of equality – mutual interest and mutual benefit – will be maintained.

The current status of funding between Europe and Asia through the framework programme will be reviewed. Details of the framework programme for research can be found on the CORDIS website: www.cordis.europa.eu