



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
RESEARCH DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

Directorate E - Biotechnologies, Agriculture, Food
The Director

Brussels, 14/06/2007
CP/K-GB/mc/E1(2007)15450

Letter to the Technology Platforms.
Plants for the Future
Sustainable Chemistry/White Biotechnology
Food for Life
Sustainable Animal Breeding and Reproduction
Global Animal Health
Forest Based Sector
Manufature
Biofuels

Subject: Public consultation on the European Commission's ERA Green Paper

Dear colleagues,

As I am sure you are aware the European Commission recently adopted a Green Paper, entitled 'The European Research Area: New Perspectives'. The purpose of a Green Paper *in general* is to stimulate debate and launch a process of consultation. The purpose of this Green Paper *in particular* is to assess the progress made in establishing the ERA and to discuss the future direction of the project. In line with these objectives, the European Commission has published a complementary, online public consultation addressing the questions raised in the Green Paper. This consultation can be found at the following website (<http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/ipm/forms/dispatch?form=ERAGreenPaper>) and is linked to from the ERA homepage (http://ec.europa.eu/research/era/index_en.html) where additional information on ERA can be found. At this moment the consultation is available only in English, but will be published in French and German very shortly.

The structure of the consultation mirrors that of the Green Paper and poses questions on each of the six main characteristics identified in the Green Paper as requirements for an effective ERA: An adequate flow of competent researchers; World-class research infrastructures; Excellent research institutions; Effective knowledge sharing; Well co-ordinated research programmes and priorities; and a wide opening of the European Research Area to the world. It also poses general questions on the overarching elements of ERA.

Like the Green Paper, what the consultation does not do is put primary focus on innovation, nor on the need to increase business R&D. Work to promote innovation and a

much more developed and coordinated demand-side policy will continue in the framework of the broad-based innovation strategy launched in 2006 including in particular, the "lead market" initiative. The Green Paper is nevertheless consistent with and complementary to the broad-based innovation strategy, as increased business R&D can only occur with the right framework conditions: surveys suggest that when investing in R&D, business considers the presence of adequate numbers of well-trained and mobile researchers, responsive to the needs of industry and an excellent public research base (research institutions and infrastructures) with strong interactions with industry to be vitally important. All of these are areas considered by the Green Paper and the accompanying consultation.

I would like to take the opportunity to encourage you to participate in this debate by responding to this public consultation, and to disseminate this message to your members and stakeholder community.

Guidelines on the completion of the consultation questionnaire can be found at the website above. Note that you can if you wish, download Word or PDF versions of the consultation prior to completing the online version. You may also provide additional comments via the email address: RTD-ERA@ec.europa.eu.

In addition to the online consultation, please note that the European Commission will also organise a series of expert groups, stakeholder seminars and other activities to generate input for the ERA debate as well as will other European institutions. Member States are also expected to organise debates on the issues raised in the ERA Green Paper, and to provide feedback to the European Commission on the outcomes.

With kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christian Patermann', written in a cursive style.

Christian Patermann