

India-EU Joint Committee on S&T Cooperation creates action-oriented agenda focusing on ICT, resource efficiency & electric mobility

The India-EU joint steering committee on science and technology agreed to develop and adopt a long-term strategic perspective for India-EU collaboration in research and innovation at the 13th Joint Steering Committee on Science and Technology Cooperation meeting hosted by the European Commission.

The two sides appreciated the achievements under India –EU science, technology Innovation cooperation and decided to create an action-oriented agenda which can be implemented within the agreed timeline at the meeting co-chaired by Director-General for Research and Innovation of the European Commission (EC), Mr. Jean-Eric Paquet, on the EU side and Secretary of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India, Professor Ashutosh Sharma on February 12, 2021.

Taking into account the Joint Statement and the ‘EU-India Strategic Partnership: A Roadmap to 2025’, adopted at the EU-India July Summit, both sides have shown keen interest for possible cooperation on ICT, in particular, cyber-physical-systems (ICPS), including artificial intelligence and robotics, circular economy and resource efficiency (waste-to-energy; plastics; etc.), electric mobility and sustainable agri-food processing and so on.

The important role of Mission Innovation to concentrate efforts on research and innovation to accelerate the clean energy transition, necessary for a carbon-neutral planet, was underlined, cooperation on health beyond Covid-19 pandemic areas through global fora was also reinforced. Both sides also underlined the cooperation on polar sciences and discussed future cooperation under Horizon Europe at the virtual meeting.

The two sides reiterated their commitment to human capital development, including researchers’ training and mobility, based on mutual interests and reciprocal promotion of each other’s equivalent programmes, aiming at a more balanced flow of researchers between Europe and India.

Indian side presented the key elements of new Science, Technology and Innovation Policy (STIP 2020), which aim to create a fit for purpose, accountable research ecosystem promoting translational as well as foundational research; indigenous development of technology, technology indigenization; facilitating open Science; equity and inclusion.

The Indian side proposed Implementation Arrangement (IA) for co-funding future joint projects under India-EU Science, Technology, and Innovation Cooperation to streamline the process of collaboration and to address certain issues on project evaluation, selection, funding, monitoring, and also IPR sharing/data sharing/materials/equipment transfer mechanism and so on.

During 2014-2020, 42 collaborative projects amounting to a total of EUR ~157 Million funding (EUR 113 from H2020 & EUR 44 from Government of India) have been funded. The majority of these collaborations took place in the form of flagship calls on water, a new generation influenza vaccine, and smart grids cooperation. The mobility of researchers from both sides was significantly increased over the years, and cooperation among scientists and research organisations from India and Europe strengthened.

Secretary of the Department of Biotechnology (DBT), Government of India, Dr. Renu Swarup, Mr. Christophe Manet, Chargé d' Affaires a.i., Delegation of the European Union to India and the Debasish Prusty, Deputy Chief of the Mission in Brussels, Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Varshney Head, International Cooperation DST, Ms. Maria Cristina RUSSO, Director International Cooperation (DG R&I- EC) and other officials from different scientific Ministries/Departments (DST, MOES, DBT) also participated in the deliberations.

