

# CIP Networks Implementation Proposals

## *Networked Observatory on Eco-innovation*

The initiative to work towards the establishment of a Networked Observatory on Eco-innovation was announced in the ETAP Report of May 2007 and discussed in the ETAP High-Level Working Group of March and September 2007.

The purpose is to collect and analyse information on trends in the area of eco-innovation and provide a *strategic knowledge resource* for policy-makers, business and finance. The Networked Observatory should build on existing projects and networks, aiming at including some of the key observation institutes across Europe.

### Setting-up the Observatory

The Competitiveness and Innovation Programme provides an adequate framework to enable the setting-up of the Networked Observatory and to support its activities financially during the first years. This will take place under the Europe INNOVA initiative and will take the form of a *grant agreement of €2.0 million over three years for up to 95% of eligible cost*. DG Enterprise and Industry coordinates the Europe INNOVA initiative and the related call for projects, but this project will be managed by DG Environment and funded out of the 'eco-innovation' earmarking in CIP.

The general initiative Europe INNOVA is oriented towards the development and testing of new practical *innovation support services* for SMEs, notably start-ups, delivered in the field by platforms of European innovation professionals in view of their wider application, e.g. by the Enterprise Europe Network. The overall objective is to accelerate innovation processes and thus to facilitate the commercialisation of innovative products and services.

The next call for Europe INNOVA is planned in the second part of 2008 and will include the Eco-Innovation Observatory as horizontal support action to a new European Innovation Platform on eco-innovation. The Observatory will gather information and data, *analyse future market and technology trends* in this field, including developments in financing, to *map the situation in Member States and in specific sectors* and provide a knowledge base with a particular attention to the needs of SMEs.

An important output of the Eco-innovation observatory should be a *yearly report on eco-innovation*. This report would be widely disseminated and available on-line. For example, it could cover:

- Overview of issues, trends and opportunities
- Environmental technology markets in the EU and globally
- Evolution of relevant measures and indicators
- Evolution of sub-sectors (such as: water treatment, renewables, energy-efficiency, eco-construction, recycling, bio-based products...)
- EU-27 country profiles
- Niche growth areas and investment opportunities
- Developments in Financing

The European Environment Agency has indicated its interest in the Networked Observatory and is willing to support the project. The EEA is not taking part directly in consortia responding to Commission's calls, but will assume a leading position in creating the network. In particular, the Observatory could benefit of the experience and tools developed by the Agency through the *Environmental Technologies Atlas*: the Atlas could provide a good basis for managing the geographically-based information of interest for the Observatory.