



European
Commission



Conference Report

1st EIP Water Annual Conference

European Parliament, Brussels

21 November 2013

Environment



More information on the European Union is available on the Internet (<http://europa.eu>).
More information on the European Innovation Partnership on Water is available on www.eip-water.eu

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Introduction

The first conference of the European Innovation Partnership on Water themed “Networking & Interacting – Innovating Water” was held in the EU Parliament in Brussels on 21 November 2013. It brought together over 370 EIP Water stakeholders, took stock of where innovation stands in Europe and helped shape the future of EIP Water with the aim of further increasing the opportunities for collaborating on water innovation in Europe and beyond.

A conference designed to foster innovation and create market opportunities

This first annual conference set out:

1. To build awareness, particularly in Europe, of the necessity and potential of innovation within the water sector and EIP Water.
2. To facilitate the creation of market opportunities by establishing new links, networks and partnerships between water innovation supply and demand.
3. To take stock of progress made so far in EIP Water.
4. To receive detailed feedback and input on a draft EIP Water activity agenda for 2014.

It showcased innovations from both within and outside the water sector through keynote addresses, panel discussions and moderated plenary sessions. Nine EIP Water Action Groups, established in May 2013, presented their nascent work; applicants for Action Group status pitched their innovation ideas in the “EIP Water’s Got Talent” contest; interactive sessions shared and debated ideas; and the next steps of the EIP Water were presented and discussed. The conference established new links and partnerships and facilitated networking between participants from both the supply and demand sides of water innovation.

All presentations of the conference have been uploaded on the EIP Water slideshare account on www.slideshare.net/eip-water



“ Working together, we will all be better prepared to face the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities. The EIP Water is an excellent instrument to support this, bringing together all relevant professionals, initiatives and organizations around shared interests. ”

Janez Potočnik, European Commissioner for the Environment

A broad range of participants valued the day, and would like more networking

Out of the 370 conference participants, about half handed in the evaluation sheet (167). The evaluation showed that the conference attracted a broad range of stakeholders from the private and public sector and academia, and that inter-related industries in the food-water-energy nexus were represented.



“ Innovation and the development of novel technology solutions are increasingly important for the global water sector going forward. The EIP Water is very well placed to both stimulate and support this across Europe. ”

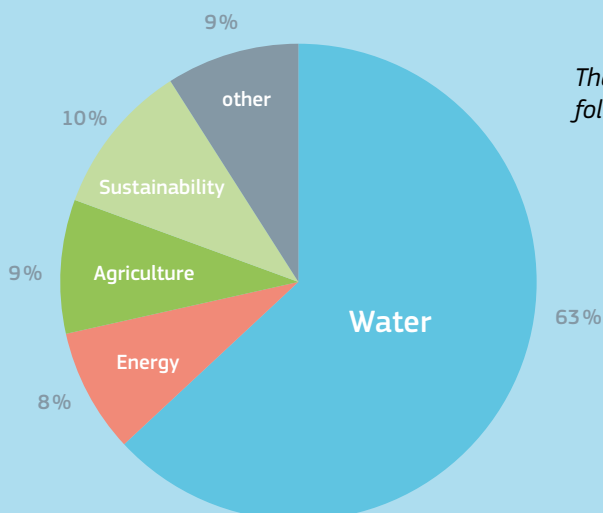
Fiona Griffith, Isle Utilities

“ The EIP Water provides a strong overarching framework for collaboration towards water innovation development. ”

Dr. Tomas Michel, CETaqua



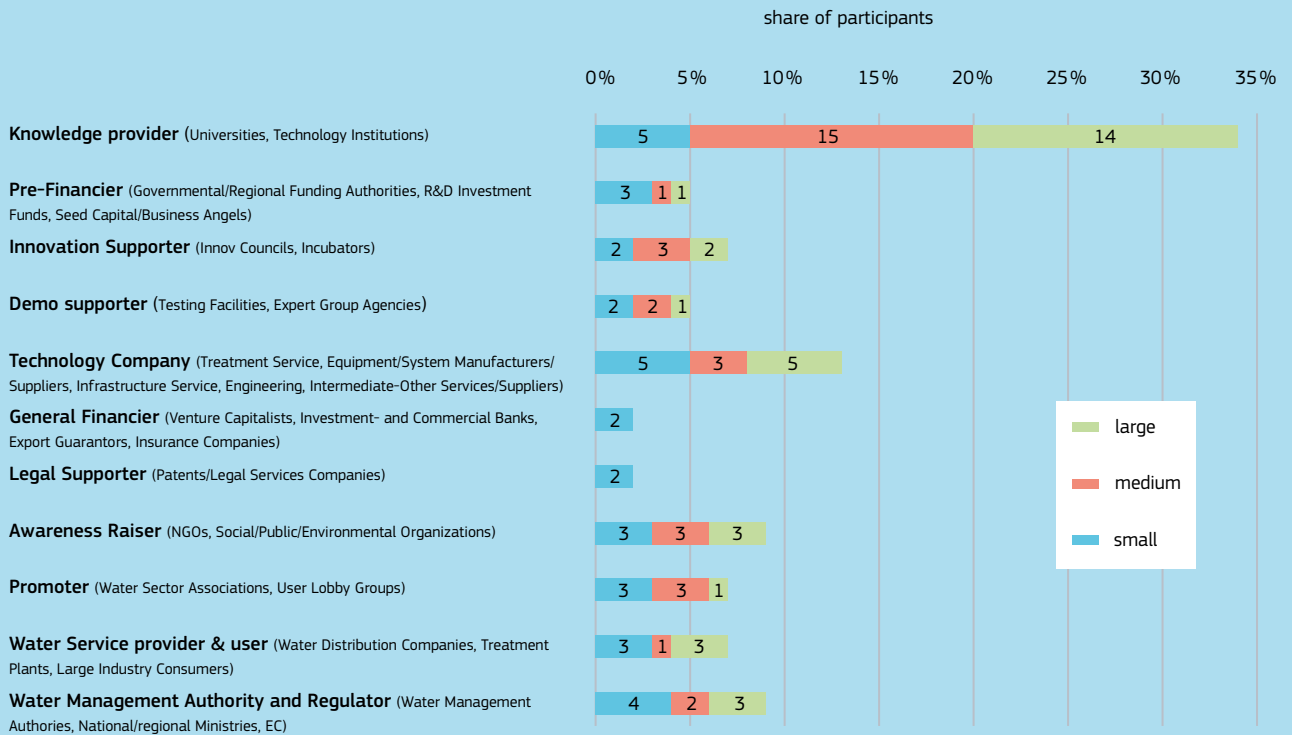
Affiliation of conference participants to sectors



The main represented sector was “Water” followed by “Agriculture” and “Energy”.



Sector and Size distribution of stakeholder entities among conference participants



“Knowledge providers” and “Technology companies” were the main present stakeholders, but all expected stakeholders were present, with a good distribution between “large”, “medium” and “small” entities.



“ Talk to the right person – try to find out who has the real pain. ”

Djevan Schiferli, IBM



“ In our province, we have established a water alliance; ... we want to speed up the innovation cycle, including labs for SMEs and demo-sites ready for using. ”

Drs. Hans Konst, Province of Fryslân

“ We are trying to show that the bottom-up approach is not only possible, but also favorable for all sectors involved in the world of water. ”

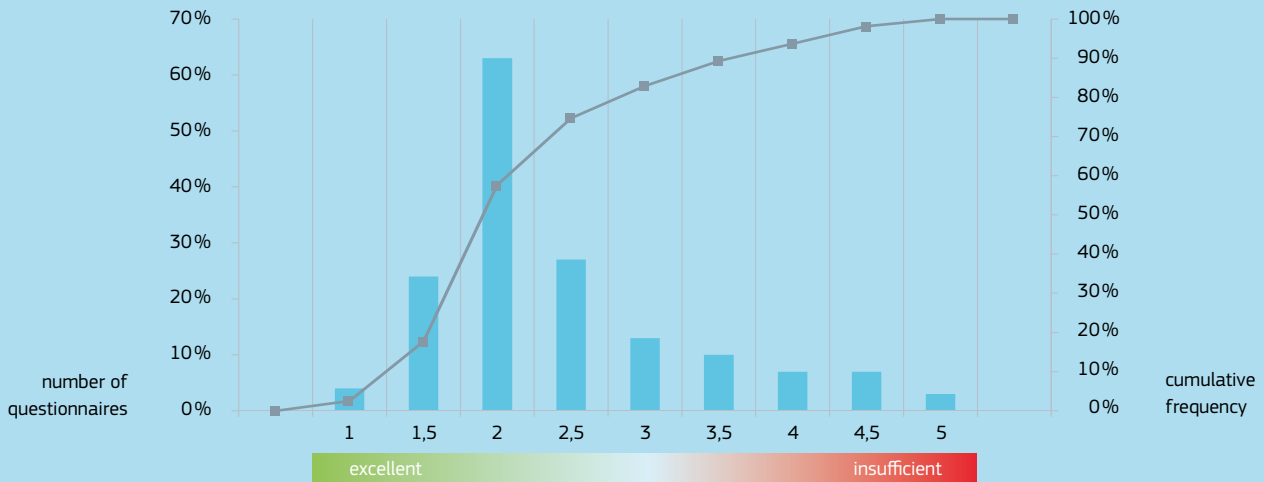
Richard Elelman, Fundació CTM Centre Tecnològic/NETWERC H2O



“ The key word of the European Innovation Partnership on Water is the word Partnership. Only if we embrace the notion of working together we will be able to drive innovation, tackle the challenges and seize the opportunities before us. ”

Marianne Wenning, Director ‘Quality of Life, Water & Air’ in DG Environment, European Commission

Average overall marks for the first EIP Water Conference

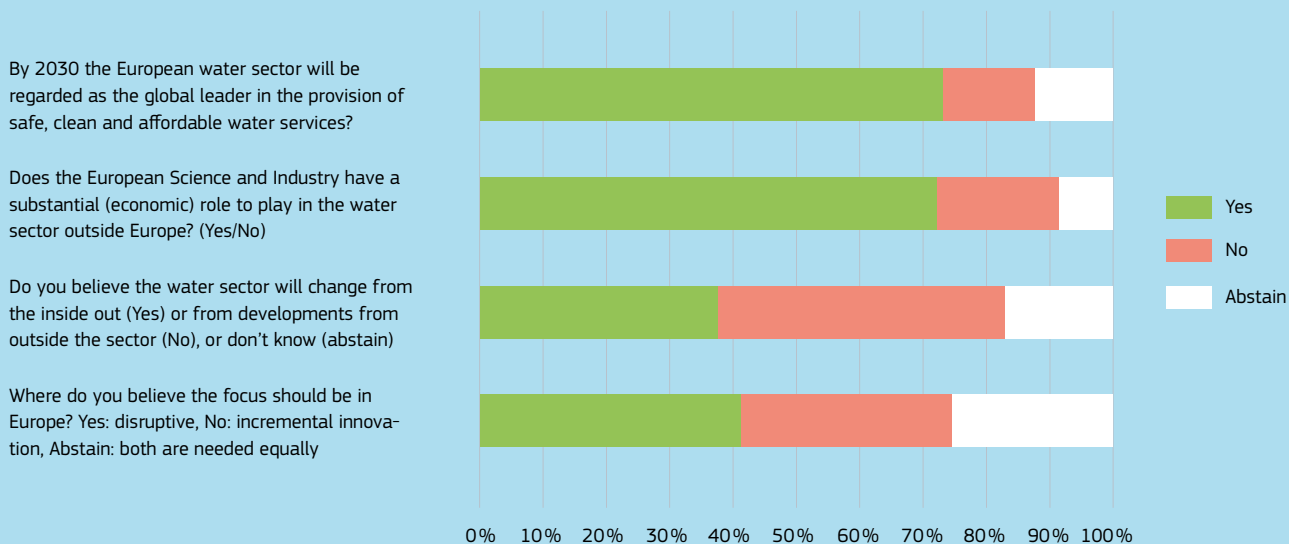


Overall, the conference was rated well, with best being valued “organization” and “moderation” (1.9), and worst “quality of presentations” (2.6).

Among the 85 written comments, 12 asked explicitly for more focus on networking opportunities, matchmaking and action groups.

The networking opportunities received an average mark of 2.2 on a scale from 1 – excellent to 5 – terrible.

During the conference, a number of questions were put to the audience. The results are shown below.



In summary, the attendance, content and results of the conference proved successful and the level of interest and engagement in EIP Water has grown. The work within EIP Water does not stop there. The conference has been a catalyst for activity within the working groups, with traffic on the EIP Water Online Marketplace increasing significantly.

The second EIP Water annual conference is provisionally scheduled for 5 November 2014 – so please mark your calendar.

Thank you for participating!

“ *Horizon 2020 holds a lot of potential and opportunities for promoting and boosting innovation in Europe.* ”

Kurt Vandenberghe, DG for Research and Innovation, European Commission



“ Our team focuses on governance, on the “how?” question: how are we going to implement innovation, how can we learn from each other, and thirdly how can we incorporate new instruments for water-innovation governance. ”

Frank van Lamoen, Provincie Noord-Brabant



“ By using the EIP Water Marketplace, we can create a stronger group that has better funding and market options. ”

Dr. Guillermo Zaragoza, CIEMAT



“ Relation-building is key to China: you get to learn about the knowledge, competences and technologies of partners and can build confidence with each other. ”

Henrik Dissing, China Europe Water Platform / Danish Ministry for Environment

“ EIP Water helped us to focus on one specific area; and secondly invited us to expand with non-EU members – so we have a more international market and knowledge. ”

Albert Jansen, TNO



Participants of the 1st annual Conference of EIP Water

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