

Options for strengthening SPIs on regional level*

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* Updated version of the 22.10.2013 presentation at the UN DESA EGM in Dubrovnik due to new additions forwarded by the participants – on second day of the EGM all participants were provided with a sheet of paper with a question, which options for strengthening the SPI (Science Policy Interface) they find important.

Overview – grouping the responses

- Rethinking regional setup
- Foster cooperation of policy makers and scientists
- Early involvement and participation of scientists in decision-making processes
- Getting the clear picture what is there and what is needed
- Use existing and establish new SPIs if necessary
- Rethinking our methodologies – from global to local, from fragmented to integrative
- Improve communication between scientific and policy communities
- Improve funding for SPIs
- Other

Rethinking regional setup

- Coordination between regional bodies
- Reforming the Mediterranean commission on sustainable development
- Revising the Mediterranean strategy on sustainable development
- Renewing the vision at the Mediterranean level through the adoption of a Mediterranean Action Plan Phase III
- Strengthening the link between UN DESA and Union for Mediterranean Platform

Foster cooperation of policy makers and scientists

- Empowering policy-makers and scientists for understanding each other
- Capacity building of policy makers and strengthening policy making based on scientific data
- To educate scientists, as well as politicians
- Raise awareness of political decision makers on need to make informed and evidence based decisions, provided by scientist
- Educate governments and scientists on need for integrated, not sectoral approach, enabling exchange of ideas, dialogue among scientists and politicians
- Better explore the need of policy makers in order to streamline scientific research
- Organise discussions on finding solutions for specific problems (to avoid general debate, to generate concrete proposals)
- Make the link for concrete issues: policy makers need implementation roadmaps (scientists can devise them)

Early involvement and participation

- Ensure scientists access to policy makers in environmental, economic, finance and planning ministries
- Strengthen the participation of scientists in decision making processes
- Need to include scientists in governmental projects from the very beginning
- Ensuring politicians are honouring their commitments / accountability

Use existing and establish new SPIs if necessary

- Create a portal similar to SCP clearing house so that scientists can identify each other, exchange of experiments etc.
- Enhance and support existing networks to give them visibility and hence respect by politicians, to be consulted
- Establish a network of innovation hubs for SCP
- Establish virtual innovation hubs to share knowledge & local initiatives & national innovation hubs
- Strengthen newly created networks such as MED SDSM
- Strengthen network of scientific institutions at national, regional and global scale
- Use the existing networks to improve SPI (in particular MCSD)
- Create efficient platforms for co-working and dialogue between science and policy (PEGASO project platform for ICZM in the MEDiterranean & Black Sea)
- SPI already exists within Danube, Sava and other programmes and initiatives – only options is strengthen it with economic and social pillars of sustainable development
- Linking SPI with transfer of technologies, best practices for the purpose of policy measures implementation (SD policy)
- Create institutional setting for regular exchange

Getting the clear picture

- Stocktaking existing initiatives and discussing them in regional existing settings
- Find the way to push at global level examples of regional SPI initiatives
- Ensuring availability of specific and reliable research data
- Develop and implement through university collaboration user-friendly monitoring (data collection), software, common criteria, regular meetings for data exchange, data analysis, publications

Rethinking our methodologies – from fragmented to integrative

- Fostering multidimensional cross-sectoral integrative approach
- Based on locals and local issues
- Put the most simple issues in the centre
- Change locals first than others in a hierarchical order
- Better integrated analysis on macro-economic, governance, environment and natural resources
- Taking into account all three pillars, point out economic and social
- Developing bottom-up approach
- Joint MA programmes – interdisciplinary but lead by socio-economic sciences to ensure focus on triple bottom line (environmental, economic, social; SD); faculty exchange, recognition of credits (ETS)

Improve communication between scientific and policy communities

- Translate scientific knowledge of usable information for policy makers
- Provide space for interaction between scientific and policy communities
- Improve communication tools between scientists and policy makers – better packaging of findings
- Not to be lost in translation
- Find a common language between scientists and policy makers
- Translating scientific information into language adequate for policy makers
- Provide training and capacity building on communication
- Create on-going opportunities for exchange and learning throughout the policy and research process
- Communication skills

Improve funding for SPIs

- Funding innovative solutions, which can only be done through multidisciplinary integrative approaches
- To ensure financial support for capacity building
- Fund research projects on hot/important/emerging issues
- Try to influence Horizon 2020 work programmes for funding knowledge brokerage projects/events in the region
- Joint research projects especially about mediterranean port cities in EU framework programme Horizon 2020

Other

- Facilitate dialogue on specific topics: one challenge (who are the best scientists in that and related fields) , + private sector
- All the Mediterranean countries should include academic and scientist level in the policy. Making procedures for the sustainable development issue.
- Gather together scientists in economy, social sciences and environmental sciences within the states and than sub-regionally and regionally. Than SPI is possible!
- Water is one important priority for GSDR
- Implement projects to test in practice tools & info offered by science
- Adjust educational programmes to the need arising from point of the policy measure implementation