JOINT STATEMENT

IN ORDER TO REACH THE AMBITIOUS GOALS OF THE EU GREEN DEAL, CRITICAL-MASS FUNDING AND A COORDINATED EU-WIDE APPROACH IS NEEDED TO OPTIMISE GENETIC POTENTIAL FOR RESILIENT AND DIVERSE PRODUCTION SYSTEMS

Three European Technology Platforms (ETPs), Plant ETP, FABRE TP and EATIP, together with the Animal Task Force, are requesting the EU Commission to consider an additional partnership on "**Optimising genetic potential for resilient and diverse production systems**" under the strategic plan 2025-27 of Horizon Europe. The signatories represent the key research and private stakeholders developing and supplying novel, diverse and more resilient varieties/breeds of plants, livestock, fish, shellfish, insects and algae for the production of food, feed and raw material for the biobased economy.

The scopes of the current EU partnerships under Horizon Europe Cluster 6 cover biodiversity, water, primary production, food systems, animal health and welfare, and data, and aim to support the goals of the EU Green Deal's Farm to Fork and Biodiversity strategies. However, while these partnerships cover a wide range of essential R&I needs that are expected to drive the short and medium term transition to more sustainable agri-food systems, their long term impact will be limited if novel, diverse and more resilient terrestrial and aquatic plants and animals, adapted to diverse production systems, are not developed in parallel.

The signatories acknowledge that Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe, as well as other (inter)national funding schemes have funded/are funding the development and optimisation of varieties/breeds of plants, livestock, fish, shellfish, insects and algae. However, there is currently no strategic long-term mechanism, partnership or other, to support this to the extent that is needed to reach the long term Green Deal goals.

The signatories therefore highlight the need for a coordinated and holistic EU-wide development of the necessary knowledge on biological processes and breeding strategies and tools to support the aforementioned partnerships in delivering more sustainable agri-food systems and a circular bioeconomy, in addition to attaining high-level policy commitments encouraging diversification and the adoption of novel species.

Considering the long timelines and considerable resources needed to develop and bring terrestrial and aquatic plants and animals to the market, particularly in the case of underutilised crops and less streamed species and breeds, increasing diversity comes at a significant cost, while diluting acreage and demand. It is therefore essential that the efforts of the private sector are accompanied with collaborations with the public sector, developing partnerships where the results of discovery research and pre-competitive breeding can feed into the development of a broad range of varieties/breeds of terrestrial and aquatic plants and animals. Such a partnership will prove essential for coordinating transversal efforts enabling knowledge and technology development and, crucially, innovation transfer between these sectors and species.

An EU partnership will prove essential to align and provide critical mass for widespread optimisation of the genetic potential of diverse and resilient varieties/breeds of terrestrial and aquatic plants and animals. This will be essential to diversify and improve the resilience of productions systems, in order to meet the needs for food, feed and raw material for the biobased economy, in line with the EU Green Deal goals and challenges related to climate change, food and nutritional security, and affordability.


Plants
for the Future
European Technology Platform


European Aquaculture
Technology and Innovation Platform


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