

**2000 Annual Monitoring Report on
the RTD activities conducted under
the EC and Euratom Framework
Programmes**

May 2001

This report is part of the series of annual reports prepared for the Community research Framework Programmes and their constituent Specific Programmes, by external independent experts assisting the Commission in the monitoring of the implementation of programmes.

The Commission services would like to thank the Chairman, Prof Gerard Pogorel and all the members of the 2000 Framework Programme Monitoring Panel for the committed work and thorough and high quality analysis and recommendations provided on various dimensions and instruments of the Framework Programmes, from their political and strategic objectives and results, to more managerial aspects.

This 2000 monitoring exercise is particularly important since it precedes both the last years of the implementation of the 5th Framework Programmes and the process of preparation of the next Framework Programme. It also marks the turning point where the perspective of the European Research Area (ERA) is embracing all Community RTD activities.

The current administrative Reform of the Commission focuses on transparency and accountability. The evaluation and monitoring activities are essential elements of this. It is therefore in line with this general orientation that the Commission services will pay particular attention to the follow-up of recommendations in order to increase responsiveness, effectiveness and efficiency in policy and programme implementation.



*Achilleas Mitsos
Director General
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PART A

**REPORT OF THE 2000
FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME
MONITORING PANEL**

**BY AN
INDEPENDENT PANEL
CHAired BY**

PROF. GÉRARD POGOREL

MAY 2001

THE 2000 FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME MONITORING PANEL

We, the undersigned, are pleased to present our report to the European Commission.

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Dear Mr Mitsos,

On behalf of the Monitoring Panel, composed of independent experts, I have the privilege to present to you the 2000 External Monitoring Report on the activities of the RTD Framework Programme.

The Panel has greatly appreciated the determination and success of the Commission in implementing on time a large-scale re-organisation as well as the energy and managerial spirit DG Research personnel lavishes on serving European Research Policy objectives.

The 2000 FP Monitoring Panel has surveyed issues pertaining to the RTD FP strategy, organisation and processes. Concerning the strategy, it considers that the European Research Area vision provides guidelines for the RTD FP to which the FP conforms from as early as 2000. As for the FP organisation, it could still be clarified and strengthened in some areas. The FP processes and procedures should greatly benefit from an improved Information System for which objectives and a timetable should be defined.

The Panel has noted that the attention paid to the follow-up of last year's Panel recommendations has greatly improved. It appears that the monitoring process itself, conducted with the help of external experts, is becoming an integral part of the RTD FP management by the Commission, which we see as very encouraging.

The Panel wishes to emphasise the constructive purpose of the work it has done with the Commission Officers to contribute to the future successes of the RTD FP.

Yours sincerely,

Gérard Pogorel, Chairman

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the 2000 External Monitoring Report on the activities of the European Union's Research and Technological Development Framework Programmes. It covers the ongoing projects and activities still being funded by the Fourth Framework Programme (FP4) as well as the second year of the implementation of the Fifth Framework Programme (FP5). It is required under Article 5.1 of the Decisions setting up the multi-annual European Community and Euratom Framework Programmes.

The 2000 Framework Programme Monitoring Panel must formally congratulate the Fifth Framework Programme's management, scientific officers and support staff on the:

- successful launch and running of such a huge and complex programme;
- efforts made at improving information and procedures;
- follow-up of last year's FPMP recommendations.

THE 2000 FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME MONITORING PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS:

CONCERNING THE FP STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

- 1) The European Research Area (ERA) should already be considered the cornerstone of the FP strategy and the structural effect be should be strengthened.
- 2) In order to foster support for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), the innovation cells and the network of National Contact Points should be reinforced and the Community patent should be adopted as soon as possible in the interest of European industry in general.
- 3) The FP organisation should enhance the international component of the ERA to address appropriately the needs of international co-operation with the candidate countries, developing countries and relationships with the industrialised countries.

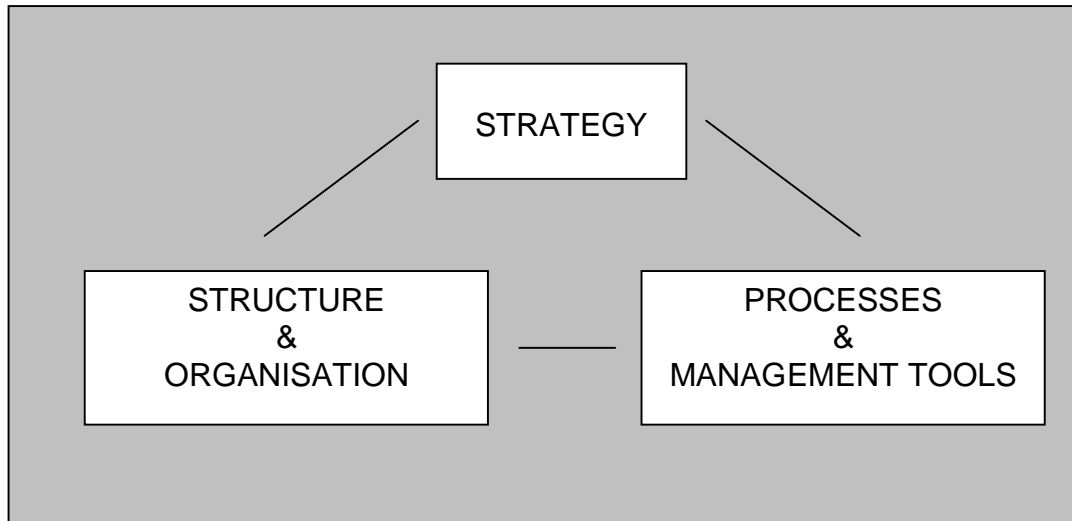
CONCERNING THE FP STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATION:

- 4) The management culture of the European Commission should be reinforced in line with the reform of the Commission and an adequate programme for training people should be implemented.
- 5) The European Energy RTD Programmes should be managed consistently.

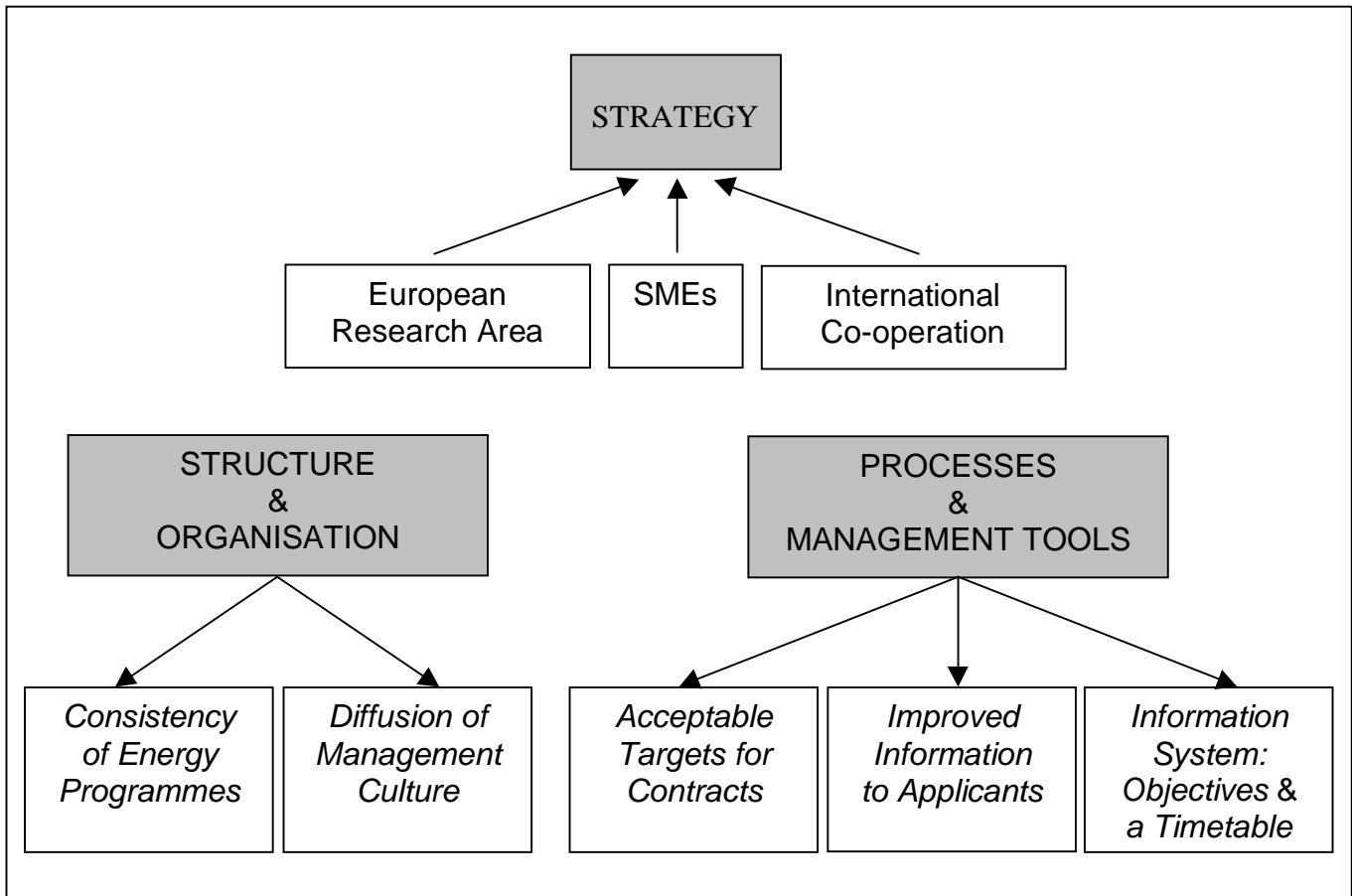
CONCERNING THE FP PROCESSES AND MANAGEMENT TOOLS:

- 6) The efforts to improve the information provided to the R&D Community must be continued.
- 7) Acceptable targets have to be set for procedures and for time to contract.
- 8) Objectives and a timetable to improve the FP information system should be set up.

METHODOLOGY & STRUCTURE OF REPORT



SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS



2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 MAJOR FACTS OF 2000

The 2000 External Monitoring Report on the activities of the European Union's Research and Technological Development Framework Programme (the FP) covers the ongoing projects and activities still being funded by the Fourth Framework Programme (FP4) as well as the second year of the implementation of the Fifth Framework Programme (FP5), the latter continuing until end-2002.

Activities were carried out in the context of two major initiatives launched by the Commission in 2000:

- The development of a “**European Research Area**” (ERA) was presented in a Communication from the Commission in January 2000¹ and, following the endorsement at the highest political level in the Council and the European Parliament, further developed as far as the contribution of the next FP to it is concerned in the Communication from October 2001². This initiative aims at establishing a true EU research policy including a better and more effective organisation of research in the Union, with more coherence and interaction between research at national and EU level. The Lisbon summit in March 2000 and subsequent summits have emphasised the creation of ERA as one of the tools contributing to achieving the goal set for the Union in Lisbon “To become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion”.
- The **Reform of the Commission**³, which intends “to make changes which will ensure that efficiency, accountability, transparency, responsibility and service are applied as working conventions” within the Commission and takes particular care in outlining human resources policies.

Further initiatives and achievements linked to FP design, implementation, results and impact included:

- The five year assessment of the Framework Programmes (1995-1999) by a high level panel chaired by Mr Majo published with the Commission's comments in October 2000⁴, and the mid-term review of FP5 carried out by the Commission Services.
- Implementation of FP5 including the launch of calls for proposals, the evaluation of tens of thousands of proposals, the conclusion of thousands of contracts with tens of thousands of participants. The specific programmes' annual workprogrammes were

¹ “**Towards a European Research Area**”, A Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions, 18 January 2000 (COM(2000)6).

² “**Making a reality of The European Research Area: Guidelines for EU research activities (2002-2006)**” A Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee, and the Committee of the Regions, 4 October 2000 (COM(2000)612).

³ “**Reforming the Commission: A Consultative Document**”, Communication from Mr. N. Kinnock in agreement with the President and Ms. M. Schreyer, 14 January 2000.

⁴ COM(2000)659 of 19 October 2000.

updated taking into account in particular the reorientation, within the limits of the programme Decisions, towards the ERA objectives and instruments.

- The reorganisation of DG RTD coming into effect on 1.1.2001, to reflect the priority attributed to the development of the ERA and improve the efficiency of the management.
- The Commission proposal of 21.2.2001⁵ on the Framework Programme (FP 2002-2006).

In the light of the above, it is hoped that the present FP5 Monitoring Report contributes positively to the effective implementation and improved outcome of FP5.

The 2000 Framework Programme Monitoring Panel (FPMP) was assisted and supported in its work by the DG Research Evaluation Sector within the Framework Programme Unit, the Specific Programmes' Monitoring Panels and Programme Management from across FP5. A summary compiled by the FPMP of the main recommendations across the specific programmes can be found in paragraph 5.2 on page 24. The Panel wishes to thank all involved for the effective, efficient and timely fashion in which their support was given.

2.2 ACHIEVEMENTS

A number of improvements and changes have been made last year or in recent years which have affected FP5 as a whole during 2000 and the main achievements were:

- The FP5 has been launched successfully and is now operational
- There have been shifts in FP5 towards the ERA
- The number of SMEs in the programmes has increased
- The reorganisation of DG Research is in place
- Information packages have improved
- Pre-screening has become a standard feature of some programmes
- Time to contract has been reduced in a few programmes
- Many procedures have been re-ordered and some have been simplified
- The follow-up of FPMP recommendations has improved, although not uniformly.

⁵ COM (2009)94 final.

3 ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

3.1 STRATEGY

3.1.1 Strengthen the Structural Effect of the Framework Programme to Implement the European Research Area (ERA)

The Commission Communications proposing the creation of a European Research Area, adopted in January and October 2000, strongly emphasised the strategic focus of the European Union RTD FP. They made clear that the aim of FPs is not solely to promote and support excellent research projects with a value adding European dimension. FP supported RTD projects must also play a role in achieving in the research domain the consistent purposes of European market integration. In this perspective, the ERA January 2000 Commission Communication defines six objectives and seven sets of measures¹.

The Panel considers that these directions are by far clearer and stronger than those derived from the European Added Value concept. The ERA, in contrast, makes both conceptually and in practical terms a significant contribution to defining the mission and implementation conditions of FPs in structuring research in Europe. The measures build up to a very specific and practical way of looking at the role of the FP, give a strategic meaning to European Added Value and act as a precise orientation guide for both the writing of the workprogrammes and the selection of the projects.

Various schemes and modalities exist across the programmes to achieve those objectives. They can be grouped into three categories according to their aims:

[a] different ways of networking

- Clusters
- Concerted actions
- Pan-European networks
- Thematic networks
- Networks of excellence
- Virtual institutes
- Research training networks

[b] reaching a size effect/critical mass

- Large-scale projects
- Integrated projects
- Technology platforms

¹ The six objectives concern: promoting research in Europe; better investment in knowledge; public research effort; private investment; organisation of research in Europe; ERA as a real European policy. The seven sets of measures are: a stock of material resources and facilities optimised at the European level; more coherent use of public instruments and resources; more dynamic private investment; a common system of scientific and technical reference for policy implementation; more abundant and more mobile human resources; a dynamic European landscape, open and attractive to researchers and investment; an area of shared values.

[c] providing support methods/functions

- Mapping of excellence
- Research infrastructures
- Communication networks and grids
- Projects and activities including a benchmarking and best-practice dimension
- Projects addressing EU policies and EU-wide concerns (standards, IPRs, food safety)
- JRC.

Some of these have been in existence for some time, others were implemented more recently. But all these concepts have converged over the last year in order to conform to the ERA concept and strategy, with a certain attitude to reinforcing clustering, adapting the role of the JRC, etc. This trend is to be systematically encouraged.

FPMP recommendations:

- The Commission should explicitly reinforce the ERA orientations in the next calls for proposals. The description of the Programme objectives included in the information package must define the expected contribution that the projects will have to ERA. The various integration schemes and tools should be furthermore enhanced and harmonised in the workprogrammes and the project evaluation criteria.

To illustrate the progress during 2000, four of the means mentioned and used to implement the ERA are examined in more detail in the paragraphs that follow. These are the human dimension, clusters, the JRC, and the mapping of excellence.

◆ Human resources

Activities aimed at developing researcher mobility and at setting up training networks build a strong foundation for the future development of the ERA. The IHP programme, with its emphasis on the European dimension in the training and mobility of researchers, is of course of primary importance in this respect. Training and mobility should be extended as much as possible within the existing FP, and encouraged in the FP6 perspective. Furthermore, those efforts and trends towards increasing the European dimensions in the research workforce should be present across all the programmes.

FPMP recommendations:

- The training and mobility actions should be enhanced as much as possible within the current FP as well as the next one.

◆ Clusters

The cluster defines a group of RTD projects, which reflects an integrated method of solving multidisciplinary problems. The objective is to maximise European Added Value, to guarantee complementarity among projects and to establish a critical mass of resources. The number of projects participating in a cluster varies widely from around 5 to more than 40. Most clusters comprise 10-15 projects.

The QoL programme, for example, has successfully established 11 pro-active clusters (established before funding) in 1999 while the IST programme has established 35 active clusters in 2000, both pro-active and reactive types (established after funding). The clusters evaluated in QoL contained excellent science and clear additional European Added Value and were all well managed. As another example, the ESD sub-programme

has several clusters, often linked to international research efforts, such as the promising THESEO cluster which makes extensive use of European international research infrastructures to address the questions relating to stratospheric ozone.

FPMP recommendations:

- Facilitate clustering through modified and harmonised selection and management procedures. This could be through having initial calls of interest for the selection of cluster topics followed by specific calls for clusters only.

◆ **Joint Research Centre (JRC)**

The JRC should be defined as a leading research centre targeted at the specific policy objectives of the Community and should be at the forefront of ERA implementation. It should serve as a tool to provide scientific support for the policies of the various DGs. In order for this to happen, it is necessary for the JRC to align with the ERA strategy. This therefore requires a closer relationship between the JRC, DG Research and other policy DGs. The JRC could even act as manager and evaluator of specific research performed at the request of DGs not involved in RTD programmes.

FPMP recommendations:

- The role and visibility of the JRC should be reinforced as part of the ERA orientation. The JRC should work closely with the DGs to meet this objective.

◆ **Mapping of excellence**

The mapping of excellence is an initiative endorsed in Lisbon last year by the European Council aiming to map excellence in RTD across all Member States. By identifying excellent competencies and the competitive strengths of the various research groups, the initiative's objective is to provide useful intelligence that will enhance collaboration, contributing towards the ERA, thereby demonstrating European Added Value and enhancing innovation and growth. The initiative will start with a pilot mapping exercise over three areas (life sciences, nanotechnologies, economics) covering a maximum of 10 sub-areas and is to be completed by the end of 2001.

The FPMP considers this initiative as the first step of a pan-European Knowledge Management activity and, therefore, as a prerequisite for the maximum utilisation of the European intellectual capital, as well as an important contribution towards the achievement of the ERA. However, the FPMP believes that although the steps taken and the scope of the current pilot implementation are clearly limited this initiative should be disseminated at a later stage to the broader research community to increase interest and contributions. It should lead towards the creation of virtual centres of excellence, another important ERA objective but, to date, no activities have been identified in that direction.

FPMP recommendations:

- The FPMP endorses the mapping of excellence initiative and the Commission should come up as soon as possible with more specific plans to involve the scientific communities.

3.1.2 Foster Support for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs)

Good progress has been made in many parts of the Innovation and SMEs programme. The latter has made a significant contribution to the debate on research and innovation in Europe and is at the forefront of Accession Countries participation with its network of Innovation Relay Centres (IRCs). However, time to contract is still unacceptably long. It is also worth mentioning that the Commission has taken concrete action on most, although not all, of the recommendations from the previous monitoring exercise. While appreciating the results that have been achieved, the 2000 Monitoring Panel sees some cause for concern, and a number of specific action points for improvement. The main areas of concern, which are common to both the Innovation and SMEs and the thematic programmes, consist in the undertaking of an exceedingly wide range of commitments. Internal regulations are complex and procedures rigid. There also should be some attention paid to connect better FP activities with the activities performed by national institutions promoting SME innovation and specialised financial institutions, for example the European Investment Bank.

Three areas are deemed to be of critical importance in helping SMEs: the National Contact Points, the Community patent, and the innovation cells.

◆ National Contact Points (NCPs)

Different fora and functions have been set up under FP5 in order to help contractors, and in particular SMEs, in different phases of a RTD project cycle, from design to outcome. National Contact Points (NCPs), set up for each programme and for the overall FP, give upstream information and advice to all potential or current contractors on Community RTD programmes, calls for proposals, project selection procedures, etc. The Single Entry Point (SEP) is a function in the Commission services dedicated to potential or current contractors among SMEs. The Innovation Relay Centres (IRCs) are national or regional centres which provide downstream information and assistance to all potential or current contractors mainly regarding the exploitation of Community RTD project results.

The NCPs are very important for the SMEs. They are structures created by the Member States, at the request of the European Commission. Their officials are appointed by the Member States and the latter are therefore responsible for their functions and their performance quality. However, there are great differences between the different NCPs. Their efficiency varies, and their missions are often only partially fulfilled.

The NCPs should provide the SMEs with information and assistance. They should direct the SMEs to the existing European Union structure(s) and should be capable of assisting them uniformly among all the Member States. The SEP at the Commission should help to bring the proposals submitted by the SMEs to the appropriate programme and evaluation team through the two procedures:

- proposal pre-screening;
- proposal evaluation and transfer to the appropriate thematic programme.

Small and medium sized companies should also receive specially adapted and simplified information from the NCPs. These should also provide access to existing sources to identify SME needs, while anticipating market and technological trends and disseminating the findings to SMEs.

The NCPs should be reinforced and their role in helping SMEs should be improved. In the same context, the establishment of regional contact points should be considered carefully as experience indicates that these can be very effective. In order to increase the efficiency of some NCPs, especially in the Accession Countries, it is also important to give suitable training to their members and to establish and communicate good practice.

FPMP recommendations:

- Improve the efficiency of the network of NCPs. Close the gap in effectiveness between these as well as between the IRCs based in the Member States and those in the Accession Countries. Encourage better co-operation between the different services and functions focused on helping SMEs (NCPs, IRCs, SEP, etc.).
- There needs to be greater coherence between the various DGs that support SMEs; for example, between DG Regio (responsible for the Business Innovation Centres) DG Enterprise (responsible for IRCs) and DG Research (responsible for the NCPs, etc.).

◆ **Community patent**

The FPMP emphasises the importance of the Commission proposal of 1 August 2000 on the Community Patent and stresses the urgency of the matter for European inventors and companies. The main complaints about the current European systems are prohibitive costs, legal uncertainty and the lack of uniform protection in Europe. The Community patent can, if properly developed, solve these problems.

The Community patent will be issued by the Office as a European patent, specifying the territory of the Community instead of the individual Member States. The proposal also provides for the creation of a centralised Community Intellectual Property Court to guarantee unity of law and consistent case law.

The patent has to be granted in a language of the proceedings before the Office (English, German or French) and will be published in that language with a translation of the claims into the other two languages. This measure is taken to avoid high costs which might dissuade inventors and companies from using the Community patent. Nevertheless, the proprietor of the patent has the option of producing and depositing translations of the patent in the other official languages of the Member States.

FPMP recommendations:

- The Commission should make endeavours to promote the adoption of the Community patent at the end of 2001 as agreed at the Lisbon Summit to ensure that protection of European intellectual property rights becomes as cheap and easily accessible as possible for European industry and inventors, especially SMEs.

◆ **Innovation cells/ dissemination**

Innovation cells are (according to the Framework Programme): “to be set up under the thematic programmes, with the aim of supplementing the innovation dimension of the implementation of programmes (e.g. in the selection and monitoring of projects) and securing, as appropriate, the follow-up of technology transfer, including technology transfer project with a demonstration effect”. In accordance with this, innovation cells were established in the thematic programmes. However, despite their inclusion in the FP decision and despite being highlighted in last year’s FPMP, the visibility of innovation cells activity was low in 2000.

In order to co-ordinate the activities carried out by other programmes in relation to Innovation and SMEs, the Commission also appointed an ad hoc Co-ordination Group to perform the task. The Group consists of representatives from the innovation cells in the thematic programmes, the Joint Research Centre, and Innovation and SMEs, which chairs the Group and provides its secretariat.

The Co-ordination Group is a forum where participants exchange views and experiences five or six times a year. In addition, the Group has launched two training initiatives for project officers in 2000, i.e. IPR seminars and a seminar on the non-technical aspects of technology transfer. Both initiatives were hosted by Innovation and SMEs.

The Co-ordination Group has had difficulties to date in fulfilling the expectations implied by the words of the Council Decision. This may be due to the lack of a distinct budget line and clear responsibilities. In other words, the money for launching activities within the Group has to be drawn from the existing items of expenditure of the Innovation and SMEs and the thematic programmes. Moreover, the innovation units lack resources and staff and are organisationally remote from the key actions (i.e. from the place where money is actually spent on research and, hopefully, on innovation). Finally, there is no direct line of authority between the Group members.

There is therefore a clear need to rethink the arrangement. Co-ordination across the FP5 programmes is achieved daily in many ways and it might appear that one more place for co-ordination is of marginal benefit. The Co-ordination Group is probably the best place to review the structure of the Technology Implementation Plan and discuss the latter's potential. More generally, the discussions within the Group are beneficial in highlighting some areas which, in order not to be neglected, require further co-ordination and action. The transfer of best practice (or, simply, good practice) for the management of the programmes is one such area. A specific example of good practice deserving dissemination is the impact assessment that Growth follows routinely. Other critical areas concern the measurement of the performance of FP5 and its predecessors in terms of exploitation and innovation. Both areas are worthy of more attention. It would be a paradox if the Commission, while recommending Member States and regions to "implement periodic target-setting, monitoring, evaluation and peer review" of their innovation policies, would fail to do this properly in its research programme which is, to date, its major innovation policy initiative.

FPMP recommendations:

- Take action to improve the effectiveness of the Co-ordination Group between the innovation cells as a place which ensures that good practice is transferred across programmes.

3.1.3 Enhance the International Component of the ERA

In order to cover the orientations towards the ERA it is vital that the international dimension of the European research system be developed and strongly articulated at European level with regard to the candidate, the industrialised and the developing countries.

Detailed discussions have already been initiated on the involvement of the candidate countries, including a procedure for the 'audit' of their research systems, training and information. It is understood that, as these countries will sooner or later be part of the European Union, a dedicated Unit was no longer considered necessary. However, the candidate countries require as much assistance as the other countries of the non-EU community since the complexity of the programmes and the procedures for submitting proposals do not yet appear to have been simplified. Perhaps better usage could be made of the National Contact Points in the Accession countries.

Co-operation with major industrialised countries such as the USA, Canada, Japan has been continuing on general research strategies as well as on issues like global warming and health. Given the prominent role of the EU in promoting the ERA, contacts should be maintained at policy level with the research institutions of North America, Japan and other Asian countries with the objective of exchanging information, developing co-operation, etc. In addition, such contacts would provide an important benchmarking role.

Co-operating in research with developing countries is also part of the general EU mission.

Under the FP5, international co-operation is subject to different approaches and conditions, promoted through the specific programme dedicated to international co-operation (INCO) and through the other specific programmes of FP5. These co-operation initiatives include links to initiatives outside the FP like INTAS, TACIS, PHARE, COST, EUREKA.

The recent reorganisation of the RTD Directorate has reduced the management structure of the international programme and transferred the principal responsibilities to the four thematic programmes. Despite some advantages, this has also introduced the following disadvantages:

- execution of the international programme is fragmented and its specific regional expertise is scattered;
- actors, both inside and outside the European Commission, find it more difficult to interact with the programme;
- the international programme lacks organisational visibility;
- no Directorate level entity is in charge specifically of the international dimension of EU research policy.

As a result, there will no longer be a single interface with potential participants and other partners who will therefore have difficulty in accessing the information.

Although an annual report on Community RTD activities is published, there is no emphasis on, nor a comprehensive description of the detailed activities related to the international programme. This would have highlighted the valuable benefits of international co-operation and shown the difficulties in implementing the projects in each country.

FPMP recommendations:

- The ERA policy objectives imply not a weaker but a stronger international policy than hitherto. There should be a Directorate to design and monitor the international (extra-EU) dimension of European Research policy.
- An Expert Advisory Group should be established to identify particular priorities and needs.

3.2 STRUCTURE / ORGANISATION

3.2.1 Reinforce the Management Culture of the European Commission and Train People Accordingly

Despite the intrinsic difficulty in managing the FP, this year has come to an end with a generally satisfactory outcome. The economic scope of the FP is comprehensive, the range of topics is very broad and the diversity of projects is considerable.

However, these projects contain two characteristics that are difficult to reconcile. There is a need on the one hand for alignment of every aspect of a project with the overall scope, procedures, etc. of the specific programmes and on the other hand flexibility is required due to the diversity of, and the degree of innovation imported to the projects. The FPMP believes that the solution to this dilemma is two-fold: while retaining the core values and overall strategy as cornerstones of European research, the need for flexibility should be emphasised to Project Officers. This therefore implies appropriate training combined with gradual delegation as appropriate as well as periodic evaluation.

A number of the Specific Programmes Monitoring Panels (SPMPs) have requested a more precise description of Project Officer functions, and the 1999 Framework Programme Monitoring Panel (FPMP) recommended also that more attention should be paid to personnel training and development. In addition, all the SPMPs have reported the use of 'good practice' in the selection process and in the monitoring of the projects. Good practice should be adopted overall and utilised generally by the personnel of the different DGs in charge of the Fifth Framework Programme.

Progressively, as procedures are streamlined, it would be advisable to initiate a decentralisation process and delegate powers of decision making to those directly in charge of monitoring and implementing the various activities. This would speed up considerably the procedures within the Commission.

FPMP recommendations:

- The functions of the Project Officers should be more carefully defined in terms of workload and harmonised methodologies.
- The personnel in charge of administrative procedures in the Fifth Framework Programme should establish a programme to improve management methods (procedures, delays, deadlines) and staff should be trained accordingly.
- The process of delegating decisions within the Commission should be reinforced.

During the design process of the Fifth Framework Programme, new management tools were introduced to achieve a series of objectives. These ranged from the continuous revision of the short and long term objectives of the programmes, following the advice of the EAG/HLAG, to the monitoring and evaluation aspects addressed by the Inter Service Group on monitoring and evaluation and, of course, to the increase in the impact of the results, on which the innovation cells and the Technological Implementation Plan focused. We are already in the second year of FP5 and these tools do not appear to have been applied fully, which therefore implies that the previous recommendations need to be reconsidered, especially bearing in mind the design process of the Sixth Framework Programme. The next Framework Programme, based on the concept of the European Research Area, should benefit by being able to draw upon these and other previous experiences.

In their first phase the EAG/HLAG did not focus sufficiently on their objectives. However, a number of SP Panels have found promising indications of their practicality and efficiency. They proved useful in some cases in reorienting towards increasingly relevant research areas and in other situations in implementing the 'top-down' management of some parts of the programmes. However, it seems that communication with the Programme Committees has not been improved although this was considered a vital element.

FPMP recommendations:

- Looking ahead to the FP6 and the remaining two years of FP5, the Commission should analyse the results obtained in the last two years to decide about the productivity of the management tools introduced with FP5. These all place very heavy demands on management resources, and the Commission does not have an excess of this.

◆ **Technological Implementation Plans (TIPs)**

TIPs are very important because they help to ensure the economic valorisation of EU funded research. They are also important to exploit jointly the competencies of SMEs, larger companies and research institutes. Due to organisational changes during last year many of the recommendations made by the 1999 FPMP have not (or only very partially) been taken into account in implementing the TIPs.

The TIP is a document that records the exploitation plans of the project contractors. It is not a static report but an active document that can be completed at the start of the project and updated at mid-term and on project completion. The TIP allows, in one comprehensive form, the project contractors to show how they are going to meet their obligations. However, the TIP form has to be made simple, shorter, more user friendly and easier to exploit.

FPMP recommendations:

- The follow-up of last year's recommendations on the TIP can still be improved, particularly to help projects involving SMEs establish Technological Implementation Plans.
- The TIP form should be simplified and easier to exploit.

3.2.2 Manage Consistently the European Energy RTD Programmes

The energy RTD programme as a whole is very complex and has gone through several changes from the FP4 to FP5. The years 2000-2001 are considered a transition towards FP6 and it is expected that the experience gained during these years will enable the Commission to improve the new energy programmes. These programmes are managed by two directorates (DG RTD and DG TREN) and apparently a clear-cut co-ordination between the two has not yet been achieved during 2000.

The apparent lack of co-ordination between the various Commission services managing the energy RTD programmes raises concerns about the short and long term consistency of implementing the European energy research policy

FPMP recommendations:

- More co-ordination is needed in the management of the energy research programmes.

3.3 PROCESSES AND MANAGEMENT TOOLS

3.3.1 Improve the Information Provided to the R&D Community

The information related to the Community R&D programmes is made available to the public by means of the Official Journal of the European Communities (OJEC), brochures and information packages, the bi-monthly CORDIS Focus magazine and the CORDIS website. In addition, various supports for proposers have been established at the EU level and in each EU, candidate and other associated countries.

While the brochures, leaflets and special reports are of high quality and content, the same cannot be said of the information related to the R&D programmes and to those addressed to proposers.

Although there have been some real improvements, the information packs issued for each programme remain complicated. The forms for proposal submission are similarly complex and the requirements focus more on information such as European Added Value, social and economic prospects than on the detailed description of the project, the scope, the basic investment and the financial results.

However the FPMP has noted as a positive measure the establishment of a pre-proposal check/consultation form that can be sent to the EU electronically, requesting information on the eligibility of proposals. Thus a dialogue can be established with the relevant scientific officer for clarification and advice.

The CORDIS website is fairly complicated and difficult to use. It is slow, does not have a search tool and is often not updated, to the extent that, as at April 2001, the closing dates for 2000 calls are still indicated. It has no links with the other websites of the European Commission. It would be helpful and speed up downloading if DG Research would have an advanced information system tool.

The CORDIS Focus magazine is of good quality and includes useful information on programmes, calls and tenders, publications and policies. However, there are long delays before it reaches free subscribers, sometimes even after deadlines have expired. It states that it does not bear any responsibility for information accuracy and refers to the website and to the contacts/references for validity of information. These reference sites rarely reply to queries, leaving the proposers without suitable information. While the contact points are not particularly helpful as they do not provide any further information beyond that included in the printed documentation or in CORDIS.

The Commission should work to have either a web information system such as that which exists currently but with better links between the sites, or it should re-think and have an altogether improved, unified information system. Currently there is little co-ordination between the various services that create and maintain the EU public information systems.

FPMP recommendations:

- There needs to be an on-going, continuous effort to improve the information (for example, documentation and application forms) provided to proposers. Improve the various websites and the links between them and provide an adequate search tool.

- Updating should be daily and interactivity should be assured in order to ensure that the proposers can communicate easily with the EU and receive suitable assistance when required.

3.3.2 Set Acceptable Targets for Procedures and for Time to Contract

Although some progress has been made most SPs are suffering from lengthy delays between the closing of a call till the signing of the contract. Some progress was achieved between 1999 and 2000 in a few of the programmes but there continue to be many examples of contract signing being more than one year after the closing date of the call, as indicated by the table in the Annex (section 5.5) on page 44. Efforts for further improvement should be made.

The evaluation period for the batches considered varied in 2000 from 1 to 13 weeks with 4.8 weeks being the average. Some programmes are giving feedback to the applicants immediately after the evaluation period; this should be obligatory for all programmes.

The time taken by the Commission to decide which projects to fund consisted of only a few weeks up until the first (informal) decision, but varied from one half to more than a year before the final (formal) decision was announced. The period of this process should be further decreased.

The signing process seems to be a matter of particular concern with delays varying from a few weeks to close to a year. This seemed in particular to be a problem for CRAFT projects which had many SMEs participating, where the legal negotiations in particular were very time consuming. The legal process should be evaluated with the objective of arriving at less rigorous formulations and time consuming administrative procedures.

FPMP recommendations:

- Evaluate the total process, from closing date of call to final signing of contract, with the aim of identifying bottlenecks in the process and taking actions to reduce these.
- Set acceptable targets for procedures and for time to contract. The targeted delays should decrease progressively year on year according to a pre-determined action plan.

3.3.3 Set Objectives and a Timetable to Improve the FP Information System

It has been recognised by both the Commission and the Monitoring Panel that major shortcomings have affected the FP Information System for some time. Incidents and a lack of global vision and IT planning have plagued the management of the FP and made it more difficult to gather the necessary data to run it and, for instance, compile the needed indicators. Due to these conditions, the necessary management and control tasks have only been performed at a high cost in terms of human resources. Many individual efforts in various parts of the directorates involved have resulted in duplications and incompatibilities between the information systems of the various programmes and the central system. Time, resources, and organisation have failed to adjust the EU RTD Information System to the requirements of the new, more integrated structure of FP5. The period between the adoption of the Framework Programme and its associated specific programmes and operational modes in general leaves insufficient time to fully develop and test the

necessary informatics system before the launch of the first calls for proposals, the subsequent evaluations and the placement of contracts. In the case of FP5, this problem was exacerbated by a late increase in the types of contracts from the initial requirement of 6 to 16 and other changes and uncertainties in respect of details for the implementation of the FP. As a result those developing the informatics system were continually engaged in a process of trying to make up for lost time.

A management structure in which the Informatics Resources Manager was outside of the Informatics Unit also added complexity to the decision making process slowing the development by de-coupling responsibility for meeting targets from the resources necessary to do so. This, added to the frequent criticisms of the Informatics Unit, led to their almost total demotivation with the consequent loss of many excellent staff.

As a consequence of these problems the central informatics system was not ready by the time of the launch of the first calls for proposals and there had been inadequate training of end users for those parts which were ready. There was also unfair criticism of the informatics unit in relation to problems outside of their control such as proposal evaluation.

In view of these problems staff in the programme directorates were forced to develop local solutions to enable them to achieve their own goals. Many of these involved local databases that were and remain incompatible with the central system. Having used these systems for the first evaluations, they were reluctant to abandon them during the year 2000 to use central systems which, although now operating well, they were not fully familiar with and consequently distrusted. Moreover, due to problems with contractors, certain critical applications still remained to be developed adding to criticism of the system.

One result of these problems is that the central database is incomplete and solutions still have to be found to up-load certain data sets and corrections held locally in the programme directorates. This means that the provision of accurate management data is extremely difficult and time consuming. When seeking FP wide statistics the problem is made worse by the fact that the database structures of all the DGs involved in the FP are different so that separate queries are required which are both time consuming and prone to error. This is compounded by the fact that at any given time there are projects from at least 3 FPs running or subject to final closure actions and that each of these is based upon a different structure and, in general, IT system

It is noted that the main problems arise from software development. By contrast the basic infrastructure, Help Desk and PC Support functions operate well and are comparable in terms of the service provided to that found in organisations of similar size.

Current and future developments

Improvements in the IT system to make it as good as or better than that of organisations of comparable size are now management priorities. To this end the reorganisation of DG Research included the provision of the necessary manpower resources and the re-incorporation of the Informatics Resources Manager function into the new Informatics Services Unit. Provision has also been made for the employment of some higher (A) grade staff essential to the deployment and operation of a modern IT system. Improved communications with end users, the development and implementation of quality assurance systems, improved contract management, end user testing and training before new applications are launched and the regular publication of measures of performance are

essential actions being undertaken. An assessment of the current situation will give a base against which to assess future improvements.

When considering how to improve the informatics system one is immediately confronted by two major questions, namely:

- what needs to be done to enable the complete implementation of FP5, given that some contracts will run until at least 2006?
- what actions need to be taken to avoid similar problems to those experienced during the last two years when launching new FPs?

These questions cannot be considered in isolation since, for example, it would make no sense to continue to develop remaining applications that are to be abandoned shortly after their introduction in favour of a new system for the next FP. However, good arguments exist for the development of a future FP wide informatics system to both improve the use of the available resources and facilitate the provision of management and other information. Studies of such a system are currently in hand. In any event, a radical new look at the data required at each stage of the proposal, evaluation, contract and project management process is required in order to address the complaints of proposers and users of the system. This implies decisions by all those involved with the FP to enable the definition of the informatics structure at an early stage in the FP decision making process.

The intention would then be to have the informatics system for the next FP in place and tested and the end users trained by the end of 2002 before the first calls for proposals are launched. In the meantime consultations are under way to determine the optimum strategy to enable the completion of FP5 by solving the immediate problems faced by the programme directorates.

FPMP recommendations:

- A definite set of goals and timetable for the implementation of a state-of-the-art information system for the next FP should be in place by July 2001 whilst at the same time actively addressing the problems with the current system.

3.4 FOLLOW-UP OF THE 1999 FPMP RECOMMENDATIONS

Last year's FPMP made five major recommendations and these are outlined below, each being followed by information on the extent of implementation.

3.4.1 The administration of the 'call for proposals to project contract' phase should be improved – recommendation 1

Given the unacceptably long period for this whole process, the 1999 FPMP recommended simplification of the information to applicants, a review of the Call for Applicants process to the Proposal Evaluator's Database, clarification to proposers and evaluators of the socio-economic requirements of the Programme, installation of an effective feedback system to proposers on the proposal evaluation, and a reassessment of the 'legalistic environment'.

Implementation: Many of the issues have been examined by the Inter Service Group on the simplification of procedures and substantial progress has been made.

There has been some simplification of information to applicants but more needs to be achieved. This is recognised by the Commission's aim to start an in-depth examination of this whole area in the next FP when it also intends to use professional editors and journalists to make such information more user-friendly. The process of calls for applications to the proposal evaluator database has been simplified and the Commission is currently also investigating the possibility of a hybrid system, allowing for block nominations combined with an open call for applicants.

A working group has looked at clarification of the socio-economic requirements and their recommendation for further explanations in the guides and manuals coupled with a careful briefing of evaluators prior to starting work has been implemented. An effective information feedback system has also been implemented. Proposers now receive informally the evaluation summary reports before the Commission's decisions are taken formally. This takes place now on average two to three months after the closing date of the call.

The Inter Service Group has laudably made a complete reassessment of the 'legalistic environment' during 2000 and several of its recommendations were implemented, while many are still pending. A major area of difficulty remains the actions to simplify and improve the contract and financial management of the research programmes, and particularly the time to contract.

3.4.2 An effective Human Resources Policy across FP5 should be developed and linked to a programme/quality improvement system – recommendation 2

It was recommended that a management/human resources consultancy be retained to develop an outline plan to meet the requirements of staff, management and the Programme's development and to support staff and management in the implementation of the plan.

Implementation: DG Research postponed its plans to develop training activities during 2000 until the reorganisation of the Directorate in early 2001 is completed. The objective of the plans is to help achieve an effective human resources policy and initiatives in this area are now expected in the spring of 2001.

3.4.3 The research and development impact mechanisms of FP5 must be strengthened – recommendation 3

This recommendation comprised a number of actions – that innovation cells become the direct responsibility of each operational programme director; that a support structure be developed for Technological Implementation Plans (TIPs) to include internal training, resources, redeployment and, as appropriate, the use of external expertise; that coherent and consistent project monitoring and impact tools be put in place in all programmes; that the collection of project impact data be aligned with the collection of information relating to contracts, monitoring and any other needs; and that each programme have one individual charged with co-ordinating project monitoring activities along with liaison to external programme monitoring and 5-year assessment activities.

Implementation: Very little progress has been apparent in this area overall and in each of the separate actions. The FPMP this year makes certain recommendations that seek to reinforce the effectiveness of some of last year's suggestions.

3.4.4 Gender awareness should be strengthened and appropriate gender-based data collected – recommendation 4

In addition the efforts to encourage female evaluators to apply for inclusion in the proposal evaluators' database should continue.

Implementation: There have been significant actions in the area of gender awareness and these are set to continue in 2001 with the new reorganisation and its new unit dedicated to personnel policy and equal opportunities. For example, during 2000 an equal opportunity dimension was introduced in the selection process for experts and an international conference was organised on the issue of women and science. Moreover, the new reorganisation will ensure that from 2001 a separate unit will address at the Community level the policy of increasing the role of women in science. However, the FPMP has noted the limited number of women represented at the Directorate level within the Commission.

3.4.5 A public awareness of science and technology function should be set up under each operational programme director – recommendation 5

There was also the recommendation that this should be developed into an integrated approach at the FP level. Support should also be provided by the Improving Human Research Potential and Socio-Economic Knowledge Programme.

Implementation: There have been several actions in this area and more are planned with the new reorganisation as of 2001, with a new unit dedicated to the issue and charged with co-ordinating activities for raising public awareness of science and technology across the Framework Programme.

4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2000 Framework Programme Monitoring Panel must formally congratulate the Fifth Framework Programme's management, scientific officers and support staff on the:

- successful launch and running of such a huge and complex programme;
- efforts made at improving information and procedures;
- follow-up of last year's FPMP recommendations.

There continue to be major management challenges facing the FP5 of course if it is to keep on developing successfully and deliver the full benefits of its research for the economic and social development of all its stakeholders, namely governments, institutions, companies and individual citizens.

The main concerns of the FPMP relate in broad terms to the FP strategy, structure and the processes/management tools used. The recommendations that follow were developed and discussed with senior Programme Management.

4.1 RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING THE FP STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

4.1.1 Strengthen the Structural Effect of the FP to Implement the ERA

- The Commission should explicitly reinforce the ERA orientations in the next calls for proposals. The description of the Programme objectives included in the information package must define the expected contribution that the projects will have to ERA. The various integration schemes and tools should be furthermore enhanced and harmonised in the workprogrammes and the project evaluation criteria.
- The training and mobility actions should be enhanced as much as possible within the current FP as well as the next one.
- Facilitate clustering through modified and harmonised selection and management procedures. This could be through having initial calls of interest for the selection of cluster topics followed by specific calls for clusters only.
- The role and visibility of the JRC should be reinforced as part of the ERA orientation. The JRC should work closely with the DGs to meet this objective.
- The FPMP endorses the mapping of excellence initiative and the Commission should come up as soon as possible with more specific plans to involve the scientific communities.

4.1.2 Foster Support for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs)

- Improve the efficiency of the network of NCPs. Close the gap in effectiveness between these as well as between the IRCs based in the Member States and those in the Accession Countries. Encourage better co-operation between the different services and functions focused on helping SMEs (NCPs, IRCs, SEP, etc.).
- There needs to be greater coherence between the various DGs that support SMEs; for example, between DG Regio (responsible for the Business Innovation Centres), DG Enterprise (responsible for IRCs) and DG Research (responsible for the NCPs, etc.).
- The Commission should make endeavours to promote the adoption of the Community patent at the end of 2001 as agreed at the Lisbon Summit to ensure that protection of European intellectual property rights becomes as cheap and easily accessible as possible for European industry and inventors, especially SMEs.
- Take action to improve the effectiveness of the Co-ordination Group between the innovation cells as a place which ensures that good practice is transferred across programmes.

4.1.3 Enhance the International Component of the ERA

- The ERA policy objectives imply not a weaker but a stronger international policy than hitherto. There should be a Directorate to design and monitor the international (extra-EU) dimension of European Research policy.
- An Expert Advisory Group should be established to identify particular priorities and needs.

4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING THE FP STRUCTURE / ORGANISATION

4.2.1 Reinforce the Management Culture of the European Commission and Train People Accordingly

- The functions of the Project Officers should be more carefully defined in terms of workload and harmonised methodologies.
- The personnel in charge of administrative procedures in the Fifth Framework Programme should establish a programme to improve management methods (procedures, delays, deadlines) and staff should be trained accordingly.
- The process of delegating decisions within the Commission should be reinforced.
- Looking ahead to the FP6 and the remaining two years of FP5, the Commission should analyse the results obtained in the last two years to decide about the productivity of the

management tools introduced with FP5. These all place very heavy demands on management resources, and the Commission does not have an excess of this.

- The follow-up of last year's recommendations on the TIP can still be improved, particularly to help projects involving SME's establish Technological Implementation Plans.
- The TIP form should be simplified and easier to exploit.

4.2.2 Manage Consistently the European Energy RTD Programme

- More co-ordination is needed in the management of the energy research programmes.

4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING THE FP PROCESSES AND MANAGEMENT TOOLS

4.3.1 Improve the Information Provided to the R&D Community

- There needs to be an on-going, continuous effort to improve the information (for example, documentation and application forms) provided to proposers. Improve the various websites and the links between them and provide an adequate search tool.
- Updating should be daily and interactivity should be assured in order to ensure that the proposers can communicate easily with the EU and receive suitable assistance when required.

4.3.2 Set Acceptable Targets for Procedures and Time to Contract

- Evaluate the total process, from closing date of call to final signing of contract, with the aim of identifying bottlenecks in the process and taking actions to reduce these.
- Set acceptable targets for procedures and for time to contract. The targeted delays should decrease progressively year on year according to a pre-determined action plan.

4.3.3 Set Objectives and a Timetable to Improve the FP Information System

- A definite set of goals and timetable for the implementation of a state-of-the-art information system for the next FP should be in place by July 2001 whilst at the same time actively addressing the problems with the current system.

5 ANNEX

5.1 BACKGROUND TO THE MONITORING EXERCISE

The 2000 External Monitoring Report on the activities of the Framework Programmes covers the ongoing projects and activities still being funded by FP4 as well as the second year of implementation of FP5, including the activities linked to the European Research Area carried out under FP5. It is required under Article 5.1 of the Council Decisions setting up the EC and the Euratom Framework Programmes:

“The Commission shall continually and systematically monitor each year, with the help of independent qualified experts, the implementation of the Fifth Framework Programme and its Specific Programmes in the light of the criteria set out in Annex I and the scientific and technological objectives set out in Annex II. It shall assess, in particular, whether the objectives, priorities and financial resources are appropriate to the changing situation. Where appropriate, it shall submit proposals to adapt or supplement the Framework Programme and/or the Specific Programmes taking account of the results of this assessment.”

5.1.1 Programme Objectives

The Decision N° 182/ 1999 /EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 December 1998 establishing the Fifth Framework Programme directs it “towards strengthening the scientific and technological bases of Community industry and encouraging it to become more competitive at international level ... [and] promoting the equality of life of the Community’s citizens and to the sustainable development of the Community as a whole, including the ecological aspects. Its implementation is based on the twin aspects of scientific and technological excellence and relevance to the above mentioned objectives ... the Community shall take action only if and in so far as the objectives cannot be sufficiently achieved by Member States.” The Decisions provide common criteria for the selection of objectives, research areas and projects:

[a] Community added value and subsidiarity:

- establishing critical mass in human and financial terms;
 - contributing significantly to Community policies;
 - addressing Community level development;
- all subject to subsidiarity.

[b] Social objectives:

- improving the employment situation;
 - promoting the quality of life and health;
 - preserving the environment;
- all in the context of Community social objectives.

[c] Economic and scientific/technological (S/T) objectives for areas:

- which are expanding and create good growth prospects;
 - where Community businesses can and must become more competitive;
 - offering prospects for significant S/T progress;
- all contributing to the harmonious and sustainable development of the Community as a whole.

5.1.2 Programme Implementation

During 2000, the main areas of Programme implementation related to:

- Design and development of the initiative "European Research Area";
- Implementation of FP5, including launch of new Call for Proposals, evaluation of proposals, conclusion of contracts, update of workprogrammes, in particular to reflect the reorientation towards the ERA, the FP five year assessment, and the mid-term review of FP5;
- Completion of ongoing FP4 activities, in particular the dissemination and exploitation of the results of FP4. It is only now, as FP4 projects finish, that the full European added value of EU funding can be achieved and assessed.

5.1.3 The Monitoring Exercise

The 2000 Report of the FPMP covers the second year of FP5 implementation and ongoing activities under FP4. Accordingly, this year's Panel has been asked to focus on the following main issues:

- Implementation and progress, including participation of Accession countries;
- Significant results, preliminary evidence of impact and European added value;
- Contribution to the issues of the European Research Area;
- Follow-up of recommendations from the previous monitoring exercises;
- Recommendations for 2001.

5.2 FP5 SPECIFIC PROGRAMMES MONITORING PANELS' EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES

This section summarises the main findings and recommendations of the individual Monitoring Panels responsible for each of the eight Specific Programmes and the JRC. (A complete version of the monitoring reports can be found at the web address: <http://www.cordis.lu/fp5/monitoring/>). These views have been taken into account by the FPMP in its own analysis and recommendations. The eight SPs are:

- Quality of Life and Management of Living Resources (QoL)
- User-Friendly Information Society (IST)
- Competitive and Sustainable Growth (Growth)
- Energy, Environment & Sustainable Development
 - Environment and sustainable development sub programme
 - Energy sub programme (non-nuclear)
- International Role of Community Research (INCO)
- Promotion of Innovation and Encouragement of Participation of SMEs (Innovation & SMEs)
- Improving Human Research Potential and the Socio-Economic Knowledge Base (IHP)

- Nuclear Energy Programme
 - Fission
 - Controlled thermonuclear fusion
- Joint Research Centre (JRC).

The following table provides an overview for the year 2000 of the FPMP recommendations in chronological order and their occurrence or support in the individual FP5 Specific Programmes Monitoring Panels' Reports. In several cases only partial aspects of the FPMP recommendations are found in the individual reports. It should be noted that the wording of the recommendations as given in this overview table provides a high level of abbreviation and summarising. For full details, therefore, the individual Programme Monitoring Panel Reports and this FPMP report have to be considered. For the actual abbreviations in the table, see paragraph 5.4 on page 43.

RECOMMENDATION	QoL	IST	GRO	ESD (1)	ESD (2)	INC	SME	IHP	FUS	FIS
3.1. Strategy										
Reinforce ERA orientations in calls for proposal and WPs	X		X	X	X	X				X
Enhance training and mobility actions across all programmes										
Facilitate clustering through modified selection and management procedures	X		X	X	X		X			X
Reinforce role and visibility of the JRC in supporting the ERA										
Implement the mapping of excellence to contribute to ERA	X		X	X	X	X				X
Improve the support for SMEs (eg NCPs, IRCs) and adjust support differences in AS vs. MS			X	X		X	X		X	
Improve the coherence between the DGs supporting SMEs			X							
Promote the adoption of the Community patent										
Ensure that good practice be transferred across programmes										
Strengthen ERA policy and international co-operation through both a specific DG and an EAG	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X
3.2 Structure/Organisation										
Redefine workload and methodologies of Project Officers	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
Improve management methods and train staff accordingly		X	X	X	X	X			X	
Reinforce the delegation of decisions within the COM			X	X	X	X	X			
Evaluate the productivity of the new FP5 management tools										
Improve TIP issues							X			
Improve the management of the energy research programmes					X				X	
3.3 Processes and Management Tools										
Improve information provided to proposers and the communication facilities with the EU	X		X	X	X	X	X		X	
Reduce the time between closing date and contract signature		X	X		X		X			
Implement a state-of-the-art information system for the next FP		X	X	X	X	X			X	

5.2.1

5.2.2 Quality of Life and Management of Living Resources – Executive Summary

The 2000 Quality of Life and Management of Living Resources (QoL) Programme Monitoring Exercise by a Panel of independent experts is based on Article 4(a) in accordance with Article 5(1) of the fifth framework programme (FP5). It covers the final ongoing projects and activities funded under the Fourth Framework Programme (FP4) and the second year of FP5 implementation.

During 2000, FP5 directors, section heads, scientific officers (SO) and support staff were able to fulfil their management goals:

- Implementation of recommendations by the 1999 Monitoring panel
- Completion of the majority of FP4 projects with successful dissemination of results, technology implementation plan (TIP) utilisation and active exploitation support for the contractors
- Selection of new projects/clusters under the FP5 by a process generally accepted as fair and transparent
- Contracting of the first FP5 projects including their publication through the CORDIS projects database
- Improvement and intensive use of altogether 15 platforms to co-ordinate industrial needs with certain RTD topics and results
- Identification, selection and focus on FP5 core topics via public conferences
- Definition, launch and initial implementation of the new European Research Area (ERA) issue
- Strategic work on the draft concept of the upcoming FP6

The work of the Panel preferentially concentrated on the new FP5 features, i.e. clusters, ERA and the complex of stage 2 criteria. During this exercise various potential problems have been recognised which led to the following key recommendations.

Key recommendations by the 2000 QoL Monitoring Panel

- Based on the principles of fairness and equality of treatment, the Commission is encouraged to harmonise ratios for the number of proposals/experts/evaluation time.
- On a strategic basis the panel request a clear and more precise definition of stage 2 parameters, especially European Added Value criteria for each call for tenders
- The Panel recommends an improvement of the whole evaluation system towards a shorter and more cost-effective process, including considerations for project pre-selection.
- A caution is needed regarding the essential interpretation of ERA as a collection of huge integrated projects, which might endanger appropriate space for brilliant science, organised in small European groups.

- The Commission has to take into account clusters outcomes to settle integrated projects
- The Panel recommends to set up a new return programme for young and senior European scientists working outside their country.
- We are recommending a call of interest for the fair selection of topics for clusters within given action lines. According to the results, specific calls should then be initiated which are only opened for clusters.
- Evaluation procedures of clusters might also be reviewed with concentration on their overall value in addition to a detailed evaluation of individual cluster projects.
- The Panel recommends a clarification of priorities, roles and functions of SO. It has been consistently recognised that the workload of individual SO's is excessive. The proposal to recruit PTAs has been advanced to address this problem. The Panel recommends speedy implementation of this and other appropriate approaches to reduce the workload of individual SO.

5.2.3 User-Friendly Information Society – Executive Summary

Over the period of the current Monitoring exercise (November 2000 – April 2001), the ITC (Information Technology & Communications) sector has been undergoing a major revaluation, as reflected in the profit warnings of major IT companies: these, in turn, have had a major impact on global stockmarkets. The ten-year period of continuous growth in the GDP due to New Economy productivity improvements seems to be temporarily disrupted, at least, in the US. Europe will be closely watched to see if the same phenomenal productivity improvements can be repeated in the coming years without the subsequent disruption. This situation provides an opportunity that the EU will indeed become "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world", as stated at the Lisbon Summit in March 2000. The IST Programme has an essential role to play in these developments.

Within Europe, probably the most important political and organisational challenge to the EU over the next decade will be the entry and integration of the next group of new Member States. The integration challenge is all the more apparent in the IT sector, where the infrastructure and IT industry in general, in the countries concerned, is weak. One of the sectors where Europe has a worldwide lead is Mobile Communications. The upcoming 3G (third generation) technologies and UMTS will offer new possibilities to keep the pace-setting role for Europe for standards, new applications and user productivity improvement. The IST Programme has a key role to play in these developments as well.

Within the IST Programme itself, Programme Management has carried out during 2000 the evaluation of the second, third and fourth calls for proposals, launched the second and third call projects, met the Programme's commitment and payment targets, and developed the workprogramme for 2001. The development of the overall RTD Programme and the associated administrative procedures has improved considerably during the past two years. The Panel is recommending a number of fundamental strategic directions and

actions geared to achieve maximum future impact and enhanced EU-wide capabilities including, as a necessity, speeding up the eEurope and eCommission initiatives.

The recommendations of the 2000 IST Monitoring Panel focus on four issues in the management of the Programme:

- ◆ **Increasing the use of electronic tools**
- ◆ **Improving Programme planning**
- ◆ **Improving administrative structures**
- ◆ **Moving forward to FP6.**

Increasing the Use of Electronic Tools

The use of electronic tools in proposal submission is not an isolated activity but an essential part of the overall digital workflow throughout the IST Programme, indeed throughout the Commission. Such an approach will contribute to increasing productivity, reducing overall costs and improving customer satisfaction — as well as reducing time-to-contract. The Panel recommends that:

- ◆ A task-force should examine how to overcome existing barriers to the electronic submission of proposals and develop an action plan by end-2001.

Improving Programme Planning

The Programme's Research Targeting and Proposal Evaluation systems are, with small caveats, excellent and the basis for solid future planning and development. However, there are many difficulties within the Project Monitoring system, the tracking of research Outputs and the assessment of Impacts due to weak forward planning. It is important that the source of these difficulties is removed and that they do not reappear in FP6. The Panel recommends that:

- ◆ A Project Monitoring System is put in place and its performance independently reviewed by means of an annual Project Monitoring Report. The first such Report should be available by end-2001.
- ◆ Programme Management develops, by end-2001, a first attempt at an integrated plan (including IT support) for the operation of the successor to the IST Programme under FP6.

Improving Administrative Structures

Good information and good planning are ineffective if the administrative structures are poor. The consistent request of Programme Management has been for "Simplification, simplification, simplification." The power to clarify administration as well as improve co-ordination across Programme Activities would be improved by clearer lines of responsibility. The Panel recommends that:

- ◆ The new incumbent of the Brussels-based Deputy Director-General position should be given responsibility as overall IST Programme Director.

Clear administration is also supported by publishing clear targets and procedures. The Panel recommends that:

- ◆ In the area of time to contract, critical milestones and guaranteed service times, including time to contract, are published, and a clear policy on the treatment of proposal

budgets is formulated across Programme Activities. Both should be available by end-2001 to the 2001 Monitoring Panel. Efforts to clarify the use of socio-economic and European Added Value selection criteria should be continued. A customer satisfaction survey should be carried out among proposers.

An effective Programme also needs commitment by all personnel in all Programme Activities. The Panel recommends that:

- ◆ Any Advisory Group(s) should be constituted to represent the concerns of all Programme Activities.
- ◆ A Human Resources Policy, explicitly linked to Programme development needs, should be put in place. Explicit targets for and measures to achieve a better gender balance should be part of this policy. Both policy and targets should be available by end-2001 to the 2001 Monitoring Panel.

The Way Forward to FP6

Developing both the European Research Area and at the same time increasing European Added Value are fundamental to the development of FP6. To accomplish this — and give greater competitiveness to European industry and benefits to European citizens — greater knowledge is needed of the use of clustering in international research and the way SMEs exploit such research. The Panel recommends that:

- ◆ Policy-oriented reviews of Take-Up Measures, SME participation and Clusters are undertaken. All should be made available by end-2001 to the 2001 Monitoring Panel.

The integration of the applicant countries into the research activities of the current and next Framework Programmes requires particular care and support. The Panel recommends that:

- ◆ In conjunction with DG Research, a medium-term plan should be drawn up for the integration of the applicant countries into FP activities, including short-term measures such as capacity-building and integration into existing networks, and made available by end-2001 to the 2001 Monitoring Panel.

Programme Management invests considerable effort in implementing Monitoring Panel recommendations and tracking and reporting on their follow-up. However, the response to recommendations should be managed in a more timely fashion, greater continuity established from one year's exercise to the next, and better co-ordination ensured with the panel monitoring the Framework Programme. The Panel recommends that:

- ◆ Each commitment made by Programme Management in response to a Monitoring Panel recommendation should incorporate an implementation timetable, and appropriate resources allocated for its realisation. A significant degree of continuity should be ensured from one year's Monitoring Panel to the next. One member, at least, of each specific programme's Monitoring Panel should be a member of the corresponding Framework Programme Panel.

5.2.4 Competitive and Sustainable Growth – Executive Summary

The Fifth Framework Programme (FP5) operated during 2000 in the second year of its implementation. The total budget allocated for all Growth calls open in 2000 was around 1000 M€. One of the main features of FP5 is its problem-solving approach which is reflected in the different Key Actions, Generic Activities, and Support for Research Infrastructure. In December 2000, the work programme has been modified in order to make use of inputs from previous calls, and in conformity with the Programme Road Map.

The overall indication is that the programme implementation made good progress in the year 2000 and that the activities of the management addressed the required objectives well. Calls for proposals have been on time and evaluations were found to work appropriately and fairly. The participation of various groups seems to be balanced. The number of participants in the Programme has increased in 2000, including a fair proportion of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and participants from the Accession Countries. During the first 2 years of Growth, participants from 11 non-EU, candidate countries were eligible as partners in the research projects.

In 2000 significant budgets were allocated for the funding of fairly large projects which contribute to the creation of the European Research Area (ERA) including Targeted Research Actions (TRA) Technology Platforms(TP), Critical Technology Projects (CTP), and Infrastructures. Some large projects have been funded, whereas others failed in the evaluation.

It is observed that most GROWTH projects have a strong European dimension and could not have been carried out on a national level. However, data show that the number of participants per proposal is in the range of 10 which raises the question of benefits and shortcomings of big consortia.

The panel's recommendations include suggestions to improve the real time internal co-ordination at the Commission between different Programmes and DGs and the external co-ordination to other European level and National Programmes. Despite evidence of an outstanding devotion to duty of Commission personnel, staffing levels sufficient to execute the workload imposed and to manage the Programme remain a concern, especially for the scientific and technical project follow-up. Also, delays in final contract signing after a successful negotiation phase are too long, particularly for SMEs. The priorities for setting the balance between bottom-up and policy driven approach are still controversial, however the balance seems up to now to be fair although more bottom-up maybe desirable in the future to maintain excellence in basic science and in order to keep a readiness to face unforeseen situations.

The panel regards the following recommendations as the major ones:

- **Higher Priority to Science and Technology**
- **Reduce Workload for Project Officers**
- **Improve internal and external Co-ordination**
- **Easy Procedures for SMEs**

5.2.5 Environment & Sustainable Development Sub Programme – Executive Summary

The Environment & Sustainable Development Sub Programme of FP5 is large and scientifically and technically broad-based. The Programme was well designed and addresses the principal environmental issues/ problems faced by the European Community. Many of these also have a global dimension. Consequently outputs from research projects are needed urgently to implement existing policies, formulate new European environmental policy and help the Community establish its position in international fora. However the overall focus tends to be on remediation rather than prevention and therefore the environmental research is not adequately integrated with sustainable development issues. This is a shortcoming of the Programme.

The Programme Committee has played a crucial role in the design of the ESD and in modifying the Work Programme to meet changing needs. However the opportunity to make such adjustments is very limited and this prevents an adequate response to newly emerging scientific challenges. The three EAGs have provided substantial advice on the Work Programme content to the Directorate. These Groups have much to offer the Directorate but their role needs to be better defined.

The ESD Sub Programme is being well implemented. The evaluation procedures are transparent and followed rigorously but should be reassessed with a view to simplification. The Directorate's Scientific Officers do a good professional job but they carry a very high work load. Consequently most of their effort is committed to Work Programme modification and project evaluation and selection procedures. Their support to the research scientists during the operational phase of projects is generally less effective than it should be, particularly for FP4 projects. Nevertheless it is a major achievement of the Directorate to have established such a soundly based Programme with the staff resource available.

While the Directorate has made an effort to disseminate research findings to a wider community through videos, brochures etc a clear policy is still lacking for the synthesis of research results from a range of projects into a clear, coherent message for policy makers and other stakeholders. Additional resources to support this vital activity are needed, including the use of external agencies.

The monitoring was undertaken during a year (1999-2000) when 'change was in the air' e.g. the development of the European Research Area, the drafting of the Sixth Environmental Action Programme, the development of ideas for the next Framework Programme and the full involvement of the Accession countries in FP5. It was appropriate for the Panel to focus on the possible impacts of such changes on the ESD and these are addressed fully in the body of the Report. The Panel considers two of these issues – ERA and Accession Countries – to be of particular importance to present and future research.

Firstly the ERA: because of the nature of much environmental research the Director and the Heads of Unit had no difficulty in showing that many FP5 ESD projects incorporate several of the features falling within the ERA concept. The Panel was pleased that the Directorate is considering how future FP5 activities can be pursued within the ERA structure. One of the major problems is to bridge the gap between EU research and that of national programmes. The Directorate needs to work with PC members and National Contact Points to establish stronger links.

With respect to the Accession Countries: analysis shows that their participation and project success rate in ESD was significantly less than that of the Member States. This is

to be expected during their first year of involvement in FP5. The Directorate should give targeted support to the National Contact Points in the ACs and create initiatives to encourage their inclusion in Member State scientific networks.

The Panel acknowledges the support provided by Directorate staff during its Monitoring work.

5.2.6 Non Nuclear Energy Sub Programme – Executive Summary

This report deals mainly with the key actions 5 and 6 of the Framework Programme5 (FP5) which constitute the sub-programme ENERGY part B , as with the ongoing projects under FP4 and even FP3 .

The year 2000 saw the merging of DG Transport and DG Energy , to form the new DG TREN , the mid-point revision of the sub programme with the revised info-pack of October 2000 , the signature of the contracts issued from the calls of 1999, and a third complementary call to reach the objectives on renewables conform to the budgetary directives (dead-line May 31st) as well as open calls for Accompanying Measures and Thematic networks (dead-lines February 15th and September 1st) .

The mid-point revision of the sub-programme introduces a clear differentiation between short , and medium to long term research , a focussing and a concentration within the subprogramme through the introduction of targeted actions and horizontal priorities . This revision is applied for the 4th call launched the 24th of October, but with different deadlines for the 2 types of research (February 9th and March 15th of 2001) .

As core indicators were not available for the globality of the sub programme during the monitoring exercise , the present report treats mainly the qualitative aspects with a particular focussing on the informatics tools and Management Information Systems.

A number of earlier addressed concerns remained major trends and worries, such as:

- the fundamental incoherence between the sub programme structure (before revision) and its management,
- proposals and projects still strongly technologically driven, rather than problem/market oriented,
- difficulties in the evaluation connected to the heterogeneity between the interpretation of the socio-economic criteria,
- lack of user-friendly and interoperable Management Information Systems,
- very heavy workload of the Scientific Officers,
- long time to contract signature.

The recommendations from the previous monitoring exercise in what concerns an impact assessment of terminated FP4 projects, a clarification of management share and responsibilities, and an improvement of the evaluation process timing were partially fulfilled, but further efforts are still necessary.

Panel key recommendations referring to the calls for tender are:

- clarification through a strong simplification of the info-pack,
- elaboration of a workable approach to European Added Value,
- reconsideration of anonymity procedures.

Panel key recommendations referring to the Internal Organisation are:

- need of an external support to the Scientific Officers (the panel understood that a specific call for Project Technical Assistance, common for both DG's, has been launched),
- need of a better communication between the various levels of the structure to improve the policy appropriation by the concerned staff,

- shift of Scientific Officers role to Project Management in a first step, and to policy maker in a second step,
- involve the scientific officers in the preparations and revisions of the Framework Programmes.

Panel key recommendations referring to M.I.S are still:

- introduction of user-friendly tools, answering to the actual needs of the staff that should be associated to the technical specifications for these tools,
- flexibility and interoperability of the various tools.

Panel key recommendations referring to the impact assessment are:

- procedure to be applied by both DG's, and not only by DG RTD ,
- results for FP4 projects to be known before finalisation of future FP6 preparation,
- possible use of results as an incentive for the participants, for example in being included in future networks of excellence.

Finally in what concerns the monitoring exercise itself, it is still needed to have:

- sufficient available statistics to judge progress achievements, impact on European Added Value and on European Research Are , participation of Accession Countries,
- better horizontal and vertical synergy inside of the process to be in coherence with the FP itself.

5.2.7 International Role of Community Research – Executive Summary

The *main strategies* of the “horizontal” Programme on Confirming the International Role of Community Research (INCO) are:

- To contribute to the implementation of the Union's external policies through joint RTD with partners from third countries (pre-accession countries, CEEC's and NIS, countries in the Mediterranean area and developing countries).
- To enhance the role of Community research internationally by stimulating S&T collaboration (S&T agreements, bursary systems, COST and EUREKA).

The *4-year budget* amounts to 475 MEUR (excluding contributions of third countries).

Main observations and recommendations:

- The Panel found that *implementation of INCO-2 in 2000* proceeded as foreseen in the Work Program and in accordance with strategic goals. This was achieved despite great uncertainty caused in the final quarter of the year by news of the *abolition of INCO's Directorate* in January 2001 and its *replacement by two units* reporting to the Deputy Director General. In the first months of 2001, as a result of the reorganisation, the *staffing of INCO was reduced*. Approximately *a third of all INCO projects were transferred to the Thematic Programmes*.
- *The new organisation* may be able to better respond to international policy aspects of R&D. However, it worries the Panel that *INCO's execution is fragmented, and its specific regional expertise is scattered*. The result is that customers, both inside and outside the Commission, find it more difficult to interact with the program. INCO is a truly horizontal program whose main strength and uniqueness lie in its ability to address regionally focused co-operative science projects in accordance with EU external policies. The Panel is convinced that this ability should be maintained and developed.

- The Panel finds that INCO plays a specific and unique role in the *European Research Area*, that its place and functions in this regard should be further explored and clarified, and that its profile should be focused and more clearly visible. The Panel finds in INCO significant awareness of the programme's *European Added Value*, but recommends a study to address concrete measures and criteria relevant to INCO activities and projects. *Integration of pre-accession countries* into Community research remains a serious challenge in general. However, within the INCO programme the issue has been dealt with in a very satisfactory manner.
- *The processing of calls* for proposal was carried out professionally. However, the time between closure of a call and contract signature is too long and the process is not sufficiently transparent to the proposers.
- The Panel could not adequately assess *progress of projects already in execution* because of insufficient readily accessible information. Thus it recommends strengthening project life cycle management and integrating information in a management information system.
- The Panel observes that INCO is still a collection of separate initiatives. More attention should be devoted to the operation of *INCO at programme level*. The Panel recommends in particular instituting an Annual Report.
- The *turnover rate of administrative and financial personnel* is high, due to short-term contracts. This shortens INCO's "institutional memory" and jeopardises the management of projects and programme.
- The Panel finds that the Commission should prepare itself better for, and commit more resources to, the *Annual Monitoring*. It is an important management tool, which the Commission should appreciate fully.

5.2.8 Promotion of Innovation and Encouragement of SME Participation – Executive Summary

The programme "Promotion of innovation and encouragement of SME participation" ("Innovation and SMEs") serves as a:

- ✓ "service provider", offering information and assistance to SMEs and other innovation actors and supporting the thematic programmes of FP5 in their efforts to promote innovation and increase the participation of SMEs;
- ✓ "clearing house", collecting and analysing information on innovation trends and policies at European and national level;
- ✓ "test bed", carrying out pilot actions to test new ideas in some areas of innovation policy.

"Innovation and SMEs" is endowed with an operational budget of 336 M€. Spending commitments for operations totalled 47,5 M€ in 1999 and 101,6 M€ in 2000.

In 2000, the programme launched and evaluated three calls; "New approaches to technology transfer", "Regional innovation actions" and "Access to private innovation financing and tools for better knowledge exploitation". It also completed the contract negotiations associated with two calls launched in 1999, "Mechanisms to facilitate the setting-up and development of innovative firms" and "Innovation relay centres". The other key parts of the programme were already in place at the end of 1999 and continued their operations through 2000. These include the SME Specific Measures (CRAFT and Exploratory Awards) and "Economic and technological intelligence projects", the information and assistance infrastructure (the on-line service CORDIS and the network of existing IRCs, Innovation Relay Centres), and the "Innovation projects".

In the view of the 2000 Monitoring Panel, good progress has been made in many parts of the programme. Despite the difficulties inherent to FP5, innovative results were achieved by the contract consortia and disseminated by the Commission - supported by the 1999 monitoring recommendations.

“Innovation and SMEs” has provided a good contribution to the debate on research and innovation in Europe and is in the front line of participation of Accession Countries with its network of IRCs. It is also worth mentioning that concrete action was taken on most, although not all, of the recommendations from the previous monitoring exercise. While appreciating the results that have been achieved, the 2000 Monitoring Panel perceives some cause for concern, and recommends a number of specific action points for improvement. The main areas of concern, which are common to both, “Innovation and SMEs” and the thematic programmes, relate to the undertaking of an exceedingly wide range of commitments, the complexity of internal regulations and rigidity of procedures, and the somewhat weak connection between the FP and the world of venture capital.

The following main recommendations to the Commission are equally urgent and should be acted upon within the lifetime of FP5:

1. Take action to improve the effectiveness of the Co-ordination Group between the Innovation Cells as a place where good practice is transferred across programmes.
2. Take measures - such as the exchange of personnel, transfer of know-how by teaching and training, consultancy – for closing the gap between the IRCs based in Member States and those set up in the Accession Countries.
3. Launch actions to measure, assess and, if necessary, increase the impact of “Economic and technological intelligence projects” on their final beneficiaries, i.e. SMEs.
4. Collect more detailed statistical figures and indicators on the participation of SMEs in FP5 and on the structure of the relevant consortia.
5. Shorten the cycle of updating of CORDIS and take other measures to improve the quality of its databases – such as the development of interactive facilities for the collection of data, and data mining and other activities to learn more about users’ preferences.
6. Make plans to bring the current pilot version of Technology Market Place to the latest stage of on-line services with the explicit objective of commercialising the outcomes of EU funded projects.
7. Consider two new specific rules for encouraging SME participation:
 - a) provided that a contract is eventually signed, project costs incurred in the period between the time when a positive proposal evaluation is received and the contract is signed should be reimbursed;
 - b) give SME start-ups with insufficient capital the option to take part in the projects, provided that they accept to be paid according to deliverables (this might also help improve the quality of work-plans).
8. Enhance co-ordination between the innovation activities of the Commission and the Innovation 2000 Initiative carried out by the European Investment Bank.
9. Review the guidelines for the TIP (Technology Implementation Plan) in order to confirm its viability as a means for track keeping of and promoting exploitation – including provision of support to SMEs for IPR protection.
10. Strengthen the base of data drawn from the Community Innovation Surveys with a view to improving the quality of the Innovation Scoreboard.

5.2.9 Improving Human Research Potential and the Socio-Economic Knowledge Base

A) Main Programme Objectives

- i) To contribute to the mobilisation of human research potential across the European Community, including accession nations, and
- ii) To strengthen the socio-economic knowledge base.

B) State of Implementation and Main Achievements

Activities in all the programme areas are now underway. The main achievements in 2000 were:

- i) The successful launch of the Research Training Network activity;
- ii) The continuing expansion of the Marie Curie Fellowships;
- iii) Extension of the range of topics included in the Key Action *Improving the Socio-Economic Knowledge Base*; and
- iv) The organisation of three major European conferences.

C) Major Recommendations

1. Greater use of electronic document transmission, fax and mail to allow evaluators to consider applications in their home country and come together for a relatively brief final decision meeting in Brussels, would use Community resources more efficiently, make participation as an expert more attractive and lead to swifter decisions.
2. Funding of projects be based on rank-order as decided by the evaluation scores given by scientific experts.
3. The Database of Experts should be refreshed on a three rather than a five-year cycle, and this should include the updating of information on existing experts.
4. The EC should encourage the participation of Applicant Countries by strengthening links with academic organisations in those countries, monitoring the activities of national contact points, suggesting how these might be made more effective and considering the appointment of a staff member with specific responsibility for the promotion of IHP in those countries.
5. Providing central support with skills in the area of dissemination beyond academic communities (for example writing press releases and communicating with mass-media, organising conferences for non-academics).
6. The CORDIS web pages should be improved by more regular up-dating and better indexing and search facilities.
7. The STRATA and Common Basis of Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators (CBSTII) activities be integrated into the Socio-Economic Research Key Action and application procedures be brought into line.
8. Specific budgets for dissemination be made available to Key Action research, separate from the negotiated research budgets and professional support for communication beyond the scientific community be made available.
9. The strategy of awarding distinctions requires rethinking. It is not practical to establish a prize rivalling Nobel without substantially greater resources and without separating award procedures from those for awarding grants. The Archimedes prize should be based on national level competitions.
10. Networks and possibly Fellowships schemes should finance the inclusion of a limited

number of non-European countries and participants.

11. A register of national and European research and academic professional organisations, grant-awarding bodies and non-profit associations active in relation to research should be drawn up and the process of dissemination of opportunities to and consultation conducted via national contact points (typically government officials) be broadened to include them.
12. A timetable for the attainment of targets for the participation of women scientists in EC funded science should be drawn up and progress towards it monitored.
13. The first meeting of the monitoring panel should take place in mid-September so that the final report can be submitted in January.
14. The Core Indicators database be established at the beginning of the year and updated in real time, so that up-to-date statistics can be supplied throughout the monitoring process.

5.2.10 Nuclear Energy Programme – Fission – Executive Summary

The EU and Euratom FP5 Nuclear fission programme covers the research and technological development areas designed to support the improvement of the Safety of existing installations and the development of waste management methods, to improve Radiation Protection practices as well as the basic knowledge of Radiological Sciences and to open doors for more safe future use of this energy. It is in the continuity of the FP4 orientations, but has a new organisation of actions. Year 2000 has been devoted to the negotiation by Commission staff of 155 contracts, mainly issued from responses to the 1999 calls. Follow up of some actions of FP4 has also been done. In year 2000 many assessments Panels have come to conclusions on FP4 (partially on FP5) and on general management. They have given many recommendations, some directed to management of FP5.

Specific Comments 1 - Management of contracts

Management of the selected proposals to come to contracts within clusters is a demanding scientific work by itself. It is a time consuming process for Commission staff and tenders. Despite the overload of the staff the Panel finds that management was well done and in a constructive approach to overcome difficulties due to cuts in funding. The work programmes which are the key documents for calls reflect properly the FP5 objectives. The 2000 call has been improved by clarifying objectives and revisiting priorities. There is still 35 % of the money available which gives the possibility to fill gaps in some identified areas where researches are needed to complete FP5 objectives.

Specific Comments 2 - Significant achievements

The objectives of FP4 have been successfully achieved. Important results have been disseminated in the scientific community by different ways. In addition of technical achievements European Added Value (EAV) can be identified.

The 155 FP5 contracts negotiated by the end of year 2000 fit with the objectives of the 1999 work programme and are of a high standard value, from which EAV can be expected, in each of the areas covered. For instance our understanding of severe accidents will increase the possibilities to control and limit the consequences of core-melt accidents and the first results on new reactors with evolutionary and innovative features will further prove the feasibility of next generation of power reactors, the pursuit of full scale demonstrations in underground laboratories will increase confidence in the safety of waste disposal, and in nuclear power in general. The social aspect is covered by some direct research. Despite the effort of the Commission participation of accessing countries is rather low.

The efforts of the staff to put in clusters the contracts and to establish some networking is of a considerable help to launch FP6.

Specific Comments 3 - Major recommendations of the Panel

Develop and provide timely for monitoring quantitative indicators showing the increment in the yearly achievement of the programme.

Continue to clarify the objectives of the programme to stimulate and focus proposals. Give special attention to the rejected proposals to increase transparency.

Minimise inconvenience due to uncertainty in the allocation of resources and the schedule of starting contracts.

Facilitate participation of accessing countries to the programmes.

Prepare carefully the possible and recommendable shift from project management to programme management.

Next monitoring should check how far the objectives of the FP5 programme are achieved through the expert scientific technical reports.

5.2.11 Nuclear Energy Programme – Controlled Thermonuclear Fusion – Executive Summary

According to the Commission's request, acting as independent experts, we have prepared this report taking into consideration the documents provided and listed in Appendix 2 and further information obtained from staff members. We found that, in 2000, the fusion programme has been managed and implemented in agreement with the guidelines and directives issued by the Council and that the programme has well advanced towards its aims along the lines foreseen, i.e. 'Next Step' activities, concept improvements and long term technology.

The fusion programme provides an excellent example of the benefits of the recently implemented idea of a European Research Area. Over more than forty years of continuously intensified and successful co-operation it has grown into an efficient and strong network of joint scientific and technological research throughout Member Countries plus Switzerland and already now some of the Accession Countries. It represents a significant European Added Value as clearly exemplified by the successful construction and operation of JET, which resulted in Europe's world leadership in fusion, by the ITER design and by very impressive research and development in the Associations. These results, highly acknowledged throughout the world, would never have been achieved by purely national efforts.

It must, however, also be said that the fusion programme has now reached a critical stage. It is essential that decisions on the 'Next Step', preferably ITER in its foreseen framework of international co-operation, must be taken as soon as possible. The fusion programme would suffer strongly if ITER construction were not started under FP 6. It must be stressed that fusion is one of only a very few large scale energy supply options for the future. It is essential to keep this option open for future generations, who will decide whether or not to use it depending on their currently unforeseeable situation. It should be appreciated that a decision to go forward with ITER is not a decision to use fusion. It is a decision to provide future generations with the knowledge necessary to make informed decisions on the possible use of fusion.

In order to support the continued successful development of the fusion programme, we recommend that:

- all possible efforts be made to begin ITER construction under FP 6,
- the French Government be encouraged to officially offer Cadarache as a European ITER site and that the ITER parties be asked to accept this offer,
- the dynamism and strength of the Associations be reinforced, to provide for the training of young researchers, for the continuing development of innovations, for the current exploitation of JET and for the future exploitation of ITER,
- the strong unified management structure necessary for a programme of this size and importance and to drive it towards the 'Next Step' be ensured.

We put forward further recommendations on the continued use of JET, on materials development, on a 14 MeV neutron source, on public awareness of the importance of fusion, on socio-economic, environmental and safety studies, on staff problems, and on Cupertino with industry (see section 4.1) which are necessary steps and actions along the path to fusion.

(see page 11 of the "Nuclear Energy Programme – Controlled Thermonuclear Fusion Report" for the full text of the Recommendations.)

5.2.12 Joint Research Centre – Executive Summary

The Joint Research Centre is a Directorate-General of the Commission and consists of eight institutes, located in five EU countries. Its mission is to provide customer-driven scientific and technical support for the conception, development, implementation and monitoring of Community policies. As a service of the European Commission, the JRC functions as a reference centre of science and technology for the Community. Close to the policy-making process, it serves the common interest of the Member States, while being independent of commercial or national interests.

Responsible for the implementation of its EC and Euratom Specific Programmes under FP5, the JRC participates to the overall FP monitoring exercise by contributing information on its activities; formally however, the monitoring of the JRC does not fall within the remit of this Panel but is carried out independently by its own Board of Governors and materialised via the JRC Annual Report. The following text contains the principal observations of the JRC Board of Governors on the Annual Report for the year 2000.

The JRC Board of Governors acknowledges the JRC management's concern of assessing how best the centre could achieve its mission, facing the challenges of the new century and making better use of its resources. The consolidation of the new mission of the JRC has driven all activities of the JRC during 2000.

The Board supports the JRC management's efforts to have the JRC activities evaluated both at the scientific and strategic level and at the administrative level, and looks forward to analysing the results emerging from these initiatives.

As regards the external evaluation exercises, the Board notes that the 1999 **Scientific Audit**, initiated by the JRC management with the aim of obtaining an assessment of the scientific quality of the JRC work, and performed by groups of highly reputed external scientific experts, has substantially contributed to the statutory **5-Year Assessment** exercise carried out this year as part of the larger Framework Programme assessment.

The Board also appreciates the report of the **High Level Panel**, chaired by Viscount Davignon, on the workings of the JRC, and the Commission's **Peer Group** review, that will both serve to better define the orientation which the JRC should adopt in the future. The Board acknowledges the suggestions made, especially those concerning the proposed role of the JRC in the European Research Area, to be developed in the frame of the next Framework Programme now under preparation. The JRC should indeed concentrate its activities and further contribute to the development of a common European reference system in support of EU policy making. *To this end, more managerial flexibility would be required to better adapt the JRC resources to implementing its mission.*

The Board appreciates the efforts devoted to integrate the users in the JRC policy formulation process with a view to setting the JRC priorities in accordance with customer needs and EU policy priorities. To this end, the creation of an inter-service Users Group, allowing for the constitution of a permanent systematic mechanism as the active interface with European policy-makers, is welcome; so is the collaboration with National Research organisations in specific fields, to increase the JRC's know-how and 'add value' to its competencies to better develop its role as partner in networks. In this respect, the Science and Governance conference improved the JRC's understanding of the potential for developing a common system of scientific and technical reference, in order to provide independent and high-quality support for policy implementation.

The Board notes that the internal audit activities have continued with a view to improve the overall efficiency of the JRC. In addition, the introduction of the Total Quality Management (TQM) process, launched for the whole of the JRC with a systematic long-term approach, was successfully implemented and its first cycle completed this year with the reporting of the various improvement teams.

The Board follows with interest the JRC Work-Programme's implementation and the efforts to integrate the Central and Eastern European candidate countries in the JRC's work. It appreciates the institutes' achievements in the realm of scientific reference, and their contribution to addressing European problems such as the dioxin crisis and the "mad cow" disease. It welcomes the JRC's performance on competitive activities.

The Board notes the promotion of JRC technology transfer in support of Community innovation policies, and the setting up of an external seed capital fund and an "incubator" function at the JRC-Ispra site for JRC spin-off projects. It further encourages managerial efforts with respect to the improvement of its external communication and of the JRC's public image.

The Board supports the development of international collaboration also outside Europe in key areas, mainly the control of nuclear materials, food safety, and environmental protection.

With respect to nuclear activities outside the Framework Programme, the Board welcomes the decommissioning activities carried out at the JRC and the management of waste and obsolete facilities, which commenced this year. While welcoming the normal running of operations of the 4-year Supplementary Programme of the High Flux Reactor (HFR) on the JRC-Petten site, the Board notes the setting up of a users' strategy aiming at further involving the HFR in the European Research Area.

The Board appreciates the work carried out at the JRC for co-ordinating the Space activities and for the setting up of joint ESA/Commission strategy for Space which should be further developed by a task force. The Board notes the report on how the JRC complies with the Council Resolution on "Women and Science", of 20 May 1999 and with the European Parliament Resolution of 9 March 1999. The Board acknowledges the outstanding contribution to the JRC mission of the former Director General, Mr. Herbert J. Allgeier, who retired on 31 October 2000.

Finally, the Board wishes to express its recognition to Commissioner Philippe Busquin for his efforts to create an environment favourable to optimising the impact of European research results in the frame of the European Research Area.

5.3 BUDGETS FOR FP5

FP5 – EC Programmes: Maximum Amounts and Breakdown (1998-2002)

INDIRECT ACTIONS	Billion EURO (Current Prices)
First Activity Research, technological development and demonstration activities <i>Indicative breakdown by theme (Billion Euro):</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quality of life and management of living resources (2,413) 2. User-friendly information society (3,600) 3. Competitive and sustainable growth (2,705) 4. Energy, environment and sustainable development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Environment and sustainable development (1,083) - Energy (1,042) 	(*)10,843
Second Activity Confirming the international role of Community research	0,475
Third Activity Promotion of innovation and encouragement of SME participation	0,363
Fourth Activity Improving human research potential and the socio-economic knowledge base	1,280
DIRECT ACTIONS	
Joint Research Centre (JRC)	0,739
MAXIMUM OVERALL AMOUNT	13,700

(*) of which 10% on average is for SMEs

FP5 – Euratom Programme: Maximum Amounts and Breakdown (1998-2002)

INDIRECT ACTIONS	Billion EURO (Current Prices)
Research and training in the field of Nuclear Energy	0,979
DIRECT ACTIONS	
Joint Research Centre (JRC)	0,281
MAXIMUM OVERALL AMOUNT	1,260

5.4 ABBREVIATIONS

AS	Accession States
COM	Commission
CORDIS	Community Research and Development Information System
COST	Co-operation in Science and Technology
CRAFT	Co-operative Research Action for Technology
CREST	Scientific and Technical Research Committee
DG	Directorate General
EAG	Expert Advisory Group
EC	European Community
ERA	European Research Area
ESD (1)	Energy, Environment and Sustainable Development (Environment)
ESD (2)	Energy, Environment and Sustainable Development (Energy)
EU	European Union
EUREKA	Co-operation between European firms and research institutes in the field of advanced technologies (1985-....)
FP	Framework Programme
FPMP	Framework Programme Monitoring Panel
FIS	EURATOM (Fission Programme)
FUS	EURATOM (Fusion Programme)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GROWTH/ GRO	Competitive and Sustainable Growth Programme
HLAG	High Level Advisory Group
ICT	Information and Communications Technologies
IHP	Improving Human Research Potential and Socio-Economic Knowledge Programme
INCO / INC	The International Role of Community Research Programme
INNO	Promotion of Innovation and Participation of SMEs Programme
INTAS	International Association for Promotion of Co-operation with Scientists from the Independent States of the former Soviet Union
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
IRC	Innovation Relay Centre
IST	Information Society Programme
IT / IS	Information Technology / Information System
I-TEC	Innovation and Technology Equity Capital
JRC	Joint Research Centre
MIS	Management Information Systems
MS	Member States
NCP	National Contact Point
PES	Programme Evaluation System
PHARE	Poland and Hungary Assistance for the Reconstruction of the Economy
QoL	Quality of Life and Management of Living Resources Programme
RTD	Research and Technological Development
RTN	Research Training Network
SEP	Single Entry Point
SER	Socio-Economic Research Key Action under IHP
SO	Scientific Officer
SP	Specific Programme
SME	Small and Medium sized Enterprises
SPMP	Specific Programme Monitoring Panel
STRATA	Strategic Analysis of Specific Policy Issues under IHP
TACIS	Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States
TIP	Technological Implementation Plan
WP	Work Programme

Time between call for proposals and signature of contract
(time elapsed between Call deadline and stage indicated in terms of weeks)

5.5 TIME BETWEEN CALL AND CONTRACT

The following table indicates, in terms of weeks, the elapsed time between the closing of the call deadline and the signing of contracts (as well as the various stages in-between indicated) for the different FP5 specific programmes during the period shown.

Programme	Call identifier	Closing date of the Call	Evaluation period	Start of negotiations	First opinion by the Committee where requested ⁶ (by batches)	Last opinion by the Committee (by batches)	First Commission Decision date ⁷	Last Commission Decision date	First contract signed ⁸	Last contract signed
GROWTH	1 st Periodic Call RTD/ OJ n° C 72, 16.03.1999, p. 31	15 June 99	July 99 4 weeks	11.08.99 ⁹ 8 weeks	28 July 99 (info) 6 weeks		In batches: 1 st on 7.12.99; 25 weeks	last on 20.12.00 79 weeks	23.12.99 27 weeks	16.03.01 91 weeks
	2 nd Periodic Call RTD/ OJ n° C 361, 15.12.1999, p. 7	31.03.00	May 00 5 weeks	July 00 ¹⁰ 9 weeks	30.06.00 13 weeks		In batches: 1 st on 16.11.00 33 weeks	negotiations still ongoing	06.12.00 36 weeks	Signatures in progress
	3 rd Periodic Call RTD/ OJ n° C 155, 6.06.2000, p. 9	29 Sept. 00	Nov. 00 5 weeks	Jan- Feb 01 ² 14-18 weeks	6 Feb 01 19 weeks		Negotiations ongoing.			
Quality of Life	1999/C 64/14	2 nd Deadline 11/10/99	Dec. 99 - Jan. 00 7 weeks	Jan to early March 00 (diff .dates = different actions) 16-20 weeks	(8.3.00) 4 batches 36 weeks	5 th batch (15) 24.11.00 58 weeks	4 batches 39 weeks	5 th batch 16.12.00 C(2000) 3692 61 weeks	30.08.00 46 weeks	23.01.01 67 weeks
	1999/C 361/06	15.3.00 1 st deadline	01/05/00 to 09/06/00 7 weeks	June 00 (diff dates = different actions) 11 weeks	2 batches 32 weeks	3 rd batch (46) 24.11.00 36 weeks	2 batches 35 weeks	3 rd batch 20.12.00 40 weeks	6.12.00 38 weeks	7.03.01 51 weeks
	idem	11.10.00 2 nd deadline	13/11/00 to 22/12/00 5 weeks	Feb 01 (diff. dates = different actions) 16 weeks						
IST	IST-99-2	17.01.00	12.02.00/03.03. 4 weeks	29.03.00 11 weeks	11.05.00 (batches) 16 weeks	24.04.01	20.07.00 (batches) 27 weeks	-	26.07.00 28 weeks	20.03.01 71 weeks
	IST-99-ADD	10.05.00	26.05.00/26.05. 3 weeks	28.07.00 (batches) 12 weeks	04.11.00 (batches) 26 weeks	01.02..01	29.11.00 (batches) 30 weeks	ongoing	18.12.00 32 weeks	ongoing
	IST-00-3	10.05.00	26.05.00/26.05. 3 weeks	28.07.00 (batches) 12 weeks	20.09.00 (batches) 19 weeks	28.03.01	7.11.00 (batches) 25 weeks	-	14.11.00 26 weeks	ongoing
	IST-00-RN1 (only one contract)	31.05.00	05.06.00/. 1 week	13.06.00 (batches) 2 weeks	22.06.00 (batches) 3 weeks	NA	29.09.00 (batches) 13 weeks	NA	31.10.00 18 weeks	NA
	IST - 00-4	31.10.00	Nov 2000 4 weeks	17.02.01 16 weeks	19.03.01 (batches) 21 weeks		18.04.01 25 weeks		30.04.01 27 weeks	
IST-00-5	15.01.01	09.02.01 3 weeks	09.03.01 (batches) 7 weeks	18.05.01 13 weeks		ongoing		ongoing		

⁶ Depending on the size of the project,-the threshold vary according to the programmes-, the Committee is either only informed of or consulted on the Commission's intentions on funding of projects. The information of the Committee may either be linked to a meeting or take place before.

⁷ Decision on projects proposals to be funded, not on rejected proposals or non eligible proposals

⁸ Commission date of signature contract

⁹ Single negotiation mandate for the whole programme (KA1, KA3, KA4 & Generic activities)

¹⁰ Separate negotiation mandate per KA/GA

Time between call for proposals and signature of contract
(time elapsed between Call deadline and stage indicated in terms of weeks)

Programme	Call identifier	Closing date of the Call	Evaluation period	Start of negotiations	First opinion by the Committee where requested ⁶ (by batches)	Last opinion by the Committee (by batches)	First Commission Decision date ⁷	Last Commission Decision date	First contract signed ⁸	Last contract signed
EESD										
A. Environment and sustainable development	EESD-ENV-99.2.	15.02.00 (for main part (>90% of funds))	13.03-07.04.00 4 weeks	12.05.00 - 18.05.00 12 weeks	13.09.00 onward / partly in "written procedure" 30 weeks	-	22.09.00- (7 batches) 31 weeks	20.12.00 44 weeks	08.11.00 38 weeks	Not yet -multiple requests for changes delay signat. of 20% of contracts
B. Energy										
Calls on Nuclear Fission	1999/C 77/09 + 1999/C 77/11	17.06.99	5 - 9.07.99 3 weeks	07.09.99 12 weeks	17.11.99 22 weeks	18.01.00 31 weeks	16.12.99 26 weeks	23.01.00 31 weeks	29.12.99 28 weeks	29.03.00 41 weeks
	1999/C 77/10 +1999/C 77/11	4.10.99	25.10-25.11.99 3-7 weeks	31.01.00 17 weeks	12.05.00 31 weeks	06.11.00 58 weeks	03.07.00 39 weeks	30.11.00 61 weeks	27.07.00 42weeks	30.01.01 70 weeks
	1999/C 77/11	12.01.00	10.03.00 8 weeks	13.04.00 13 weeks	25.05.00 19 weeks	-	03.07.00 25 weeks	-	08.08.00 30 weeks	17.08.00 31 weeks
	1999/C 77/11	27.03.00	25.05.00 7 weeks	07.07.00 14 weeks	16.10.00 29 weeks	14.11.00 33 weeks	8.11.00 32 weeks	30.11.00 35 weeks	01.12.00 35 weeks	24.01.01 43 weeks
	1999/C 77/11	14.06.00	15-22.09.00 13 weeks	11.10.00 17 weeks	06.11.00 21 weeks	-	30.11.00 24 weeks		12.02.01 35 weeks	12.02.01 35 weeks
	1999/C 77/11	25.09.00	15-30.11. 00 7 weeks	26.01.01 17 weeks						
Calls on Non Nuclear Energy	1999/C77/15 (Open AM)	17.1.00 (Generic) & 15.2.00 (Acc Meas)	6-9.3.00 3 weeks	5.5.00 11 weeks	no opinion required: funding below 600.000 €	no opinion required: funding below 600.000 €	7.11.00 (C/2000/3186) 38 weeks	13.12.00 (C/2000/3765) 43 weeks	29.11.00 44 weeks	31.01.01 54 weeks
	2000/C73/0 (3rd Call) & 2000/C73/11 (Open AM)	31.5.00	3-7.7.00 1st Stage, 19-20.7.00 2nd stage 4 weeks	28.7.00 8 weeks	10.11.00 ? 23 weeks	6.12.00 ? 27 weeks	28.11.00 (C/2000/3587) 26 weeks	21.12.00 (C/2000/4016) 29 weeks	15.12.00 28 weeks	not signed yet
	2000/C73/0 (3rd Call CA, TN only) & 2000/C73/11 (Open AM)	1.9.00	25-29.9.00 3 weeks	10.11.00 9 weeks	no opinion required: funding below 600.000 €	no opinion required: funding below 600.000 €	no decision yet	no decision yet	not signed yet	not signed yet
SME Exploratory awards¹¹	1999/C 92/13 (01.04.1999) Average of 5 evaluations	12.01.00 (interim cut-off)	7.02.00 3 weeks	29.03.00 (for all programs) 8 weeks			6.07.00 24 weeks	20.09.00 33 weeks	22.09.00 33 weeks	pending 40 weeks
IHP										
Marie Curie fellowsh. Individual	IHP-MCFI-99-1	open call 2 nd deadl 5/03	3-17/05/00 7 weeks	4/07/00 16 weeks	NA.		3 batches 28 weeks	4 th and final batch 41 weeks	9.10.00 34 weeks	15.03.01 44 weeks
Marie Curie fellowsh. Individual	IHP-MCFI-99-1	Open call 3 rd deadl 13/09	11-27.10.00 4 weeks	24.11.00 10 weeks	NA		3 batches 15 weeks	4th batch: 29 weeks	6/03/01 25 weeks	19/03/01 27 weeks
Marie Curie fellowships Industry Host	IHP-MCHI-00-1	3/10/2000	8-10.11.00 1 week	19.12.00/23.02.01 11 weeks	13.02.01 19 weeks		Not yet			
Improving the socio-economic knowledge base	IHP-KA1-00-1	delayed until 28.06.00	18.09.00/ 07.10. 12 weeks ¹²	08.12.00 23 weeks	Sub-Committee 15.11.00 20 weeks	Upcoming				

¹¹ Only for Exploratory Awards. For Craft scheme, the thematic programmes take over from the negotiations mandate stage.

¹² Please note the holiday period July/August

Time between call for proposals and signature of contract
(time elapsed between Call deadline and stage indicated in terms of weeks)

Programme	Call identifier	Closing date of the Call	Evaluation period	Start of negotiations	First opinion by the Committee where requested ⁶ (by batches)	Last opinion by the Committee (by batches)	First Commission Decision date ⁷	Last Commission Decision date	First contract signed ⁸	Last contract signed
INCO	ICFP599A4PR01 38 proposals received	16 June 1999	July 99 = 3 weeks (2 steps evaluation: scientific + regional together)	06 Aug. 99 7 weeks	12 Nov. 99 21 weeks	06 Dec. 99 24 weeks	13 Dec. 99 25 weeks	22 Dec. 99 26 weeks	18 Jan. 99 30 weeks	17 May 00 47 weeks
Examples of calls for dev. projects			ICFP599A4PR01 201 proposals received	16 Sep. 1999	Oct. 99 = 4 weeks (2 steps evaluation: scientific + regional)	23 Nov. 99 10 weeks	08 June 00 39 weeks	05 Dec. 00 68 weeks	12 July 00 48 weeks	20 Dec. 00 71 weeks
Maximum length for all batches ¹³ in each step of the procedure			13 weeks	23 weeks	39 weeks	68 weeks	48 weeks	79 weeks	53 weeks	91 weeks
Average length for all batches in each step of the procedure			4.8 weeks	12,2 weeks	20,8 weeks	41.9 weeks	28,8 weeks	74.8 weeks	33,3 weeks	53,2 weeks
Minimum length for all batches in each step of the procedure			1 week	2 weeks	3 weeks	27 weeks	13 weeks	26 weeks	18 weeks	27 weeks

¹³ batches include different number of contract of various nature, numbers of partners, type of participants, amount of funding ...
NB: the mention of the extremes of the time range does not give any indications of the medium length which tend to be closer to minimum than to maximum.

PART B

**COMMISSION SERVICES'
COMMENTS
ON
THE 2000 FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME
MONITORING REPORT**

No	Recommendation	Commission Services' Response	Milestones for implementation / progress
1	RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING THE FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME « STRATEGIC » OBJECTIVES		
1.1	<i>STRENGTHEN THE STRUCTURAL EFFECT OF THE FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME TO IMPLEMENT THE ERA</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Commission should explicitly reinforce the ERA orientations in the next calls for proposals. The description of the Programme objectives included in the information package must define the expected contributions that the projects will have to ERA. The various integration schemes and tools should be furthermore enhanced and harmonised in the work programmes and the project evaluation criteria. The training and mobility actions should be enhanced as much as possible within the current Framework Programme as well as the next one. 	<p>As underlined in the Framework Programme Monitoring report itself, a large spectrum of schemes and modalities have already been introduced in the 2000 and 2001 work programmes of the current specific programmes – while respecting the legal framework - in order to favour the implementation of ERA objectives: networking through clusters, concerted actions, thematic networks; reaching a size effect/critical mass via for instance technology platforms and larger projects and providing support by mapping of excellence, access to and enhancement of research infrastructures etc. These efforts have been systematised across all programmes in the latest calls for proposals, which thus serve as bridges to the next Framework Programme. In addition, dedicated calls aiming at integration of entities from candidate countries in current Community funded RTD actions have been launched by the thematic programmes in the autumn 2001. However, in order to avoid confusion amongst users, major changes to information packages and project evaluation criteria will not be introduced at this late stage of implementation of the current Framework Programme.</p> <p>Concerning the next Framework Programme, the Commission foresees in its proposal of 21.2.2001 to dedicate it to the realisation of ERA as reflected in its main objectives (integrating, structuring and reinforcing the European Research Area) and its new instruments (in particular networks of excellence, integrated projects and Community participation to jointly implemented national programmes).</p> <p>In the perspective of the implementation of the next Framework Programme, a working group has been set up to prepare clear guidelines for information-packages, including clear objectives in work programmes and definition of project evaluation criteria.</p> <p>Emphasising training and mobility of researchers across Europe, but also internationally, is of primary importance in the perspective of development of the ERA. Therefore these dimensions of the current Framework Programme, have been enhanced across the different programmes, while respecting the current legal framework. Furthermore a strategy for mobility and training has been presented in June 2001 in a Communication to the Council and the European Parliament entitled "A mobility strategy for the European Research Area". The Communication presents a strategy to create a favourable environment for the mobility of researchers in the ERA, in order to develop, attract and retain appropriate human resources in research and to promote innovation. A first group of actions are proposed in order to improve the information on vacancies, as well as on administrative and legislative conditions in each country (e.g. web portal), providing assistance to mobile researchers and their families (e.g. network and mobility centres) and a series of open co-ordination actions with Member States aimed at improving the administrative and legal situation of mobile researchers and their families (conditions of entry, social security, taxation, etc). This is also the reason why the Commission has proposed a substantial increase of resources for the new Framework Programme in this area (almost doubled) and a series of new and</p>	<p>Last calls for proposals: second half 2001-2002</p> <p>Preparation of next Framework Programme information packages: second half of 2001-2002</p> <p>Second half of 2001-2002</p> <p>Communication : "A mobility strategy for ERA" June 2001</p>

No	Recommendation	Commission Services' Response	Milestones for implementation / progress
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="240 565 637 802">• Facilitate clustering through modified and harmonised selection and management procedures. This could be through having initial calls of interest for the selection of cluster topics followed by specific calls for clusters only. <li data-bbox="240 1127 666 1305">• the role and visibility of the JRC should be reinforced as a tool of European policy in implementing in the ERA. The JRC should work closely with the DGs to meet this objective. 	<p data-bbox="694 212 1771 537">enhanced measures to encourage the mobility of European researchers. Under the common label Marie Curie, instruments will aim at stimulating long life intra-European and international mobility from the initial training in research and the acquisition of complementary skills for more experienced researchers to the establishment of new independent and excellent teams. Instruments will be adapted to the different necessities (host driven actions including training networks, individual fellowships, grants for establishment of excellence teams, Marie Curie Chairs etc). Return and professional reintegration instruments will play an important role in this strategy. Furthermore, the new instruments which have been developed for the identified research priority areas - networks of excellence and integrated projects - will provide for training and mobility actions as in-built components.</p> <p data-bbox="694 561 1778 675">The Panel praises the current development of and experiences with clusters, while underlining their role in ensuring complementarity amongst projects, in establishing a critical mass of resources and in maximising European added value. The recommendations aim at facilitating the process of clustering of projects.</p> <p data-bbox="694 683 1782 1105">The Commission services welcome this encouragement to the development of clustering. They keep learning from current clusters and explore new mechanisms, some of them being in line with the panel's suggestions. For example, in the Quality of life programme, through the recent initiative on Genome Research for Human Health, different type of activities (RTD projects, host fellowships etc.) are clustered under a common integrated management structure. Following a call for expressions of interest, five topics with the highest added value for Europe have been selected, and a dedicated call has been launched on 31 May 2001. Similarly, the other specific programmes are making efforts to facilitate clustering either ex ante or ex post by use of the current instruments. The experience gained will be exploited in setting up modalities for the implementation of the next Framework Programme. One of the major characteristics of the latter will be the concentration of means on a limited number of priorities implemented through projects of an increased size. Clustering will therefore be furthered, particularly in the form of the new Integrated Projects.</p> <p data-bbox="694 1130 1775 1390">The JRC has recently formulated a clear strategy to reinforce its role in support of the EU policy-making process and its contribution to the development and operation of EU systems of scientific reference for policy decisions. A major feature of this strategy is the setting up of a High Level Inter-service Users' Group composed of Directors General of user DGs and chaired by the JRC DG. One of its tasks will be the arbitration and priority setting in the allocation of resources to the activities directly related to the policies. A more detailed explanation of this new approach can be found in the Communication from the Commission to the Council and European Parliament entitled "Fulfilling the JRC's mission in the European Research Area", COM (2001) 215 final of April 20, 2001.</p>	<p data-bbox="1809 699 2111 756">Exploration of new mechanisms: 2001-2002</p> <p data-bbox="1809 1130 2043 1211">July 2001: kick-off meeting of the JRC HLIUG</p>

No	Recommendation	Commission Services' Response	Milestones for implementation / progress
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Framework Programme Monitoring Panel endorses the mapping of excellence initiative and the Commission should come up as soon as possible with more specific plans to involve the scientific communities. 	<p>The mapping of excellence initiative in research and technological development (RTD) at a European level aims at providing useful intelligence to benefit more from the potential of excellent S/T competences available across the EU. This initiative endorsed in Lisbon by the European Council constitutes a major contribution to the ERA.</p> <p>Clearly, the credibility of such a mapping exercise depends to a large extent on the active participation of the stakeholders, both the scientific community and the relevant national authorities.</p> <p>Therefore a High Level Group "Benchmarking and Excellence" composed of representatives of the 15 Member States has been appointed in July 2000. It has already been involved in the definition of a methodology and in the choice of the fields to be mapped in a first step (12 fields in three broad areas: life sciences, nanotechnologies and economy). In parallel, expert panels involving the scientific community have been set up in order to compare and analyse data on excellence available in Member States.</p> <p>The results of the first pilot exercise in the areas of life sciences, nanotechnologies and economy should be available by the end of 2002. Further exercises will draw on lessons learnt from this pilot exercise in terms of methodology.</p>	<p>First pilot exercise in 2001-2002</p>
1.2	<p><i>FOSTER SUPPORT FOR SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZED ENTERPRISES (SMEs)</i></p>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the efficiency of the Network of National Contact Points (NCPs) Close the gap in effectiveness between the Innovation Relay Centres (IRCs) based in the Member States and those in the Accession Countries. 	<p>In order to enhance the performances of the NCPs, Commission services have regularly organised meetings (4 times a year) to promote the exchange of information, offer training sessions relevant to project submission, negotiation and management, and to encourage the diffusion of good practices. In the context of the Economic and Technological Intelligence action, the Commission has financed a project in which a large number of SME-NCPs aim at developing quality and performance standards. Furthermore dedicated Web sites have been developed, which are mainly used by the NCPs to communicate and to carry out partner searches for their clients.</p> <p>The further development of such initiatives will be encouraged.</p> <p>The Commission is well aware of the difficulties of certain organisations from the Accession countries in providing high quality IRC services. In order to fill this gap, the Commission has taken appropriate measures ever since the pilot phase of FEMIRCs (Fellow Members to the Innovation Relay Centres), operated in Central Eastern European countries (CEECs) between 1997 and 2000.</p> <p>The most important among them having been the so called "twinning" scheme, through which each FEMIRC was linked during the whole duration of the project to one Member State IRC to get the necessary assistance and training for its operation. During the current operational phase, the Commission has been taking further measures relating to the day-to-day task, such as continuous induction training for new IRC staff and staff exchanges, contractual provisions to facilitate networking and joint events. IRC-Central Unit experts have made several missions to Accession Countries to support the local IRCs. In addition to this, many "old" Member States IRCs, based also on the previous FEMIRC experience,</p>	<p>Ongoing initiatives: April 2000-April 2003.</p> <p>Ongoing initiatives</p>

No	Recommendation	Commission Services' Response	Milestones for implementation / progress
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="240 289 653 440">• Encourage better co-operation between the different services and functions focused on helping SMEs (Single Entry Point, NCPs, IRCs, etc.) <li data-bbox="240 656 659 927">• There needs to be greater coherence between the various DGs that support SMEs; for example, between DG Regio (responsible for the Business Innovation Centres) DG Entr (responsible for IRCs) and DG Research (responsible for the NCPs, etc.). <li data-bbox="240 1068 659 1398">• The Commission should make endeavours to promote the adoption of the Community patent at the end of 2001 as agreed at the Lisbon Summit to ensure that protection of European intellectual property rights becomes as cheap and easily accessible as possible for European industry and inventors, especially SMEs. 	<p data-bbox="694 207 1748 269">have themselves established preferential links with Accession Countries IRCs, facilitating their participation in technology brokerage and other events they organise.</p> <p data-bbox="694 285 1782 467">Through the Communication SEC 2001/261, of 21.2.2001, the Commission has launched an initiative "rationalising and streamlining the existing business support networks" (EICs, BICs, IRCs, NCPs, and others). The initiative is based on a joint effort of all Commission services concerned by networks and services dealing with the assistance of businesses (DGs Regional Policy, Energy and Transport, External Relations, Internal Market, Press and communication, Research, Education and Culture, Enterprise and the Secretariat General).</p> <p data-bbox="694 483 1782 634">It is proposed in 2002 to create tools which will facilitate the operation of carrying out an initial diagnosis of a client's problem and for signposting the client to the most appropriate service provider. In parallel, starting in 2002, further action to promote closer co-operation between the networks will be initiated, including specifications for a common IT platform and a common Code of Ethics.</p> <p data-bbox="694 651 1782 1049">As indicated above, the will for a common approach and actions between the DGs involved in SMEs support is already established and will be continuously put into practice. Concrete examples under the Innovation and SME programme include the actions under Economic and Technological Intelligence (ETI), which gather members of all support networks, fostering collaboration between them in themes related to the Framework Programme. Partners from Accession countries represent 20% of ETI contractors, 3 actions in particular focus on the needs of organisations from States candidate to EU Membership, whilst 60% of the actions have at least a partner from these countries, thus integrating these intermediaries (and the SMEs they support) into the EU economy. The ETIA (Economic and Technological Intelligence Action ETI-BICs) involves 30 BICs and 10 NCPs. The objective is to help SMEs from regions involved to build transnational research or innovation projects, building on the synergies between DG Regio and DG Research activities in the area of support to SMEs for Research and Innovation.</p> <p data-bbox="694 1065 1782 1216">The Commission fully agrees with this ambition as reflected in its proposal and has made all efforts to support and achieve it. However, it recalls that the adoption of such legal acts is not only depending on its own will and endeavours, but mainly of the legal decision makers (Council and European Parliament) and regrets that an agreement on this important topic has not yet been reached.</p>	<p data-bbox="1809 285 2100 436">Communication "Rationalising and streamlining the existing business support network" (21.2. 2001)</p> <p data-bbox="1809 501 2111 618">Common IT platform / common Code of Ethics/ tool for Initial diagnosis of client's problem : 2002</p> <p data-bbox="1809 745 2043 834">ETIA-BICs: beginning 1.1. 2001 (length 18 months)</p>

No	Recommendation	Commission Services' Response	Milestones for implementation / progress
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take action to improve the effectiveness of the Co-ordination Group between the innovation cells as a place, which ensures that good practice is transferred across programmes. 	<p>The Commission services strive to enhance the operational aspects of the Innovation Co-ordination Group.</p> <p>Mid-way through the execution of the fifth Framework Programme, a greater number of good practice examples are now being identified because</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> projects have started producing visible results, assessment activities and collection of information are under way and the Programme management and operations are building-up innovation-specific experience. <p>In order to diffuse the good practices which are being identified, the "Report on Innovation Activities in the fifth Framework Programme and Co-ordination aspects 2000" summarises innovation activities across the fifth Framework Programme. This report is disseminated across all fifth Framework Programme Directors and Heads of Units as well as the Innovation Cells.</p> <p>The Co-ordination Group is now collecting and distributing information about good practices across the fifth Framework Programme in a much more systematic manner by instigating a "stock-taking" exercise. This is expected to result in the compilation of a "directory" of one-page profiles on a wide range of individual innovation activities. The directory will be aimed at the fifth Framework Programme management and project officers. Seminars have been organised in 2001 on issues such as implementing the software tool for collecting and processing of Technological implementation plans (eTIP), good practice case studies and lessons from the fourth Framework Programme projects, research-industry interface, high tech start ups etc.</p> <p>A new co-ordination effort has also been undertaken between the Co-ordination Group / Innovation Cells and the inter-service Group on RTD monitoring and evaluation, in order to improve the exchange of information and experiences, in particular with the aim of improving the Technological Implementation Plan (TIP).</p>	<p>Ongoing initiatives</p> <p>Report on Innovation activities (7.8.2001)</p> <p>Development of eTIP 2001 onwards</p>
1.3	<i>ENHANCE THE INTERNATIONAL COMPONENT OF THE ERA</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ERA policy objectives imply not a weaker but a stronger international policy than hitherto. There should be a Directorate to design and monitor the international (extra-EU) dimension of European Research policy. 	<p>The Commission shares the Panel's view that the international dimension of ERA will be stronger than the previous individual and combined components of the INCO programme. This is reflected in the Communication on "The International Dimension of European research Area" (COM (01) 386 of 25.06.2001) to Council and Parliament and in the Commission's proposal for the next Framework Programme. An identifiable structure responsible for design, monitoring and some aspects of implementation of the international dimension of European S&T policy would provide greater focus and conceptual capacity. Given the need for explicit synergies between international S&T co-operation and other dimensions of foreign policy such as external affairs, trade, environment, and development on the one hand and for coherence of the international dimension across thematic programmes on the other, this functionality is best ensured through a suitable organisation structure under the direct political responsibility of the Deputy Director General.</p>	<p>No further implementation proposed</p>

No	Recommendation	Commission Services' Response	Milestones for implementation / progress
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An Expert Advisory Group should be established to identify particular priorities and needs. 	<p>The Commission agrees that a dialogue and consultation platform that allows other European foreign policy areas (particularly those mentioned already above) and a wider range of stakeholders to advise the Commission on priorities and needs is welcome. The currently on-going S&T dialogues provide useful experience in this direction (cf. Asia Europe meetings-ASEM-; EU Mediterranean Co-ordination -MoCo-; dialogue with Latin America and Caribbean -REALC-; Cairo Summit related to EU OAU concertation for the whole Africa). In addition, these issues are also addressed in the expert advisory groups and programme committees of the thematic programmes.</p> <p>The most suitable format(s) of such a platform should be determined following a broad consultation.</p>	Dialogue and consultation platform: end 2002
2	RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING THE Framework Programme STRUCTURE /ORGANISATION		
2.1	<i>REINFORCE THE MANAGEMENT CULTURE OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION AND TRAIN PEOPLE ACCORDINGLY</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The functions of the Projects Officers should be more carefully defined in terms of workload and harmonised methodologies. The personnel in charge of administrative procedures in the Fifth Framework Programme should establish a programme to improve management methods (procedures, delays, deadlines) and staff should be trained accordingly. 	<p>Activity based management is being implemented throughout the Commission as part of its reform process reform initiated by the White Paper on Reform of March 2000 (COM(2000)200). In this context, a number of standards for internal control within the Commission services have been set out and they are currently being implemented. In particular, a standard on "Mission, role and tasks" include the requirement of a "job description". As identified by the panel the tasks of the scientific officer are diverse. The scientific officer acts as a "general practitioner" and stands as a mediator between the different stakeholders. Being both a scientist and a manager, he/she has to integrate scientific, regulatory and policy approaches. Activity Based Management and job descriptions will help fulfil the Panel's recommendations.</p> <p>Improving the management of the Framework Programme, particularly simplifying and speeding up procedures, is a permanent priority for the Commission. In 2000, a working group has systematically reviewed possibilities for improvement and many of its recommendations have been implemented in the following months. Indeed, the Panel recognises that many procedures have already been re-ordered and some simplified.</p> <p>The continuation of this process is helped by the thrust and opportunities created by the broader process of Commission. The decentralisation of decisions to operational levels of management is an example of an important improvement introduced by the reform (see below). Moreover, the Commission reform involves a thorough evolution of the management culture of services, as principles of activity-based management are now being implemented. Annual management plans for each Directorate General are currently being put into place, with specific and verifiable objectives being attached to activities and, progressively, performance indicators being attached to objectives. A set of minimum standards for different aspects of management are being progressively implemented. This Commission-wide process is of course being applied to the management of the Framework Programme and important benefits can be expected.</p>	<p>ABM, job descriptions 2001 – 2002</p> <p>Annual management plans: beginning of 2002</p> <p>Performance indicators attached to objectives: progressively from beginning 2002 - 2003</p> <p>Standards: 2001 – 2002</p>

No	Recommendation	Commission Services' Response	Milestones for implementation / progress
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The process of delegation decisions within the Commission should be reinforced. 	<p>However, the Commission has chosen to maintain some continuity in the procedures of the current Framework Programme, so as not to create confusion amongst users at this advanced stage of implementation. More scope for progress lies with the next Framework Programme, which is being designed from the start with a view to maximise user-friendliness, simplicity and efficiency. A series of inter-service Working Groups have been set up to prepare the different aspects of implementation.</p> <p>Training is an integral part of the reform process. Priority has been given to financial training. Officials involved in financial circuits have been offered a training course on "principles of the new financial system of the Commission" and all authorised officers have been offered a training course on the cycle of expenditure. This was essential in the context of the decentralisation of financial circuits. Other types of training related to activity based management are under way, including on job description.</p> <p>Also as part of the reform process, the Commission services are taking the necessary measures to ensure that the following training and information management standards will be implemented by 2002:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – reviewing training needs in the context of the annual staff appraisal; – ensuring that identified training needs are met as soon as possible; – developing an internal training capacity in order to respond to specific needs not covered by Commission-wide training courses; – defining a training and mobility policy aiming at enriching staff background and experience; – ensuring that procedures are fully documented, kept up to date and available to all relevant staff. <p>Although the services have already gone some way towards meeting these standards, supplementary efforts will be made so that they are complied with by the end of 2002.</p> <p>Many internal decisions have already been decentralised to the operational management levels. For example, Directors have recently been given responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Publish calls for proposals foreseen by the work programme; – Select external evaluators from a common database; – Establish the priority list of projects to be negotiated and start contractual negotiations as soon as possible after the conclusion of the evaluation; – Inform applicants on the results of the evaluation right after the conclusion of the evaluation; – Speed up the conclusion of contracts by sending to contractors a draft contract before the Commission decision is taken; – Make the financial commitments for contracts (for 95% of commitments). 	<p>Preparation of procedures for the next Framework Programme: 2001 – 2002</p> <p>Priority to financial training: 2001</p> <p>Other training: 2001 onwards</p> <p>Implementation of training and information management: 2002</p>

No	Recommendation	Commission Services' Response	Milestones for implementation / progress
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Looking ahead to the sixth Framework Programme and the remaining two years of the fifth Framework Programme, the Commission should analyse the results obtained in the last two years to decide about the productivity of management tools introduced with the fifth Framework Programme. These all place very heavy demands on management resources, and the Commission does not have an excess of this. 	<p>The latest development in this direction is the habilitation to a Commissioner or delegation to a Director General i.a. to adopt the projects, which have been selected according to a Commission-agreed selection procedure. Further subdelegation allows full convergence at the level of the programme Director of the authority to take operational decisions, within the overall framework defined, and of the right to authorise expenditure, within the limits of the budget and the annual allocation of administrative resources.</p> <p>Within the different Commission Services, reflections are continuing on possibilities for further decentralisation. In DG Research, for example, pilot Directorates might transfer most financial officers from specialised financial units to the operational units. Scientific officers would become sub-delegated authorising officers for payments. On the basis of such experiences, and depending on the management structures required for the next Framework Programme, further adjustments in the organisation and financial circuits could be made in due time.</p> <p>The Commission agrees with the usefulness of a review of the performances of management tools introduced with the fifth Framework Programme. Different initiatives have already been launched in this respect. The informal inter-service Working Group on simplification, set up in January 2000 to screen the fifth Framework Programme procedures, is one of them. Different measures have been implemented following the conclusions of this working group as indicated above. This includes a reduction of the length of the contract preparation forms, particularly important to SMEs. In addition, SMEs are given a feedback of the results of the evaluation of their proposals within 6 weeks after the submission deadlines. As far as user satisfaction is concerned, the number of complaints from the SMEs has substantially dropped since these simplifications were introduced. As regards further improvements of the management, notably of specific SME measures, a study is currently undertaken concerning possibilities for externalisation.</p> <p>DG Information Society has launched a study to identify suitable indicators for measuring end-user satisfaction with the Commission's tools and procedures. The inter-service Working Groups set up by DG Research with a view to preparing the implementation of the new Framework Programme systematically review the situation, including on the basis of input from the different monitoring and five-year assessment results and recommendations. A summary of the monitoring exercises undertaken in 1999 - 2002 is foreseen by the beginning of 2003.</p> <p>All these initiatives will contribute to this reflection in the broader context of preparation and implementation of the next Framework Programme.</p>	<p>Habilitation, Delegation: Autumn 2001</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> End-user satisfaction study results: October 2001; Inter-service Working Groups: Second half 2001 - 2002; Monitoring Summary: beginning of 2003

No	Recommendation	Commission Services' Response	Milestones for implementation / progress
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The follow-up of last year's recommendations on the TIP can still be improved, particularly to help projects involving SME's establish Technological Implementation Plans. - The TIP form should be simplified and easier to exploit. 	<p>The Technological Implementation Plan (TIP) for the fifth Framework Programme has been under partial revision during the first semester of 2001 in order to improve its user-friendliness and to enhance electronic data collection, exploitation and dissemination. It is noted that the dissemination set-up must take into account that many organisations, and in particular SMEs, are rather sensitive about public disclosure of details of their work. A revised form was designed and tested in the context of the RTD Evaluation Inter-Service Group and technically developed and promoted through the co-ordination Group /Innovation Cells.</p> <p>The underlying rationale and modalities for the TIP will be assessed and revised as appropriate prior to any continuation in next Framework Programme.</p>	<p>TIP revision, software tool and test by end of 2001 completed. On-going activities for implementation (second half 2001 – 2002).</p> <p>Second half 2001 – 2002</p>
2.2	<i>MANAGE CONSISTENTLY THE EUROPEAN ENERGY RTD PROGRAMMES</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More co-ordination is needed in the management of the energy research programmes. 	<p>Since the separation between short-term and long-term projects (and the consequent budget separation) has been defined, co-ordination among the Directorates General for Research and for Transport and Energy has much improved. A source of lack of co-ordination has been identified in the different deadlines set for the two Directorates General. This has recently been harmonised and from now on deadlines will be the same. DG Research and DG Transport and Energy are increasingly organising activities to be managed jointly such as an impact assessment exercise on the fourth Framework Programme energy projects carried out during the second half of 2001.</p>	<p>Joint deadlines for calls, report on the fourth Framework Programme energy projects impact: December 2001</p>
3	RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING THE FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME PROCESSES AND MANAGEMENT TOOLS.		
3.1	<i>IMPROVE THE INFORMATION PROVIDED TO THE R&D COMMUNITY.</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There needs to be an on-going, continuous effort to improve the information (for example, documentation and applications forms) provided to proposers 	<p>The Commission shares the view that the quality of information made available to the public, and more particularly to the proposers, is of crucial importance and that improvements in this respect are required in spite of the progress already achieved as recognised by the Panel.</p> <p>However, as participants are now familiar with the documents related to the current Framework Programme, there will not be additional modifications before the end of the fifth Framework Programme.</p> <p>In the context of the preparation of the next Framework Programme, a particular effort will be made on the information packages to improve further the clarity of forms and guides for proposers. In order to carry this out, an inter-service Working Group "Communication" has been set up during summer 2001. At a later stage, external editors will be asked to contribute to the drafting of the documents.</p> <p>Concerning proposals submission aspects, the objective is to move towards a 100% electronic system.</p>	<p>Inters-ervice WG "Communication": Second half 2001 – 2002</p>

No	Recommendation	Commission Services' Response	Milestones for implementation / progress
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the various websites and the links between them and provide an adequate search tool. • Updating should be daily and interactivity should be assured in order to ensure that the proposers can communicate easily with the EU and receive suitable assistance when required. 	<p>The information on the CORDIS site is updated daily. CORDIS offers access to comprehensive information on past, and current activities, including calls, in particular those with multiple deadlines. There are many links to the EUROPA web site. General links are provided through the main links section. Specific links are provided via individual pages on the specific topic to other websites of the EC.</p> <p>CORDIS also offers a global search tool on its home page and several specific search tools tailored to various user profiles.</p> <p>However, the Commission services will take account of the Panel recommendations. The 2001/2002 plan for continuous improvement will allow direct information provision on-line, rapid updating and improved handling. A review of the set up is being carried out in preparation of the next Framework Programme.</p> <p>For its part, the DG Information Society has agreed on a communication strategy for the IST Programme. The DG is leading the development of thematic portals on the Europa website (eEurope and IST research). ISTweb is one of the largest specific programme sites on CORDIS, and an external support contract is about to be launched to improve the quality, quantity and consistency of information published</p>	<p>Ongoing initiatives: 2001-2002</p> <p>Next Framework Programme set up review: 2002</p> <p>June 2001</p>
3.2	<i>SET ACCEPTABLE TARGETS FOR PROCEDURES AND TIME TO CONTRACT</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the total process, from closing date of call to final signing of contract, with the aim of identifying bottlenecks in the process and taking actions to reduce these. • Set acceptable targets for procedures and for time to contract. The targeted delays should decrease progressively year on year according to the pre-determined action plan. 	<p>The Commission services fully agree that this question is of major importance. A particular effort has been made over the past months to monitor systematically each aspect of the process in response to the 2000 Monitoring Panels.</p> <p>In the continued effort to shorten the unnecessary delays in the process up to the signature of contracts, various measures have been put in place in DG Research, in particular in the context of the reorganisation of the DG and of the Reform. Thus, three co-ordinating directorates at the end of 2000, cutting out a whole layer of administration involved in approving contracts; operational Directorates and Units were given increased responsibilities to deal directly with certain issues without seeking prior approval (e.g. publishing calls for proposals, drawing up the list of external proposal evaluators or of approved projects). The delegation procedure is now in place cutting down the time involved in internal consultation and allowing greater authority for the Director General to approve projects without consulting the Commission as a whole; draft contracts are sent at an earlier stage, helping to speed up the signature.</p> <p>The effect of these measures should cut at least 10% of the time taken to sign the contracts.</p> <p>An experimental procedure for reducing time to contract was tested by DG Information Society during the evaluation of a call for proposals of the IST programme in the first half of 2001. A subsequent analysis and report identified the following main elements for improving time to contract:</p> <p>Clear and credible timetables for evaluation, negotiation and contract signature.</p> <p>Advance communication of these timetables to all concerned.</p>	

No	Recommendation	Commission Services' Response	Milestones for implementation / progress
		<p>Ownership by the Directors of the planning and implementation of procedures. Procedures have been put in place to cover each of the above points, with the result that time to contract should be reduced to under 150 days for the remainder of the IST Programme while maintaining the quality of evaluations and negotiations</p> <p>In the context of the next Framework Programme, the reduction of the time to contract will also be amongst the priorities. Possible measures and targets are currently being discussed, based on experience across the programmes, including the above pilot project, and a thorough analysis of bottlenecks, with a special attention to be paid to the phases of negotiation and signatures of contracts which can be long (10% of contracts account for a third of the total negotiation time).</p> <p>The Working Group "Programme Management Analysis and Comparison" set up at the request of the Research Ministers and with secretariat in DG Research contributes to reflections on general management methods of RTD programmes at national and European level, including the aspects related to time to contract. In addition, a dedicated working group set up by the European Research Advisory Board (EURAB) is currently addressing project evaluation in general and any possible advice on this particular question will be taken into account.</p> <p>It must be stressed that any measures introduced and targets set for reducing the time taken for various procedures must remain compatible with the best use of money and fair and equal treatment of all proposers. In particular, the quality of the evaluation process and of negotiations should be maintained, taking into account the various objectives, action types, number of interlocutors, partners and countries taking part, administrative costs involved. It should also be noted that the current length of procedures is already comparable with those of many national programmes in Europe and of large contracts of some major programmes in the United States.</p> <p>Thus, a generalised drastic reduction of time to contract appears difficult, but all efforts will be made to set realistic targets.</p>	<p>2002</p> <p>2002</p>
3.3	<i>SET OBJECTIVES AND A TIMETABLE TO IMPROVE THE FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME INFORMATION SYSTEM</i>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A definite set of goals and timetable for the implementation of a state-of-the-art information system for the next Framework Programme should be in place in July 2001 whilst at the same time actively addressing the problems with the current system. 	<p>The Commission definitely agrees that there is a need to proceed from the current fragmented system to an integrated internal information system. As requested by the Panel, a timetable has been set mid 2001; covers both a bridging system and a single comprehensive system for the next Framework Programme.</p> <p>In the transition phase towards the next Framework Programme covering the first year of the new Framework Programme, current IT systems will be modified and inter-linked as required. For the new Framework Programme a single IT system for use by all DGs involved in the management of RTD programmes is being planned and developed. It will allow access to all proposal and contract data via a common database. A dedicated inter-service Working Group set up in autumn 2001 is preparing this system. The system will be deployed only after proper testing and training of users.</p>	<p>Bridge system: second half 2001 – 2003</p> <p>Preparation of single system: Autumn 2001-2003</p>