



# EIP Water

Boosting opportunities – Innovating water

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## State of play in Spring 2016

### Background

Water is increasingly recognised as the number one long-term risk for the environment, global economy and society; competition over the scarce resource is on the rise. As a consequence, water has also been identified as the sector with very high investment needs.

The European Innovation Partnership on Water – EIP Water in short – is one of five EIPs which aim to speed up innovations that contribute to solving such societal challenges, enhance Europe's competitiveness and contribute to job creation and economic growth. EIPs help to pool expertise and resources by bringing together public and private actors at EU, national and regional level, combining supply- and demand-side measures.

The EIP Water was created and established in 2012 and facilitates the development of innovative solutions to address major European and global water challenges. At the same time, the EIP Water supports the creation of market opportunities for these innovations, both inside and outside of Europe.

### Topics

Eight priority topics have been identified in the EIP Water [Strategic Implementation Plan \(SIP\)](#). They focus on innovation driven actions that will potentially deliver the highest impact. Five thematic priorities have been selected:

- [Water reuse and recycling](#)
- [Water and wastewater treatment, including recovery of resources](#)
- [Water-energy nexus](#)
- [Flood and drought risk management](#)
- [Ecosystem services](#)

In addition, there are three selected cross cutting priorities:

- [Water governance](#)
- [Decision support systems and monitoring](#)
- [Financing for innovation](#)

[Smart technology](#) has been defined as an enabling factor for all priorities. The EIP Water focuses furthermore on the following five key barriers and bottlenecks to innovation in the water sector:

1. Improving access to funding and adequate financial instruments, including markets
2. Setting an innovation-friendly regulatory framework and overcoming regulatory barriers
3. Promoting public innovation procurement (supporting the European Assistance for Innovation Procurement Initiative [EAFIP](#))
4. Promoting and learning from Partnerships
5. Promoting testing facilities and dissemination of showcases

## Organisation and governance

The governance structure of the EIP Water allows for making accelerated progress towards its overall objectives, is action oriented, minimises bureaucracy and stimulates stakeholder participation.

The EIP Water is led by a Steering Group, consisting of 26 high-level representatives of relevant stakeholders spanning both the demand and supply sides of innovation. The **Steering Group** meets annually to provide strategic guidance and to develop recommendations to European Commissioners on relevant policies and implementation.

29 **Action Groups** are developing their own innovations, and support the EIP Water work on identifying and removing barriers to innovation. They offer practice-based experiences that can result in appropriate water policy recommendations.

The **European Commission's Directorate General for the Environment (DG Env)** acts as a facilitator of the EIP Water, keeping oversight and driving the overall process. In addition, the European Commission provides a link with EU funding mechanisms and relevant policies, to support the activities of the EIP Water and to take recommendations into consideration.

A **Secretariat**, composed of a consortium of external consultants, has been set up in 2012 to support the various day-to-day activities and bodies of the EIP Water. The Secretariat works under the supervision of the European Commission's DG for the Environment.

## Advantages of EIP Water

The EIP Water has positioned itself successfully as a strong player in the European water innovation sector. EIP Water acts mainly in three areas:

- It supports its Action Groups to deliver faster and better, and to overcome barriers
- It supports the creation of a proper framework (financing, regulation)
- It communicates and informs about water innovation challenges, and promotes solutions

The EIP Water is increasingly recognised as the entity that aims to facilitate the removal of barriers to innovation in the European water sector, and that brings the most relevant stakeholders together. It has

- streamlined EU funding priorities, e.g. Horizon 2020 and Water JPI
- contributed to better understanding of markets, together with the [China-Europe](#) and [India-EU Water Partnerships](#)
- contributed to informed and better policy and regulation, e.g. on [water reuse](#)
- enhanced the visibility of EU water innovation expertise including [1,500 projects](#), 150 demonstration sites and [200 products & services](#) on its Marketplace [eip-water.eu](#)

In its role as an "information broker" for water innovation in Europe and globally the EIP Water

- has held three successful conferences with an average of 450 participants, in [Brussels](#), [Barcelona](#) and [Leeuwarden](#), resulting in the Leeuwarden declaration on "[How to drive water innovation in Europe](#)"
- has established a strong web presence via the [EIP Water Online Marketplace](#) with 600 daily visits and 14,000 downloaded documents
- produces a [monthly newsletter](#) with over 4,500 subscribers in Europe and beyond
- manages the twitter handle [@eip\\_water](#) with more than 1,000 followers, and 50 presentations on [slideshare](#) already viewed 35,000 times