

futureearth
research for global sustainability

Report from Group D

How could Future Earth be implemented in Europe?

European specificities

- A lot of small countries and associated diversity
- Increasing supra-national regulatory regime
- Long experience of integration of research programmes and funding across borders within Europe
- Existing bodies promoting such integration for grand challenges
- Lacking integration between silos and to the global level

What infrastructure already exists and what is needed to promote and coordinate Future Earth?

Future Earth, continuation or revolution?

Future Earth needs to **build on** existing infrastructures to develop integration of scientific approaches (and not structures) on sustainability issues

ex: issue-specific assessments

What infrastructure already exists and what is needed to promote and coordinate Future Earth?

Infrastructures that have to be taken into account should at least cover 4 main functions:

1. Coordinating scientists undertaking research
2. Funding scientific programmes, training programmes
3. Supporting policy
4. Have a proper geographic coverage

Existing infrastructures

- European Commission per se
- Tools supported by the EC (JPI, ERANET, etc.)
- Institutions with mandate to cover the whole of Europe. Examples:
 - European Alliance
 - UNECE
 - EEA
 - COST
- National institutions

What is needed to promote and coordinate Future Earth?

Principles:

- Devise light infrastructure to connect people (and not be too institutionally-driven)
- Promote coordination between existing infrastructures
- Ensure continuity (e.g. long-term support for monitoring type of programmes)
- Build complementary activities
- Ensure balanced representation across the whole of Europe
- Accounting for European specificities

What is needed to promote and coordinate Future Earth?

Suggestions:

- Establish a platform / forum where the Future Earth scientific community can discuss ideas and young scientists get inspired (ex: inspirational young scientists conferences)
- Develop synthetic research and a platform for dissemination (to policy-makers, etc.)
- Explore mechanisms to endorse initiatives ('Future Earth label')

What could be the form and functions of the European regional node of Future Earth and interfaces with European institutions?

Form should follow function

Functions:

1. Build regional capacity (early-career scientists, young people)
2. Act as incubator for new activities / projects
3. Influence the agenda for EU programming
4. Strengthen capacity of all nations to have national structures
5. Link with policy groupings (ex: European business council, etc.)

What could be the form and functions of the European regional node of Future Earth and interfaces with European institutions?

6. Identify partnership opportunities at international level (promoting coordination among regional approaches)
7. Future Earth regional node should not be a funding body but promote integration among big funding initiatives and inspire
8. Highlight regional transectoral grand challenges (ex: climate, agriculture, etc.)
9. Provide guidelines for sustainability training at all education levels (ex: networking and training of young scientists)

What could be the form and functions of the European regional node of Future Earth and interfaces with European institutions?

- Make explicit the added value of an international secretariat, regional node and national structures
- Future Earth regional node should not be the ‘voice of Europe’ (ad-hoc tool to engage with intergovernmental assessments)
- Establish a working group to define the potential functions and consequences for the form of the regional node, and undertake initial mapping of key bodies to engage