

# From Research to Innovation: Unlocking a virtuous circle

The High Level Group on the Competitiveness on the European Chemicals Industry (HLC) stressed the importance of innovation, while recognising that research doesn't necessarily translate into innovation. Europe excels in research, but has not met its potential bringing the research to market and translating it into new goods and services that present value to society.

Innovation is not only limited to technologies, but requires a change of mindset by industry and government. More cooperation is required than just pouring money into a "malfunctioning innovation system."

Research is turning money into ideas, innovation is turning ideas into societal and business value.

For these reasons, Cefic is focusing on turning the recommendations of the HLC on Research, Innovation and Human Resources into concrete actions to maintain the HLC's momentum in EU and national policies: better identifying areas of pre-competitive research, initiating demonstration projects and injecting the notion of innovation into all research platforms under SusChem, the European Technology Platform for Sustainable Chemistry.

**"The chemical industry...will always have a strategic, economic and social importance... because of its ability to continually generate innovation critical to meeting major challenges of modern societies."**

*Conclusion of the High Level Group on the Competitiveness of the European Chemicals Industry.*

By successfully bringing back "chemical industry" into EU and national research programmes and by magnifying future involvement in European research and innovation programmes, Cefic is helping position the chemical industry as a broadly supported enabler and solution provider for society.

## Preparing for FP8

Cefic's engagement in SusChem – the aim of which is to boost chemistry, biotechnology and chemical engineering innovation in Europe – has freed up as much as € 750 million in public funding for chemical research in the first 2 years. With the 6<sup>th</sup> Research Framework Programme (FP6), chemistry was nowhere on the agenda in 2005. Industry engagement has to ensure that for the next phases of the 7<sup>th</sup> Research Framework Programme (FP7) even more funding is made available and used by companies. Therefore we are now aiming to build up the SusChem effort by ensuring the continuation and improvement of the industry's R&D engagement in FP7 and other innovation programmes. We are also preparing for the launch of FP8 in 2013, which has to focus more on supporting the implementation of research and technologies into sustainable solutions.

Much effort, meanwhile, has gone into managing and unlocking additional national funding via SusChem National Platforms. The goal is to ensure better complementarity of national research programmes with the European industry innovation agenda. This will promote efficient transnational collaboration.

The added value for companies is to benefit from EU and national support (including funding) in an efficient way, to avoid the duplication of efforts at the national and European levels and to create opportunities for all Cefic members large and small. Making the best possible use of industry resources will bolster industry leadership in these programmes.

## Future, fast, flexible and innovative

It is important to demonstrate the value of research and innovation to downstream users, not only in times of economic crisis.