



## COMET- Co-ordination and Implementation of a Pan-European Instrument for Radioecology was presented at ICRER 2014.

The EC-FP7 project **COMET (COordination and iMplementation of a pan-European instrument for radioecology** - [www.comet-radioecology.org](http://www.comet-radioecology.org)) was presented during the final plenary session of the Third International Conference on Radioecology and Environmental Radioactivity, which took place in Barcelona, Spain, the days 7-12 of September 2014.

COMET started in June 2013 and will last for 4 years. With COMET, we **aim to strengthen the pan-European research initiative on the impact of radiation on man and the environment** by facilitating the integration of radioecological research, including both the human food chain and the protection of wildlife. The project will build upon, and compliment, the foundations laid by the European Radioecology Alliance (ALLIANCE<sup>1</sup>) and the on-going FP7 STAR Network of Excellence in radioecology<sup>2</sup>.

At the time of the ICRER conference, the COMET consortium counted thirteen **partners**; eight from EU member states, two from Norway, two from Ukraine and one from Japan. A call was launched in December 2013 and seven more organisations joined COMET from October 2014 onwards with amongst others collaborators from Denmark, Switzerland, US and Australia.

**Through COMET**, capacity, competence and skills in radioecology will be strengthened at a pan-European level. COMET will develop initiatives to encourage organisations from the European (and larger) radioecological research community to join the Radioecology Alliance to help realise the priorities identified in the Strategic Research Agenda for radioecological research. A roadmap and associated implementation plan is being developed in collaboration with the Radioecology Alliance and the allied platforms on low dose radiation risk (MELODI<sup>3</sup>) and emergency response and recovery (NERIS<sup>4</sup>) and the radioecology community at large who is invited to become associated to the development of roadmap and implementation plan. COMET also intends to enhance and maintain European capacity and skills in radioecology.

COMET will initiate highly **innovative research**. Seven initial research activities have been identified: they are in the domain of NORM, forest and marine radioecological modelling, food chain modelling, particle modelling, acquiring transfer data to wildlife, transgenerational and epigenetic effects. The new projects joining COMET will deal with marine radioecology (FRAME) and particle behaviour (RATE).

**At ICRER**, the ALLIANCE, in collaboration with STAR and COMET, organised two short refresher sessions on “ERICA Tool Update” and “Noble Gases modelling”. At ICRER, COMET organised an internal meeting on steps towards a radioecology roadmap together with the ALLIANCE. And since **ICRER is such a great venue for radioecologists from everywhere**, we organised a meeting to welcome the new COMET partners. This allowed also to put faces to names. The FRAME and RATE representatives explained in a few words what the projects were about and the old COMET crew talked about COMET and how the new projects could best be integrated. And all this in a lovely setting and under a heart-warming Barcelona sun.

**We are a great team - if you want to take part**, through collaboration in working groups, join the ALLIANCE (by contacting its president) and you'll line up with COMET too.

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COMET welcoming its new partners from FRAME and RATE @ ICRER 2014

<sup>1</sup> ALLIANCE: European Radioecology Alliance (ALLIANCE) <http://www.er-ALLIANCE.org/>, the association created by 8 organizations in Europe to integrate radioecological research in a sustainable way; at the time of writing, 8 new members have already join the ALLIANCE.

<sup>2</sup> STAR: Strategy for Allied Radioecology, <https://wiki.ceh.ac.uk/display/star/>

<sup>3</sup> MELODI: Multidisciplinary European Low Dose Initiative, <http://www.melodi-online.eu>

<sup>4</sup> NERIS: European Platform on Preparedness for Nuclear and Radiological Emergency Response and Recovery, <http://www.eu-neris.net>