

Developing a pan-European research programme to support modern regulation

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SKEP brings together 26 key national research funders, representing a blend of experience from EPAs, environment ministries and research institutes across 18 countries. The aims of the network are to facilitate improvements in science into policy processes, and to support evidence-led modern regulation.

The SKEP network has created a robust research platform through which public-sector organisations funding environmental research can pool financial resources to support trans-national calls.

Calls funded in this way contribute to the integrated European evidence-base necessary to underpin policy development in emerging areas of environmental concern.

They also allow more efficient use of research budgets, by reducing overlaps, sharing best practice, and disseminating results to a wider and more influential audience.

Using the experience gained in two 'pilot' calls, the SKEP network will launch its main call in early 2009, to serve the needs of environmental regulators.

The work will aim to support policy approaches that are effective, efficient, easy to implement, increase accountability and environmental outcome-based. These will advocate simple, transparent and consistent legal approaches.



The main call will focus on the impact of emerging technologies on environmental regulation. This will include the following components:

- I. A review of NBIC technology developments using roadmaps and life-cycle analysis to identify risks, opportunities and trade-offs for environmental regulators;
- II. A comparison of management approaches, at the member state level, for emerging technologies;
- III. Lessons learnt from communication strategies with reference to societal impacts, consumer demand and public involvement;
- IV. An assessment of legal sustainability for existing legal frameworks for converging technologies.