

SAGES Statement on “Brexit”

Overview

Membership of the EU has had a profound effect on UK Environmental policy and research, both through single market and environmental regulation, and policies in areas such as agriculture, climate change, energy and fisheries¹. While the UK is a net contributor to the European Union overall, it does get back more research money than it puts in². In terms of vulnerable subject areas, Environmental Sciences have a particularly high reliance on EU funding, with 34% of competitive research grant income coming directly from EU sources². With political will, financial vulnerability can be countered: networks and influence cannot. Without joint funding, EU researchers will have little incentive to continue collaboration with UK researchers.

SAGES-related EU funding streams

Primary European research and training funding streams of relevance to environmental and policy geoscience researchers within Scotland are listed. Those marked * or ** are judged to be of highest strategic and/or monetary value to SAGES partners; indentation follows EU administrative hierarchy.

1. Directorates General:

- LIFE (DG Environment)
- DG MARE
- DG Research and Innovation*
 - Horizons 2020 (H2020)** - successor to FP7
 - European Research Council (ERC)**
 - Starting Grants
 - Consolidator Grants
 - Advanced Grants*
 - Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions*
 - Innovative Training Networks (ITN)*
 - Individual fellowships (IF)
 - Research and Innovation Staff Exchanges (RISE)
 - Co-funding of Regional, National, and International Programmes (COFUND)
 - ESFRI Research Infrastructures*

2. European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)*

- Interreg: Atlantic Area
- Northern Periphery and Arctic

3. COST Action*:

COST in an intergovernmental framework consisting in 36 Member Countries and a Cooperating State. It funds researchers from these countries to embark upon networking opportunities by participating in science and technology networks called 'COST Actions'.

Some specific examples of SAGES-EU collaborations, networks and research relationships (non-exhaustive)

1. *Current*

- Transition into the Anthropocene (TITAN). Advanced [ERC](#) grant.
- Next generation training opportunities for European micro-palaeontologists engaged in the oil, gas and environment sector ([ITN](#)).
- SAGES-led [H2020](#) Green Initiative programme to support EC biodiversity and forestry strategy.
- Understanding subduction zone topography through modelling of coupled shallow and deep processes ([ITN](#)).
- Atlas ([H2020](#)). A Trans-Atlantic assessment and deep-water ecosystem-based spatial management plan for Europe.
- AtlantOS ([H2020](#)): Optimising and Enhancing the Integrated Atlantic Ocean Observing Systems.
- A glider component of EuroGOOS ([COST](#)): Gliders for Research, Ocean Observation and Management.
- IMPRESSIONS: Impacts and risks from higher-end scenarios: Strategies for innovative solutions ([FP7](#) [RTD](#)).
- OPERAs - Operational Potential of Ecosystem Research Applications. [FP7](#)
- LUC4C: Land use change: assessing the net climate forcing, and options for climate change mitigation and adaptation. [FP7](#)
- EUCLEIAL: EUropean CLimate and weather Events: Interpretation and Attribution. [FP7](#)
- TITAN: [ERC Advanced grant](#): Transition into the Anthropocene: learning about the climate system from the 19th and early 20th century

2. *Pending Brexit “at risk” research collaborations*

- COMPASS ([Interreg Atlantic Area](#)) Collaborative Oceanography & Monitoring for Protected Areas and Species.
- EU [COST](#) Action. Network of researchers who can analyse and model Antarctic radar data, to back out a continental climate history supporting findings from the ice-core community.
- MSCA-ITN-2017 [ITN](#). Biogeochemical cycling, organic matter fluxes, carbon sequestration, biodiversity, ecosystem functioning, ecosystem services in temperate and tropical habitats.
- EU [COST](#). SIPCOM: Science, Industry, Policy Communication On Microplastics.
- [H2020](#) European Industrial Doctorate (EID) scheme: Linking multi-disciplinary insights into poverty, environment, wellbeing and social policy.
- [ESFRI](#) DANUBIUS-RI: Pan-European Research Infrastructure for Advanced Studies on River Sea Systems.

References

¹ Burns, C., A. Jordan, V. Gravey, N. Berny, S. Bulmer, N. Carter, R. Cowell, J. Dutton, B. Moore S. Oberthür, S. Owens, T. Rayner, J. Scott and B. Stewart (2016), The EU Referendum and the UK Environment: An Expert Review. How has EU membership affected the UK and what might change in the event of a vote to Remain or Leave?

² Hook, D. and M. Szomszor (2016), Digital Research Reports. Examining implications of Brexit for the UK research base: An analysis of the UK’s competitive research funding.