



## Present and future for the European Union and Russia co-operation in the field of the Environment: the E-URAL project

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The overall strategic objectives of the E-URAL project concern: mapping of research expertise and needs in Russia in the field of Environment; awareness raising and capacity building for multipliers and researchers in Russia through training activities and staff exchanges; promotion of co-operation opportunities between EU and Russia; liaison with Russian and European stakeholders in areas of mutual concern.

With the aim of mapping the niches of excellence existing in Russia (particularly in peripheral regions) for the thematic priorities of the FP7 Environment theme, a Questionnaire on EU-Russia partnership in the field of Environment was developed and disseminated widely to hundreds of identified Russian organizations, and allowed to create the on-line database on Russian major research infrastructures, researchers and multipliers available on the E-URAL website (<http://www.e-ural.vsu.ru/en/>). Database can be looked up by European and Russian users (<http://www.e-ural.vsu.ru/en/uforms/appforms/search>) by several search keys (e.g. research subject, geographical location) and the complete information (contact information, information and description of the scientist's organisation, expertise offered, previous and present experience in the international cooperation, etc.) of the Russian profiles is obtained. In addition, the questionnaire was equally instrumental for the identification of research needs as well as priorities and obstacles for the EU-Russia cooperation.

Moreover, a series of thematic workshops on coastal zone management, nature and biodiversity, climate change impacts and environmental technologies for solid waste and wastewater management gave opportunities to local Russian researchers to meet with highly experienced EU researchers (usually coordinators or qualified partners of EU FP6/FP7 projects) and to discuss research themes and collaboration mechanisms, as well as to build up new partnerships. The main results concerning the perspectives and futures for European Union and Russia co-operation in the area of the environment, obtained through the questionnaire and the workshops, will be presented and discussed.