

COST networking: challenge and outlook for Swiss and European Food and Agriculture

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The COST mission

Strengthen Europe in scientific and technical research for peaceful purposes through the support of cooperation and interaction between European researchers

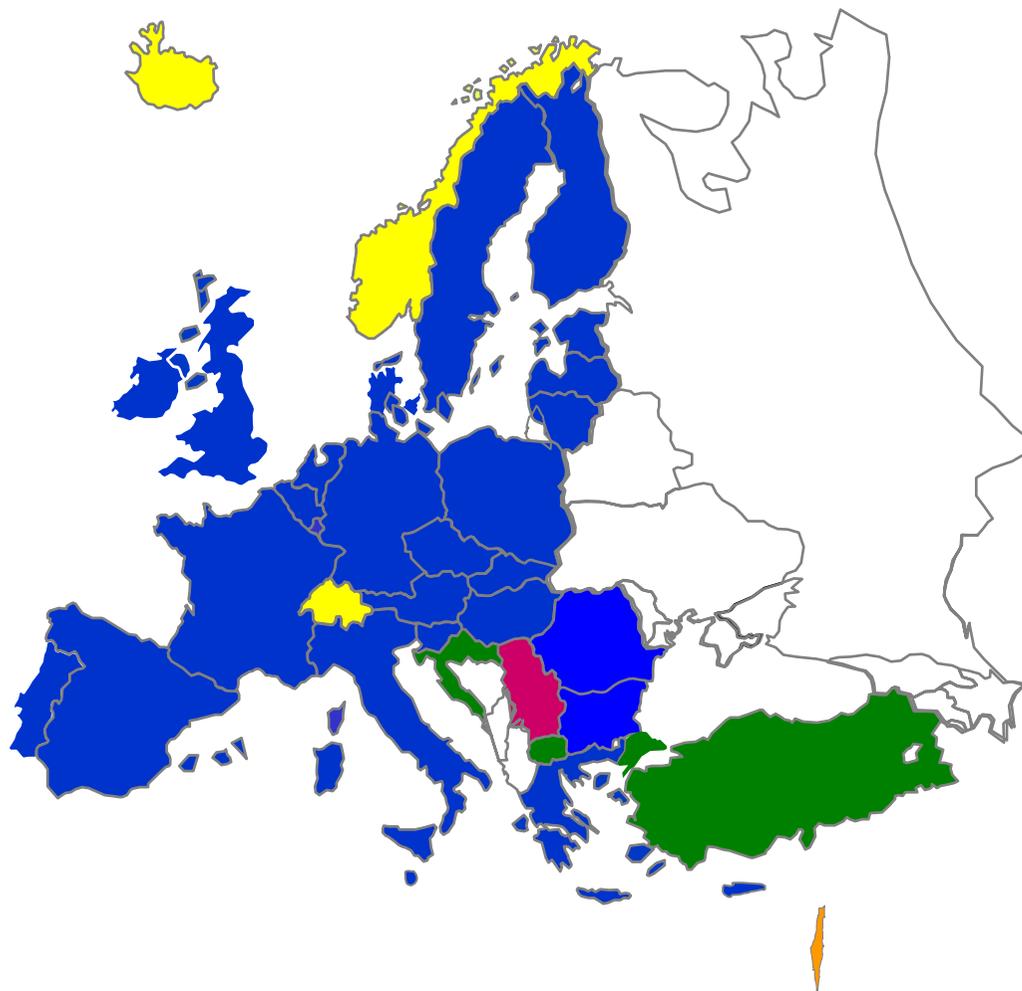
The COST programme is a long-running, economical and highly successful way to spread awareness and build networks between Europe's researchers.

It reflects the human dimension of science, helping researchers to share not only the results of their work but also their aims and methods.

COST main characteristics

- **“Bottom-up” – no fixed programmes / priorities**
- **Flexible participation – join in if you are interested**
- **Focus on multidisciplinary cooperation**
- **Enabling agent – Promotion of Early Stage Researchers**
- **Pan-European dimension**
- **Open to global cooperation in the mutual interest**
- **Co-ordination through cooperation in networks**
- **“Non-competitive” (pre-normative; public utility)**
- **Networks based on national funding of researchers and projects – national responsibility**
- **Equal access / Open Call**
- **Building bridges**

COST Countries



◆ The 27 EU Member States

◆ EFTA Member States

- ▶ Iceland
- ▶ Norway
- ▶ Switzerland

◆ Acceding & Candidate Countries

- ▶ Croatia
- ▶ FYR of Macedonia (FYROM)
- ▶ Turkey

◆ Potential Candidate Countries

- ▶ Republic of Serbia

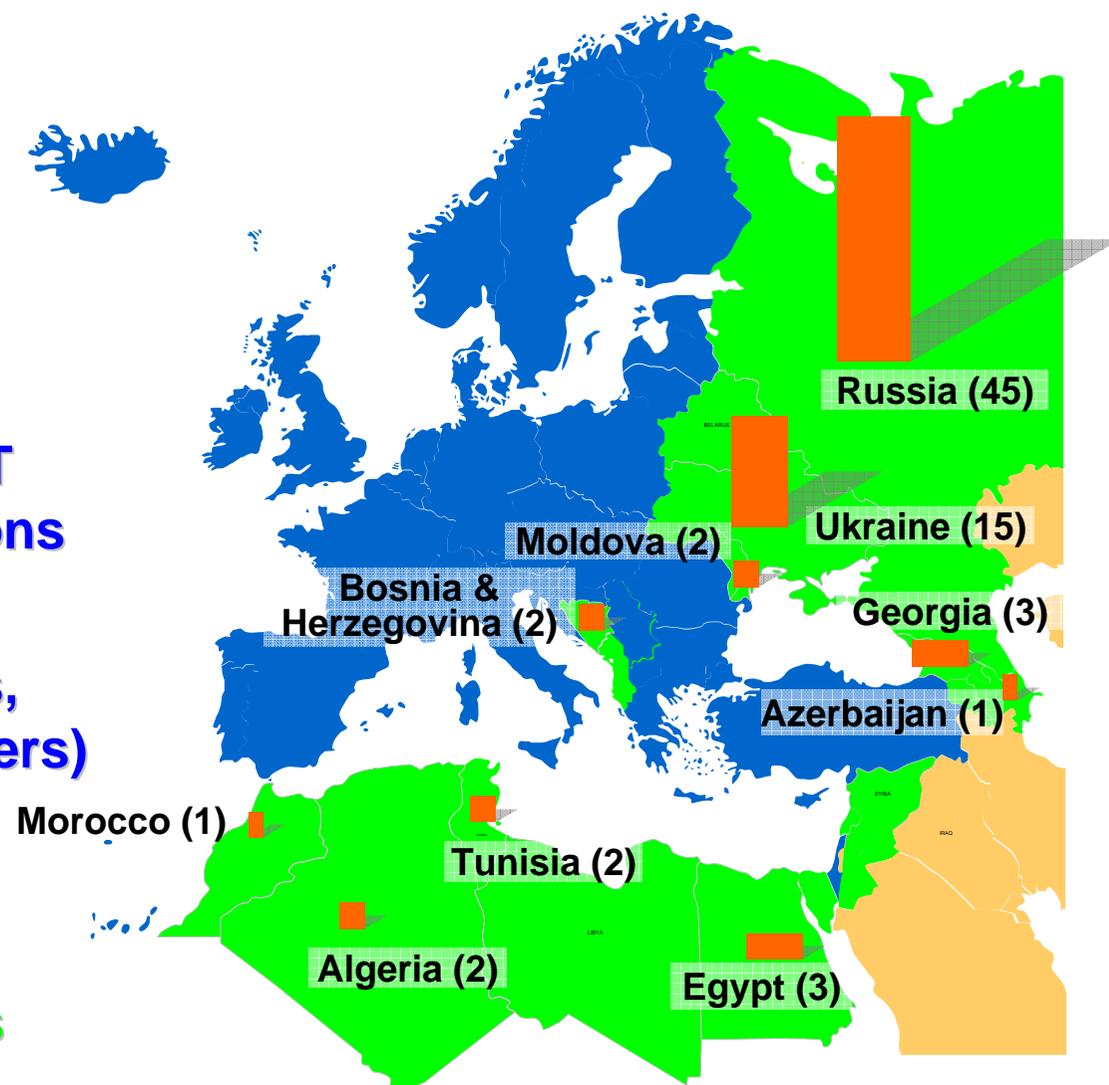
◆ COST Co-operating States

- ▶ Israel

COST and the Neighbouring Countries

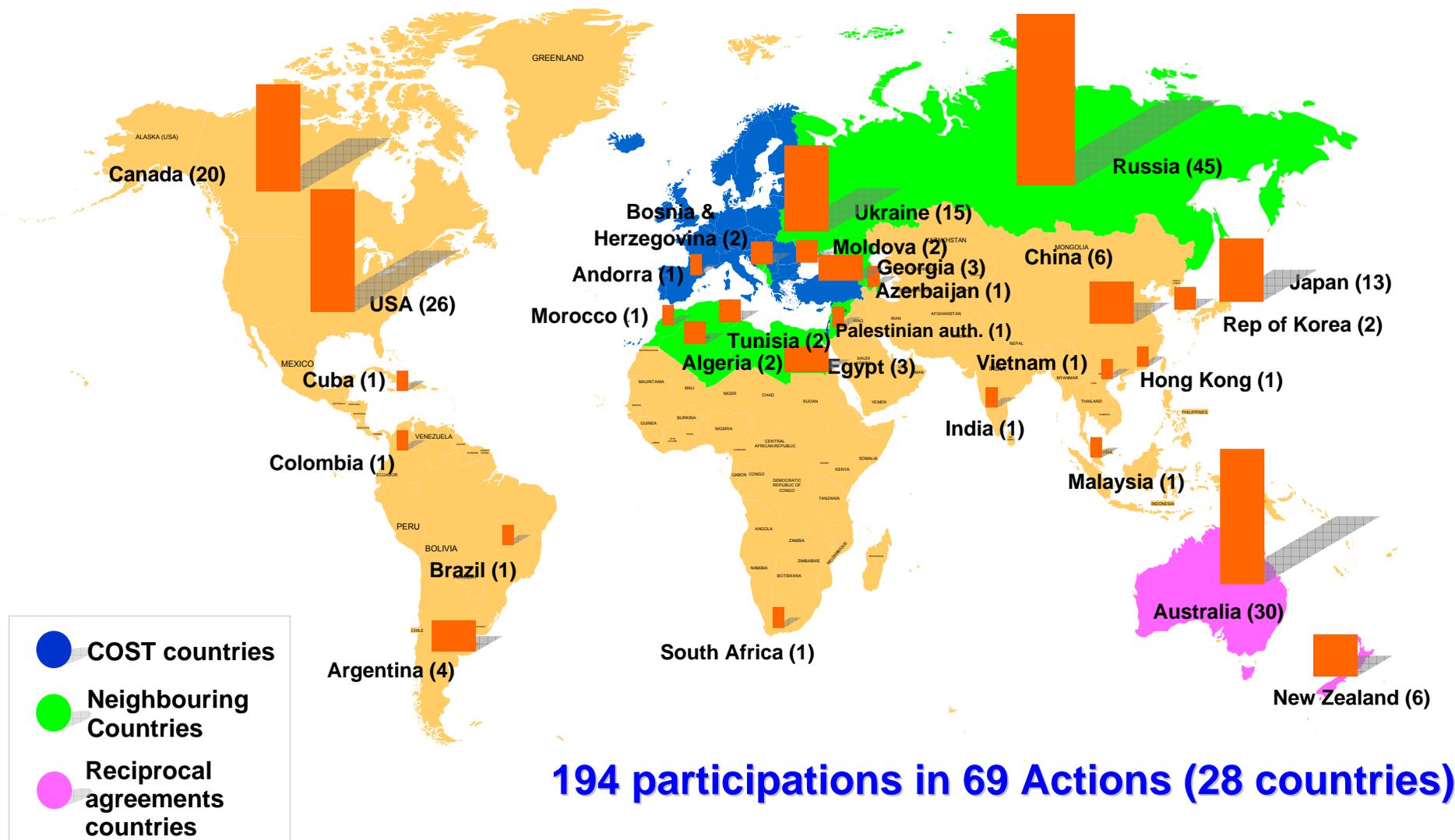
- COST countries
- COST neighbouring countries

- Special budget line in the COST system to facilitate collaborations
- Specific exchange activities (Short Term Scientific Missions, focus on Early Stage Researchers)



76 participations in 36 Actions

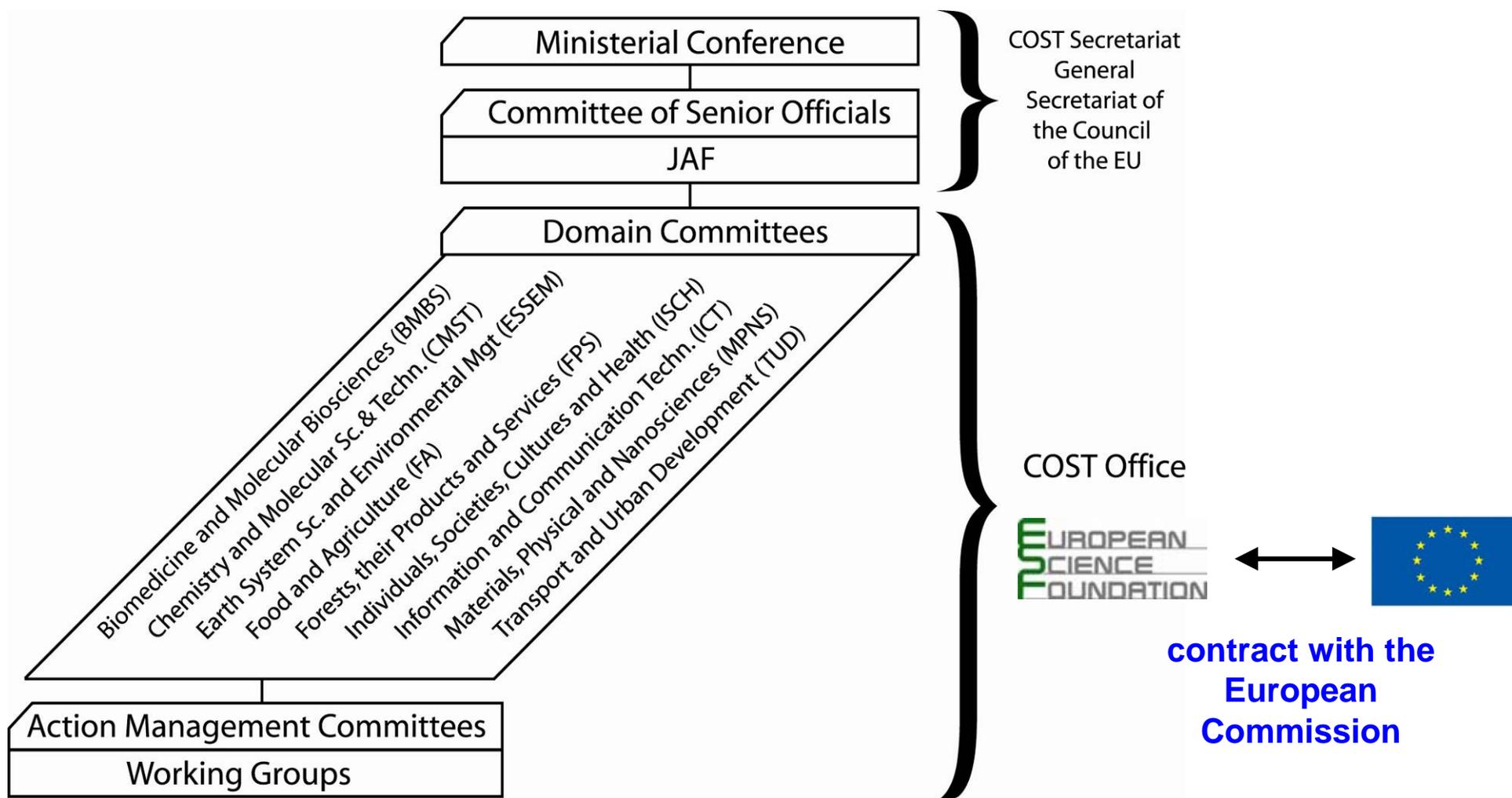
COST Actions: global participation (May 2008)



9 Scientific and Technical Domains

1. Biomedicine and Molecular Biosciences (BMBS)
2. **Food and Agriculture (FA)**
3. Forests, their Products and Services (FPS)
4. Materials, Physical & Nanosciences (MPNS)
5. Chemistry and Molecular Sciences & Technologies (CMST)
6. Earth System Science & Environmental Management (ESSEM)
7. Information & Communication Technologies (ICT)
8. Transport & Urban Development (TUD)
9. Individuals, Society, Culture & Health (ISCH)

COST Governance



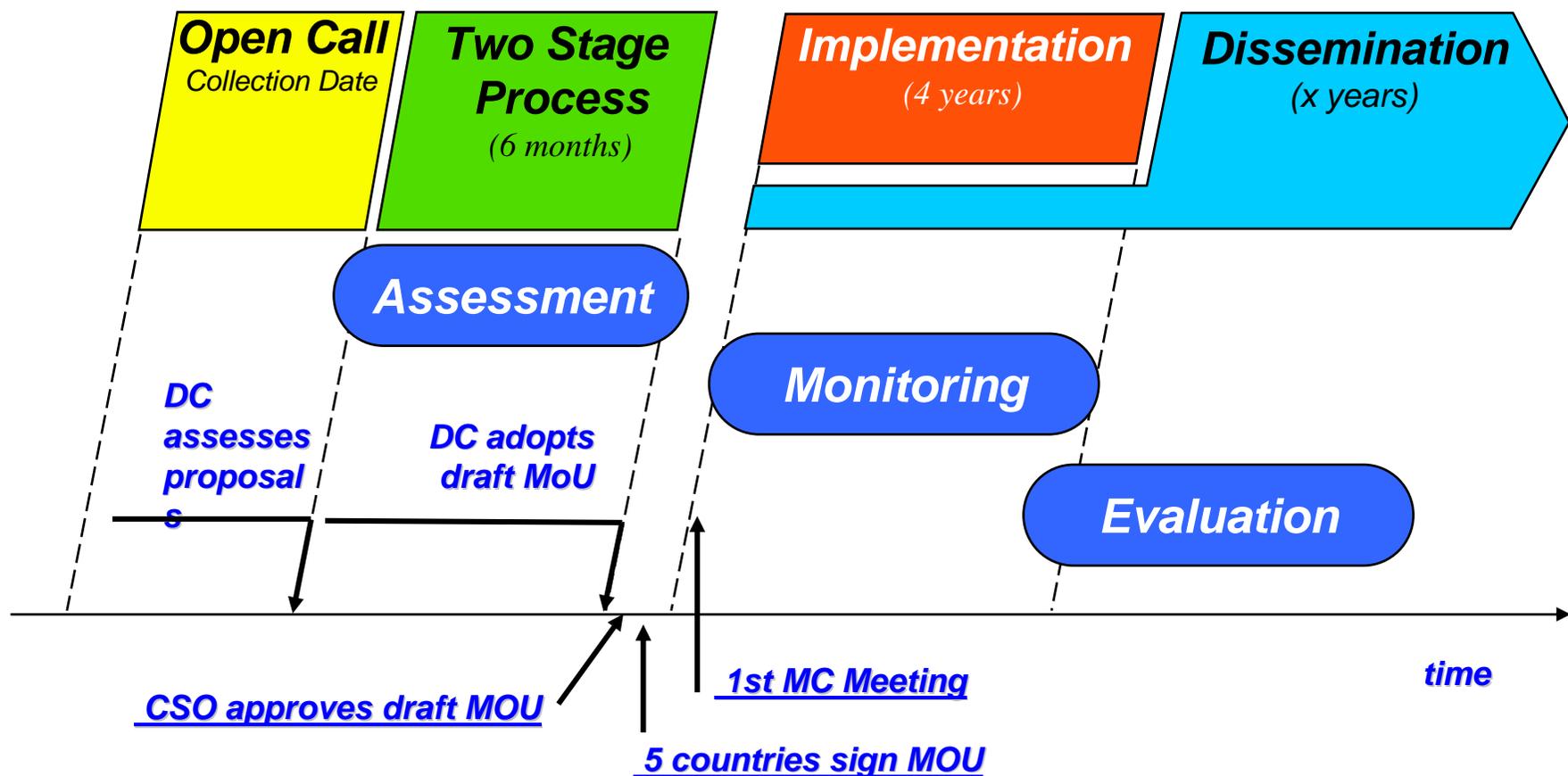
What is funded by COST?

COST Actions: Nationally funded projects (min. 5 participating countries) with a joint work programme receive finance for:

- Science management meetings
 - Scientific workshops and seminars
 - Short Term Scientific Missions (STSMs)
 - Training Schools and Research Conferences
 - Dissemination
- *Average funding about 100 000 € per year per Action*

Exploratory/Strategic Workshops: to explore future scientific or societal needs, support policy developments or initiate new activities

COST Action Life Cycle



The role of the Domain Committees (DCs)

- **Assessment** of proposals in the Open Call
 - Reviewing and rating of Preliminary Proposals
 - Hearings and Ranking of Full Proposals
 - Participation in establishing final selection
- **Monitoring** of Actions in progress
 - “Progress Report” submitted every year by Actions
 - Presentation by the Action Chair at Annual Review Meeting (ARM) and advising the COST Office on budget
- **Evaluation** of completed Actions
 - Peer review by the Evaluation Panel
 - Approval of the “Evaluation Report”

Ongoing COST Actions relevant to ABIM

- ✓ **860** Sustainable low-input cereal production: required varietal characteristics and crop diversity
- ✓ **862** Bacterial toxins for insect control
- ✓ **863** Euroberry research: from genomics to sustainable production, quality and health
- ✓ **864** Combining traditional and advanced strategies for plant protection in pome fruit growing
- ✓ **872** Exploiting genomics to understand plant-nematode interaction
- ✓ **873** Bacterial diseases of stone fruits and nuts

New COST Actions relevant to ABIM

- ✓ **FA0604** Triticeace genomics for the advancement of essential European crops
- ✓ **FA0605** Signalling control of stress tolerance and production of stress protective compounds in plants
- ✓ **FA0701** Arthropod symbiosis: from fundamental studies to pest and disease management
- ✓ **FA0803** Prevention of honeybee colony losses
- ✓ **FA0804** Molecular farming: plants as a production platform for high value proteins

The COST **Open Call**

- **“Open Call” = Continuous and thematically open**
 - Encourages multidisciplinary proposals
 - Improves transparency
 - Ensures quality
 - Furthers competitiveness
- **Emphasis on Early Stage researchers: their joint efforts bring improved recognition**
- **Selection criteria are public**
- **Specific collection dates (i.e. 26 September 2008)**
- **2-stage process / peer reviewed**
- **Successful COST Actions proposals can expect to start activities within 9 months after the collection date**

COST Open Call

COST invites researchers throughout Europe to submit proposals for research networks and use this unique opportunity to exchange knowledge and to embark on new European perspectives.

www.cost.esf.org/opencall

This continuous call is thematically open. Proposals from all Scientific Domains are welcome. The last collection date for preliminary proposals was 26 September 2008, the next one will be 27 March 2009.

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