

**INFORMATION OFFICE OF THE
STEERING PLATFORM ON RESEARCH FOR
WESTERN BALKAN COUNTRIES**

Contract no. **031770**

**Final Activity Report
M1-M24**

**by Elke Dall
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Due date of deliverable: **May 2008**

Start date of project: 1 May 2006

Duration: 24 months

Organisation name of lead contractor for this deliverable:

Centre for Social Innovation

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Introduction

This report contains an overview of the activities carried out in the project ASA-MOCO-WB during the whole lifetime (lasting from May 2006 – April 2008) and describes the progress in relation to the project objectives, the progress towards the milestones and deliverables set for the period and any problems encountered as well as corrective actions taken.

It is based upon the 1st interim activity report and the 2nd interim activity report.

Publishable executive summary

The Information Office of the Steering Platform on Research for the Western Balkan Countries (see-science.eu) provided information on issues of science and technology (S&T) policy in the region and beyond to assist the Steering Platform in the conduct of its work for the first two years of its lifetime.

The Steering Platform, which was launched by the European Commission and the Austrian Council Presidency in June 2006, plays a central role in stimulating, monitoring, coordinating and supporting cooperation in research and technological development (RTD) between the countries of the European Union (EU) and the Western Balkan Countries (WBC). It is a forum for the exchange of information and of views and recommendations on the RTD policy in and towards the WBCs, and for the establishment of a common information base.

The Information Office was carried out as a 'Specific Support Action' (SSA), funded under the Specific International Scientific Cooperation Activities (INCO) in the 6th Framework Programme for Research and Development (FP6) and will be continued under the 7th Framework Programme in the project WBC-INCO.NET.

Its Mission Statement states that the task of the Office is to provide information on S&T policies and actions:

The Information Office acts as a source of high quality targeted information on research in the Western Balkan countries (WBCs) by supporting the Steering Platform through a regular eJournal, analytical studies and reports and directories.

The Information Office contributes to dialogue on S&T issues between the EU and the Western Balkan countries and the integration of the research and innovation systems of the WBCs into the European Research Area (ERA).

On the website <http://see-science.eu> (or <http://www.wbc-inco.net> respectively), collections of relevant papers (document service), useful contacts of stakeholders from the region and the EU (who is who), organisations and links are provided. Furthermore, studies directed at the needs of the Steering Platform were produced, including 'S&T Reports' on all Western Balkan Countries and a Needs-Offer-Matrix comparing the funding sources available with the demands in the region.

Last but not least, the Information Office provided a quarterly online journal including regular updates on the Platform's advancements, S&T issues of the Western Balkan region and corresponding EU and Member States policies through expert interviews, event reviews etc.


1. Project objectives and major achievements during the reporting period

In the following table, the specific objectives stated in the Description of Work (left side) are assessed and the status of their achievement is briefly described.

Description of Work, page 4 (et seqq.):	Assessment of the objectives for the second year of implementation:
Its specific objectives are:	
a) to establish an evidence based <i>documentation service</i> for the members of the "Steering Platform Westbalkan" consisting of (a) a web-based content management system (including homepage with restricted access features) comprising all relevant S&T documents relevant for the policy dialogue,	The content management system was established in the first period. It has been maintained and improved in the second period. A scholarship database has been added, the technical framework improved, restricted access is implemented specifically for the contact data, organisation database and access to specific documents. All "News" and the Journals are publicly accessible.
(b) a contact database comprising all helpful co-ordinates of the members and their relevant support services as well as information on other important institutional stakeholders of all participating countries,	The database has been established, contact data has been entered and maintained as far as possible (e.g. new functions, new telephone prefix, etc.) and continuously new stakeholders have been added.
b) to support the policy dialogue between the EC, the Member States, Associated States and the Westbalkan Countries by <i>analytical support studies and materials</i> on S&T policy issues actually and urgently addressed by the "Steering Platform Westbalkan" consisting of (c) S&T Country Reports of all so called Westbalkan Countries (i.e. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro) focussing on legal fundamentals and existing RTDI strategies,	Country reports have been drafted (separately for Serbia and Montenegro) and continuously updated with the assistance of local experts.
(d) an analytical confrontation between demand for and existing European and international instrumental offer to support an enhanced co-operation between the European Union and the	The demand-offer-analysis has been delivered and published. At the end of the project, it has been updated, printed and disseminated once more.

<p>Westbalkan Countries,</p>	
<p>(e) thematic analytical studies on urgent issues which arise during the policy dialogue and which are regarded as essential by the Platform's participants to be explored in more depth (e.g. survey and assessment of RTD infrastructures in the region; state of art of the development of the Information Society in the region; policy evaluation of existing mobility programmes; study on SME absorption capacity for RTD etc.),</p>	<p>The initially postponed thematic analytical studies have been carried out following the topics decided upon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Science and Technology in Kosovo/UNMIK (complementing the above mentioned country reports) - Mobility Barriers: "Barriers to international mobility and the integration of researchers from Western Balkan Countries (WBC) in the European Research Area (ERA)" - Innovation Infrastructures in the Western Balkan Countries
<p>(f) a summary publication broadening the targeted dissemination level beyond the Platform's members and enhance the wider political and scientific dialogue on the topic.</p>	<p>The summary publication "Science and Technology in the Western Balkan" has been edited and published. It is available in 500 copies. All updated country reports and the complementing thematic report on Kosovo/UNMIK are included in this publication. Other reports were printed separately.</p>
<p>c) to deliver a tailor-made <i>communication service</i> for the "Steering Platform Westbalkan" (g) in format of an quarterly online journal providing regular updates on the Platform's advancements, S&T issues of the Westbalkan region and corresponding EU and Member States policies, expert interviews, event announcements etc.</p>	<p>The quarterly journal has been regularly published. As it was decided to print the issues for better dissemination of the tangible outcomes, all e-journals developed were also printed and disseminated to major stakeholders.</p>
<p>The following indications provide a measurable and verifiable outline of the above mentioned objectives (see DoW, page 5):</p>	
<p>ad (a) <u>Web-based content management system</u>: a minimum of 300 relevant documents and studies at the end of year 1 and a minimum of 500 relevant documents and studies at the end of the project should be systematically catalogued and easily accessible stored in the web-based content management system.</p>	<p>The content management system has been established. 275 document entries were available for download after the first period, 421 document entries are available at the end of the project. All documents state source (with internet URL if available), type of document, a citation and an abstract. The relevance of the documents was more dominant than to reach the figure of 500.</p>

	It is envisaged that this figure will be reached within 2008 as the work will be continued.
ad (b) <u>Contact database</u> : all helpful co-ordinates of all members of the Steering Platform as well as their respective support services should be recorded by month 2 and regularly updated throughout ASA-MOCO-WB's lifetime. Additionally, main institutional stakeholders from all Westbalkan Countries as well as institutional Member States' stakeholders dealing with S&T issues relevant for the Westbalkan Region will be recorded. A benchmark of at least 300 relevant personalised recordings is anticipated.	At the end of the first period 192 contact data entries were available for registered see-science.eu users and a total of 398 users registered. After the second period, 795 users were registered.
ad (c) <u>Country reports</u> : S&T country reports of all five Westbalkan Countries will be established until month 5 of this project. Each country report will consist of approximately 15 to 20 pages featuring the legal S&T fundamentals and a synopsis of the most important national RTDI strategies and instruments.	Already in the first period it was decided to publish 6 reports instead of 5 due to the dissolution of Serbia and Montenegro. All reports were much longer than envisaged (approximately 50 pages depending on formatting). All 6 reports were updated and reviewed at the end of the project.
ad (d) <u>Demand/offer analysis</u> : one analytical synopsis confronting the identified needs with the available European and international instruments to support an enhanced RTD co-operation between the European Union and the Westbalkan countries will be elaborated in the second quarter of this project. Gaps will be identified and strategic policy recommendations in arrangement with the EC prepared.	The study which was carried out in the first period was updated in the second period.
ad (e) <u>Thematic reports</u> : three thematic reports consisting of approximately 15 to 20 pages will be elaborated on basis of the demand for more in-depth analysis on certain S&T issues expressed by the Platform's members majority. The topics of each of the	As stated above, the thematic reports have been initially postponed and all carried out in the second project period. The length and depth of the reports was exceeding the expectations in the proposal: - Science and Technology in

<p>three thematic reports will be identified during the meetings of the Steering Platform (presumably biannually) and the thematic reports will be prepared until the next meeting takes place in order to serve as input for the agenda and forthcoming discussions.</p>	<p>Kosovo/UNMIK (complementing the above mentioned country reports) – approx. 30 pages - Mobility Barriers: “Barriers to international mobility and the integration of researchers from Western Balkan Countries (WBC) in the European Research Area (ERA)” – approx. 75 pages - Innovation Infrastructures in the Western Balkan countries – approx. 300 pages (6 country reports)</p>
<p>ad (f) <u>Book:</u> all reports will be summarised in a publication which is envisaged to be published in 500 copies depending on the communication needs of the EC and eventually published by the Office for official publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.</p>	<p>The book was published in the second period. It has 305 pages and was printed in 500 copies and disseminated via mass mailing and at events. The pdf-version can be downloaded from the website.</p> 
<p>ad (g) <u>Online journal:</u> a quarterly online journal service (in total 7 electronic newsletters) will be implemented and regularly delivered to the Platform’s members (and their endorsed affiliates). Each electronic journal will consist of a minimum of 7 pages including study and book reviews, announcements of forthcoming relevant events, guest contributions and especially news and updates from the “Steering Platform Westbalkan” dialogue.</p>	<p>7 issues of the online journal have been published during the project as planned. Additionally to the online versions and pdf-copies which were sent to the mailing list, also printed copies were disseminated.</p> <p>Further details in the report on disseminating knowledge.</p> <p>Main aspects included are: Framework Programme News, News from the Commission, Initiatives, Book reviews Several guest authors have contributed.</p> <p>The last issue was already published under the new logo in order to reflect in time the transition to the WBC-INCO.NET project.</p>

Comments on problems and corrective actions

1) Problem: The transition to the WBC-INCO.NET project which started on January 2008 needed to be reflected in the work while still maintaining a clear division between the two projects.

Corrective action: With the project officer it was agreed to rebrand the last issue of the ASA-MOCO-WB journal while it was still clearly produced within this project. WBC-INCO.NET has no journal activity in the first 6 months of its implementation.

2) Problem: The thematic report on innovation infrastructures has by far exceeded the volume which was envisaged initially for the report as basically 6 reports (one per country) were developed. Publication in the final compendium would double the size of it. Costs were considerably higher for printing and layout.

Corrective action: The deliverable was published independently from the others in the form of booklets. Costs were accepted to be higher than budgeted, but as travel costs were to be expected slightly lower as well as costs for the activities in workpackage 1, it was envisaged to cover all project activities within the available budget.

2. Workpackage progress of the period

The following overview shows for each of the four workpackages, a) the objectives described in the DoW and their assessment, b) the list of deliverables and the date of submission and c) the milestones and their assessment for months 13 to 24 of the project implementation.

WP 1 Documentation Service

a) Objectives

<p>The objective of this work package is to establish an evidence based <i>documentation service</i> for the members of the "Steering Platform Westbalkan" consisting of</p> <p>(a) a web-based Content Management System (CMS) (including homepage and restricted access features) comprising all relevant S&T documents relevant for the policy dialogue and</p> <p>(b) a contact database comprising all helpful co-ordinates of the Platform's members and their relevant support services as well as information on other important institutional stakeholders.</p>	<p>Completely fulfilled In the second project period regular updates were carried out.</p> <p>Involved contractor: ZSI</p>
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b) Deliverables

Del. No	Deliverable title	Lead partic.	Due date	Submission Date
D2	Contact Database (needs regular updates)	ZSI	m2 + updates	m2 + updates
D4	Programmed web-based Content Management System in place (needs to be regularly maintained and updated) and Homepage	ZSI	m3 + updates	m3 + updates

c) Milestones

(Milestones were already achieved in the first project period)

<p>M1 Content Management System in place and Homepage is running with the first accessible documents and Steering Platform members as registered users</p>	<p>Fulfilled Lead contractor: ZSI</p>
<p>M2 Address Database set up and filled with first set of data (which will be then continuously updated)</p>	<p>Fulfilled Lead contractor: ZSI</p>

WP 2 Analytical Support

a) Objectives

<p>The objective of this workpackage is to support the policy dialogue between the European Commission, the Member States, Associated States and the Western Balkan Countries by analytical support studies and materials on S&T policy issues actually and urgently addressed by the Steering Platform Westbalkan consisting of</p> <p>(a) S&T Country Reports of all so called Westbalkan countries focussing on legal fundaments, existing Research and Technological Development and Innovation (RTDI) strategies and statistical input, throughput and output indicators,</p> <p>(b) an analytical confrontation between needs and existing European and international instruments to support an enhanced co-operation between the European Union and the so called Western Balkan Countries (demand/offer analysis),</p> <p>(c) thematic analytical studies on urgent issues which arise during the policy dialogue and which are regarded as essential by the Steering Platform Westbalkan participants to be explored in more depth</p>	<p>a) completely fulfilled involved contractor: ZSI</p> <p>b) completely fulfilled involved contractor: FFG</p> <p>c) completely fulfilled involved contractor: FFG and ZSI</p>
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b) Deliverables

Del. No	Deliverable title	Lead partic.	Due date	Submissi on Date
D5	S&T Country Report – Albania	ZSI	m5	m5 Update in m18-22
D6	S&T Country Report – Bosnia and Herzegovina	ZSI	m5	6 Update in m18-22
D7	S&T Country Report – Croatia	ZSI	m5	m6 Update in m18-22
D8	S&T Country Reports – Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	ZSI	m5	m6 Update in m18-22

D9	S&T Country Report – Serbia and Montenegro (has been substituted through)	ZSI	m5	m6 Update in m18-22
D9a	S&T Country Report – Serbia	ZSI	m5	m6 Update in m18-22
D9b	S&T Country Report – Montenegro	ZSI	m5	m6 Update in m18-22
D10	Thematic S&T Report Innovation Infrastructures <i>Postponed</i>	ZSI	m8 m16	m16 Updates till m 24
D11	Demand/Offer Matrix and Analyses	FFG	m9	m9 Update in m22
D12	Thematic S&T Report II Mobility Barriers <i>Postponed</i>	FFG	m14 m16	m17
D13	Thematic S&T Report III Science and Technology in UNMIK/Kosovo	ZSI	m20	m21
D15	Final Compendium on the ASA-MOCO-WB Analytical Reports	ZSI	m23	m23

c) Milestones

M3	All five Country Reports ready	Fulfilled Lead contractor: ZSI
M4	First Thematic S&T Report ready	Initially postponed, fulfilled with little delay Lead contractor: ZSI
M5	Second Thematic S&T Report ready	Initially postponed, fulfilled with little delay Lead contractor: FFG
M6	Third Thematic S&T Report ready	Initially postponed, fulfilled with little delay Lead contractor: ZSI
M7	Publication comprising all scientific reports of ASA-MOCO-WB (Final Compendium) ready	Fulfilled Lead contractor: ZSI

WP 3 Communication Service

a) Objectives

<p>The objectives of the communication services are to</p> <p>(a) to disseminate information among the members of the Steering Platform,</p> <p>(b) compile news, reviews and articles specifically tailored for the Steering Platform's interests,</p> <p>(c) and consequently enhancing the information flow between the face-to-face meetings through a tailored newsletter medium (journal).</p>	<p>completely fulfilled involved contractor: ZSI, FFG</p> <p>A "special issue" in cooperation with SEE-ERA.NET was published additionally in November 2007. The final issue was used for re-branding and to support the sustainability of the journal.</p>
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b) Deliverables

Del. No	Deliverable title	Lead partic.	Due date	Submission Date
D14	Online Journal (Newsletter) (7 issues)	ZSI	4, 7, 10, 13, 16, 19, 22	4, 7, 10, 14, 17, 20, 23

c) Milestones

(Milestone was already achieved in the first project period)

M8	First Journal Template ready	Fulfilled Lead contractor: ZSI
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WP 4 Project Management

a) Objectives

<p>The aim of the work package is to</p> <p>a) secure a coherent development of all project tasks and to run the management at the project level (communication with the EC, financial and management reports), etc.</p> <p>b) to study the question how to provide a sustainable structure for Platform's Support</p>	<p>fulfilled involved contractor: ZSI</p> <p>Sustainability is secured through the WBC-INCO.NET project which involves ZSI and FFG as well as 24 other stakeholders from the region.</p>
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b) Deliverables

Del. No	Deliverable title	Lead partic.	Due date	Submission Date
D1	Project Presentation	ZSI	1	1
D3	Final Plan for using and disseminating knowledge (including a Knowledge Management Plan for the web-based CMS and for the online journal / newsletter) in month 2 with regular updates	ZSI	2 + updates	2 + updates
D16	Feasibility Assessment for Sustainable Support Structures	ZSI	24	24
D17	Report on actions taken to raise public participation and awareness	ZSI	24	24

D16 has been fulfilled with the project application of WBC-INCO.NET which provides sustainability for most of ASA-MOCO-WBs activities and also highlights the Task Force on Building and Fostering Human Capital.

D17 reflects on D3 as regards the further inclusion of public participation and awareness.

c) Milestones

The Meetings are defined as Milestones for the Project Management as they will be points for decisions which will define the next steps in all workpackages. Steering Platform members have the possibility to express their needs and wishes for the support action – e.g. type of documents to be gathered, type of addresses to add in WP1; setting of topic for thematic reports in WP2; discussion of format and structure for the online journal. Furthermore the Platform's members will be asked to provide content as external content providers which will then be incorporated into the deliverables and disseminated again.

M9	First Steering Platform Meeting (during the Austrian EU presidency)	Fulfilled (held in Vienna)
M10	Second Steering Platform Meeting (during the Finish EU presidency)	Was not held
M11	Third Steering Platform Meeting (during the German EU presidency)	Fulfilled (held in Berlin)
M12	Fourth Steering Platform Meeting (during the Portuguese EU presidency)	Fulfilled (held in Thessaloniki)

3. Consortium management

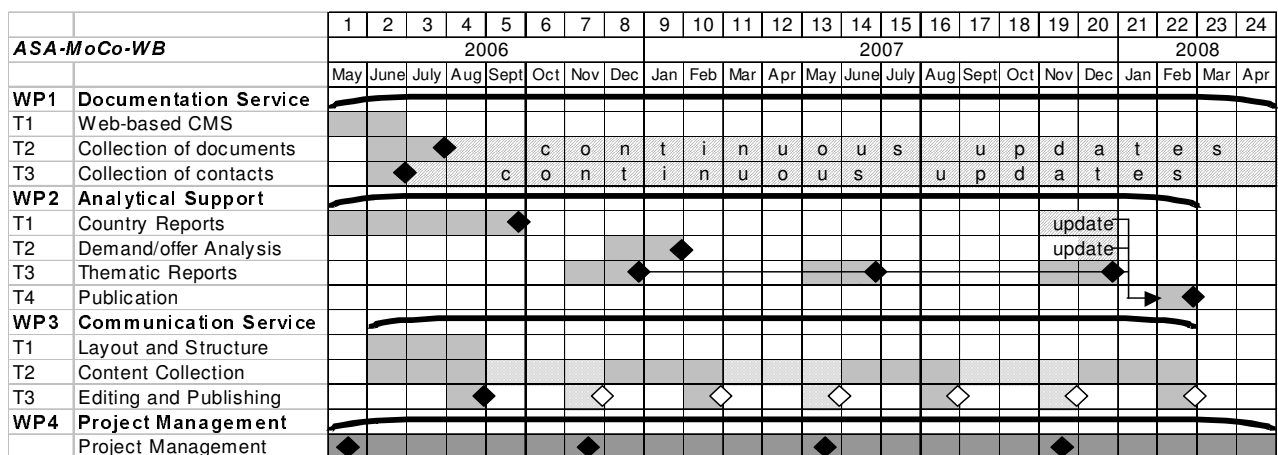
The administrative co-ordination of the project was carried out as planned by the project co-ordinator Ms. Elke Dall (ZSI) in both periods. Supervision at the ZSI was done by senior researcher Dr. Klaus Schuch.

At ZSI also technical staff was involved in the project: Maros Kollar (in 2006 and 2007), Berni Bauch (throughout the project as back-up support) and Christian Flury (starting 2008). Jana Machacova was involved in the preparation of the Innovation Infrastructure Report and Martina Lindorfer supported the coordination after January 2008 when the INCO-NET started as well and efforts had to be distributed.

At the FFG, a change of personnel occurred and instead of Prof. Manfred Horvat, who retired, Mr. Ralf König has taken over the responsibility. Project manager at FFG was Ms. Elli Tzatzani-Stepanovic who was replaced by Ms Victoria Solitander in October 2007. The responsibilities of the partner have not changed.

Some changes in the project's time table have occurred in Task T1 and in Task T3.

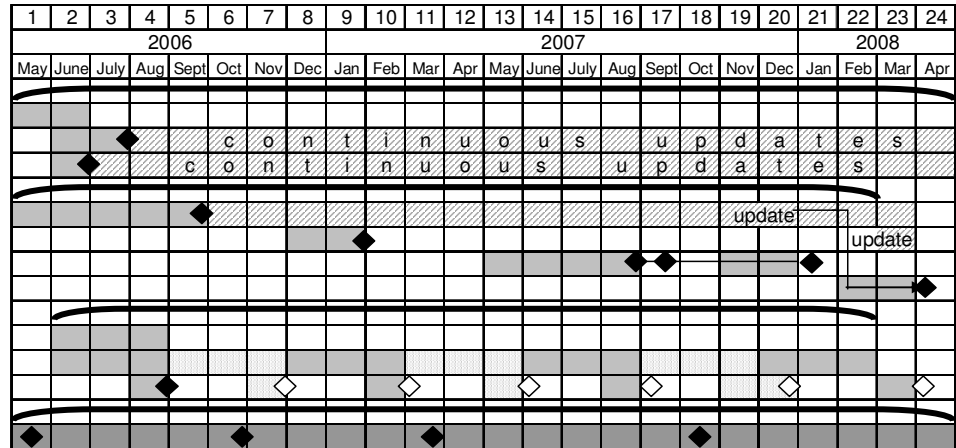
Gantt chart according to Description of Work:



Updated gantt chart in May 2008 (end of project):

ASA-MoCo-WB

- WP1 Documentation Service**
- T1 Web-based CMS
- T2 Collection of documents
- T3 Collection of contacts
- WP2 Analytical Support**
- T1 Country Reports
- T2 Demand/offers Analysis
- T3 Thematic Reports
- T4 Publication
- WP3 Communication Service**
- T1 Layout and Structure
- T2 Content Collection
- T3 Editing and Publishing
- WP4 Project Management**
- Project Management



Cooperation with other projects has been established especially through the development of the eJournal (WP3) and joint dissemination activities have been implemented with SEE-ERA.NET, ERA WESTBALKAN+, SCORE, EU-Balkan-FAB-Net, BAFN, Food-N-Co, MedResInSEE, IS2WEB, SEE-INNOVATION, SEE-GRID, SEE-GRID-2, SEE-GRID-SCI, WBC-INCO.NET, etc.

Cooperation with other programmes has also been established: COST, SEE Programme (Interreg IV), Competitiveness and Innovation Programme, Instrument for Pre-Accession, Central European Initiative, Stability Pact and Regional Cooperation Council, Joint Research Centres, etc.

4. Other issues

Already at the beginning of the project, the acronym used for the project proposal ASA-MOCO-WB, describing Analytical Support Assistance for the Monitoring Committee for Western Balkan Countries was changed – mainly because the Monitoring Committee bears the name “Steering Platform”. With reference to the website a new acronym has been developed and was then in use for outside communication (except with commission services for project management related communications): see-science.eu

At the end of the project, smooth transition to the project WBC-INCO.NET was secured. This project will continue with several services developed in ASA-MOCO-WB, such as the journal (Task 7.3 of WBC-INCO.NET), the website and the databases (Task 7.1 of WBC-INCO.NET). The relaunch of the website took place on April 30, 2008.



Project Logo:



Project Website:

<http://www.see-science.eu>

Sustainability after April 2008:

(for details see D16 Report "Feasibility Assessment for Sustainable Support Structures")



With the website <http://www.wbc-inco.net> which continues to offer the services built up by the see-science.eu project.