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Science Technology and Innovation
in the chemicals sector:
the importance of networking



Huge challenges for the European Chemicals Industry

- International competition
- Costs of feedstock
- Climate change
- Creating skills
- Financial markets
- ...



What to do in Europe

- The Chemicals Industry in Europe is still the larger in terms of world market share with respect to other competing areas, but...
- Its market share is decreasing
- It is relocating in other parts of the world
- Its competitiveness is at stake



What is our competitive advantage

- Europe cannot compete for lower salaries, for cheap resources or for relaxed environmental quality standards
- Europa can compete for its knowledge base, its research potential, its skills, its potential of growing new skills, its organisational capability at regional level and along the value chain, its first class infrastructures



How to reverse the trend?

- **INNOVATION** is the only European asset that can make the difference
- **Open innovation** schemes
- More investments in **high-tech** sectors
- **Start-up** programmes in Universities linked to chemical **entrepreneurship** programmes
- Promotion of **Public-Private-Partnerships**
- Better exploitation of funding opportunities **along the innovation chain**
- Focus on excellence – **clusters and regions**



Importance of networking

- Innovation clusters and networks at territorial level and along the value chain are essential for:
 - Optimal logistics solutions
 - Efficient delivering of common services
 - Connection with Universities and research centres
 - Industrial ecology
 - Strategic partnerships



Is innovation facilitated by clustering?

- Successful innovation is a complex process, based on a combination of factors where clustering may play a major role:
 - Scientific and Technological developments
 - Availability of skills
 - Market conditions
 - Regulatory environment
 - Business models
 - Risk capital availability



Technology Platforms may contribute to FP7

- Technology Platforms are generating the political momentum for a more coordinated and stronger industrial participation in research
- Several TPs, among which the SusChem, are cited in the FP and in the SP text as one of the sources of the FP7 research agenda
- Major contributions are given in the phase of preparation of the work programmes
- Projects are now starting among the clustered industrial partners beyond the availability of European funds (the case of lighthouse SusChem projects)



The importance of SusChem and SusChem+

- It was able to mobilise stakeholders around key objectives, identifying priorities on which focussing research activities
- It produced important and substantial documents, from the vision, to the strategic research agenda, to the implementation plan
- It is evolving through a more capillar organisation at national/regional level, in order to better involve SMEs and local actors
- Following the recommendation from the HLG, it is extending its remits towards innovation-related activities – how to use research results to create business



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Thanks for your attention!

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