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EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE IN ASTROBIOLOGY, RESULTS OF THE ASTROMAP CONSULTATION

Abstract

Astrobiology is a multidisciplinary field of research, which encompasses scientists ranging from cosmology, astronomy, planetary sciences, physics, chemistry, geology, paleontology to biology. In order to map the existing astrobiological expertise in Europe a comprehensive community consultation has been performed within the AstRoMap (Astrobiology and Planetary Exploration Road Mapping) project that is supported by the European Commission FP7 framework. From this information a data base of scientists (European and beyond) interested in astrobiology and planetary exploration (see: <http://www.astromap.eu/database.html>) has been established. It reflects the demography and research and teaching activities of the astrobiology community, as well as their professional profiles and involvement in astrobiology projects. The database provides an ideal platform for networking between scientists interested in the various fields of astrobiology. Considering future aspects of astrobiology in Europe, the need for more astrobiology-dedicated funding programmes at the EU level, especially for cross-disciplinary groups, was stressed. This might eventually lead to the creation of a European laboratory of Astrobiology, or even of a European Astrobiology Institute.

AstRoMap partners are: 1. Centro de Astrobiología (INTA-CSIC), Torrejón de Ardoz, Madrid, Spain ; 2. European Science Foundation, Strasbourg, France ; 3. Association pour un Réseau Européen d'Exo/Astrobiology (EANA), France ; 4. B-USOC, Brussels, Belgique; 5. Deutsches Zentrum für Luft- und Raumfahrt (DLR), Cologne, Germany; 6. Institute for Space Astrophysics and Planetology-National Institute for Astrophysics (IAPS-INAF), Rome, Italy