Panel

Living Labs and Regional Challenges - Panel Discussions: Regional Policies for the Future Internet

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Panel Outline
The strategic potential of the Internet continues to emerge, and its open access has become a central concern for the sustainable development of communities throughout the world. As new approaches such as Living Labs underline the link between technology and territory, regions are playing a central role in shaping internet-based innovation strategies capable of providing concrete answers to the challenges we face.
In parallel, the Future Internet is now taking shape, and it has become increasingly evident that the way it is designed and deployed is immensely important. Following the Bled Declaration of 2008, the European Commission has launched key actions to coordinate research efforts through the Future Internet Assembly and to provide substantial support to a new experimental infrastructure through the € 300M Future Internet PPP. While these initiatives are welcomed as keeping Europe at the forefront of designing such a strategic infrastructure, impact will be limited if the process is entrusted to European research and industrial communities alone.

Indeed Regions and Macro-regions at the global level have a leading role to play in the shift towards broader, sustainability-oriented innovation policies, as they are closer to the expression of demand that drives the new approaches and their expectations of benefits. The premise is that regions and macro-regions throughout the world have both a right to sit at the table as well as responsibilities to bear and opportunities to offer:

1. As democratically elected bodies close to the innovation ecosystems of citizens and businesses, they can represent the voice of their constituencies and provide the democratic legitimacy that is essential to the process of defining the Future Internet.

2. As the institutions that manage the territories within which experimental Future Internet infrastructures will need to be deployed and its stakeholder engaged in Living Lab co-design processes, can offer the necessary operational support.

3. As authorities managing funding for regional development policies, particularly in rural areas, they can provide complementary support to Future Internet initiatives if strategies are coordinated from the outset.

This panel discussion will examine these issues and the potential for moving towards an enrichment of the Bled Declaration that incorporates the regional and macro-regional to global dimensions. The open discussion will adopt a “conversational” mode including comments and contributions from the floor, build on outcomes of the workshop held in the previous session, and identify next steps.

The discussion will briefly touch on the following topics:

- The Regions for the Future Internet initiative (Jesse Marsh)
- Rural FI infrastructures and Central Europe (Adam Turowiec)
- eParticipation and eTuscany (Francesco Molinari)
- Living Labs and the Future Internet (Pieter Ballon)
- Experiences in Syria and Near East (Vito Cistulli)
- EnoLL strategies for Brazil and Latin America (Alvaro Oliveira)