

PROMOTING SYNERGIES AT REGIONAL, NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN LEVELS

José Carlos Caldeira

Presidente, ANI – Agência Nacional de Inovação. Interview by Paul Sillers

What is your background and what made you enter the aeronautics sector?

Currently I'm president of ANI, the Portuguese National Innovation Agency, which is a public agency for promoting knowledge transfer through greater collaboration between academia and industry, and also for promoting technological entrepreneurship. I've been with the agency for three years, and before that I worked in research and with an interface organisation working between academia, industry and research companies. My main focus is in advanced manufacturing systems, although I have been involved in several areas, so my link to aeronautics is more on the process side. I have also been responsible for a production technology cluster in Portugal, very much linked and in-line with European initiatives in manufacturing platforms for future technologies.

We work horizontally across all sectors and one of the emerging sectors that has been quite active in Portugal is aeronautics. In terms of added value and in terms of advanced technologies the National Innovation agency is quite interested in these initiatives, working in aeronautics.

What led you to Clean Sky Joint Undertaking and what first drew your attention to the programme?

The National Innovation Agency is responsible for promoting the participation of national organisations in Horizon 2020, particularly companies, including the Joint Technology Initiatives like Clean Sky – through the national contact points for these initiatives.

We've had contact with Clean Sky for many years since the beginning and have been promoting the participation of the national organisations in this initiative. Participation has been growing and we're more active now, since the beginning of Horizon 2020 – which is also more or less the beginning of my role here in the agency.

For us there's an aspect which is very important: the synergies between European



structural funds and European programmes and the national programmes and national funds. Clean Sky is one of the leading initiatives in this field because for a while they've been promoting arrangements and agreements with national and regional authorities to promote synergies and complementarities between funding at European level and initiatives and funding at national and regional level. We signed a MOU in October 2016 between the agency, the National Science Foundation and Clean Sky to promote collaboration and synergies between what we are doing in aeronautics at European level and at national level. As you can imagine, for an emerging sector, which is the case of aeronautics in Portugal, it's very important.

Based on your experience, what should be encouraged about the Clean Sky programme and what is the most exciting thing about Clean Sky?

We are working on two levels of synergy: One is how we capacitate Portuguese organisations to have better and stronger participation in Clean Sky – how we reinforce the capabilities, the competences, the critical mass, at national level – how we support the development of

the national R&T agendas in those fields. How we organise stakeholders, mobilise them, how we support them in the preparation of proposals and the ideas so that they can have better and relevant participation in Clean Sky.

The other one is the further exploitation of results of the project because at Clean Sky we develop technologies up to a certain

“ Synergies between European funds for regions and European programmes are key. Clean Sky is one of the leading actors in this field. ”

level, but then of course we can use complementary funding instruments to take these technologies and bring them to a higher TRL at national and regional level. There's also what we call “cross fertilisation” – some technologies

developed for aeronautics have potential to benefit other sectors.

The most exciting thing in Clean Sky is the capability of working together with different countries and the different areas. This capability of mobilising and involving many other stakeholders at national and regional level via these collaborations and via these agreements is a very important aspect of this platform. And I believe that this is the way of clearly taking benefits of the European dimensions that we have as a set of countries, as a community, and also being able to benefit a large number of stakeholders from sectors and regions, so they really have a European dimension.