Reconfiguring R&I Collaborations, What we still need to know

Online, 09/06/21

Dimitri Corpakis, former EU official

d.corpakis@gmail.com

A few things, I think I know, about Collaborative Innovation

- Collaborative Innovation involving the Quadruple Helix is mainly concerned about addressing wide ranging societal challenges and rarely about bringing about a specific innovation result. It is thus rather addressing *impacts and more specifically risks of all kinds (known, less known or simply unknown)*

- However, collaborative innovation thrives when open cooperation protocols are used in a co-creation and co-design context, among knowledgeable peers: open source software is a good real-world example (for example the Linux OS)

- Civil Society participates successfully when given a chance to respond and interact with the leading innovators, and when it is wisely represented by motivated groups (working for or against the initial concepts generating the innovative process). User groups have thus played and still play a huge role in the development of software solutions. *The French Minitel deployment in the late 80's (long before the Internet emerged) was based on real-world social experiments with large user communities, involving also non-technical issues*

De-constructing Civil Society

- *Civil society has different functions*: interest groups, advocacy groups, groups with catalysing function for the promotion of an idea, but also a societal control function versus potential risks and negative impacts or ommissions from the development of an innovative process, product or service.

- *In a more positive approach, civil society can be an important player* in the *identification of collective visions* for growth / economic and social progress/ as in the case of Smart Specialisation Strategies (Entrepreneurial Discovery process).

- *Civil society is fluid and is rarely institutionalised and organised* like knowledge institutions or industry which have established hierarchical and functional structures. However *the more civil society groups get organised and sophisticated*, the more their interventions gain in quality and impact (their *connectivity* towards the other 3 helices increases and defines impact).

- *A fully fledged upstream inclusion of civil society in the Quadruple Helix* is dependent on its '*connectivity*' with the other 3 parts / its *readiness* to perform *meaningful dialogues* and also its *preparedness* to formulate *concrete proposals* in this debate or at least *concrete options* for consideration.

The sustainability of governance frameworks involving Civil Society

- Historically, collaborations born in the context of the EU R&D Framework Programme have been maintained over a longer period of time in the presence of mutual trust and interests. Civil Society groups (CSG) involved in such schemes will probably follow the same path

- However CSGs run after non-material gains and will rarely be included in a consortium in the absence of working relationships. Such relationships need to focus on credible scenarios of efficient interactive dialogue among the parties involved. *Some good examples pointing to this direction might be Nanomedicine R&D projects or projects involving Deep Sea Mining.*

Science

Companies back moratorium on deep sea mining
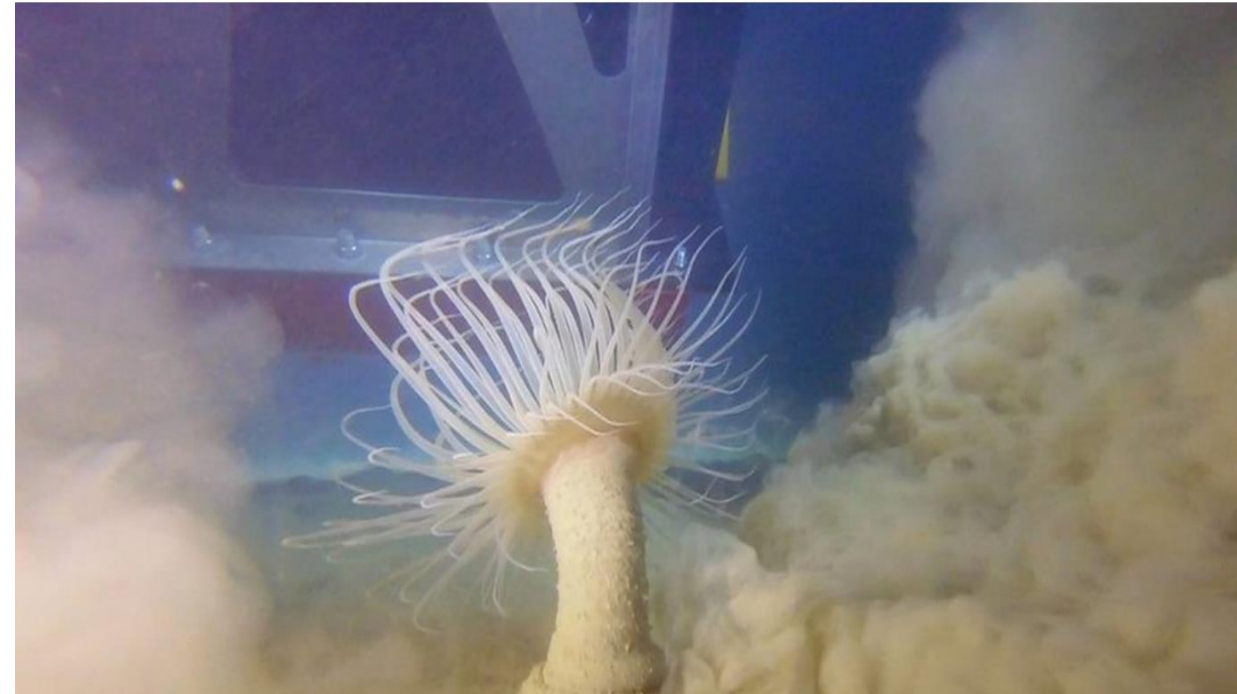
By David Shukman
Science editor

🕓 3 April

What's the problem?

Claudia Becker, a senior BMW expert in sustainable supply chains, tells me what led the car giant to decide against using deep sea metals.

"It's the fear that everything we do down there could have irreversible consequences," she said.

"Those nodules grew over millions of years and if we take them out now, we don't understand how many species depend on them - what does this mean for the beginning of our food chain?

"There's way too little evidence, the research is just starting, it's too big a risk."

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

POWER

High Power, Low Willingness / Better arguments needed	**High Power, High Willingness** / Things happen
Low Power, Low Willingness / Nothing happens/ Business as usual / BAU	**High Willingness, Low Power** / Alliances needed

WILLINGNESS