



# The ERICs in the Environment Cluster

*a document prepared by the ERIC Forum 2 project*

## WHAT IS AN ERIC

An ERIC (European Research Infrastructure Consortium) is a legal form under EU law created to set up and operate research infrastructures of European relevance. ERICs are primarily non-profit organisations, although they may carry out limited economic activities directly related to their mission. They can own assets, employ staff, enter into contracts, and serve as a coordinated provider of research facilities and services for the European research community. Its members include EU Member States, associated countries, non-EU countries, and intergovernmental organisations. They can be single-sited, concentrated at one location, or distributed, with a central hub coordinating multiple national or regional nodes across different countries.

## HOW ERICS ADD VALUE TO YOUR RESEARCH PROJECTS

1

Access to advanced research facilities and services you might not have at your home institution, including state-of-the-art equipment, digital archives, imaging, materials, or specialised labs.

2

Support for complex, interdisciplinary, or large-scale projects, from early-stage research to applied testing, prototyping, and validation across multiple techniques and disciplines.

3

Opportunities for international collaboration and resource sharing, enabling cross-border, multidisciplinary work and integration into broader European research networks.

4

Open and FAIR-access mechanisms, often through calls for proposals, giving researchers from any institution a chance to use top-tier infrastructure.

5

Boost the credibility and visibility of your research by linking your work to recognised European infrastructure, which can strengthen funding applications, publications, and collaborative efforts.

## HOW AN ERIC TAKES PART IN RESEARCH PROJECTS



ERICs can act as a project partner/beneficiary in grant proposals or funded projects.



A distributed ERIC can also participate via one of its member institutions or national nodes rather than the central entity itself, or with both (having a central hub as a beneficiary and national nodes/facilities as Affiliated Entities).



ERIC can coordinate or manage project/ Work packages/ tasks, including coordination of multi-site, multi-country research efforts (especially relevant if the ERIC is distributed). Many have multiple EC projects experience.



For projects needing trans-national access or shared infrastructure use, ERICs are often explicitly encouraged or required as beneficiaries (or via their nodes) in calls under major European funding schemes.



## ENVIRONMENT CLUSTER

Infrastructures focused on observing, monitoring, modelling and understanding environmental processes — from climate and ecosystems to pollution and biodiversity — to support science-based decision-making on global environmental challenges.



ACTRIS is a pan-European distributed research infrastructure dedicated to the observation and understanding of short-lived atmospheric constituents and their interactions. ACTRIS offers open access to high-quality data, state-of-the-art facilities, and tailored services, supporting atmospheric and climate research.

[www.actris.eu](http://www.actris.eu)



DANUBIUS-RI is the International Centre for Advanced Science on River-Sea Systems. It facilitates interdisciplinary science on the continuum from river source to sea, it offers state-of-the-art research infrastructure, and provides the integrated knowledge required to sustainably manage and protect River-Sea Systems. Its services range from in situ and Earth Observations, analysis, numerical modelling and management scenario development.

[www.danubius-ri.eu](http://www.danubius-ri.eu)



EMSO, the European Multidisciplinary Seafloor and water column Observatory, aims to explore the oceans, to gain a better understanding of phenomena happening within and below them, and to explain the critical role that these phenomena play in the broader Earth systems.

[www.emso.eu](http://www.emso.eu)



EPOS, the European Plate Observing System, is a multidisciplinary, distributed research infrastructure that integrates data, services, and facilities from solid Earth science communities across Europe. It provides sustainable, open access to harmonised, high-quality data and advanced tools, enabling collaborative research and innovation to better understand geodynamic processes, natural hazards, and their impacts on society.

[www.epos-eric.eu](http://www.epos-eric.eu)



Euro-Argo ERIC is a Research Infrastructure which allows active coordination and strengthening of the European contribution to the international Argo programme.

[www.euro-argo.eu](http://www.euro-argo.eu)



ICOS, the Integrated Carbon Observation System, is Europe's dedicated research infrastructure for high-precision observations of greenhouse gases. Through harmonised data spanning the atmosphere, ecosystems and oceans, it enables cutting-edge research on the carbon cycle and its response to natural and societal pressures, laying the foundation for informed solutions to climate change.

[www.icos-ri.eu](http://www.icos-ri.eu)



LifeWatch ERIC is Europe's only e-Science biodiversity and ecosystem research infrastructure, offering FAIR-compliant data and analytical services dedicated to research in both areas. Covering a specific and unique niche in the European and international landscape, it provides access to biodiversity content, services, and communities to promote science-based and reliable answers to global ecosystem challenges. Through LifeWatch ERIC researchers can discover, access, harmonise, standardise, integrate, and analyse data, enabling advanced modelling of biodiversity and ecosystems.

[www.lifewatch.eu](http://www.lifewatch.eu)