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## Editorial

As President of AssoArpa, an association of 21 regional environmental agencies in Italy and IMPEL's newest member, we are working to facilitate the development and integration of the technical and surveillance activities of all regional and provincial environmental agencies in Italy. The association collaborates strongly with ISPRA, the National Institute, in the consolidation and growth of the National System for the Protection of the Environment. AssoArpa has mostly focused on the exchange of operational and technical procedures, policies and expertise. For example, we have jointly developed a national network of highly specialised laboratories, to help us to analyse dioxins. Some important challenges remain ahead such as overcoming the remaining regional differences among the agencies, aligning them with best practices and to secure adequate national and local resources for shared responsibilities. The Italian Parliament is currently discussing a new law to this end, which will formally create a new National System for the Protection of the Environment, including all regional Agencies and ISPRA. AssoArpa is confident that the Italian system will be able to take maximum advantage from membership of IMPEL, in terms of efficient exposure to shared European practices but also to contribute to IMPEL's development with our 20-year experience in environmental control and protection practices.

*Stefano Tibaldi, President AssoArpa and DG Arpa Emilia-Romagna and Umberto Benezzi, DG Arpa Emilia-Romagna*

## Key outcomes 13th IMPEL General Assembly

During the 13th IMPEL General Assembly, which took place on 11-12 December in Rome, Italy, Dr. John Seager and Mr. Chris Dijkens were re-elected as Chair and Vice Chair of IMPEL for a further 2 years until 2017. IMPEL welcomed two new members into its family: The Albanian State Inspectorate of Environment & Water, and AssoArpa, the National Association of 21 regional public Agencies responsible for environmental protection in Italy. The network also finalised its new future strategic direction, reviewed the network's finances, approved several project reports and agreed to some changes of its internal rules.