



Marie Curie Actions: Marie Curie Incoming International Fellowship (IIF)

Participant: Dr. Ton Snelder
Project Title: Improved Spatial Frameworks for River Environment Management (**ISFREM**)
Research Area: Environment
Research Programme: FP6
Contract Type: Marie Curie Incoming International Fellowship
Coordinator: Centre National du Machinisme Agricole, du Génie Rural des Eaux et des Forêts (CEMAGREF), France
Period Covered: 24 months from 02 October 2006 to 01 October 2008
Funding: €216 291

It's a wonderful experience – you learn a lot. It is also very challenging with a new language to learn and very different systems of administration.

Dr. Ton Snelder is a natural resources engineer and environmental management researcher with 20 years of experience in the field of water management. Based at the **National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA)** since 1995, Dr. Snelder's responsibilities have ranged from commercial consulting to leadership of teams in developing environmental classification systems.

In 2005, Dr. Snelder received a **Marie Curie Incoming International Fellowship** which allowed him to carry out research at the **French National Institute Cemagref** for two years. His specific project undertook research to improve environmental classifications for use as spatial frameworks to support the implementation of environmental and conservation activities including planning, monitoring, assessment and regulation. The research performed made a strong contribution to the field of environmental classification by demonstrating the gains in performance that are possible using statistical modelling.

The Fellowship has produced seven published, submitted and preparatory papers which have facilitated new European and international collaborations. In addition to his contribution to Cemagref research, the Fellowship allowed Dr. Snelder to develop an understanding of systems with different environmental characteristics to those present in NZ, as well as important skills in database management, statistical modelling and habitat modelling. The Fellowship strongly reinforced the existing collaboration between the host institute and New Zealand and defined new perspectives for making it sustainable. In particular, future projects include adapting the modelling tools developed in France for the large scale management of river flows in NZ. Dr. Snelder's preliminary achievements concerning the ecological management of intermittent streams have also appeared as a strong axis for future collaboration, with Cemagref employing him for an additional eight months to finish publications and specify future collaborative actions. Dr. Snelder is expected to return to New Zealand, and NIWA, in June 2009.