**ITINERIS–ACTRIS Pilot Access Program: Enhancing Scientific Collaboration through Coordinated National and European Infrastructure Access**

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The ITINERIS–ACTRIS Pilot Access Program introduced, for the first time in Italy and the EU, a coordinated and nationally funded scheme for access to ACTRIS facilities. The initiative allowed international scientists to use advanced Italian platforms within ACTRIS and supported Italian researchers in accessing ACTRIS facilities across Europe and beyond, fostering scientific exchange and collaboration in atmospheric sciences.

Running until July 2025, the Program facilitated access to 62 cutting-edge facilities, including observational sites, simulation chambers, mobile units, and central laboratories, fostering interdisciplinary research with implications for climate, air quality, health, and energy. In some projects, sequential use of multiple facilities was also achieved.

A key innovation was the funding scheme—aligned with EU practices—covering part of travel and subsistence costs and directly managed by the ERIC. This significantly reduced access barriers, improved inclusiveness, and increased management efficiency.

Scientific uptake was strong: 63 applications received, with a total of 58 concluded Access project and a total of 113 users. Physical access accounted for 64% of applications, remote access 12%, and combined access 24%. Notably, about 70% of users applied to access Italian facilities confirming the effectiveness of the measure.

Independently peer review consistently assessed the proposals as scientifically sound, innovative, and often highly interdisciplinary. By integrating diverse access opportunities under a single framework, the Pilot Call demonstrated that a nationally funded scheme can successfully sustain open access to European research infrastructures. Unlike traditional mechanisms relying solely on EU calls, ITINERIS–ACTRIS positioned Italy as a pioneer, setting a precedent replicable by other countries.

The presentation will highlight Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)—including accesses metrics, user profiles, facilities accessed, and access modalities —together with selected results and impacts on scientific knowledge, underscoring the Pilot’s role in shaping future access policies.

**Keywords: Research infrastructures, Access schemes, Scientific collaboration**