



Brussels, May 2018

**MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC CO-ORDINATION GROUP  
FOR THE WFD COMMON IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY**

**17 MAY 2018 FROM 10:00 TO 18:00**

**CENTRE ALBERT BORSCHETTE, ROOM 1D, BRUSSELS**

A meeting of the Strategic Co-ordination Group (SCG) of the Common Implementation Strategy (CIS) for the Water Framework Directive (WFD) was held on 15 May 2018. The following Member States participated in the meeting, in the room or by video link: AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HR, HU, IE, IT, LU, LV, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, and UK. In addition, delegates from IS, NO and TR, and representatives of CEEP, CEFIC, CONCAWE, EAA, ECPA, EEA, EEB, EMPA, EREF, EURAQUA, EURELECTRIC, EUROMETAUX, EUWMA, EWA, INBO, NAVI TG, UEPG, Wetlands International, WG GW, WWF EPO, and DG ENV attended the meeting. A full list of meeting participants is provided in Annex 1.

Copies of the agenda, meeting documents and presentations given are available for download from CIRCABC: <https://circabc.europa.eu/w/browse/648f8866-0c6e-4880-a657-7f36cbd104e7>

## **1 – Welcome and Introduction**

The co-chairs Co-Chair Bettina Doeser (BD) from the Commission (COM) and Karl Schwaiger (KS) from Austria welcomed all delegates to the meeting, including those joining by video link.

## **2 – Approval of the agenda and minutes of the last SCG meeting; approval of updated SCG Rules of Procedure**

The agenda was approved without changes.

No comments were received on the minutes of the last SCG meeting, so the minutes were adopted.

BD reported that the SCG Rules of Procedure have been updated to take into account the revised COM rules on expert groups. Only one comment has been received in writing from SI and BD confirmed that the rules will be clarified to address this comment. Participants were invited to express a view.

In general, the updated SCG Rules of Procedure were approved by the SCG. In view of the fact that the SCG also constitutes part of the CIS process, they will be sent up to Water Directors for endorsement,

Certain participants made comments:

NO commended COM for continuing to ensure participation of EFTA and European Economic Area countries in the CIS.

SE, FI and ES raised concerns that the provision of meeting documents 10 working days before meetings is not always complied with, which creates problems for participants who need to coordinate positions at national level or within the organisations they represent.

BD noted the comments and said the COM always strives, and will continue to strive, to provide documents as soon as they can. However, sometimes some delay is inevitable.

### **3 – Activities of the Working Groups and Ad-hoc Task Groups**

#### **Deliverables for endorsement/acknowledgement by Water Directors:**

##### **(a) WG Chemicals - Revised Technical Guidance Document for deriving Environmental Quality Standards (TGD-EQS)**

Stéphanie Schaan (SS) (COM) presented the aim and process of the revision of the technical guidance, as well as the outcomes, outstanding issues and proposed next steps. The document proposed for endorsement by Water Directors updates the guidance for derivation of EQS for priority substances and river basin specific pollutants.

Issues concerning the link between this guidance document and the drinking water standards were raised quite late in the process and have not been taken into account in the current version. They will be considered in the next revision of the guidance. SS clarified however that consistency between the Water Framework Directive and the Drinking Water Directive (DWD) is ensured by WFD article 7, which requires Member States to set additional objectives and implement related measures where necessary to reach the objectives of the DWD.

LU agreed with the need to look at this issue in the near future, highlighting the possibility that the EQS derived in line with the current guidance might not be enough to reach good ecological status. FI agreed that the level of protection should not be lowered.

SE asked whether the WG Chemicals had been consulted on the final version of the document. SS clarified that the document was the object of several rounds of comments by the WG Chemicals and that the most recent changes related to drinking water were introduced based on the discussions in the WG, and further sent to the WG for comments in advance of the SCG meeting.

ECPA raised concerns over what they see as an excessive use of the precautionary principle and standards which may be too costly to reach without a proportionate benefit to society.

SS clarified that the mention of the precautionary principle in the guidance was not modified in this revision. Changes introduced in the guidance were necessary to adjust it to the latest scientific evidence. SS also pointed out that adjusting EQSs based on the most recent scientific evidence may mean increasing the EQS, but that doesn't imply reducing the actual level of protection.

FI stated that some EQS calculations based on the new guidance give very low results compared to present, for example with dioxins it could be 6-8 times lower than current. Is there a risk that these levels are getting too low to be picked up by available measuring methods?

SS stated that large changes would not normally be expected, based on the implementation tests done for a sample of substances. The change in the EQS for dioxins mentioned by FI would result from the use of the toxicologically based approach when deriving the quality standards to protect human health. Following previous discussions at the WG Chemicals and at the SCG, this methodology hasn't been included in the revised version of the guidance document presented to the SCG. Instead, this issue is proposed for consideration in the next updates of the guidance document.

KS closed the discussion with a reminder that the outstanding issues (in particular related to the derivation of standards to protect human health against contamination via drinking water and seafood consumption) are postponed to the next revision. He proposed to submit the document to Water Directors for endorsement accompanied by a short note explaining this.

#### **(b) WG DIS**

- **Reporting Guidance on implementation of Programmes of Measures (PoM)**
- **Reporting Guidance on the new substances in the 2013 EQS Directive**

Joaquim Capitão (JC) (COM) explained that the reporting guidance on implementing PoM has been discussed in WG DIS and presented to this group in the draft stage. The reporting guidance as agreed by the WG DIS covers the minimum information that the WG agreed was necessary at this stage. The main question addressed in the last meeting of the WG DIS, and raised again in writing by Slovenia and Portugal, relates to the reporting of costs of measures.

While there is no clear legal obligation to report on the costs of measures, this information is essential for DG ENV to be able to support its request for European funds to be allocated to the implementation of the WFD. At present, as highlighted in the ongoing Blue2 study, it is very difficult to estimate the funding needs for the implementation of the WFD and this situation will not change unless adequate reporting on the costs of measures, planned and implemented, is in place.

SI and FR recognised the importance of reporting on costs of measures, while stressing that, in their view, this goes beyond the legal requirements of the WFD.

ES asked how they could report on the implementation of measures that were not included, by mistake, in the reported Programmes of Measures. Furthermore, the obligation to report by 22 December makes it impossible to include financial figures for 2018. This issue was also raised by FR.

JC responded that COM is aware that changes have been made by MS for different reasons. To be able to handle the electronic reporting and draw conclusions on the implementation of

the PoM, which is the objective of this exercise, the electronic reporting needs to be based on the PoM as reported in the 2<sup>nd</sup> RBMPs. Progress on measures that were not included at that time can still be reported in the background documents.

Concerning the deadline for reporting, JC reminded the participants that the deadline is set in the WFD and cannot therefore be changed by COM. Furthermore, as the financial year ends at different times in different Member States, extending the deadline to allow every Member State to report on the 2018 financial data would be very difficult in any case. The reporting guidance asks Member States to report to which period the information on costs refers, so Member States should report the information that they have available by the legal deadline.

ES raised a concern about the documents uploaded in Circabc for this meeting, which are different from the ones that were available at the last meeting of the WG DIS.

JC clarified that, as discussed in the WG DIS, the documents had been updated to include the reporting information in a logical order, instead of the alphabetical order that was followed in the previous version of the documents. He also clarified that the information required in the reporting on Programmes of Measures is substantially different in the two reporting obligations that have the December deadline, as one concerns the implementation of existing Programmes of Measures, while the other concerns preliminary Programmes of Measures for substances added to the EQS Directive in 2013.

FR thanked the COM for the effort made to stabilise the reporting schemas.

KS closed the discussion on this point stating that the reporting on costs of measures is, in the end, in everyone's interest. He proposed that the documents be forwarded to Water Directors for acknowledgment, together with a short note concerning the importance of reporting on costs of measures. He also urged everyone to participate in the upcoming Blue2 workshop, for which the information has already been circulated by e-mail.

### **Information point:**

#### **(c) ATG on Hydromorphology**

##### **– Information on ongoing work on GEP, and recent workshop on 'Significant adverse effect on use'**

Raimund Mair (RM) (COM) gave a presentation about the ongoing work to develop an Appendix to the CIS Guidance Document 4 on Good Ecological Potential (GEP) for Heavily Modified Water Bodies (HMWB).

HMWB work is focused on key users, i.e. water storage, flood protection, agricultural drainage, inland navigation and uses at coastal/transitional waters. Significant progress has been made recently on GEP and mitigation measures. Finalised reports are available on GEP mitigation measures for water storage, flood protection and agricultural drainage, as well as a workshop report on inland navigation. A draft report on coastal and transitional waters is also available.

A workshop on significant adverse effects on use or wider environment was held on 23-24 April to exchange experiences, clarify issues/challenges and gain input on the topic for elaboration of the new appendix. It was attended by approx. 65 people with a technical and

policy background, whereas more attendance by policy experts would have been desirable. The outcomes will feed into work on the GEP guidance.

A first draft for the GEP guidance will be discussed at the ECOSTAT meeting in the end of May. A further updated version will be discussed at the autumn ECOSTAT and SCG meetings. Major progress on the work is expected for 2018 and finalisation is planned for spring 2019.

NO supports the work to harmonise approaches and share good practice, commenting that the final balance between environmental improvement and significant adverse impact on other uses is a policy decision at national level.

RM highlighted that the aim of this work is to learn from each other about how to set up the assessment framework and to find a balance between technical and policy-related questions.

### **Other WG and ATG Reports – written information only**

#### **(d) WG ECOSTAT**

LU asked about the status of Nutrient Best Practice guide.

Sandra Poikane (SP) (COM) replied that the document is already finalised and has been available on CIRCABC for a while. The next WG ECOSTAT meeting at the end of May will discuss it. If agreed, it will be submitted to the SCG for transmission to the Water Directors and adoption as CIS guidance.

#### **(g) ATG on Water Reuse**

NL mentioned that the progress report of the ATG on Water Reuse states that a proposal to establish a drafting group to develop guidance documents for Water Reuse in agricultural irrigation and aquifer recharge will be subject to SCG agreement. Given that the next SCG meeting will be too late, will this be discussed in this meeting?

BD replied that the CIS programme from January 2019 onwards is being discussed in this meeting more generally, but the discussion is not expected to go into details about the activity of different groups. COM will raise the specific issue of the ATG on Water Reuse in the next Water Directors meeting.

KS concluded the discussions and commended the COM for the increased use of written reports as opposed to presentations for the updates. He also thanked the WG leads for their hard work.

## **4 – Legal/Implementation issues and other activities**

### **(a) Update on RBMP/FRMPs adoption and reporting: State of Play of RBMPs/FRMPs; European waters – assessment of status and pressures 2018 report (EEA)**

Lourdes Alvarellos (LA) (COM) provided an update on the adoption and reporting for the RBMPs and FRMPs. Most Member States have adopted their Plans, with only a few

exceptions. Some countries are yet to complete electronic reporting and will therefore not be included in the current assessment.

The COM is currently finalising the assessment of the RBMPs and FRMPs. The Commission's formal report on implementation of the Directives will be accompanied by Staff Working Documents containing EU overviews for the WFD and associated Directives and for the Floods Directive, as well as two sets of Member State reports.

Preliminary drafts of MS reports are currently being sent to the concerned MS for a factual check. About a third of MS reports have been sent to date. Some responses were already received and the comments will be incorporated in the final drafts. The aim is to publish all reports in the summer, hence three weeks have been allowed for comments from MS on the draft reports.

LV mentioned having problems with summary reports on RBMPs. There are significant mistakes and data appearing in the MS report are not the same as what was reported in WISE. There are significant concerns about using this data to inform conclusions for LV.

LV highlighted the need to work out a solution that allows for correct and consistent information to be used for the COM report. This statement was supported by several other MS, who stressed the difficulty of doing an adequate check in only 3 weeks.

BD - COM understand fully that coordinating a quick check of the facts in three weeks is a challenge. The reports are being shared in a spirit of cooperation, as an informal process, as there is no obligation to consult MS on a COM report.

Information in the reports comes mainly from dashboards which have been available for some time to Member States, together with the assessment questions, so the overall time allowed for checks is substantially more than three weeks.

Unfortunately the 3-week deadline cannot be extended due to the short deadlines for the whole process. Where there are major issues, these will be addressed bi-laterally, but MS are encouraged to stick to the deadlines as much as possible.

JC – As the creation of the dashboards from the EU database is an automatic process, it is important to identify where errors are due to incorrect reporting by MS or to errors in the creation of the dashboards. The latter need to be addressed so that the dashboards present an accurate picture of the reported data. Where errors are due to incorrect reporting, the COM will take corrections into account, but will not have the time to re-do the assessments.

CZ asked how many countries will be covered by the COM report this summer.

LA replied that all MS except LT, IE and EL will be covered, as the electronic reporting was not available. ES and UK will be covered, but Canary Islands (ES) and Gibraltar (UK) will not be included for the same reason.

SE stated that given the short timescale, it would be helpful to know when the draft reports will be available for review, so that resources can be allocated.

LA replied that most draft reports should be sent by next week and the remaining within the next 10 working days.

ES thanked the COM for work but expressed concern that the COM reports will be based on the electronic reporting and not necessarily on the contents of the RBMPs.

BD clarified that the reporting guidance was agreed with MS when the Plans were being prepared and that the COM had repeatedly informed MS that its assessment would be mainly based on the electronic reporting, using the reported Plans and background documents where necessary to clarify issues for which the electronic reporting does not provide sufficient information.

FR said that requests for clarification are detailed and asked whether COM expected detailed or general answers.

BD replied that the more concise and precise the answers the better.

FI expressed concerns that the draft reports were available only in English and asked whether the MS comments also had to be in English.

BD clarified that all documents are sent in English as working documents. Responses need to be in English. Translation will occur once the reports are finalised.

### **European waters – assessment of status and pressures**

#### **Presented by Caroline Whalley (EEA) and Stéphane Isoard (EEA)**

The European Environment Agency (EEA) presented an update of the assessment of the European waters based on MS reporting of status and pressures in the RBMPs. This report presents a European overview. More detailed results are presented in an interactive tool in WISE-Freshwater. Data from the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> RBMP cycles are stored in a EU-level WISE database. From this, interactive maps, graphs and tables can be produced and were demonstrated.

A lot of discussion and feedback has been received from the different CIS WGs. A formal consultation was also carried out through the Eionet network. Over 600 comments were received and processed. The outputs are being finalised and are due for launch on 3<sup>rd</sup> July.

NL and FR complimented the EEA on how the data was compiled and presented, noting that it addressed a lot of previously unanswered questions.

EEA thanked all for positive feedback from the WGs and is happy to hear feedback of issues being addressed.

DK raised an issue with the way in which data is aggregated, leading, for example, to total areas for water bodies larger than the country itself.

The EEA mentioned that a bilateral meeting with DK is planned to discuss this issue and that it will be happy to have bilateral dialogues with others as necessary.

## **(b) Study on an Integrated Assessment of RBMPs (2<sup>nd</sup> cycle)**

Pierre Strosser (ACTeon) presented the study that is being done for the COM, which assesses whether, and how, the key management principles embedded into the WFD, have been made operational – thus contributing to the achievement of its objectives and the delivery of benefits to society. The study focuses in particular on how key principles have been embedded through the Driver-Pressure-State-Impact-Response (DPSIR) framework. It uses the concept of storylines to describe the DPSIR, with a focus on four main pressures and at both MS and EU levels.

The study commenced in September 2017. A short consultation was carried out with the SCG, the feedback has helped identify key areas of interest. 25 responses were received. The added value of DPSIR was highlighted as the fact that the framework encourages a systemic approach, allowing coherence, comparability and understanding links. Limitations include challenges in applying it to multiple pressure environments. The study is currently ongoing and two stakeholder workshops are being planned in October/November.

NL presented its experience with the DPSIR framework. There are many uncertainties on separate parts of the framework and correlations are complex. In NL, the practice is to relate the measures directly to the pressures. The cyclic approach of monitoring and use of experts helps with the assessment. DPSIR is very helpful if used qualitatively e.g. as a story telling tool. DPSIR is not seen as realistic for WISE reporting.

DE agreed with NL that in rivers, multi-faceted responses are also seen in DE, however, it may be possible to use DPSIR for groundwater as pressures and measures are simpler. DE stated that if there is agreement with NL's conclusion that DPSIR is not a realistic basis for WISE reporting, this needs to be discussed before November and the reporting guidelines will need to be amended.

BE agreed with DE and asked what is the aim of this study.

LA replied that the requirement came from the first assessment of the RBMPs. It was realised that the different compliance aspects were being assessed separately and the links inherent in the DPSIR were not being picked up. The study was planned to help with this aspect, to support WFD implementation and the Fitness Check of water legislation. It is not about identifying what is right or wrong, but to provide examples of why making the links is important for implementation. The DPSIR process should be seen as an integral part of implementation of the WFD, not as a separate task. It should help with linking the pressures and drivers to the priorities, financing and measures, enabling better communication of why priorities and measures have been developed.

FR stated that it is important that we understand how DPSIR can be used to construct social policies. DPSIR works well on paper and when scientific information is available, but how do we transform this into arguments that are understood by policy makers?

NL agreed that method is more applicable for groundwater than for surface water and can be useful to structure and present information, but not for analyses and conclusions.

### **(c) Developments on Water and Agriculture**

Gerard Shortle (GS) (COM) presented an update on the ongoing work in the areas covered by the Staff Working Document published in 2017.

On policy, CAP review and revision is now at an advanced stage. The objective is to modernise the CAP and support its transition towards more sustainable agriculture and vibrant rural areas. The new delivery model emphasises flexibility, simplicity and result orientation. Each MS will develop its own CAP Strategic Plan to better target environmental actions to suit their local conditions. The indicators will be more closely aligned with results, allowing payments to be better linked to results. Three regionally and thematically focussed workshops will be delivered in winter 2018/19 to assess suitable interventions to address agriculture-related pressures on water status.

The level of investment needs for environmental management and funding in the agricultural sector is being gauged using interviews with a sample of MS. The selected MS will be contacted in the coming weeks. Development of a knowledge hub is being led by the JRC. The hub will act as a central point for the collection, sharing and dissemination of data across MS, policy makers and regulators. A workshop on this is planned for later in the year.

DK expressed interest in being included in the sample of MS. Welcomes the review of cross compliance, but feel it is not an effective tool for achieving environmental ambitions or WFD objective of good status as it hinders efficient use of CAP funding beyond payments.

BD replied that COM takes note of DK's offer to be part of the interviews.

FR asked what were the expectations from the three workshops. FR did not respond to the questionnaire due to time pressures and because this was not considered as a priority, in particular because the EIB loans do not fit with the FR system of subsidies. Finally, FR asked how DG ENV is working with DG AGRI on the reform of the CAP.

GS replied that the workshops are a joint effort between DG AGRI and DG ENV to gauge water quality and quantity issues in agriculture.

BD further clarified that DG AGRI and DG ENV worked together to produce the background note and are working together on the proposal for a new CAP. The outcome of the work on investment needs is to provide a general overview of financing needs in the area. The EIB is one of the sources of funding, but there are other funding sources as well and the outcome will not just be used for financing by EIB.

IT asked whether the Knowledge hub is expected to bring together data requested from MS, which would be centralised and then shared, and whether it is already operational.

GS replied that the hub is still under development. It is intended to make existing information available to decision makers.

BD clarified that the Knowledge hub is not a new reporting requirement. It is a service tool that brings together existing information and presents it together in a more user-friendly format.

EUWMA highlighted the importance of coordination of water and agriculture initiatives within the COM and with MS. The CAP reform can help achieve WFD goals. Ministries delivering the WFD should be involved with DG AGRI in the development of national plans.

#### **(d) WFD/FD Peer to Peer process**

Yannick Pochon (INBO) provided an update on the status of implementation of the peer to peer process under a contract from the COM. The process was set up to enable mutual learning for practitioners from River Basin Districts involved in the implementation of the WFD and FD.

The process involves matchmaking peer experts to competent authorities. The 1<sup>st</sup> call for expressions of interest was launched in March 2018. 10 expressions of interest to receive visits by experts were received from 8 MS, as well as 33 from potential visiting experts from 13 MS. Development of detailed ToRs for individual visits and match-making is ongoing. The first missions are planned to commence in Spring/Summer. Future webinars and workshops are also being planned for wider participation.

The SCG was asked to note that expressions of interest by competent authorities or experts can still be submitted. Up to 18 peer to peer exercises can be organised.

BD added that, as presented in a previous SCG meeting, a similar peer-to-peer exercise has been set up within the Environmental Implementation Review process.

#### **(e) Update on Commission initiatives –**

##### **- Water Reuse**

BD mentioned that a COM proposal for a Regulation on minimum standards for Water Reuse for agricultural irrigation is being finalised and is expected to be adopted soon by the College.

Italy supports the risk evaluation approach in the draft Regulation, but is concerned that it relies on guidance to be provided at a later stage

##### **- Strategic Approach to Pharmaceuticals**

Helen Clayton (HC) (COM) reminded participants that this topic was discussed in the last SCG meeting, when potential policy options in 10 areas were presented. Public consultation closed in February and the report of the consultation is being finalised. The 10 areas have now been narrowed down to six, which will be the basic structure for the strategic approach.

## - Watch List

HC informed the participants that the Art. 21 Committee met on 17<sup>th</sup> April to vote on the COM proposal for a revised Watch List. The Committee voted unanimously in favour of the proposal and the formal process of adoption is ongoing.

Several substances were removed from the Watch List and three substances were added. Work is also starting on the next update, which is needed to remove the substances which by next year will have reached the maximum of 4 continuous years in the Watch List. Substances are also being considered for addition to the list in 2019, and suggestions from MS or stakeholders are welcome.

### **(f) Update on the Fitness Check of Water Legislation, and the evaluation of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive (UWWTD)**

LA presented the update. The assessment of the 2<sup>nd</sup> RBMPs and 1<sup>st</sup> FRMPs are important building blocks for the Fitness Check. The Fitness Check started in November and will continue until mid 2019. A Fitness Check is defined under the better regulation nomenclature. It is based on the five assessment criteria of efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, coherence and EU added value. All evaluation questions will be focussed on these five criteria. The development will follow a structured evaluation process including public consultation. There will be an open consultation for three months, possibly after the summer, as well as a targeted consultation for the main stakeholders, which will involve the SCG. Many recent and ongoing projects, as well as the outcomes of the Vienna Conference, will feed into the Fitness Check.

The evaluation of the UWWTD is not a Fitness Check as it focuses on one single legal instrument rather than several. It uses the same five criteria. The evaluation started earlier than the Fitness Check but both studies will proceed in parallel, with common activities including consultations/workshops.

EEB asked how the COM plans to engage with the CIS WGs and SCG and what the timeline will be.

LA replied that the public consultation is likely to be after the summer. For the targeted consultation, the CIS is the main target. This will primarily be through the SCG, but WGs will be addressed for specific technical issues.

Wetlands International asked whether the targeted consultation will take place before or after the public one.

LA replied that the two consultations are likely to be around the same period, but they are not linked.

DK expressed interest in participating in the UWWTD expert workshops this autumn, and suggested that the use of resources (phosphorus and energy) and wastewater be included as a topic in the workshop and the evaluation in general.

WWF asked about the consultation group mentioned in the draft agenda for the Water Directors meeting and what their role is in the Fitness Check.

KS replied that an answer to this question would be provided under point 6a of the agenda.

LU asked whether the planned workshops, even if they are not CIS events, could be added to the CIS calendar available in CIRCABC.

BD replied that a comprehensive calendar is a good idea, but a big challenge. COM will continue to send information as soon as possible and try to list all events it knows about in the CIS calendar.

## **5 – Preliminary discussion on the 2019-2021 CIS Work Programme**

KS introduced the discussion, which should be based, for a question of efficiency, on the three groups of questions in the COM discussion document, even if it is understood that the questions asked there are not necessarily exclusive.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE CIS**

*Q1. The current objectives of the CIS are broad and allow the CIS to work on both long and short-term tasks. Do you agree that these objectives should be maintained also for the next period?*

*Q2. Do you agree that the focus of the next CIS Work Programme should continue to move from the development of guidance to the exchange of good practices?*

The overwhelming response to both questions was yes.

Some points highlighted for consideration are summarised below:

1. Some guidance is still needed, but any new guidance or updates should only be done if useful for the 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle of implementation, due to capacity issues.
2. Work programme should be flexible to react to changing priorities.

### **DURATION OF THE NEXT CIS WORK PROGRAMME**

*Q3. Given the current state of implementation of the WFD, associated Directives and Floods Directive, do you believe that three years is still the ideal duration of the next Work Programme? Would it make sense to bring the CIS Work Programme cycle in line with the cycle of implementation of the Directives, making the next Work Programme a 6-year programme? The Work Programme would start with the conclusions of the assessment of the 2<sup>nd</sup> RBMPs and 1<sup>st</sup> FRMPs and end with the conclusions of the assessment of the 3<sup>rd</sup> RBMPs and 2<sup>nd</sup> FRMPs.*

*Q4. The conclusion, in 2019, of the evaluation of the WFD and associated Directives and of the Floods Directive, may lead to the need to adjustment in these general objectives or in the details of the Work Programme. Similarly, if it is decided to have a longer duration for the*

*next Work Programme, adjustments may be needed during its implementation. Do you agree that the Work Programme to be adopted in November 2018 will need to be reviewed and, if necessary, modified regularly?*

*Q5. If regular reviews of the Work Programme, do you agree that these would be led by the individual Working Groups and Ad-hoc Task Groups and validated by the SCG and Water Directors?*

The overwhelming response was to retain the 3-year cycle of programmes. The reasons cited for keeping the 3-year cycle include maintaining flexibility to adapt to arising issues and to fit the three different steps of the FD.

Some delegates were happy with a potential change to 6 years in the future, but not for the next cycle, if some form of robust interim reviews occur.

There was general agreement that the work Programme that is adopted in November 2018 will need to be reviewed regularly and modified as necessary.

There was no objection to reviews by individual WGs and ATGs, however there was a plea that the SCG should have the opportunity to discuss, and not just to confirm the outcomes.

## **WORKING SETUP OF THE CIS**

*Q6. We currently have "permanent" Working Groups on Chemical, Data and Information Sharing, Ecological Status, Floods and Groundwater. Do you agree that these Working Groups should be kept in the next CIS Working Programme?*

*Q7. Three Ad-hoc Task Groups (ATGs) were established under the 2016-2018 CIS Work Programme, on Art. 4(7), Hydromorphology and Water Reuse. The ATG on Art. 4(7) delivered the guidance for which it was created. The work of the ATG on Hydromorphology has been run in close coordination with the work of the Working Group on Ecological Status. The TG on Water Reuse participated in the process that led to the upcoming Commission Proposal for a Regulation, but once this Regulation is adopted it is likely to lead to the need for new guidance documents, namely on risk assessment. Do you agree that the work of the ATG on Art. 4(7) can be considered as concluded, that the mandate of the ATG on Hydromorphology is integrated in the mandate of the WG on Ecological Status and that an extended mandate is given to the ATG on Water Reuse in the next Work Programme?*

*Q8. The work on water and agriculture has been done, over the current Work Programme, outside the framework of the CIS, to involve the agriculture authorities and stakeholders, in addition to DG AGRI. Do you think that this is still the best way to reach progress on the links between water and agriculture?*

*Q9. Are there other topics for which you believe a Working Group or Ad-hoc Task Group would be necessary in the next Work Programme?*

There was general agreement that the current WGs should be retained in the next programme.

There was general agreement that the work of the ATG on Art. 4(7) is concluded.

There was general agreement that an extended mandate should be given to the ATG on Water Reuse in the next Work Programme. Opinions were divided on whether this should continue as an ATG or become a permanent WG.

There was general agreement that the mandate of the ATG on Hydromorphology should be integrated into the mandate of the WG on Ecological Status. It was highlighted that this would require a broadening of ECOSTAT membership to include more geomorphologists.

There was general agreement that the work on water and agriculture is an important area that needs continued work. The challenges of water and agriculture were described as both technical and political. Alignment of policies of the Environment and Agriculture DGs in this area is needed.

It was suggested that the Environment and Agriculture DGs jointly develop a working group on water and agriculture in some setting that they both agree on, as the topic goes beyond the remit of the CIS.

There was a suggestion to be comprehensive in drawing up a list of tasks but allocating short, medium and long-term goals in priority order.

Several ideas for concrete tasks were put on the table, even if that was not the purpose of this initial discussion. These ideas, which will need to be discussed when a draft Work Programme is submitted to the SCG for discussion, included items like classification and evaluation systems for temporary rivers, use of DNA sampling for evaluation of water quality, etc.

Communication within the CIS set-up was commended in terms of its transparency and collaborative approach. The importance of this continuing was highlighted.

There was strong support for a new WG to be formed to focus on financing of measures and broader economics of the water Directives. This group could also build on work from the previous WG Economics such as work on water pricing and monetisation of costs and benefits of WFD, including integrating principles such as ecosystems services.

Communicating and demonstrating the impact of WFD implementation to MS and the public was also identified as a topic that requires attention. Future support for funding of the WFD programmes by MS will rely on the success of this communication.

Pharmaceuticals and microplastics were identified as an area for increased focus. This would require increased links between the work of WG Chemicals and WG ECOSTAT as they are interested in various aspects of it. Important coordination will also be needed with the implementation of the MSFD, as work is ongoing on the movement of microplastics via rivers and transitional water bodies to the sea.

Climate change was identified as an area in which there is an increasing need for further guidance. There is commonality between what needs to be delivered for climate change and WFD so there is opportunity for joint benefit delivery.

For topics with strong cross cutting interest, such as microplastics, climate change and sediments, there was a plea to look properly into how these are going to work.

Other links with other Directives which need to be addressed include the nature Directives, Drinking Water Directive and Nitrates Directive.

In particular, it was suggested that when working on financial challenges, a group could review which other Directives include commitments to deliver similar objectives and seek opportunities to co-deliver.

New guidance was identified as needed for biota monitoring and water reuse.

It was agreed that additional written comments could be sent to the COM by 24<sup>th</sup> May, to be considered for the preparation of a draft Work Programme and already in the preparation of a discussion document for the Water Directors meeting in Sofia.

In his concluding remarks, KS mentioned that, regarding water and agriculture, it is important that it is dealt with, but the work needs an appropriate home. The CIS might not be the only or even the best home.

## **6 - Water and Marine Directors' meeting preparation**

### **a) Water and Marine Directors' meeting (Sofia, 11-12 June 2018)**

Mariya Babukchieva (BG) presented the details of the forthcoming meeting.

BG requested MS to express interest, by e-mail, in presenting examples of good practices in delivering the objectives of the WFD by 22<sup>nd</sup> May.

KS asked Jean Paul Lickes (LU) to respond to the earlier query (within Item 4f) regarding the consultation group reporting to the Water Director's meeting.

The consultation group was formed following a request by Water Directors in the Tallin meeting. There have been two meetings to date, with 12 MS participating. The COM has been invited to participate as an observer. The aim is to produce a document, which MS could identify with, that gives recommendations for the Fitness Check. The document is being produced for the Water Directors as the request for this work came from them. This does not mean a desire to restrict the information flow. In the first progress report, for the Sofia meeting, the purpose, background and objectives of the paper will be presented and initial ideas of what options could be beyond 2027. There is a clear consensus that there should be no lowering of the ambition level. The group also agrees that the communication of the success stories of the WFD up to now is essential. There are also overarching subjects which will be addressed including cost recovery, chemicals, integration of other relevant Water Directives, how to deal with Art. 4(7) and climate change. The group's purpose is to bring

together a group of MS confronted with the challenges of implementing WFD to look for better ways to implement it.

KS asked what would be the process after the Sofia meeting.

LU replied that after the Sofia meeting, there will be another meeting of the consultation group around October, to collect more information after receipt of feedback from WD in Sofia, and then a report will be finalised. It is currently unclear if this will be first presented at the SCG - will check and get back to the SCG.

BD – Thanked LU for the update and confirmed that COM participated as observer in the second meeting. COM hopes all MS involved in the group will participate in the Fitness Check process.

WWF, EEB and NTG expressed concerns that the consultation group is dealing with issues of implementation of the WFD, which is the purpose of the CIS. The fact that documents are being submitted to Water Directors without having been discussed in the SCG deviates from the CIS established practices and is not a transparent process. WWF also asked who are the MS who participate in the consultation group.

KS replied that membership was open to all MS so there is no relevance in knowing which ones actively participated. The objections raised on the process and the deviation from the traditional working methods of the CIS will be brought to the attention of Water Directors in the meeting in Sofia.

#### **b) Water and Marine Directors' meeting (Vienna, 29-30 November 2018)**

KS explained that the Water Directors' meeting will be on the morning of the 29<sup>th</sup>, a joint meeting of the Water and Marine Directors on the afternoon of the 29<sup>th</sup> and the Marine Directors' meeting on the morning of the 30<sup>th</sup>.

The agenda will be dominated by the CIS work programme and the follow up of the European Water Conference. More detail will be provided at the next SCG meeting. COM will ensure invitations are sent out early. Please register as soon as possible.

### **7 – Other issues/AOB**

#### **a) European Water Conference (Vienna, 20-21 September 2018)**

Robert Fenz (AT) mentioned that the conference is jointly organised by the COM and AT's EU Presidency. It will concentrate on progress in implementing the WFD and on the Fitness Check. The location is in the centre of Vienna. About 400 participants are expected, 200 already registered. It is for those directly concerned with the implementation of the Directives, such as MS and stakeholders.

BD clarified that the conference is confined to one conference room, therefore no parallel or side sessions can be organised. The focus will be on topics of relevance to implementation

and the Fitness Check and the number of speakers will be limited to enable ample time for discussions.

### **b) European Symposium on Eutrophication (Paris, 27-28 June 2018)**

Jean Marie Quémener (FR) presented the details of the symposium. FR has carried out a large programme of work in this area and has faced significant challenges in resolving issues of eutrophication and identifying and agreeing thresholds for reducing nutrients. FR has therefore launched a stock-take of science on eutrophication to support public policy on the subject.

This conference will share the outcome of this initiative with other MS. There will be exchanges in small groups, a brainstorming session on what could be done for effective policies and a roundtable looking at environmental goals for ecosystems and strategies for mitigating eutrophication. The meeting will take place in the Ministry for the Environment. COM will distribute the registration form and the deadline for registration is 14<sup>th</sup> June.

### **c) Next SCG meeting: 8-9 November 2018**

BD stated that the next SCG meeting could be a 1 or 2-day meeting, depending on what will need to be discussed by then. The dates will be 8<sup>th</sup> and/or 9<sup>th</sup> November.

## **8 - Key actions and conclusions**

The key actions/conclusions agreed at the meeting included the following:

<b>Nr</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Action/conclusion</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
<b>3a</b>	<b>WG Chemicals - Revised Technical Guidance Document for deriving EQS</b>	<b>Document to be forwarded for Water Directors' endorsement with a comment on the issue of health limits vs. toxicological limits</b>	<b>10 days before the WDs meeting</b>
<b>3b</b>	<b>WG DIS - Reporting Guidance on implementation of PoM</b>	<b>Reporting Guidance to be forwarded to the Water Directors for acknowledgement. COM to draft a short supporting paragraph explaining why it is important to report on costs of measures</b>	<b>10 days before the WDs meeting</b>
<b>3b</b>	<b>WG DIS - Reporting Guidance on new substances in the EQS Directive</b>	<b>4 Reporting Guidance to be forwarded to the Water Directors for acknowledgement</b>	<b>10 days before the WDs meeting</b>
<b>4d</b>	<b>WFD/FD Peer to Peer process</b>	<b>Interested MS and experts to send Expressions of Interest.</b>	<b>As soon as possible</b>

<b>5</b>	<b>Preliminary discussion on the 2019-2021 CIS Work Programme</b>	<b>Feedback on objectives, duration and working set-up noted. Further comments can be provided</b>	<b>24th May</b>
<b>7a</b>	<b>European Water Conference (Vienna, 20-21 September)</b>	<b>Interested members invited to register for the conference</b>	<b>As soon as possible</b>
<b>7b</b>	<b>European Symposium on Eutrophication (Paris, 27-28 June)</b>	<b>Interested members to sign up at link provided with the workshop paper.</b>	<b>13th June</b>

## Annex 1: List of participants

<b>MEMBER STATES</b>	<b>PARTICIPANTS</b>
<b>Austria</b>	Egon Bäumel Robert Fenz Karl Schwaiger (SCG Co-Chair)
<b>Belgium</b>	Elizabeth Chouters Veronique Van Den Langenbergh
<b>Bulgaria</b>	Mariya Babukchieva
<b>Croatia</b>	Vladimir Šimić
<b>Cyprus</b>	Maria Philippou
<b>Czech Republic</b>	Ladislav Faigl
<b>Denmark</b>	Ditte Andreasen Merete Jeppesen
<b>Estonia</b>	Mariina Hiiob
<b>Finland</b>	Juhani Gustafsson
<b>France</b>	Fanny Bontemps Jean-Marie Quemener
<b>Germany</b>	Meike Gierk * Michael Trepel
<b>Greece</b>	Nikolaos Mantzaris
<b>Hungary</b>	Gabriella Jelinek
<b>Ireland</b>	Donal Grant
<b>Italy</b>	Lucia Fiumi Monica Roviezzo
<b>Latvia</b>	Iveta Teibe
<b>Luxembourg</b>	Jean-Paul Lickes Anne-Marie Reckinger
<b>Malta</b>	Michael Schembri
<b>Poland</b>	Małgorzata Bogucka-Szymalska Przemysław Gruszecki
<b>Portugal</b>	Maria Quadrado *
<b>Romania</b>	Gheorghe Constantin
<b>Slovak Republic</b>	Zdenka Kelnarova
<b>Slovenia</b>	Janez Dodič
<b>Spain</b>	Iñaki Arrate Victor Manuel Arqued Esquia
<b>Sweden</b>	Anneli Harlén Barbro Naslund Landenmark
<b>The Netherlands</b>	Gerrit Niebeek Diederik van der Molen
<b>UK</b>	Dave Martin Rhonda Scobie-Crago

<b><u>STAKEHOLDERS</u></b>	<b><u>PARTICIPANTS</u></b>
<b>CEFIC – European Chemical Industry Council</b>	Steven Van de Broeck
<b>CONCAWE – CONservation of Clean Air and Water in Europe</b>	Markus Hjort
<b>EAA – European Anglers Alliance</b>	Mark Owen
<b>ECPA – European Crop Protection Association</b>	Stuart Rutherford
<b>EEB – European Environmental Bureau</b>	Sergiy Moroz
<b>EREF – European Renewable Energies Federation</b>	Amélie Girard
<b>EURAQUA</b>	Antonio Lo Porto
<b>EURELECTRIC – Union of the Electricity Industry</b>	Hélène Lavray
<b>Eurometaux – European Association of Metals</b>	Sofia Andriani Ntokou
<b>EUWMA – European Union of Water Management Associations</b>	Dieter Staat
<b>EWA – European Water Association</b>	Andrea Barbieri
<b>INBO – International Network of Basin Organisations</b>	Yannick Pochon
<b>NTG – Navigation Task Group</b>	Jan Brooke
<b>UEPG – European Aggregates Association</b>	Alev Somer
<b>Wetlands International</b>	Eef Silver
<b>WWF – The World Wide Fund For Nature</b>	Martina Mlinaric

<b><u>EFTA COUNTRIES</u></b>	<b><u>PARTICIPANTS</u></b>
<b>Iceland</b>	Aðalbjorg Birna Guttormsdóttir
<b>Norway</b>	Anders Iversen *

<b><u>CANDIDATE COUNTRIES</u></b>	<b><u>PARTICIPANTS</u></b>
<b>Turkey</b>	Burhan Fuat Çankaya

<b><u>EUROPEAN COMMISSION</u></b>	<b><u>PARTICIPANTS</u></b>
<b>Directorate-General for the Environment (DG ENV) Unit C1 – Clean Water</b>	Varvara Aleksic Lourdes Alvarellos Joaquim Capitão Helen Clayton Bettina Doeser (Head of Unit ENV.C1 and SCG Co-Chair) Helen Jolly (Meeting Secretary) Raimund Mair Stéphanie Schaan Gerard Shortle Hans Stielstra (Deputy Head of Unit ENV.C1) Vasileios Tyriakidis Giovanni Vallera Elisa Vargas Amelin
<b>Joint Research Centre (JRC)</b>	Sandra Poikane

<b><u>EEA</u></b>	<b><u>PARTICIPANTS</u></b>
<b>European Environment Agency (EEA)</b>	Stéphane Isoard * Caroline Whalley *

<b><u>OTHERS</u></b>	<b><u>PARTICIPANTS</u></b>
<b>Royal Haskoning DHV</b>	Fola Ogunyoye (Consultant for DG ENV)
<b>WG Groundwater</b>	Johannes Grath

\* Via video link

\*\* Via audio call

## Annex 2: Agenda



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**  
 DIRECTORATE-GENERAL  
 ENVIRONMENT  
 Directorate C - Quality of Life  
**ENV.C.1 – Clean Water**



Brussels, 15 May 2018  
**ENV-SCG 17052018**

**MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC CO-ORDINATION GROUP  
 FOR THE WFD COMMON IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY**

**17 MAY 2018 FROM 10:00 TO 18:00**

**CENTRE ALBERT BORSCHETTE, ROOM 1D, BRUSSELS**

### REVISED DRAFT AGENDA VERSION 4

1 – Welcome and introduction	Co-Chairs
2 – Approvals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Agenda</li> <li>– Minutes of the SCG meeting of 8 February 2018</li> <li>– Updated SCG Rules of Procedure</li> </ul>	COM
3 – Activities of the Working Groups and Ad-hoc Task Groups ( <i>written information has been provided for all the Working Groups and Ad-hoc Task Groups</i> ) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliverables foreseen for endorsement/acknowledgement by Water Directors:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) WG Chemicals                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Revised Technical Guidance Document for deriving Environmental Quality Standards (TGD EQS) <i>[foreseen for endorsement by Water Directors]</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>b) WG DIS                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Reporting Guidance on implementation of Programmes of Measures <i>[foreseen for acknowledgement by Water Directors]</i></li> <li>– Reporting Guidance on the new substances in the 2013 EQS Directive <i>[foreseen for acknowledgement by Water Directors]</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Information point:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c) ATG on Hydromorphology                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Information on ongoing work on GEP, and recent workshop on</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	WG/ATG Leads

<p>'Significant adverse effect on use'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Written information only:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>d) <i>WG Ecostat</i></li> <li>e) <i>WG Floods</i></li> <li>f) <i>WG Groundwater</i></li> <li>g) <i>ATG on Water Reuse</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<p>4 – Legal/Implementation issues and other activities (<i>written information has been provided on Legal/Implementation issues</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Update on RBMP/FRMPs adoption and reporting: State of Play of RBMPs/FRMPs; European waters – assessment of status and pressures 2018 report (EEA)</li> <li>b) Study on an Integrated Assessment of RBMPs</li> <li>c) Developments on Water and Agriculture</li> <li>d) WFD/FD Peer to Peer process</li> <li>e) Update on Commission initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Water Reuse</li> <li>– Strategic Approach to Pharmaceuticals</li> <li>– Watch List</li> </ul> </li> <li>f) Update on the Fitness Check of Water Legislation, and the evaluation of the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive</li> </ul>	<p>COM/EEA</p> <p>Consultant/COM</p> <p>COM</p> <p>Consultant/COM</p> <p>COM</p> <p>COM</p>
<p>5 – Preliminary discussion on the 2019-2021 CIS Work Programme</p>	<p>WG/ATG Leads</p>
<p>6 – Water and Marine Directors' meeting preparation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Water and Marine Directors' meeting (Sofia, 11-12 June 2018)</li> <li>b) Water and Marine Directors' meeting (Vienna, 29-30 November 2018)</li> </ul>	<p>BG/AT</p>
<p>7 – Other issues/AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) European Water Conference (Vienna, 20-21 September 2018)</li> <li>b) European Symposium on Eutrophication (Paris, 27-28 June 2018)</li> <li>c) Next SCG meeting: 8-9 November 2018</li> </ul>	<p>Co-Chairs</p> <p>FR</p> <p>COM</p>