



## MINUTES OF THE 68<sup>th</sup> BUREAU MEETING

Athens, 2 February 2016

Adopted by the Bureau at its meeting on 22 June 2016

*SIGNED*

Elisabeth Freytag-Rigler  
Chair, EEA Management Board

## RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

The Chair, Elisabeth Freytag-Rigler, opened the meeting by welcoming the Bureau members and guests, and presenting apologies on behalf of those unable to attend.

Final agenda:	Annex 1
Attendance list:	Annex 2
Action list:	Annex 3
Decision list:	Annex 4

## ITEMS 1-2 FOR DECISION

### Item 1 Adoption of draft agenda

The Bureau adopted the agenda (Doc. EEA/BU/68/01) without changes, noting that the update by the Chair of the Scientific Committee (agenda item 5) would be presented by the Executive Director.

### Item 2 Adoption of the 67<sup>th</sup> Bureau minutes, 6 October 2015

The minutes (Doc. EEA/BU/67/02) were adopted without changes and have been made available on the Forum.

## ITEMS 3-5 FOR INFORMATION

### Item 3 Draft minutes 74<sup>rd</sup> Management Board, 26 November 2015

The Bureau took note of the draft minutes of the 74<sup>rd</sup> Management Board held on 26 November 2015 (Doc. EEA/BU/68/03).

### Item 4 Update by the Chair (oral)

The Chair reported on the following matters:

- Financing decisions for ETC funding in 2016 and the 2016 Procurement Plan have been adopted in written procedure since the Board meeting in November;
- Only one candidate (Julia Werner, Germany) has come forward for the vacant place as Vice-Chair/Bureau member. The election will take place at the Management Board meeting in March.
- Karl Falkenberg, Senior Advisor for Sustainable Development in the European Political Strategy Centre of the European Commission, has agreed to come to the March Management Board meeting to talk about work on SDGs (as discussed in Vienna). Preparation of this part of the Board agenda was further discussed up under item 16 of this agenda.

### Item 5 Update by the Scientific Committee Chair (oral)

The Bureau welcomed the [presentation](#) provided by the Chair of the Scientific Committee, and given by the Executive Director.

In response to a question, the Executive Director clarified that Board members are also welcome to attend EEA/Scientific Committee seminars.

In response to a further question concerning the relationship between the Scientific Committee and the EEAcademy, the Executive Director clarified that the Scientific Committee and its members can make valuable contributions to the EEAcademy, but that the aim of the EEAcademy is the broader co-creation of knowledge, while the Scientific Committee has its mandated tasks in accordance with the provisions of the EEA/Eionet regulation.

### Item 6 Update by the Executive Director

Taking document EEA/BU/68/06 as read, the Executive Director gave a presentation (hyperlink to be added) with an overview of the highlights since the last meeting. In particular, he mentioned difficulties at times in balancing between being relevant to, while at the same time independent of, the policy debate in Europe. He highlighted the continued efforts on the SOER 2015 outreach, including the presentation in Athens the following day, the positive developments under the Environmental Knowledge Community (EKC) umbrella, and the importance of countries getting involved in Copernicus.

The update was welcomed, the Bureau expressing great satisfaction with the overall style and content.

The possible role of the EEA in the Energy Union and the circular economy was raised. As regards the Energy Union, Artur Runge-Metzger, DG Climate Action, informed the Bureau that discussions between the different players in the Commission and with the Member States were on-going and it could take some time to reach an agreement. An explicit role for the EEA could certainly be envisaged, and the evaluation of the EEA/Eionet Regulation could be very timely in this regard. Michael Scoullou, European Parliament designate, pointed out that the European

Parliament also had an important role to play, and encouraged contacts with the Committee for Environment, Public Health and Food Safety.

Concerning the circular economy, the Executive Director pointed out that the future role of the EEA was already relatively clear. Close collaboration with Eurostat would be important.

Vanja Grigorova, Vice-Chair/Bulgaria and Kari Holden, Norway, both reported on the positive outcomes of the SOER launches in their countries, with increased awareness of and interest in the work of the EEA in general.

Referring to the Executive Director's remarks, Astrid Schomaker, DG Environment, confirmed the positive development under EKC between the information providers and users, and welcomed the improved coordination of European Topic Centres.

In response to further comments and questions from Bureau members, the Executive Director:

- confirmed that the EEA was engaging actively in the upcoming Environment and Health ministerial meeting;
- clarified that there would be a broad consultation with countries and others on the upcoming Arctic report;
- agreed that future work on sustainable cities should have a broader scope, and informed the Bureau that in order to achieve this, a staff member had been appointed to coordinate work on urban issues across the EEA.
- informed that recruitment of Seconded National Experts would be clarified in the following few weeks

## **Item 7 Update DG Environment: amendment EEA Regulation**

Astrid Schomaker, DG Environment, reported that the process setting up the evaluation of the EEA/Eionet Regulation under the Better Regulation agenda was going to plan, and that the call for tenders to carry out the evaluation was likely to be published before the summer. Kick off would be towards the end of the year, with finalisation late 2017/early 2018. The first stage would be a public consultation.

## **ITEMS 8-11 STRATEGIC ORIENTATION**

### **FOR DECISION**

#### **Item 8 Adoption PD 2017-2019**

In presenting the proposal for the draft Programming Document 2017-2019, the Executive Director highlighted the major challenges the EEA is facing in trying to meet growing demands with diminishing resources. He was discussing the issue with high-level Commission officials, and as indicated in the programming document would also bring it to the Board later in the year.

Michael Scoullou, European Parliament designate, strongly supported by Maria Peppas, Vice-Chair/Greece, urged the EEA to consider addressing the environmental impacts of migration into the EU. The Executive Director responded that he had directed a question to the Network of Environment Protection Agencies on this issue in order to clarify the size and shape of the problem, and to identify possibilities for EEA work in 2017 that would complement work going on in other fora. He would return to the question again at the Management Board meeting in June.

It was clarified that the draft PD 2017-2019, including the draft AWP 2017, could be amended, if deemed appropriate, in order to include such work in connection with its final adoption by the Management Board in December this year.

Astrid Schomaker, DG Environment, stated that she could agree to the draft subject to the EEA following the Commission policy regarding resource cuts in the coming years (for the EEA: 9 posts less and flat nominal budget 2016-2018). She then went on to request that the EEA takes on work on Invasive Alien Species, emphasising that in the view of the Commission this was more important than the EEAcademy. The Executive Director responded that the EEAcademy was not a new task, but a streamlining of existing activities under a common approach in order to better reflect the overall objective of the Multiannual Work Programme to strengthen the knowledge base. He saw no scope for a new task on Invasive Alien Species under the present resource constraints.

The draft PD 2017-2019, as set out in Doc. EEA/BUR/68/08, was hereafter adopted for transmission to the EU Institutions.

It was pointed out that it would be relevant to move the early Bureau meeting to the end of January next year in order to be able to meet the formal deadline of 31 January.

### **Item 9 Designation of EEAcademy Advisory Committee members**

After some clarification of the involvement of DG RTD, JRC and National Focal Points in the process leading up to the proposed list of Advisory Committee members, the Bureau adopted the decision designating the members of the committee as set out in Doc. EEA/BU/68/09, with an amendment to one recital to clarify that the function of secretariat to the committee is not a full-time task.

## **FOR GUIDANCE**

### **Item 10 Summer seminar(s) – topics**

Introducing this item, the Chair noted that discussions at the Environment Knowledge Community meeting on 15 January had led to an agreement to organise a broader conference with Member States, relevant Commission services and the EEA in the autumn. The idea of a joint Management Board seminar with Dimesa in the summer was therefore not longer relevant.

The Executive Director then outlined a proposal for a Management Board seminar this year on the future Eionet, bringing together issues such as the implications for the Eionet of the Commission-led monitoring and reporting fitness check (M&R), the future model for support from European Topic Centres, and the E3I initiative of the National Focal Points.

There was general support for this proposal, with the following observations being made:

Astrid Schomaker, DG Environment, emphasised that we should not only look at formal compliance, but also how we get a picture of what is really happening on the ground. The link to the M&R process was good. In order to have enough time for preparation, moving the seminar to the end of the year might be preferable.

Artur Runge-Metzger, DG Climate Action, stressed that the topic was very important also for his DG and suggested broadening the scope to include energy. He however felt that, by moving the seminar to the end of the year, some opportunities for influencing developments in Brussels might be missed.

Nuno Lacasta, Vice-Chair/Portugal, pointed out that there was broad interest in the Council for the topic of monitoring and reporting, Member States generally emphasising that there should be no duplication and no increase in the burden of reporting. He also felt that June could be premature.

Michael Scoullos, European Parliament designate, emphasised that the seminar should not only focus on reporting and information flows to the EEA, but also what information the EEA provides on that basis. SEIS should also be a dimension of the seminar.

It was agreed that, on the basis of the discussion, the EEA would provide a paper to the Board in March with a worked-up proposal for the overall scope and objectives of the seminar, also addressing the issue of the timing.

#### **Item 11 Scientific Committee – renewals and recruitments**

The Bureau had no remarks to the proposed timetable for the renewal and recruitment process this year set out in Doc. EEA/BU/68/11.

Following a request from Astrid Schomaker, DG Environment, the Bureau agreed to allow members two more weeks to comment on the proposed list of areas of expertise for recruitment (Doc. EEA/BU/68/01add1). In that context, Julia Werner, Germany, asked if there was no longer need for legal expertise in the committee.

Michael Scoullos, European Parliament designate, emphasised that recruitment should not only focus on formal scientific competences, as some of the most-needed expertise can lie in fields where not much has been formally published.

The Chair concluded that the issue would be brought to the Management Board in March on the basis of a revised paper.

### **ITEMS 12-16 OPERATIONAL/ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

#### **FOR GUIDANCE**

#### **Item 12 Follow-up discharge: MB CVs and Dols**

The Bureau took stock of the state of play concerning the publication of CVs and Declarations of Interests of Management Board members on the Agency website (Doc. EEA/BU/68/12).

The Executive Director remarked that some MEPs had again shown an interest in the issue during the recent discharge hearing in the Budget Control Committee.

It was clarified that alternates could also provide CVs and Dols.

#### **Item 13 Scientific Committee honorarium**

After a short discussion on the basis of Doc. EEA/BUR/68/13, the Bureau agreed to propose to the Management Board that the level of the honorarium be raised in line with inflation over the past 10 years and to be kept under review every few years.

Also, it was agreed to propose to the Management Board that the scope be widened to include participation in agency committees, such as selection committees for scientific staff, ETC topic review committees and the EEAcademy Advisory Committee, where participation is specifically requested by the Executive Director and/or the Chair of the Management Board.

#### **Item 14 Accounts 2015 and discharge process 2014**

The Executive Director briefed the Bureau on the recent discharge 2014 hearing in the European Parliament Budget Control Committee. There had been some focus on grant management (ETCs) and the horizontal issue of the use of cloud services. There had been no major criticisms, and the proposal was to grant discharge.

There were no remarks to the provisional accounts for 2015 (Doc. EEA/BUR/68/14).

## **FOR DECISION**

### **Item 15 Annual Report and Annual Activity Report – procedure**

Referring to Doc. EEA/BUR/68/15, The Bureau agreed to request the Management Board for a derogation to adopt the reports. It also requested the EEA to look into the possibility of the Board granting a general derogation.

### **Item 16 Approval draft agenda 75<sup>th</sup> Management Board, 16 March 2016**

The draft agenda of the 74<sup>th</sup> Management Board (Doc. EEA/BUR/68/16) was approved with the following amendments:

- The heading of agenda item on the summer seminar would be modified to take account of the fact that there would not be a joint seminar with Dimesa, and instead to reflect the discussion under item 10 above.
- The exchange of views with Karl Falkenberg would be taken out of the agenda proper, and there would be further presentations by Astrid Schomaker on behalf of the Commission, and by the Executive Director on EEA activities. It was also suggested to include the activities concerning SDGs of other organisations, such as OECD.

## **ITEMS 17-18 FOR INFORMATION**

### **Item 17 Overview of audits**

The Bureau took note of the latest audits. For more information see document EEA/BUR/68/17.

### **Item 18 Feedback from Bureau members**

The Bureau members had nothing to report back this time.

*The meeting closed at 14.55*

## **ANNEX 1 – Final agenda of the 68<sup>th</sup> Bureau meeting**

### **FOR DECISION**

1. Adoption draft agenda
2. Adoption 67<sup>th</sup> Bureau minutes, 6 October 2015

### **FOR INFORMATION**

3. Draft minutes 74<sup>th</sup> Management Board, 26 November 2015
4. Update by the MB Chair
5. Update by the SC Chair (given by the Executive Director)
6. Update by the Executive Director
7. Update DG Environment: evaluation EEA Regulation

### **STRATEGIC ORIENTATION**

#### **FOR DECISION**

8. Adoption PD 2017-2019
9. Designation of EEAcademy Advisory Committee members

#### **FOR GUIDANCE**

10. Summer seminar(s) – topics
11. Scientific Committee – renewals and recruitments

### **OPERATIONAL/ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

#### **FOR GUIDANCE**

12. Follow-up discharge: MB CVs and Dols
13. Scientific Committee. Honorarium
14. Accounts 2015 and discharge process 2014

#### **FOR DECISION**

15. Annual Report and Annual Activity Report - procedure
16. Approval draft agenda 75<sup>th</sup> Management Board, 16 March 2016,

### **FOR INFORMATION**

17. Overview of audits
18. Feedback from Bureau members

**ANNEX 2 ATTENDANCE LIST – EEA 68<sup>th</sup> BUREAU, 2 February 2016**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>ORGANISATION</b>	<b>SIGNATURE</b>
<b>Members</b>		
Elisabeth FREYTAG	Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry Environment and Water Management (Austria)	Signed
Vanya GRIGOROVA	Executive Environment Agency (Bulgaria)	Signed
Nuno LACASTA	Ministry for Agriculture, Environment, Sea and Spatial Planning (Portugal)	Signed
Alda OZOLA	Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Energy (Latvia)	Signed
Maria PEPPA	Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change (Greece)	Signed
Astrid SCHOMAKER	DG ENV, European Commission	Signed
Michael SCOULLOS	Expert designated by the European Parliament	Signed
<b>Guests/Observers</b>		
Florian EWYO	Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry Environment and Water Management (Austria)	Signed
Kari HOLDEN	Climate & Pollution Agency (Norway)	Signed
Sybille van den HOVE	Chair, EEA Scientific Committee	Apologies
Artur RUNGE-METZGER	DG CLIMA, European Commission	Signed
Julia WERNER	Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (Germany)	Signed
<b>EEA Staff</b>		
Hans BRUYNINCKX	Executive Director	Signed
Søren NIELSEN	Head of Programme, ADS	Signed
Elena OSTÁRIZ	Scientific Committee Secretariat, IEA	Signed
Jeff HUNTIGTON	Senior Advisor/Management Board Secretariat, EDO	Signed



**ANNEX 3 DRAFT ACTION LIST**

<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>Status 2 May 2016</b>
To publish on Forum the final minutes of the 67 <sup>th</sup> Bureau meeting	Done
EEA to clarify with the EPA network pressures from migration on the environment, with the possibility of including such work in the AWP 2017. The ED to report back to the MB in June.	To do
Members to provide comments on the proposals for new areas of expertise in the Scientific Committee by 16 February	Done
EEA to take stock and reflect on lessons learned regarding the EEAcademy summer schools, once the exercise has taken place two or three times	To do
EEA to look into the possibility of a general delegation to the Bureau for adoption of the AR/AAR	Done

**ANNEX 4 - List of Decisions and Guidance, 68th Bureau, 2 February 2016,  
Athens**

Agenda item	Outcome	Comments
1 Adoption of the agenda	Adopted	In the absence of the Chair of the Scientific Committee, the presentation under item 5 of the work of the committee was given by the Executive Director
2 Adoption 67th Bureau minutes, 6 October 2015	Adopted	
8 Adoption PD 2017-2019	Adopted as a draft for transmission to the EU institutions	Work on the environmental impacts of migration could be included in the final version, pending further discussion inter alia with the EPA Network
9 Designation of EEAcademy Advisory Committee members	The decision designating the members of the AC was adopted	A change was made to a recital to clarify that the function of Advisory Committee secretariat is not full-time.
10 Summer seminar(s) - topics	The Bureau noted that the foreseen summer MB/Dimesa seminar was no longer appropriate and supported developing a proposal to the Board for an MB seminar on the future Eionet	The EEA was asked to include in the proposal to the Board considerations pro and contra moving the seminar to later in the year (in order to provide more time for preparation)
11 Scientific Committee – renewals and recruitment	The proposals for broadly-defined new areas of expertise were generally welcomed. It was however agreed to allow Bureau members 2 more weeks to comment.	The EEA was asked to consider the need for legal expertise in the future. The Bureau asked the EEA to provide the Board with one background document covering both aspects
12 Follow up discharge: MB CVs and Dols	The Bureau took note of the status for publication of CVs and Dols	It was clarified that MB alternates are included
13 Scientific Committee. Honorarium	The Bureau agreed to ask the MB to increase the level and scope of payment of honorarium	The increase in level should reflect inflation over the past 10 years, while the scope should be increased to include participation in EEA committees of a formal nature
14 Accounts 2015 and discharge process 2014	The Bureau took note of the accounts and of the positive developments under the 2014 discharge process	-
15 Annual Report and Annual Activity Report - procedure	The Bureau agreed to ask the MB for a	The EEA was asked to look into the possibility of a general delegation

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delegation to adopt the  
2015 AR/AAR

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16	Approval draft agenda 75th Management Board, 16 March 2016	The draft agenda was approved with changes related to items 8 and 10	The heading of item 8 should be adapted to reflect that there will no longer be a joint seminar with Dimesa, and item 10 should be transformed into a free- standing debate on SDGs, outside of the formal agenda, with presentations from Karl Falkenberg, DG ENV on behalf of the Commission, and the EEA. Also OECD's work could be presented.
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Approved by the Chair of the Management Board  
on 2 February 2016

(Signed)

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Elisabeth Freytag-Rigler