



**MINUTES OF THE 71ST BUREAU MEETING,
held in Copenhagen on 31 January 2017**

Adopted by the Bureau at its meeting on 16 May 2017

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 observers.

Final agenda: Annex 1
Attendance list: Annex 2
List of decisions and guidance at the 71st BU meeting: Annex 3

ITEMS 1–2 FOR DECISION

Item 1 Adoption of draft agenda

The Chair and DG ENV's representative confirmed the need for distributing background documents on strategic agenda items in preparation of the Bureau meetings.

The Chair acknowledged the publication plan 2017 tabled by EEA.

The Bureau adopted the agenda (Doc. EEA/BU/71/01REV) without changes.

Item 2 Adoption 70th Bureau minutes, 4 October 2016

The minutes (Doc. EEA/BU/71/02) were adopted with the following small number of clarifying amendments; to item 6: 'The member nominated by the European Parliament (EP) supported the idea for the enhanced role on Climate Change however it was too early to express the EP's views.' and a correction in the name of an institution in Annex 2. The minutes have been made available on the Forum.

The Bureau exchanged views in relation to item 10 of the 70th Bureau meeting and more specifically the topic of environmental challenges related to migration. DG ENV's representative presented an update on activities initiated by DG ENV, DG DEVCO and the European Parliament; as well as activities at international level. The following detailed written information was also provided to EEA in the margins of the meeting:

- DG ENV promoted the organisation of a conference at European Parliament in June 2016 (with Environment and Development Committees) on the link between Land Degradation and Migrations;



- DG ENV published in September 2015 a ‘Science for Environment Policy’ briefing exploring interlinked drivers of human migration in the context of environmental change ⁽¹⁾;
- DG DEVCO have commissioned a study specifically into the link between land degradation and migration and to set out options for action under EU development policy — this is due to be finalised in the coming weeks;
- There was an international conference on environment, climate change and migration in November in Liege ⁽²⁾ in the context of Horizon 2020 EDGE project.

DG CLIMA’s representative and the Executive Director clarified further EEA’s role by highlighting the inclusion of the topic in a recent EEA report, cooperation with OSCE and the Executive Director’s interest to reflect further on the topic with other EU and knowledge institutions through for example a joint meeting. The Executive Director reconfirmed that dedicated work on the topic is not part of EEA’s core tasks.

The member nominated by the European Parliament (EP) called for a systematic follow-up on matters arising during past meetings through a dedicated re-occurring agenda item or the Executive Director’s update.

ITEMS 3–5 FOR INFORMATION

Item 3 Draft minutes 77th Management Board, 7 December 2016

The Bureau took note of the draft minutes of the 77th Management Board held on 7 December 2016 (Doc. EEA/BU/71/03).

Item 4 Update by the Chair

The Chair reported on the following matters:

- In the coming years, the emphasis of DG ENV’s and DG CLIMA’s agenda will be on implementation of legislation rather than on new legislative action. The Chair emphasised that EEA will have a very important role to play in this both in terms of monitoring and reporting, and in providing assessments.
- Conclusions on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will be presented in the context of the General Affairs Council, upon request of the Environment Council.

Item 5 Update by the Scientific Committee (SC) Chair

The recently elected SC Chair informed the Bureau of the agenda for the meeting on 1-2 February and expressed his commitment to further increasing the SC’s relevance for EEA core activities by providing scientific expertise support (SOER 2020; assessments; joint seminars); as well as to continue to fulfil the SC’s formal role in relation to strategic planning and recruitments as laid down in EEA’s founding regulation.

The SC Chair shared his positive experience participating in a joint EEA-DG CLIMA communication event around the launch of EEA’s report on ‘Climate change, impacts and vulnerability in Europe 2016’.

¹http://ec.europa.eu/environment/integration/research/newsalert/pdf/migration_in_response_to_environmental_change_51si_en.pdf

² <http://orbi.ulg.ac.be/bitstream/2268/204038/1/Hugo%20Conference%202016%20-%20Compendium%20of%20abstracts.pdf>

The Chair welcomed the SC's Chair's commitment to ensure delivery of the 'Declarations of Commitment and Conflict of Interest' forms for all new Scientific Committee members.

Item 6 Update by the Executive Director

Taking the document 'Update by the Executive Director' (Doc. EEA/BU/71/06REV) as read, the Executive Director presented an overview of highlights since the last meeting.

In the context of the update by the Executive Director, the Bureau also discussed in detail:

- Clean Energy package proposed by the Commission in November 2016
 - DG CLIMA informed the Bureau on the specifics of the Commission proposal for a 'Regulation on the Governance of the Energy Union' including: the streamlined approach for monitoring and reporting and the political process between Member States and the Commission including the establishment of separate sessions for climate and energy as well as dedicated Working Groups (WG) for energy under the Climate Change Committee (CCC). He also informed on the ongoing Commission process to ensure the inclusion of proposed new tasks and their resources implications in EEA's PD 2018-2020. The co-decision process is ongoing and negotiations will be led by the Maltese presidency in the Transport, Telecommunications and Energy Council configuration (TTE).
 - EEA informed the Bureau that EEA's future role in the field of energy would be very similar to the one on climate change mitigation established through the current Greenhouse gas Monitoring Mechanism Regulation (MMR). He concluded that EEA's proposed role is a formal recognition of EEA's informal role over the past years.
- Budget constraints and uncertainties
 - Both the Chair and the Executive Director recognised the potential budgetary impacts of ongoing political developments for EEA's future work planning.
- Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
 - The Executive Director recognised the need for a close cooperation between the different EU institutions for the SDGs' monitoring framework and informed the meeting that this will be addressed in the Environment Knowledge Community (EKC) meeting.
 - Germany and Ireland called for avoiding the development of new indicators.
- INSPIRE
 - EEA informed the Bureau on the planned merging of Eionet's NFP INSPIRE and DG ENV's INSPIRE working groups.
- Communication on environment
 - DG ENV's representative agreed with the Irish representative on the value of EEA communicating on environmental concerns rather than on MS compliance.
 - The Bureau members shared views on different requirements on communication when addressing international partners and press compared to when interacting within the EU.

Item 7 Update DG Environment, incl. evaluation of the EEA/Eionet Regulation

DG ENV shared the latest information on the process for the evaluation of the EEA/Eionet Regulation. The evaluation started in December 2016 with a focus on the intervention logic, consultation plan and background documentation. Stakeholder consultation and evidence collection will be conducted from February to September 2017. The interim evaluation report with draft findings will be available for a



stakeholder consultation in early December 2017. She reassured the Bureau of the privileged role of the Management Board (MB) through amongst others foreseen regular state of play updates and discussion in the MB meetings and a dedicated e-survey for MB members.

She also provided a status update on the Monitoring and Reporting Fitness Check. The follow-up actions will be formulated in a Commission Communication foreseen to be adopted in spring 2017 and the evidence will also feed into EEA's evaluation. She informed the Bureau on the initial steps taken by DG ENV to discuss with EEA the opportunities to address certain findings already in EEA's present MAWP.

In relation to the 7th EAP evaluation, she informed the meeting that a first building block is the EEA report 'Environmental indicator report 2016 — In support to the monitoring of the 7th Environment Action Programme' addressing the three thematic priorities; and the need for the establishment of some qualitative indicators to allow for monitoring of each of the nine 7th EAP priorities.

Finally, DG ENV shared information on the three objectives of the proposed governance for the Energy Union (to streamline reporting and monitoring obligations; to create more transparency and predictability for investors; and to ensure objectives and targets of the Energy Union) and EEA's role in relation to monitoring and reporting of the energy efficiency and de-carbonisation dimension. She also announced the adoption of the second state of the Energy Union report on 1 February 2017.

DG ENV provided an update on the Environmental Knowledge Community (EKC), for which the next meeting will take place on 15 March 2017.

The Chair thanked DG ENV for sharing the information and asked for some further clarification on the foreseen role of the Management Board. DG ENV's representative clarified that this would include regular updates, a specific survey in the EEA evaluation process to which each of the Management Board and Bureau members will be invited to complete and the opportunity for DG ENV to organise informal technical meetings or exchange sessions with the EEA Management Board and Bureau members outside of the formal set-up.

In the context of the DG ENV update, the Bureau also exchanged views on:

- EEA/Eionet evaluation

The representatives of Portugal and Ireland emphasised the importance of including all relevant stakeholders in the consultation process and in particular of ensuring inclusion of people from both ministries and agencies. The Chair expressed her support and emphasised that representatives of both types of institutions are included in the Management Board and Bureau. The Executive Director suggested to organise a meeting between the evaluators and the Management Board members early in the process.

- Fitness check on monitoring and reporting

Bureau members called for streamlining of reporting obligations, early definitions of reporting obligations and pragmatic ICT developments for reporting. The Executive Director agreed with this and expressed an interest in streamlining of reporting to bring efficiency gains and the further investment in ICT tools. He cautioned against a significant increase of EEA's role in new data flows seeing present budget constraints, as well as the high investment and maintenance costs related to dataflow management.



ITEMS 8–11 STRATEGIC ORIENTATION FOR DECISION

Item 8 Adoption draft Programming Document 2018–2020

Taking document EEA/BU/71/08 and the draft Programming Document 2018-2020 (PD 2018–2020) as read, the Chair introduced the PD 2018–2020 and highlighted that the meeting coincided with the deadline for adoption, seeing the obligation on EEA to submit the draft PD 2018–2020 to the Commission, the European Parliament and the Council on 31 January 2017. She also emphasised that there would be further opportunities for commenting before the document’s final adoption later in the year. The Executive Director provided some additional information regarding the proposed timelines until adoption of both the PD 2018-2020 and the PD 2019–2021.

DG ENV informed the Bureau on the new guidelines for internal processing in the Commission of programming documents of decentralised agencies which results in the following milestones for EEA’s draft PD 2018–2020 process: budget 2018 hearing (8 March 2017), deadline for the opinion of DG BUDG and DG HR on the draft PD 2018–2020 (31 May 2017) and the delivery of the Commission opinion on the draft PD 2018-2020 to EEA after inter-service consultation (1 July 2017). In the light of this new information the Chair and EEA’s ED concluded that the proposed timelines for the final PD 2018-2020 and the draft PD 2019–2020 would have to be revised. A revised timelines proposal will be communicated to the Bureau and Management Board after further reflection by EEA.

Cover note EEA/BU/71/08 to the PD 2018-2020 addressing the consequences of the continued resource constraints was welcomed by a number of Bureau members and formed the basis for some further discussions and clarifications by the Executive Director. These included the proposed reduction of investment in international activities and EEA representation in Brussels as well as the potential investment need for the EEAcademy. The Executive Director emphasised that proposed areas for de-investment do not bear any reflection of staff performance in these work areas. The Bureau also discussed the interpretation of the information provided on staff resources.

DG ENV’s representative clarified DG ENV’s view that there is a need to ensure the inclusion of new investment areas in the final PD 2018-2020; this could also include some quick wins resulting from the findings of the Fitness Check on Monitoring and Reporting. The Executive Director informed the meeting that in particular in the potential investment area of invasive alien species, discussions with Unit D in DG ENV are ongoing on the scope and impact for EEA.

The Bureau adopted the draft Programming Document 2018–2020.

FOR GUIDANCE

Item 9 Follow up of the Management Board seminar 6 December 2016

EEA introduced background document EEA/BU/71/09 and clarified the process and scope for the MB seminar outcome document.

The Eionet findings will be structured around two elements, namely the value of the EEA and Eionet and development perspectives. The document will be structured around three areas being knowledge, importance of network and the infrastructure and tools; and it will include a differentiation between long-term strategic and operational development suggestions.



The Chair and DG ENV emphasised a strong preference towards receiving a draft of the Management Board document, allowing for commenting by Bureau members before sharing the findings with the Management Board.

EEA confirmed the commitment to provide a draft outlining the main findings to the Bureau in February, allowing for integration of Bureau members' comments in the Management Board background document for the March meeting.

Item 10 Topic for Management Board seminar December 2017

The Chair introduced background document EEA/BU/71/10 and explained that the document on outcomes of the Management Board seminar will summarise all Eionet findings relevant for the EEA/Eionet evaluation including long-term strategic and operational suggestions.

The Bureau discussed the proposed topic, the timeliness of the seminar in the overall EEA evaluation process, advantages and disadvantages of organising it back-to-back with the workshop foreseen by the DG ENV's evaluators and the location of the seminar (Brussels or Copenhagen). The discussion included also reflections on the opportunity for DG ENV to organise informal technical meetings or exchange sessions outside of the formal set-up, which was formulated by DG ENV's representative under item 7.

The Bureau concluded that the preferred option would be to replace the Management Board seminar in December with the stakeholder workshop on the preliminary findings on the EEA evaluation, and this back-to-back to the Management Board meeting in Copenhagen. The Bureau also welcomed and agreed with the proposal from DG ENV to organise an informal meeting between the evaluators and the Management Board and Bureau members back-to-back with the Bureau meeting on 16 May 2017. This will allow for both a plenary session and individual interviews of MB and Bureau members.

Item 11 SOER project plan

The Chair invited EEA to provide a more extensive briefing seeing the project plan could not yet be distributed to the Bureau.

The Executive Director then introduced the background document EEA/BU/71/11 by providing a short overview of the process. The preliminary framing of the project was conducted in autumn 2016 and included consultation with DG ENV and DG CLIMA and the MB in December. He confirmed that the project plan, including interactions with all stakeholders (EEA staff, Eionet, Management Board, Scientific Committee, Commission services, etc.) would be provided timely for discussion at the Management Board meeting.

It was further confirmed that the project plan will be distributed mid-February to allow for discussion in the upcoming NFP/Eionet and MB meeting. He also provided some additional information on the project plan, the foreseen prototypes for the assessment reports, the embedding of SOER 2020 in the SC work plan and the interaction with Eionet National Reference Centres (NRCs) on the EU level forward-looking assessments. He also informed about the idea to organise a 'winter school' by end 2017 under the EEAcademy to build assessment capacity internally in EEA and with the network on integrated assessments.

The member nominated by the European Parliament suggested to provide guidance to the different stakeholders in terms of the type of contributions EEA would like to receive.



EEA clarified that a specific stakeholder process will be organised between the publications of the SOER assessments in mid-2019 and the synthesis report in mid-2020. This stakeholder consultation is foreseen to be of a more political nature and will include discussions with policymakers on how to interpret the assessment findings. The representative of Portugal asked whether the outlined process is similar to the IPCC approach. It was further clarified that the proposed SOER process is indeed inspired by successful international processes but that the details still need further definition.

The Executive Director explained that the slightly earlier deadlines for the SOER 2020 will allow for the results to feed into the Commission 7th EAP evaluation and 8th EAP preparation.

The Scientific Committee's Chair announced that SOER 2020 is one of the major items on the agenda of the upcoming SC meeting. He expressed his interest in close interactions between EEA and the Scientific Committee with the overall aim of ensuring a high credibility of SOER 2020 outcomes.

ITEMS 12–13 OPERATIONAL/ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Item 12 Accounts 2016 and discharge process 2015

Taking document EEA/BU/71/12 as read, EEA highlighted all-time best provisional budget execution of 99.906 % included in the 2016 accounts. He also informed about some amendments to EEA's 2015 discharge from the ENVI Committee in relation to conflict of interest and application of article 16 of the Staff Regulations. He announced that the final accounts would be provided in time for the Management Board meeting in March and drew attention to the fact that completely separate accounts will be included for the Copernicus financing.

Item 13 Approval draft agenda 78th Management Board, 14 March 2017

The Chair introduced the draft agenda (Doc. EEA/BU/71/13) and suggested two additional agenda items: firstly the SOER 2020 project plan and secondly a presentation by the Chair of the Staff Committee. She also asked the Bureau for a reflection on the topic for the one-hour special session. The Chair also noted that the proposed timeslot should be re-evaluated and potentially extended in the light of the updated agenda.

The Bureau discussed several potential topics for the special session and decided on the topic 'The use of citizen science and big data, inter alia in the context of indicators'. The Executive Director agreed to draft a background paper.

Item 14 Overview of audits

EEA introduced the background document EEA/BU/71/14 and provided some highlights on the visits of the European Court of Auditors, external auditors from an independent company and the Internal Audit Service (IAS). She also explained that the IAS strategic risk assessment will form the basis for the IAS's strategic planning and topics to audit over the next 3 years.

Item 15 Revised meeting calendar 2017

The Bureau took note of the revised meeting dates decided upon by the Management Board in December (Doc. EEA/BU/71/15).

Item 16 Consolidated Annual Activity Report – procedure for adoption by Bureau

Taking document EEA/BU/71/16 as read, the Executive Director informed about the key milestones in the adoption process, namely discussion of a draft CAAR in the Bureau on 16 May 2017, adoption

of a revised version in the Management Board on 13 June 2017 and for forwarding the final CAAR to the European Institutions and Member States by 15 June 2017.

Item 17 Feedback from Bureau members

The member nominated by the European Parliament provided a hard copy of the report “Towards a Green Economy in the Mediterranean” ⁽³⁾ as an example of good interaction between civil society, science community and other organisations.

The Executive Director provided a short additional explanation on the foreseen inclusion of timelines in the final publication plan

The meeting closed at 15.35h.

³ <http://mio-ecsde.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/greeneconomy-med-web.pdf>

ANNEX 1 Final agenda of the 71st Bureau meeting

FOR DECISION

1. Adoption draft agenda
2. Adoption 70th Bureau minutes, 4 October 2016

FOR INFORMATION

3. Draft minutes 77th Management Board, 7 December 2016
4. Update by the Management Board Chair
5. Update by the Scientific Committee Chair
6. Update by the Executive Director
7. Update DG Environment, incl. evaluation of the EEA/Eionet Regulation

STRATEGIC ORIENTATION

FOR DECISION

8. Adoption draft Programming Document 2018–2020

FOR GUIDANCE

9. Follow up of the Management Board seminar 6 December 2016
10. Topic for Management Board seminar December 2017
11. SOER project plan

OPERATIONAL/ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

FOR GUIDANCE

12. Accounts 2016 and discharge process 2015

FOR DECISION

13. Approval draft agenda 78th Management Board, 14 March 2017

FOR INFORMATION

14. Overview of audits
15. Revised meeting calendar 2017
16. Consolidated Annual Activity Report – procedure for adoption by Bureau
17. Feedback from Bureau members



ANNEX 2 ATTENDANCE LIST – EEA 71st BUREAU, 31 January 2017

NAME	COUNTRY/AFFILIATION	ORGANISATION
MEMBERS		
Elisabeth FREYTAG-RIGLER	Austria	Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Environment and Water Management
Laura BURKE	Ireland	Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Julia WERNER	Germany	Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety
Nuno LACASTA	Portugal	Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Energy
Alda OZOLA	Latvia	Ministry of Environment Protection and Regional Development
Maria PEPPA	Greece	Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change
Joanna DRAKE	European Commission	DG ENV
Michael SCOULLOS	European Parliament	University of Athens
GUESTS/OBSERVERS		
Per MICKWITZ	Chair of EEA's Scientific Committee	Finnish Environment Institute
Herdís Helga SCHOPKA	Observer from non-EU Member State	Ministry for the Environment and Natural Resources, Iceland
Jacques DELSALLE	European Commission	DG ENV
Artur RUNGE-METZGER	European Commission	DG CLIMA
EEA STAFF		
Hans BRUYNINCKX	EEA	Executive Director
Paul MCALEAVEY	EEA	Head of Programme, ACC
Søren NIELSEN	EEA	Head of Programme, ADS
Katja ROSENBOHM	EEA	Head of Programme, COM
Chris STEENMANS	EEA	Head of Programme, IDM
Jock Martin	EEA	Head of Programme, IEA
Ronan UHEL	EEA	Head of Programme, NSS
David STANNERS	EEA	Head of Programme, PAN
Anne-Marie BUTTOLO	EEA	Project manager - Internal Audit Capability, EDO
Teresa RIBEIRO	EEA	Project manager - Strategic coordination, EDO
Jeff HUNTIGTON	EEA	Senior Adviser Management Board Secretariat, EDO
Eva GOOSSENS	EEA	Management Board Secretariat, EDO
Johannes SCHILLING	EEA	Management Board Secretariat, EDO



**ANNEX 3 LIST OF DECISIONS AND GUIDANCE 71ST BUREAU MEETING
(Copenhagen, 31 January 2017)**

Decision EEA/BU/2017/001

Agenda item	Outcome	Comments
1 Adoption of the agenda	Adopted as drafted	The Bureau stressed the importance of ensuring that Bureau meetings can be used for timely discussions related to strategic issues facing the EEA.
2 Adoption 70th Bureau minutes, 4 October 2015	Adopted with a small number of clarifying amendments	The amended minutes will be published on the EEA website and the Forum
8 Adoption draft PD 2018–2020	Adopted as a draft for transmission to the EU institutions	Comments made by Bureau members will be taken into account in the further process. The timing of the further process and adoption by the MB was left open.
9 Follow up of the MB seminar 6 December 2016	The Bureau endorsed the intention to bring the outcome the document to the MB in March	The Bureau encouraged the EEA to share the main messages with the Bureau members before transmission of the draft to the MB as a whole.
10 Topic for MB seminar December 2017	The Bureau agreed to focus the seminar on the preliminary findings of the evaluation of the EEA/Eionet Evaluation as a workshop in the evaluation process.	It was provisionally agreed that the seminar/workshop would be in Copenhagen. Furthermore, it was recognised there would be a need for the Board to discuss the preliminary findings at the December meeting itself. Finally, it was agreed to look into the possibility of the consultants interacting informally with the Bureau in May.
11 SOER roadmap	The Bureau endorsed the intention to bring the project plan to the MB in March.	The Bureau was informed of the intention to involve the SC strongly in the process. The Bureau provided guidance on the involvement of other stakeholders. The project plan will also be discussed with the NFPs in early March.
12 Accounts 2016 and discharge process 2015	The Bureau took note of the accounts and the discharge process.	
13 Approval draft agenda 78th Management Board, 14 March 2016	The draft agenda was approved with some additions.	Items on the SOER project plan and an introduction to the new Chair of the EEA StC were added. It was clarified that the special session would focus on the use of citizen science and big



data, inter alia in the context of
indicators.

Approved by the Chair of the Management Board
on 31 January 2017

Signed

Elisabeth Freytag-Rigler