



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR ENERGY
DIRECTORATE D – Nuclear Energy, Safety and ITER
Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety

Meeting of the Group of Experts referred to in Article 31 of the Euratom Treaty

Via WebEx

17-18 November 2020

SUMMARY REPORT

(Approved by the Group of Experts at the meeting 1 – 2 June 2021)

INTRODUCTION

The meeting of the Article 31 Group of Experts (GoE) took place on 17-18 November 2020 via WebEx. This was the first meeting of the newly constituted Group of Experts, appointed for a five-year term: 2 October 2020 – 31 December 2025. For organisational reasons, the Scientific Seminar 2020 on *“Radiosensitivity” of children - Health issues after radiation exposure at young age* will be held as a separate event on 1 December 2020.

The meeting was attended by 43 out of 47 members of the GoE, representatives from all observers (IAEA, ICRP, WHO, IRPA, HERCA, NEA, Norway and Switzerland), and representatives from DG FISMA, DG JRC, DG SANTE, DG RTD, and DG ENER.

The Deputy Director-General responsible for the coordination of Euratom policies, welcomed the new GoE, and informed them of key policy developments addressing the COVID-19 crisis recovery and response, BREXIT, the Green deal and EU Taxonomy as well as Euratom challenges in radiation protection, nuclear safety and radioactive waste management which are of particular interest to the GoE.

0. PRESENTATION OF THE NEWLY CONSTITUTED GROUP OF EXPERTS

In a "tour de table", the Experts briefly introduced themselves.

1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The draft Agenda was adopted with no changes.

2. INFORMATION ON THE SUMMARY REPORT OF THE WEBEX MEETING HELD ON 9 JUNE 2020

The Chair¹ informed the Group of Experts of the Summary Report of the meeting held by WebEx on 9 June 2020, which had been approved by written procedure and published on the Europa website². The GoE took note.

3. PROCEDURAL ASPECTS

3.1 Rules of Procedures

The Secretariat briefly introduced the Rules of Procedures of the Group of Experts established under Article 31 of the Euratom treaty. The GoE took note.

3.2 Election of a new Chairperson for the period November 2020 – June 2023

The election of the new Chairperson took place according to the Group's Rules of Procedures. The Group of Experts re-elected³ Mika Markkanen as the new Chairperson.

3.3 Election of a new Vice-Chairperson for the period November 2020 – June 2023

The election of the new Vice-Chairperson took place according to the Group's Rules of Procedures. The Group of Experts elected³ Helena Janžekovič as the new Vice-Chairperson.

4. INFORMATION BY THE COMMISSION

The Head of Unit D3 Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety presented the structure of DG ENER's Directorate Nuclear Energy, Safety and ITER and current activities in the area of radiation protection and nuclear safety.

5. WORK PROGRAMME OF THE ARTICLE 31 GROUP OF EXPERTS "ROAD MAP"

5.1 Hand-over from the previous term

The Secretariat presented the rolling work programme of the previous term of Article 31 Group of Experts as updated based on developments in the different areas of work. In the discussion that followed, the experts raised specific activities and proposed additional topics for the work programme. In the medical exposure area, it was proposed to discuss the topics of image quality and incident handling within the Working Party on Medical Exposure. The Commission agreed to provide additional information on the Quadrant project after the meeting⁴. Regarding emergency preparedness and response (EP&R), the GoE agreed to

¹ The beginning of the meeting (until end of agenda item 3.1) was chaired by the Chair of the previous group.

² The approved Summary Report of the June 2020 meeting can be found under <https://ec.europa.eu/energy/en/group-experts>

³ The election procedure took place in a separate "MEMBERS only" virtual room accessible only to the members and the Secretariat, and was chaired by the Vice-Chair of the previous group.

⁴ After the meeting, the Secretariat shared with the GoE additional information on the QuADRANT project and on the forthcoming workshop on 14-16 December. Up-to-date information about QuADRANT can be found in the project website: <http://www.eurosafeimaging.org/clinical-audit/quadrant> .

discuss topics of interest and the proposal to establish a working party in this area at the next meeting of the GoE. The GoE agreed that this discussion should cover also the safety and security interface in EP&R. The HERCA representative noted the need for a continued good coordination with the work of the HERCA working party on nuclear emergencies. With regard to the implementation of the BSS Directive, the GoE agreed to add a more general point on implementation challenges (such as the graded approach, exemption and clearance, justification and optimisation, non-medical imaging or other issues potentially identified in future). Within the area of natural radiation sources, the GoE agreed to include the ongoing Commission activity on Radon Action Plans and a potential follow up thereof. One expert raised the issue of NORM, NORM waste and associated challenges. The GoE noted that the various aspects of this topic are covered in the work programme by the activities under the areas of Natural Radiation Sources, Radioactive Waste Management, and BSS Implementation Challenges. The experts further reported on relevant ongoing activities of HERCA, IAEA and ICRP on NORM. With the above-mentioned amendments, the GoE approved the rolling work programme.

5.2 Article 31 Working parties

The Secretariat presented mandates and achievements of the Article 31 Working Parties during the previous term.

The GoE acknowledged the important work delivered and agreed to set-up the same three working parties, namely on Natural radiation sources (WP NAT), on Medical exposure (WP MED), and on Research Implications on Health and Safety Standards (WP RIHSS). With regard to the WP RIHSS, the Secretariat proposed to establish a core group coordinating the scientific seminars with the possibility to invite, depending on the topic of the seminar in question, additional experts e.g. from other working parties to join the working party and to form the scientific committee of the upcoming scientific seminar. Experts were invited to declare their interest to join any of the working parties to the secretariat within two weeks (three weeks for WP RIHSS)⁵. It was noted that even after these deadlines, nominations will be accepted in accordance with the Rules of Procedures. The Chair of the GoE encouraged experts to join any of the working parties. Last but not least the GoE acknowledged the important contributions and work performed by the experts in the working parties in the previous term and encouraged the new members to participate.

The GoE agreed to convene online meetings of each working party early in 2021, with a view to discuss and prepare mandates (based on the mandates of the previous term) and work programmes. Draft mandates and draft work programmes shall be submitted to the GoE for approval during the next GoE meeting. In its previous term, the WP NAT had already prepared a draft report on building materials, which shall be shared with the new WP NAT.

6. EU TAXONOMY

At the meetings in November 2019 and in June 2020, representatives from DG ENER informed the previous GoE on the EU Taxonomy (a building block of the Commission's sustainable

⁵ Based on the received expressions of interest the WP NAT has gathered 15 members plus 2 experts interested to follow the work as observers, the WP MED 14 and the WP RIHSS 3 plus 2 experts interested to join when specific topics are encountered. The WP compositions have been communicated to the members of the GoE.

finance initiative). They presented the general legislative framework, the work of the Technical Expert Group (TEG) on sustainable finance, as well as the discussions in the Commission services regarding a technical assessment of the do-no-significant-harm (DNSH) criteria of nuclear energy and next steps.

In the meantime, the Commission has invited DG JRC to carry out a technical assessment of the DNSH aspects of nuclear energy and to prepare a report. The JRC technical report shall be reviewed by two independent groups of experts invited to provide their opinions: the Scientific Committee on Health, Environmental and Emerging Risks (SCHEER), and the Group of Experts referred to in Article 31 of the Euratom Treaty.

In this meeting, an extended session was devoted to EU Taxonomy to inform the new GoE in view of the Commission's request to the GoE for an Opinion on the JRC's technical assessment of nuclear energy.

6.1 Presentation of the EU Taxonomy regulation

A representative from DG FISMA presented the EU Taxonomy regulation, the status of the first Delegated Act (on climate change mitigation and adaptation), including the respective timeline and the state of play on nuclear energy. He also informed the experts on the upcoming public consultation on the draft Delegated Act which was to be launched soon⁶. He answered questions of the experts, and clarified the specific technical requirements including the requirement to consider the whole life cycle of an economic activity. The GoE took note.

6.2 Presentation of the JRC technical assessment of nuclear energy

A representative from DG JRC presented the progress of the JRC's technical assessment of nuclear energy under the DNSH criterion of the Taxonomy regulation. The presentation covered the Terms of Reference (ToR), the structure of the JRC report and the expected timeline. A draft report is expected to be available by end 2020 and the final report at the end of the first Quarter of 2021. The report could be provided in draft to both the GoE and the SCHEER to allow already at an early stage to clarify questions and to identify additional aspects to be addressed. In the discussion that followed, the experts raised a number of questions, including clarifications on the timeline and on the next steps following the Opinions of the two expert groups. The FISMA representative clarified the steps towards the drafting of a Delegated Act and the following stages and further actions towards its final approval. One expert reported that data regarding radiological impact for various electricity production technologies are given in the UNSCEAR 2016 Report. The JRC representative confirmed that this report has already been taken into consideration in their technical assessment.

6.3 Request to Article 31 Group of Experts for an Opinion

⁶ Following the meeting, the Secretariat informed the GoE of the launched stakeholder consultation on the draft Commission Delegated Regulation supplementing Regulation (EU) 2020/852 – the “draft Taxonomy Delegated Act”: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12302-Climate-change-mitigation-and-adaptation-taxonomy> . The closing date of the stakeholder feedback period was Friday 18 December 2020.

A representative from DG ENER presented the draft mandate of the GoE for an Opinion on the findings of the JRC's DNSH technical assessment of nuclear energy. The GoE discussed and approved the taxonomy mandate.

6.4 Discussion on the Working Party on Taxonomy (WP TAX)

The GoE discussed and approved the creation of a Working Party on Taxonomy to work on the requested Opinion. They also discussed the composition of the working party and collected the interest of experts to participate. It was agreed that the experts confirm/express in writing their interest to participate to the Secretariat within one week⁷. It was agreed that the GoE Chair would serve as contact person until the first meeting of the Working Party in which the WP Chair will be determined. The Secretariat is ready to schedule a WP meeting as soon as possible.

7. DRAFT EC PUBLICATION RP195 - EUROPEAN STUDY ON CLINICAL DIAGNOSTIC REFERENCE LEVELS FOR X-RAY MEDICAL IMAGING (EUCLID)

A representative from DG ENER informed the GoE on the draft publication RP 195 European Study on Clinical Diagnostic Reference Levels for X-ray Medical Imaging (EUCLID). The GoE approved the draft report for publication in the Radiation Protection series of the European Commission.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was raised.

9. DATES OF THE NEXT MEETING

The **June 2021** meeting of the Article 31 Group of Experts is planned for **1 - 2 June 2021**.

The **November 2021 meeting** of the Article 31 Group of Experts is planned for **9 - 10 November 2021**.

Depending on the evolution of the COVID-19 situation, the next meetings may take place as online meetings.

Subject to the timeline of the final JRC report, an additional meeting may be organised in spring 2021 for discussion and approval of the Opinion on taxonomy.

⁷ Based on the received expressions of interest the WP TAX has gathered 16 members. The composition has been communicated to the members of the GoE.