

# ENVIRONMENTAL WORKING GROUP MEETING

5<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2007

## NOTE OF MEETING

ATTENDEES: Brian Murphy, Environment  
Leo Murphy, Education  
John Thompson, Agri-rural  
Terry Savage, Border Regional Authority  
James Daly, BMW Regional Assembly  
John Anderson, CNCC  
Mervyn Hill, CNCC  
David Erwin, CNCC  
Lynsey Moore, DFP  
Sarah Reid, SEUPB  
Damian Fitzpatrick, DETI  
Ann-Marie Brooks, DEL  
Glenn Moorcroft, DOE  
Niamh Gallagher, DEHLG  
Michelle Furphy, NISRA  
John Bradley, OFMDFM

Secretariat: Anne Baker, DFP

Apologies: John Doran, Business  
Lucinda Blakison-Houston, Environment  
Domhnall O’Cobhthaigh, Local Govt  
Hubert Nicholl, Local Govt  
Alex McGarrel, CNCC

### 1. Welcome

DFP opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and thanking them for their participation in the Group. It was noted that there was a good representation across the sectors and from all Programmes.

### 2. Appointment of the Chair

DFP explained that the Chair of the group must be a member or deputy member on one of the Monitoring Committees and invited nominations from the Group. There were no volunteers at this point but Brian Murphy agreed to be Vice-Chair. It was agreed that the Secretariat would approach Lucinda Blakison-Houston to gauge her interest for Chair.

**Action: Secretariat**

### **3. Terms of Reference (TOR)**

DFP explained that the Terms of Reference which had been circulated to the group was that of the Environmental Working Group (EWG) from the previous round of Structural Funds, but would be a useful starting point to draw up the TOR for the new Group. The Group were reminded that once they had agreed their TOR, it would also have to be agreed by all the Programme Monitoring Committees.

The newly appointed vice-chair asked if someone from the Rural Development Programme (RDP) should be asked to join the Group to ensure complementarity across all Programmes. DFP noted that the RDP was not a Structural Fund Programme but agreed to approach DARD for their response.

#### **Action: Secretariat**

It was also noted by DFP that a representative from the RDP Monitoring Committee attended the C & E Monitoring Committee and a representative from DETI attended the RDP Monitoring Committee to ensure complementarity.

#### **3.1 Background**

DFP advised that the Secretariat would update the 'Background' section in line with the new Programmes. The BMW Regional Assembly member noted that the legislation would have most likely been updated.

The Education representative stated that using the word 'neutral' was not sufficient and that projects should be aiming for more than neutral. He suggested holding briefing/workshops for potential applicants. DFP advised that this could be an area for the group address.

The DETI advisor stated that guidance was being drawn up for Selection Panels, after a discussion at the C & E Monitoring Committee meeting, which gave advice on how to handle projects which did not score more than 50% of available points against the cross-cutting themes.

DFP advised that projects not scoring highly could have conditions written into their Letter of Offer to improve their area on the cross-cutting themes e.g. waste management strategy, which would have to be met before any payments were made.

The SEUPB advisor stated that the PEACE III Monitoring Committee had also discussed the issue whereby projects could attain the required overall score without actually meeting the cross-cutting themes score, but had not yet come to an agreed solution to the problem.

The vice – chair noted that there should be consistency across all the Programmes in the selection process and that this needed to be addressed.

### **3.2 Roles & Responsibilities**

There was some discussion regarding the work the group will address and the budget to do so. It was agreed that the Secretariat would circulate the final report issued by the previous Environment Working Group for reference.

#### **Action Secretariat**

Regarding the budget, it was agreed that DFP and the vice-chair would meet to discuss a first year budget to put to the Monitoring Committees.

#### **Action: DFP and Vice-chair**

The Group agreed that the work plan should be strategic and pick up on the critical areas. The vice-chair suggested that these issues could be identified from the Strategic Environmental Assessments carried out on the Programmes as part of the ex-ante. The Secretariat will circulate links to these documents on the various Programme websites to members. If anyone wishes to obtain a hard copy please contact the Secretariat.

#### **Action: Secretariat**

The DFP representative worked through the list of work areas in the TOR and after discussion around each area it was agreed the Secretariat would make the required amendments and circulate to the members for comment.

#### **Action: Secretariat**

Main points that came out of the discussion and which could be addressed in the groups Work Plan were:

- Need to educate project applicants or project promoters/IBs
- Need for Networking with other Regions regarding Best practice
- Have a representative from the Commission on the Working Group
- Economic appraisals to focus on cross-cutting themes not just financial aspect of projects

### **4. Development Path Analysis (DPA)**

The NISRA representative tabled the draft guidance on the implementation of DPA which is to be used by Managing Authorities. She explained the background of DPA and how the previous EWG requested that it be used in the 2007-13 round of Structural Funds as the Environmental monitoring tool. She advised that the new guidance was similar to the previous guidance but with slight amendments to terminology and the paths would now be (a) to (f) rather than 1-6. Each project will be assigned one path on the basis of their activities.

NISRA also advised that they were working with each of the Programme Managing Authorities on tailoring the guidance to their specific Programme and indicative project activities.

The Secretariat will circulate the guidance to all working group members.

**Action: Secretariat**

A CNCC representative asked if Path F could include the promotion/support of activities. NISRA agreed to amend.

**Action: NISRA**

#### **5. Date of next meeting**

It was agreed that the draft TOR would be circulated to the working group for comment and the final version sent for approval by written procedure before being presented to the C & E Monitoring Committee at the end of January 2008.

It was agreed the next meeting would be held on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2008. The Secretariat will be in touch with time and venue, which will be easily accessible by public transport.

**Action: Secretariat**