



Minutes of the Sherpa Group Meeting
High level group on Key Enabling Technologies (KETs HLG)
12 December 2013

1. Introduction on the objectives of the meeting and feedback on the meeting of the Sherpa Group with the Member States Group on KETs, by Mr. Gabriel Crean (Vice President of CEA Technologies, Chairman of the Sherpa Group)

M. Crean welcomed the Sherpa Group. He reminded all that the context of this meeting was important. Firstly, last 10th of December, the European Commission (EC) launched the new Horizon 2020 programme with the publication of the first calls for proposal. The start of Horizon 2020, as shown by the official documents published on the EC website, confirms that most of the High Level Group on KETs (KETs HLG) recommendations elaborated since 2011 have been considered for the new work programme. M. Crean highlighted that this very positive progress made towards a more innovation friendly environment in Europe, still requires further development.

In particular, he referred to the EC State Aid Framework on Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) and stated that Industry's expectations on the use of the article 107.3(b) of the TFUE on the "important project of common European interest" required concrete guidance from the EC.

2. Introduction by Mr. Michel Catinat (Head of Unit Key Enabling Technologies and Digital economy, DG ENTR)

M. Catinat welcomed the Sherpa Group and provided feedback on the final content of the Horizon 2020 programme. M. Catinat confirmed that most of the recommendations and proposals from the KETs HLG were considered and would be implemented in Horizon 2020.

He firstly explained that in the LEIT pillar introduction (Leadership in Enabling and Industrial Technologies), the "cross-cutting KETs section" explicitly mentioned a list of pilot lines under the four areas of high industrial interest and innovation potential identified by the KETs HLG: embedded energy, smart structures, high performance production and innovative industrial processes.

He then confirmed that the implementation of combined funding mechanisms, recommended by the KETs HLG in its first report of 2011, was now a reality. It is now possible to combine Horizon 2020 funds with European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) within the same project.

Regarding pilot lines, by nature close-to-market, M. Catinat confirmed that a specific set of evaluation criteria has been elaborated for KETs pilot lines in line with the recommendations of the KETs HLG of 2011: criteria on excellence include reference to TRL; impact criteria mention soundness of the business plan, first exploitation / manufacturing in Europe, market potential, job creation, etc.; and implementation criteria make reference to cooperation along the value chain.

He also explained that the Horizon 2020 SME Instrument covers access for SMEs to technology platforms. He referred in this context to the recommendation of the KETs HLG of July 2013 on pan-European access for SMEs to KETs technology platforms (recommendation n°5 of the HLG KET Status Implementation Report). The demand side is thus covered by Horizon 2020. Further work is still needed to cover the supply side.

Finally, he informed the Sherpa Group about some studies DG ENTR would launch soon:

- The first study will be launched in January 2014 (will run until February 2015) and will focus on KETs Technology Platforms. The objective of this study will be to map the existing KETs Technology Infrastructures and analyse the current state of cooperation between the platforms. Amongst other things, the study could allow to further develop the idea of "vouchers" given to technology platforms to finance part of their SMEs' support activities. With regard to the idea of "vouchers", some Sherpa members referred to the voucher system applied in Germany to stimulate cooperation. The system was not seen as very successful and so, if applied by the EU, it should be extremely well designed to deliver the expected results. M. Crean stated that as concerns the proposed objectives of this study, it is very useful to identify the barriers from the supply side, by mapping the KETs Technology Infrastructures. However he did not see added value to analyse the state of cooperation between technology infrastructures since many platforms can be found within RTOs which are national government operators with complex collaboration strategies. M. Catinat explained that the objective was to analyse how to better streamline the supply side to meet all needs of SMEs.

- The second study to be launched in January 2014 concerns skills for KETs and should allow to have a broad picture of the European situation in terms of KETs multidisciplinary skills requirements and gaps, in view of proposing an action plan.

3. Update from thematic working groups chairmen on thematic test cases / IPCEI

M. Catinat explained the ongoing work with regard to “Important projects of common European interest” (IPCEI). As soon as the public consultation on a draft Communication on IPCEI will be published, the Sherpa members will be informed. M. Crean saw this upcoming publication as an encouraging sign. Concrete implementation of the IPCEI provision, recommended by the KETs HLG since 2011 was now closer to reality.

During the discussion with the Sherpa Group several issues related to KETs were raised:

- In particular, it was observed that the KETs industry, compared to the aeronautics industry (Airbus in the 80’s could be considered as an IPCEI example), was a diversified one, with various players and intra-European competition.
- The volume issue should be clarified: what should be the size of the projects?

Finally, the chairmen of the working groups (WG) dedicated to the thematic test-cases presented their proposals on potential thematic IPCEIs: WG on Embedded Energy, WG on High Performance Production and WG on Innovative processes using renewable resources.

M. Crean proposed that the initial ideas could be further developed and tested with the sectorial DGs in charge of each industrial domain. He also stressed that considering the delay of availability for EC guidance on the IPCEI provision, industry should take the lead to initiate the process of elaborating IPCEIs in Europe. To do so, the Sherpa Group could prepare a White Paper on the necessity to launch in Europe IPCEIs in the four thematic areas identified by the KETs HLG.

In addition, M. Catinat stated that the European Council of February 2014 would be important. M. Crean stated that the current political context is indeed appropriate: national initiatives on KETs in France (the 34 national industrial plans from the French Government), in Germany (CLIB initiative), etc. demonstrate that the political climate is favourable to support such industrial projects.

4. KETs High Level Group report to European stakeholders in view of the European Council - Introduction by Gabriel Crean, proposal of report architecture and open discussion

M. Crean firstly presented a draft architecture of the KETs HLG report as well as a proposal for the cover page (the tile is only indicative). The Group agreed on the following principles:

- The “2020 scenario” should present the potential of KETs for the competitiveness of the European industry and economy, as well as Europe’s strength (its world class research for instance, etc.). Some parts should therefore be merged, in order to conclude on a positive and encouraging message. “What KETs can do for Europe” is an issue that should be addressed.
- The KETs HLG report should provide to the European stakeholders an Industry perspective on what has been proposed, what has been implemented by the EC, and what still needs to be done.
- The KETs HLG report should deliver political messages on two concrete actions required at a European level to accelerate the implementation of the KETs strategy :
 - o The re-industrialization of Europe via KETs industrial pilot lines and demonstration activities
 - o The acceleration of high tech European SME champions to global market

5. Open discussion and presentation of findings on KET ecosystems

This topic was postponed due to lack of time

6. Presentation on the Horizon 2020 Societal Challenges by EC Representatives (15 min per SC): Energy, Transport, Bio-economy, Climate, environment, and open discussion

As introduction, M. Crean stated that the objective of today’s presentations was to understand the linkages between Societal Challenges and KETs. As further developed in the KETs Status Implementation report, KETs are technology building blocks that should be integrated into European products and solutions.

The presentations are available. The discussion also focused on the need for KETs experts in the evaluation of projects.

7. HLG KET SME support action, feedback from Vilnius SME Assembly, and update from Working Group Chairmen

This topic was postponed due to lack of time

8. Update on combined funding inter-service discussions and proposal for joint working group HLG KET- EC

This topic was postponed due to lack of time

9. Next HLG KET meeting (29 January 2014)

The KETs HLG meeting will take place on 29 January, from 2.30 to 4.30 pm. The Sherpa Group agreed on the global roll-out of the meeting:

- Introduction from Commissioners : Vice-President Tajani and Commissioner Hahn have confirmed their participation; Vice-President Kroes and Commissioner Geoghegan-Quinn have not yet;
- Presentation of the report by the KETs HLG President
- Intervention of HLG speakers
- Conclusion

10. MoU discussion

It was agreed that this MoU should be a “declaration”, to avoid any scrutiny from Industry legal departments. It was agreed that this Declaration would be important towards the Council but also towards the next European Commission. A first draft would be circulated and discussed at the next Sherpa Group meeting.

APPENDIX : AGENDA

AGENDA OF HLG KET SHERPA GROUP MEETING, 12 OF DECEMBER 2013, BRUSSELS

10:00	10 min	
	5 min	Introduction on the objectives of the meeting and feedback on the meeting with the European SME Envoys (Vilnius, SME Assembly, 25-26 Nov. 2013), , by Mr. Gabriel Crean, Vice President of CEA Technologies, CEA, Chairman of the Sherpa Group
	5 min	Introduction by Mr. Michel Catinat, Head of Unit Key Enabling Technologies and ICT, DG ENTR
10:10	90 min	Update from thematic working group chairmen on thematic test cases / IPCEI (M. Mijlemans, M. Cartuyvels, M. Geerts, Ms Burel) (15 min per IPCEI test case)
11:10	70min	High Level Group on KETs report to European Council and European Commission - Introduction by Gabriel Crean, proposal of report architecture and open discussion
12:20	10 min	Open discussion and presentation of findings on KET ecosystems
12:30	90min	Lunch
14:00	90 min	Presentation on the Horizon 2020 Societal Challenges by EC Representatives (15 min per SC): Energy, Transport, Bioeconomy, Climate, environment, and open discussion
	30 min	HLG KET SME support action, feedback from Vilnius SME Assembly, and update from Working Group Chairman (M. Lichtmanneger, M. Bressler)
	15 min	Update on combined funding inter-service discussions and proposal for joint working group HLG KET-EC
	30min	Next HLG KET meeting (29 January 2014)
	15 min	MoU discussion
		Any other business
17h:00		End of meeting