CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR THE SELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE INFORMAL EXPERT GROUP ON MARINE KNOWLEDGE

1 Background

In agreement with Commissioner Karmenu Vella and Vice-President Katainen, the Directorate General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE) has set up an informal group of experts, hereinafter referred to as "the group".

The tasks of the group are to provide the Commission with the scientific, technical and operational expertise on matters concerning marine observation notably by:

- assisting in the monitoring of all phases of all projects set up to further the aims of the European Observation and Data Network (EMODnet)[1];
- advising on the priorities for data to be made available through the Network;
- advising on how the needs of maritime business and investment can be served better by the provision of data through the Network;
- preparing an analysis of gaps in current or future marine observation systems that limit offshore or coastal investment;
- determining how private companies could contribute towards monitoring the seas and oceans and how the data they collect for their own purposes could be made more widely available

The Commission is therefore calling for applications with a view to selecting members of the group.

2 Features of the Group

2.1 Composition

The group shall consist of around 20 members each of whom could be either

- Type B members - individuals appointed to represent a common interest shared by stakeholders who have an interest in marine data, such as a particular area of maritime business, interests shared by local or regional authorities etc. Where appropriate, those individuals may be appointed on the basis of proposals put forward by the stakeholders concerned. They could act as self-employed consultants of employees of an organisation;
- Type C members – organisations who would be responsible for ensuring that their representatives provide a high level of expertise. The Commission may refuse a representative nominated by an organisation if it considers that the representative does not meet the profile required, as indicated in chapters 4 and 5 of this call. In such cases, the organisation concerned shall be asked to appoint another representative.

[1] http://emodnet.eu

2.2 Appointment

Members shall be selected from applicants complying with the requirements referred to in chapter 4 of this call.

Members shall be appointed for three years. They shall remain in office until replaced. Their term of office may be renewed.

Members who are no longer capable of contributing effectively to the group's deliberations, who resign or who do not comply with the conditions set out in Article 339 of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union shall no longer be invited to participate in any meetings of the group and may be replaced for the remainder of their term of office.

Registration on the Transparency Register is required in order for individuals representing a common interest and organisations to be appointed.

Provision may be made for the same number of alternates as members to be appointed. Alternates shall be appointed in accordance with the same conditions as members and shall automatically replace any members who are absent or indisposed.

In order to ensure continuity and the smooth functioning of the group, a reserve list of suitable candidates shall be established that may be used to appoint replacements. The Commission shall ask applicants for their consent before including their names on the list.

Members who are no longer capable of contributing effectively to the group's deliberations, who in the opinion of DG MARE do not comply with the conditions set out in Article 339 of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union or who resign, shall no longer be invited to participate in any meetings of the group and may be replaced for the remainder of their term of office.

2.3 Rules of engagement and operation of the group

The group shall elect a Chairperson from amongst its members by a simple majority.

The group shall act at the request of DG MARE or at the request of its chairman with the agreement of DG MARE.

It is expected that the group will meet twice or three times per year on Commission premises in order to discuss matters concerning marine observation and data. DG MARE shall provide secretarial services.

Members and members representatives should be prepared to attend meetings systematically, to contribute actively to discussions in the group, to be involved in preparatory work ahead of meetings, to examine and provide comments on documents under discussion, and to act, as appropriate, as 'rapporteurs' on ad hoc basis. As a general rule, working documents will be drafted in English and meetings will be also conducted in English.

The group shall adopt its opinions, recommendations or reports by consensus. In the event of a vote, the outcome of the vote shall be decided by a simple majority of the members. Members who have voted against shall have the right to annex a document summarising the reasons of their vote.

Participants in the activities of the group shall not be remunerated for the services they render. Travel and subsistence expenses incurred by participants shall be reimbursed by the Commission in accordance with the provisions in force in the Commission and within the limits of the available appropriations allocated to the Commission services under the annual procedure for the allocation of resources.

Members of the group and their representatives, as well as invited experts and observers, shall comply with the obligations of professional secrecy laid down by the Treaties and their implementing rules, as well as with the Commission's rules on security regarding the protection of EU classified information, laid down in Commission Decisions (EU, Euratom) 2015/443[2] and 2015/444[3]. Should they fail to respect these obligations, the Commission may take all appropriate measures.

On a proposal by and in agreement with DG MARE, the group shall adopt its rules of procedure on the basis of the standard rules of procedure for expert groups.

DG MARE may invite experts from outside the group with specific competence in a subject on the agenda to participate in the work of the group or sub-group on an ad hoc basis.

DG MARE may give observer status to individuals and organisations, either by direct invitation or as a result of this call for applications. When entities are appointed as observers, they shall nominate their representatives. Although observers and their representatives may be permitted by the Chair to take part in the discussions of the group and provide expertise, they shall not have voting rights and shall not participate in the formulation of recommendations or advice of the group.

In agreement with DG MARE, the group may set up sub-groups to examine specific questions on the basis of terms of reference defined by the group, with the agreement of DG MARE. Sub-groups shall report to the group. They shall operate in accordance with the rules laid down by the group and in compliance with the Horizontal rules on expert groups. If members of sub-groups are not members of the group, they shall be selected via a public call for applications. Sub-groups shall be dissolved as soon as the mandate is fulfilled.

2.4 Transparency

The group shall be published on the Register of Commission expert groups and other similar entities, hereinafter referred to as “the Register of expert groups".

The names of individuals representing a common interest shall be published on the Register of expert groups; the interest represented shall be disclosed. The names of organisations shall be published on the Register of expert groups. The names of observers shall also be published.

All relevant documents (such as agendas, minutes and participants’ submissions) shall be made available either on the Register of expert groups or *via* a link from the Register to a dedicated website, where information can be found. In particular, DG MARE shall ensure publication of the agenda and other relevant background documents in due time

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2 Commission Decision (EU, Euratom) 2015/443 of 13 March 2015 on Security in the Commission (OJ L 72, 17.3.2015, p. 41).

3 Commission Decision (EU, Euratom) 2015/444 of 13 March 2015 on the security rules for protecting EU classified information (OJ L 72, 17.3.2015, p. 53).

ahead of the meeting, followed by timely publication of minutes. Access to dedicated websites shall not be submitted to user registration or any other restriction. Exceptions to publication shall only be made where it is deemed that disclosure of a document would undermine the protection of a public or private interest as defined in Article 4 of Regulation (EC) N° 1049/2001[4].

Personal data shall be collected, processed and published in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 45/2001.

3 Application procedure

Interested individuals and organisations are invited to submit their application to the European Commission, DG MARE.

Applications must be completed in one of the official languages of the European Union. However, applications in English would facilitate the evaluation procedure. If another language is used, it would be desirable to include a summary of the CV in English.

Organisations shall indicate the name of their representative(s) in the group.

An application will be deemed admissible only if it is sent by the deadline and includes the documents referred to below. All documents submitted by applicants should be duly filled in, legible, signed and numbered sequentially.

3.1 Supporting documents

The applicant should apply through the EU Survey on-line tool at the following URL:

https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/M+arineKnowledgeExpertGroup2016

This should include the following information:

- the applicant's motivation for answering this call and stating what contribution the applicant could make to the group;
- a classification form duly filled in specifying, inter alia, the category to which the application is made, as well the interest represented;
- a selection criteria form duly filled in documenting how the applicant fulfills the selection criteria listed in chapters 4 and 5 of this call;
- for individual experts applying to be appointed as members of the group to represent a common interest, as well as for representatives nominated by organisations, curriculum vitae (CV) shall also be provided, preferably not exceeding three pages.

Additional supporting documents (e.g. publications) may be requested at a later stage.

3.2 Deadline for application

The deadline for submission for this call for interest is 1600 (Brussels time) on 4 May, 2017.

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[4] These exceptions are intended to protect public security, military affairs, international relations, financial, monetary or economic policy, privacy and integrity of the individual, commercial interests, court proceedings and legal advice, inspections/investigations/audits and the institution's decision-making process.

4 Selection criteria

The overriding principle in selection will be to ensure that that all significant users of marine data are represented. The Commission / DG [...] will take the following criteria into account when assessing applications:

- Proven and relevant competence and experience, including at European and/or international level, in areas relevant to marine observation and data
- Good knowledge of the English language

5 Selection procedure

DG MARE will use the following procedure when assessing applications.

1. Group the applications into four groups
    a. academia, research, education
    b. private bodies
    c. public authorities
    d. civil society
2. divide each group into domains of similar interest
3. If there is more than one application per domain then the selection will be by:
    a. proven and relevant competence and experience, including at European and or international level, in areas relevant to marine observation and data (all members);
    b. proven capacity to represent effectively the position shared by stakeholders (members representing a common interest only);
    c. competence, experience and hierarchical level of the proposed representatives (organisations only);
    d. good knowledge of the English language allowing active participation in the discussions (all members).

It may be that more than one person per domain be selected; for instance if there are geographical or disciplinary specificities that could ensure balanced representation of relevant experience and knowledge, The need to achieve overall gender balance in the Group will also be taken into account.

It may also be that not all domains are represented, should the knowledge of that domain be adequately covered by another.

The selection procedure will be followed by the establishment of a list of most suitable applicants, and concluded by the appointment of the members of the group. DG MARE shall establish a reserve list of suitable candidates that may be used to appoint replacements.

The list of members shall be published on the Register of expert groups.

For any further information please contact MARE-A1@ec.europa.eu

Annex: Privacy statement

Electronically signed on 02/03/2017 10:17 (UTC+01) in accordance with article 4.2 (Validity of electronic documents) of Commission Decision 2004/563