

"Systematic and Permanent Dialogue with the local democracies in Europe. A strategic approach"

(Work document for the European Commission)

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**I.- Brief presentation of GMF**

GMF is composed of municipalities in France, Sweden, Spain, Netherlands, Lithuania, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, Slovakia and Slovenia. At the same time it maintains collaborations with municipalities in Germany, Belgium and Great Britain.

The objectives of the association are:

- Defend the application of local democracy principles related to nuclear energy management in order to get the total respect for the principles of Transparency, Local Participation and Economic Development.

- Facilitate the exchange of information and experiences among its members.

- Promote the participation of local decision their makers into the European debate forums and in the decision-making processes being carried out in the EU.

- Help with the implementation of the EU standards in an enlarged EU.
The activities currently carried out are:

- International conferences on nuclear energy and its local impacts in their different aspects.
- Maintain and develop permanent relations with the EU and follow up the evolution of its policies.
- Maintain and develop permanent relations with other international organizations (OECD-NEA, OIEA-IAEA, EDRAM, WENRA, WANO, FORATOM, etc.) by participating in their debate forums.
- Exchange information among the partners about the different realities in each country.
- Maintain a web page of significant news for the members of GMF.

II.- Comments on the document.

II.1 General

We appreciate the initiative of establishing efficient information systems and permanent participation.

The initiative of channelling this action through the Committee of Regions (CdR) seems to be an important way in combination with others of a more direct sort. The local level and the local case must be respected better. Our national organizations are not always our best representatives.

The general principle for any type of relation should be effectiveness; therefore participation should start with defined and understandable aims.

The document should define when the European Commission has to open interactive processes in order to avoid a bureaucratic and less effective system.

Large conferences about general and too abstract have to be avoided.
II.2 Contents

It is necessary to make a distinction between information and participation. The first one is indispensable for the second one.

The final document should define a minimum system of information flow, partly of general interest but mainly sectorial that guarantees punctual as well as complete knowledge.

The existing projects as well as the monitoring and control that are carried out in the implementation of sectorial policies should also be known.

There is not enough general information proposed on a web page. There should be interactive communication instruments leading to forums for debates, conferences, exchanges, conferences, etc.

The participation should be real and therefore useful for all the parties involved. Answer should be given to the questions of who, how, when and why participation is needed.

The associations should demonstrate their implication in work programs that refer to the contents of the debate and their possibilities for true collaboration by means of a minimum structure or implication of their members.

II.3 Committee of Regions (CdR)

It is essential to define a transparent and plural system for electing representative associations.

The CdR should only be a work forum without either executive or decision capacity on the debates. It should be kept in mind that the municipalities represented in this committee are large municipalities and the sectorial associations generally include small municipalities. The large municipalities work alone as non-associated. The small ones need the association to defend their interests.

The CdR is a good channel in order to carry out the election of representative associations, organize programs and general conferences, organize debates and sectorial participative processes as well as channel helps for making participation easier.

The CdR should not be the only body that guarantees the participation in sectorial topics, but it does seem ideal for the organization of wider events.
The CdR should have enough financial resources in order to guarantee a true democratic participation. Not all the countries have the same means and not all the associations have enough funds to support their associates' expenses. Economic means will be really effective if participation is only opened up to the truly representative ones.

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