

Meeting:	NuLeAF Steering Group, 22 June 2006
Agenda Item:	10
Subject:	Involvement in European Initiatives
Author:	Fred Barker
Purpose:	To provide an overview of NuLeAF involvement in COWAM, CARL and EUROCLI projects

1 Introduction

NuLeAF is involved in two major collaborative research projects – COWAM and CARL. It has also been invited to participate in an initiative called EUROCLI. This report outlines the nature of the initiatives and seeks Steering Group endorsement for involvement in COWAM 3.

2 COWAM

COWAM stands for Community Waste Management and involves projects within the European Research Frameworks of the European Commission.

COWAM 1 (2000-2003)

This set up a network of stakeholders in the governance of radioactive waste management, involving 230 delegates from 10 European countries. The purpose was to set up a collective learning process, focussing on the quality of decision-making processes from a local viewpoint. A final report was published in November 2003 (www.cowam.com/documents/cowam-en2003.pdf).

COWAM 2 (2003-2006)

This engaged the network in applied research focussing on key topics identified in COWAM 1. The project will finish in 2006 with the issue of practical guidance addressing:

- the role of local democracy and participatory assessment methods
- the influence of local actors on national decision-making processes
- arrangements for the long term governance of radioactive waste management
- the quality of decision-making processes.

This guidance should be of particular relevance to NuLeAF's work.

The last COWAM 2 Annual Seminar is being held in Belgium between 4-7 July 06. Fergus McMorrow is attending on behalf of NuLeAF.

COWAM 3 (2007-2009)

This project – known as COWAM in Practice (CIP) – will focus on five countries: France, Romania, Slovenia, Spain and the UK. The aim is to support participants in their development of new governance arrangements for radioactive waste management.

In each participating country, it is intended that a ‘National Stakeholder Group’ (NSG) will assess, from a local perspective, the governance approaches developed in their country. This group will be supported by a National Facilitator who will organise the national work programme and prepare a case study. An international expert group (the Methodological Task Force, MTF) will give further support by providing research to each NSG on issues the national group consider most relevant to analyse its experience. In the second part of the project, the MTF will analyse the case studies and develop guidelines for others to use.

The NuLeAF secretariat (through John Hetherington) was closely involved in the setting up of CIP and in developing a partnership for UK involvement. Discussions got to the point where a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was about to be signed between NuLeAF, Westlakes Scientific Consulting (WSC) and Enviro. The MoU allocates the following roles to the UK partners:

- NuLeAF: Participation in the CIP Steering Group and 6 meetings with National Stakeholder Groups, and assistance with the National Facilitator role.
- WSC: Primary role as National Facilitator, organiser of meetings with National Stakeholder Groups and participant in the MTF.
- Enviro: Participant in the MTF and assistance with the National Facilitator role.

At the time of writing the Executive Director is in discussion with WSC to clarify expectations of NuLeAF’s role and coverage of associated costs.

In principle, CIP will provide opportunity for NuLeAF to play an important role in reviewing the development of the UK’s approach to implementing policy on the long-term management of radioactive wastes, with a particular focus on the effectiveness of local community involvement.

3 CARL

CARL is a social sciences research project into the effect of stakeholder involvement in decision-making on radioactive waste management. The name CARL comes from the four types of partners in the project: Citizens, Agencies responsible for radioactive waste management, Research social scientists, and Licensing and regulatory authorities. Participants come from Belgium, Finland, Slovenia, Sweden and the UK. The project is co-funded by participating agencies.

The overall aim is to develop practical guidance on the organisation and conduct of effective stakeholder involvement in radioactive waste management.

UK participants come from NuLeAF, Nirex, the University of East Anglia and the regulators. A Steering Committee meets twice a year. NuLeAF is represented on the SC by Councillor Tim Knowles from Cumbria County Council.

The project's first comparative report, 'Towards a typology of Stakeholders in Radioactive Waste Management' was published in March 2006. A Summary County Report on the UK has also been published (www.carl-research.org/docs). This suggests the following issues for further investigation in the UK context:

- The consequences of the widespread turn to stakeholder participation, both in terms of the character of stakeholder relationships and the socio-technical activity of those responsible for waste management.
- The potential for and limits to stakeholder influence, including the extent to which participatory processes represent a break with traditional top-down consultative approaches.
- The significance of institutional changes for stakeholder involvement, including devolved government, the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive, and reform of the planning system.

The annual CARL workshop is being held in Troon, Scotland on the 29 and 30 November 2006. It is anticipated that there will be up to 15 participants from NuLeAF and COSLA. The workshop will discuss the findings from the project's research on the sorts of questions above.

The CARL project is scheduled come to an end in September 2007, with a final workshop in Sweden.

4 EUROCLI

An initiative is underway to form a European Association of nuclear site stakeholder groups and local liaison committees ('EUROCLI'). The initiative is supported by the French National Association of Local Commissions (ANCLI) and the Spanish equivalent (AMAC).

The purpose would be to:

- Promote a greater consideration of participatory democracy in the governance of nuclear activities;
- To voice at European level questions, concerns and comments of Site Stakeholder Groups and Local Committees
- To demonstrate the capacity of these groups to increase the quality of decision-making processes
- To disseminate good practices and enhance the exchange of experiences in the EU.

As a result of discussions between John Hetherington and those organising the initiative earlier in the year, there is an expectation that NuLeAF will participate in some way in the EUROCLI initiative.

At the time of writing, the Executive Director is discussing with the NDA the issue of who might lead UK input (as the NDA has overseen the setting up of Site Stakeholder Groups around its sites in the UK).

Although NuLeAF should maintain links with this initiative, it is probably not appropriate for NuLeAF to play the leading role for a number of reasons:

- Although NuLeAF has Member Authorities that sit on Site Stakeholder Groups, it cannot claim to represent the views of those groups.
- NuLeAF's interest in nuclear issues is focussed on legacy management and does not extend to whether new nuclear power stations should be built (which will be addressed within the EUROCLI initiative).
- In addition to representing local authorities with nuclear sites in their area, NuLeAF represents a wider local government constituency.

The organisers hope to announce the formation of EUROCLI at a conference on 'Sustainable Development of Territories and Risk Governance' in Dunkirk on 5-6 October. NuLeAF has been invited to make a presentation to one of the workshops at the Conference on the theme of 'Building Strategies for Change at the National and European Level: a Necessity for Local and Regional Actors'.

A verbal update about participation in the EUROCLI initiative and Dunkirk Conference will be provided at the Steering Group meeting.

5 Recommendations

The COWAM and CARL projects are both highly relevant to NuLeAF's concerns. It will therefore be important to ensure that the findings from each project are reviewed so that they can be used to inform the development of NuLeAF's work.

It is recommended that the Steering Group:

- a) Consider reports on the outputs from COWAM 2 and the November 06 CARL workshop at future meetings.
- b) Endorse participation in COWAM 3 and delegate authority to the Executive Director to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with UK partners, subject to satisfactory clarification of NuLeAF's role and coverage of associated costs.
- c) Consider participation in the EUROCLI initiative and Dunkirk Conference in the light of a verbal update by the Executive Director.