



Enabling
& Transboundary Cooperation
& Integrated Water Resources Management
in the extended **DRIN RIVER BASIN**



Memorandum of Understanding
for the Management of the Extended Transboundary Drin Basin

GEF Project “Enabling Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated
Water Resources Management in the Extended Drin River Basin”

16th Meeting of the Drin Core Group
7th Meeting of the Steering Committee of the GEF Drin Project

Annotated Agenda

Ohrid, 15-16 November 2018

The Coordinated Action for the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding for the management of the Drin basin (Drin CORDA) is supported by the GEF Drin Project. Thus, the latter constitutes an institutional project implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and executed by the Global Water Partnership (GWP) through GWP-Mediterranean (GWP-Med), in cooperation with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). The Drin Core Group (DCG), being the multilateral body responsible for the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding serves as the Steering Committee of the Project. GWP-Med serves as the Secretariat of the DCG.

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Thursday 15 November 2018

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Thursday 15 November 2018

1. **Welcome (15.30-15.35 h)**
2. **Adoption of the Agenda (15.35-15.40 h)**
3. **Review and adoption of the report of the 15th Meeting of the Drin Core Group (DCG)/6th Meeting of the Steering Committee (SC) of the GEF Drin Project (15.40-15.45 h)**
4. **Drin CORDA Report 2018 (15.45-16.45 h)**

Background

The operational and financial framework for the activities to implement the Drin MoU is provided mainly by the Drin Project Document and the Strategic Results Framework therein. The Drin Project document is fully aligned in content with the Drin Action Plan approved by the Drin Ministerial Meeting; the Project document has *de facto* updated the Drin Action Plan. Additional activities are financed by the Austrian Development Agency.

The vast majority of the activities planned for January - May 2018 were implemented in accordance to the Workplan 2018 (approved by the 14th DCG meeting).

More information can be found in the Q1-Q3 2018 Report that details the Activities implemented and the Results achieved, in relation to the following areas of action:

1. *Development of the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) report*
 - 1.1. Information and Data collection/generation – Building the Drin Database
 - 1.2. Finalisation of Thematic reports on:
 - 1.2.1. Pollution
 - 1.2.2. Institutional and Legal Setting
 - 1.2.3. Biodiversity and Ecosystems
 - 1.2.4. Hydrology
 - 1.2.5. Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus
 - 1.3. Preparation of TDA Synthesis Report
2. *Development of the IMS*
 - 2.1. Presentation of IMS related outputs (prepared by the consultant) and approval by the EWG and the DCG
 - 2.2. Presentation of the draft ToR and specifications for the development of the IMS (prepared by the consultant) and approval by the EWG and the DCG
 - 2.3. Procurement of Services and contracting consultant(s)
3. *Support of the work of the DCG and its EWG*
4. *Drin Core Group Meetings*
5. *Expert Working Group Meetings (i) Water Framework Directive, (ii) Expert Working Group Biodiversity, and Ecosystems (iii) Monitoring and Information Exchange*
6. *Establishment and operation of Inter-ministerial Committees*
7. *Capacity Building activities*
 - 7.1. Organization of two (2) Capacity Building Workshops
 - 7.2. Participation of representatives of the Drin Riparians in regional and international workshops and conferences
8. *A program of on the ground pilot demonstrations will deliver tangible results using quantifiable indicators*

- 8.1. *Integrated River Basin Management Planning in Lake Ohrid*
- 8.2. *Preparation of a wastewater management decision support tool - Wastewater treatment in Shkodra city area*
- 8.3. *Wastewater management in Kosovo*
- 8.4. *Reduction of nutrient load and forest preservation through biomass collection and production of fuel briquettes in Montenegrin part of Skadar Lake*
- 8.5. *Establishment and testing of Transboundary Monitoring in Skadar/Shkoder and Buna/Bojana*
- 8.6. *Cooperation on Flood Risk Management in the Drin Basin*
9. *Public Participation and Stakeholders Involvement*
10. *Implementation of Communication and Outreach activities*
11. *Production and/or reproduction of information and communication material e.g. publications including Leaflets, Brochures, Books, video spots etc.*

Action

- The Secretariat/PCU will report to the DCG on the implementation of the Workplan 2018 and the results achieved. Related information is presented in the report Q1-Q3 2018; additional information regarding the developments in the period October – November 2018 as well as the expected developments for December 2018 will be also presented. The meeting will be asked to consider the report for approval.
- The consultants that prepare the Integrated River Basin Management Planning in Lake Ohrid will make a presentation on the developments. The DCG will provide advice and guidance.
- The consultants that have undertaken the preparation of a wastewater management decision support tool will make a presentation on the developments. The DCG will provide advice and guidance.

Background Documents

- Q1-Q3 2018 Report

5. Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis – Thematic reports (16.45-17.00 h)

General description

The Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) is being carried out to:

- Identify and assess transboundary -including water and other natural resources as well as environmental management- issues.
- Assess the environmental impacts and socio-economic consequences of each issue.
- Identify the immediate and underlying causes of these issues among the social and economic sectors and activities. Furthermore, the TDA should identify the related root causes/ drivers that ultimately create these issues. These could be information gaps on the existing environmental state, policy distortions, institutional and/or legal framework related deficiencies etc.

The TDA shall provide the necessary information that will enable countries to:

- Discuss and decide on the issues that will be addressed with priority.
- Negotiate and formulate a Strategic Programme of Actions and interventions to address the causes and drivers that result in the identified issues.

The TDA is based on and be the synthesis of the following thematic reports:

- (i) Socio-economic; it was developed in 2017 and approved by the DCG in early 2018

- (ii) Biodiversity/Ecosystems; it was finalized and approved by the DCG in early in 2018
- (iii) Institutional and Legal Setting; the draft was finalised in 2017 and approved by the DCG in early in 2018 – the refinement of the draft is being done by UNECE
- (iv) Hydrology/Hydrogeology; a draft is ready (see agenda items below)
- (v) Pollution; a draft is ready (see agenda items below)

The draft Causal Chain Analysis is prepared (see agenda items below); a draft of the TDA synthesis report is being prepared while the final draft is expected in the end of January 2019 (due to availability of time of the consultant that is preparing this). The structure of the synthesis report follows this of the endorsed by the DCG annotated Table of Contents.

The Thematic Reports developed, include the necessary elements to be used as building blocks for the development of a river basin management plan at the Drin Basin level should such a decision be taken by the Riparians in the future (including: initial proposal for the delineation of water bodies in accordance to the EU WFD, calculation of water budget under different scenarios, analysis of pollution pressures, assessment of pollution loads generated, assessment of chemical pollution, identification of protected areas, analysis of the governance of water and environment in the basin, initial assessment of the condition of and the pressures to biodiversity etc.). The level of detail of the pollution report is such that can be used by the authorities of the Riparians for policy making. The Analysis of Chemical Pollution Report (annex of the Pollution Thematic Report) can be used as reference for the academia/research institutes.

5.1 Thematic report on Hydrology / Hydrogeology (17.00-17.45 h)

Background

The Thematic Report on Hydrology / Hydrogeology provides the core information related to the water resources management in the Drin Basin including the: (i) overall description of the basin; (ii) overview of sub-basins and underground formations; (iii) a first attempt for the delineation of surface water bodies¹; (iv) groundwater bodies identified by the Riparians; (v) sector water demands (agriculture/industry/domestic); (v) water budget under three scenarios; (vi) description of hydro-morphological issues. It will form the basis for the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis.

The report has been prepared by the Project Team with the assistance of two international experts and input from the Seismological and Hydrological Institute of Montenegro and three (3) National Experts, one for each of the remaining beneficiary Drin Riparians.

The delineation of the water bodies as well as the water budget was made feasible through the cooperation with the Institute of GeoSciences, Energy, Water and Environment (IGEWE) of Albania that run the model *Panta Rhei*, an economic-environmental simulation tool developed with the financial Support of GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit) and fed with data provided by the Hydro-Met institutes and the responsible institutions of the beneficiary Drin Riparians.

Delays in the preparation of the report was due to delays from the side of the expert that had been charged

¹ These can't be considered as an official delineation of water bodies at the transboundary level as per the EU WFD; such delineation will be subject to work for the preparation of a River Basin Management Plan at the transboundary level, discussion and related decisions by the Drin Riparians. However, the Hydrologic reference areas delineated as part of the work for the preparation of the Thematic report on Hydrology /Hydrogeology can be used as basis for the development of an extended Drin River Basin Management Plan.

to prepare this. PCU took action resulting in the report being ready for the DCG meeting.

Action

- The meeting will be presented the Draft Thematic Report on Hydrology/Hydrogeology and will provide comments and guidance for its finalisation.

Background Documents

- Draft Thematic Report on Hydrology

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5.2 Thematic report on Pollution (09:00-09.45 h)

Background

The Thematic report on Pollution provides an assessment of the pollution status and trends of the Drin basin and identify and describe national and transboundary pollution sources.

Its preparation is based on readily available information (10 years data-series from the monitoring programmes of the Drin Riparians) as well as information developed through the GEF Drin project (2 monitoring expeditions) and follows -at the level possible- the EU WFD's requirements with regard to the chemical and ecological characterization of water bodies.

It is prepared by an Officer - assembles also information and provides expertise regarding Montenegro- with the assistance of three (3) National Experts and one (1) International Expert; the latter assists in the preparation of the Thematic report and the respective chapter of the TDA.

The information is given **at three levels:**

- the sub-basin level i.e. Lake Prespa, Lake Ohrid, Black Drin River, White Drin River, Drin River, Lake Skadar/Shkoder, Buna/Bojana River.
- at the level of individual Riparian of each of the sub-basins mentioned above
- at the level of Drin basin;

A draft report is ready.

Action

- The meeting will be presented the two major parts of the Draft Thematic Report on Hydrology/Hydrogeology:
 - Pollution pressures and generated pollution loads in the Basin;
 - Chemical pollution assessment.
- The DCG will provide comments and guidance for the finalisation of the Report.

Background Documents

- Draft Thematic Report on Pollution

5.3 Thematic report on Nexus (09.45-10.15 h)

Background

The Nexus analysis -as per UNECE methodology- is being done in two phases:

- A. Phase I includes the identification of Nexus issues of priority and a qualitative assessment, for each of the priority issues of linkages/benefits/trade-offs, among the Nexus sectors.
- B. Phase II comprises the use of modelling tools to support a comprehensive assessment that will quantify the linkages/benefits/trade-offs, among sectors, and assess the trends under different developmental scenarios as means to identify optimal use of natural resources for sustained growth.

A. The Nexus analysis Phase I is financed through the GEF Drin Project and co-financed by Austrian Development Agency (ADA) supported Project "Promoting the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources in Southeastern Europe, through the use of the Nexus approach" a.k.a. the NEXUS Project; it will contribute to and become integral part of the TDA and SAP development of the GEF Drin Project.

The outcomes of a Nexus analysis can complement the outcomes of the TDA and assist in the development of the SAP as follows:

- i) Introduce additional level(s) of analysis of interlinkages and identification of trade-offs and co-benefits considering -in addition to water and environment- also energy and food security.
- ii) Assist in the identification of causes of transboundary issues and problems beyond the basin: energy and agricultural management don't use the basin as a spatial unit of reference; there are energy and trade flows that transcend basins creating interlinkages and trade-offs beyond the basin.
- iii) Assist in the identification of measures/solutions as part of the SAP that will (a) address transboundary problems and issues; (b) foster Nexus sectors security in the Drin Basin; (c) facilitate integrated Nexus related resources management.

Overall, addressing the nexus of water-food-energy-ecosystem security, the relevance of the entire spectrum of competing water needs is recognised, stressing the explicit role, interests, and leadership of other sectoral stakeholders beyond the water and environment sectors.

A concept note explaining the approach that will be followed has been prepared and circulated by UNECE.

The Thematic report on Nexus is being prepared by UNECE in cooperation with the Secretariat, and the assistance of four (4) Local Experts, one for each Drin Riparian. The report is expected to be finalized within the year and inform the TDA.

There is an effort, through the Drin TDA, to combine and if possible to couple the TDA/SAP methodology with the Nexus assessment methodology.

B. The Nexus analysis Phase II for the Drin Basin, will be implemented fully through the ADA NEXUS Project.

The NEXUS Project beneficiaries include Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo², Montenegro, Serbia and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The Regional Working Group on Environment (RWG Env) established under the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) *South East European (SEE) 2020 – Jobs and Prosperity in a European Perspective Strategy* serves as Steering Committee of the Project.

Serving the SEE2020 strategy, the Project's purpose is to introduce the Water, Energy, Food and Ecosystems Nexus approach and catalyse action for its adoption and implementation in the SEE2020 area, at the Economies' and transboundary basin levels. Doing so, the Project will also enable the identification of nexus related issues to be addressed with priority in two Transboundary Basins and one State/Economy i.e. where its activities will focus on and create the conditions for financing actions to address four of these issues.

One of the transboundary basins that the project focuses on, is the Drin Basin; the latter was decided by the representatives of the Drin Riparians in the Regional Working Group on Environment under the RCC. The DCG -that has as the primary role the coordination of actions in the Drin Basin for the implementation of the Drin MoU- has decided to become also the Steering Mechanism of the nexus activities focusing on Drin under of the ADA Nexus.

Action

- The meeting will be presented the Nexus concept note and will provide comments and guidance for the development of the report.

Background Documents

- Concept note explaining the approach that will be followed has been prepared and circulated by UNECE

5.4 TDA Synthesis Report (10.15-11.00 h)

Background

The draft Causal Chain Analysis is prepared; a first draft of the TDA synthesis report is prepared while the final draft is expected till the end of the year. The structure of the synthesis report follows this of the endorsed by the DCG annotated Table of Contents.

Action

- The meeting will be presented the Causal Chain Analysis and a first draft of the TDA synthesis and will provide comments and input for its finalisation.

Background Documents

- Draft Causal Chain Analysis

² *References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999).

6. Information management System IMS (11.15-12.00 h)

Background

One of the concerns for sustainable development in the Drin basin identified in the Drin MoU is the need for “improving access to comprehensive data and adequate information to fully understand the current state of the environment and water resources and the hydrological system (including surface and coastal waters) as well as ecosystems of the Drin Basin” (Drin MoU Article 3: i).

At the same time, Drin Riparians have agreed that one of the priority actions to address this concern is the “improvement of information exchange through the establishment of a system for regular exchange of relevant information among competent authorities of each party” (Drin MoU Article 4: c).

The development of an Information Management system (hereinafter: IMS) has been envisaged to enable the Drin Riparians to collect, store and share data and information in a consistent way.

The aim is for the IMS to be used as: a) repository of data that will be collected and produced through the development of the Transboundary Diagnostic Analysis (TDA) and b) a platform to enable joint data collection, storage and exchange, including GIS functions.

All institutions and organizations in the beneficiary Riparians, that will be using the IMS, start from different positions in terms of water resources and related water management data collection and administration; these positions may have been driven by political, historical and geographical conditions. Thus, it is expected that in order for the IMS to be established and used, certain conditions must be in place prior to the development of IT infrastructure and tools. Among these, the most important ones are the following:

- The beneficiary Riparians agree and are willing to exchange water management data;
- The beneficiary Riparians agree regarding the: data to be exchanged; characteristics of data to be exchanged; frequency of exchange; format and units to use; on the modules that the IMS will have and will be developed; ownership and management of the joint IMS etc

The development of the IMS should be seen as a tailored process that will be implemented in a number of phases facilitating and enabling the development of efficient data exchange mechanisms that will be used by the beneficiary Riparians. To that extent, the first phase of the development of the IMS focus on the preparation, under the framework of the implementation of the Drin MoU, the Terms of Reference that will define conditions, parameters and specifications for the: i) collection, storage and exchange of data among beneficiary Riparians; ii) development as well as the operationalization of the IMS.

The Drin Project is financing technical support for the first phase of the development of Information Management System (IMS). The Tasks and respective deliverables of the consultant hired are indicated in the table below.

Task as per Consultancy contract	Deliverables
Task 1: Analysis of the “present state” and definition of “desired state” for basin and water data management in each of the beneficiary Riparians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Inception Report ● Reports from the missions in each of the beneficiary Riparians ● Detailed analysis report - water data management

Task 2: Determine IMS thematic datasets and set of standards for exchanging basin and water management data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List and specifications of IMS themes, data-sets objects and layers • The feature catalogue • IMS data model • Standards to be used within IMS • IMS data exchange protocols
Task 3: IMS Architecture -Operational concept for next phase(s) of IMS development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specification of IMS tools and services • Draft proposal - architecture of the IMS system
Task 4: Develop the IMS Implementation plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation plan for development of IMS • Report from the Implementation plan meeting(s) with the beneficiary Riparians
Task 5: Develop ToR for the development of the IMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of reference (s) for a phased design, development and implementation of IMS

The Consultant delivered the following products in November 2017 and presented these to the EWG and DCG:

- *“Detailed Analysis Report on Basin and Water Data Management Drin Riparians”*.
- *“IMS thematic datasets and set of standards for exchanging basin and water management data”* Report including: List and specifications of IMS themes, data-sets objects and layers; The feature catalogue; IMS data model; Standards to be used within IMS; IMS data exchange protocols.
- Architecture/Operational concept for next phase(s) of IMS development
- Implementation plan for the development of IMS

The outputs were sent in January 2018 to the EWGs and DCGs for comments. The IMS related outputs (see above) are voluminous and use specialised technical language. Following guidance by the PCU, a summary was prepared by the consultant to enable the beneficiaries following the process and providing guidance on the issues necessary for the consultant to finish its work.

The 14th DCG meeting had decided that:

- The Drin Riparians should take more time to go through the extensive IMS reports, comprehend the content and assess the extent to which the current proposal: (i) serve their needs; (ii) is compatible with the IMSs that exist in the Drin Riparians.
- The Expert Working Group on Monitoring and Information Exchange of the DCG will convene to validate the information on the basis of which the IMS reports was prepared; discuss the IMS reports; provide guidance to the consultant for the finalisation of the proposal on the Architecture as well as for the preparation of the ToR.

The following outputs have been presented again during the meeting of the EWG on Monitoring and Information Exchange (Tirana, 20-21 February 2018); the respective decisions of the EWG are given below:

- *“Detailed Analysis Report on Basin and Water Data Management Drin Riparians”*
 - The EWG MIE agreed with the findings of the report and validated it as an outcome of the meeting with a provision of comments to be received within two weeks following the EWG meeting, by 5 March.
 - It was decided that the consultant will update the table by including the UNECE Water Convention reporting.
 - The EWG MIE recommended the DCG to approve the findings of the report.

- *“IMS thematic datasets and set of standards for exchanging basin and water management data”*.
 - The EWG MIE:
 - validated and agreed with the presented results of the report.
 - agreed with the list of priority datasets (hydrological, meteorological, pollution and water level). The table with the list of datasets would be updated accordingly by the consultant and sent to the EWG members.
 - had no objections to the standards and protocols.
 - recommend DCG to approve the findings of the report.
- *“IMS Architecture -Operational concept for next phase(s) of IMS development”*. The Draft proposal regarding the architecture of the IMS included: advantages and disadvantages of various options, system components (hardware, software, communication facilities), operational and technical conditions; existing infrastructure, budgetary restrictions, maintenance costs, future infrastructure needs.
 - The EWG MIE validated the proposal on the condition that:
 - the budgetary table will be updated and restructured in order to enable decision making of the EWG: cost should be presented in uniform manner (investment cost, operational cost) with brief elaboration of subject and in accordance with timeframe of phased development (sub-modules). The consultant will briefly elaborate his suggestion of best applicable option.
 - Modules will be developed as sub-modules (at least two) of presented base module and briefly elaborated in terms of timeframe and resources.

During the previous DCG meeting the consultant presented again the work and outputs under the Task 3 (as per ToR for the development of the IMS) *“IMS Architecture -Operational concept for next phase(s) of IMS development”*. Elements of the ToR for the development of the IMS was presented as well.

The consultant reminded the DCG that there will be a considerable investment necessary to build an IMS that will enable the exchange of about 180 parameters. As discussed during the 14th Meeting of the Drin Core Group, Ms. Visnja Omerbegovic presented 5 different options for the set-up and operation of the IMS corresponding to different budget requirements, including the following:

- Option 1: Commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) system hosted on the premises of the PCU;
- Option 2: Hybrid system hosted on the premises of a neutral partner organization;
- Option 3: Hybrid system hosted in the cloud;
- Option 4: Open Source system hosted on the premises of the PCU; and
- Option 5: Open Source system hosted in the cloud.

All five (5) presented options are suitable for the exchange of the following data:

- Data collected in the framework of the TDA of the GEF Drin project;
- Hydrological and Meteorological data exchanged with the World Meteorological Organization;
- Data reported to the European Environment Agency including:
 - i. WISE SoE - Water quality in transitional, coastal and marine waters; and
 - ii. EURIWATERNET;
 - iii. European Pollutant Release and Transfer Register ((E-PRTR-a);
- Data from national River Basin Management plans and Flood Risk Management Plans.

The DCG discussed in detail the proposed options for the establishment of the IMS. The DCG decided that options 2 and 5 are the most appropriate. The Consultant explained related operational costs to burden the Riparians for each option.

The investment costs for the development of the IMS will be covered by the GEF Drin Project. As none of the Drin Riparians were ready to undertake the operational costs for the IMS, the DCG requested the Secretariat to investigate the possibility for a neutral partner organization to host or provide hosting services for the IMS, preferably a UN body. The Secretariat discussed with UNECE and IWLEARN. None of the two accepted to host the IMS.

A written procedure was followed for the approval of the ToR as per decision of the 15 DCG.

Action

The meeting will be reminded the options for the set-up and operation of the IMS and will discuss the steps ahead for the development and operation of the IMS.

Background Documents

- ToR for the development of the Information Management System
- Summary of options and prices for the development and maintenance of the IMS.
- Summary for Proposal of IMS Architecture
- Summary of key findings of the reports
- Report of the 16th DCG Meeting

7. Floods (12.00-13.00 h)

Background

Conditions for the implementation of the provisions of the Drin MoU in relation to flood risk management are being created. The floods issue is reaffirmed as of priority in the TDA.

Decisions of the DCG in this regard include among others: (i) establishing an EWG on Floods; (ii) one of the demonstration activities of the Drin project focusing in the field of flood risk management; (iii) enabling the involvement of energy sector in the sustainable management of the Drin Basin including flood; (iv) having under its auspices and be the Steering Committee of the Project on Floods should the proposal currently prepared is approved by the Adaptation Fund (AF).

A Concept Note was prepared after consultation with the key stakeholders in the Drin Riparians through missions undertaken in June by the consultant hired by UNDP to prepare the floods project proposal to be submitted for financing to the Adaptation Fund; the Concept Note was approved by the AF secretariat. The Concept Note included among other a preliminary assessment of the state of play in the Drin Basin in the domain of floods management.

According to current planning, the Project Document will be prepared within Q4 and be submitted so as to be considered for approval by the Adaptation Fund board of March 2019. Action is taken by UNDP for the realization of the advice of the DCG that activities be complimentary to and build upon those of the GIZ project on adaptation not Climate Change.

Action

- The DCG will be presented the Concept note of the AF Floods project.

Background Documents

- Concept note of the AF Floods project.

8. Workplan 2018 (13.00-13.45 h)

Background

The operational and financial framework for the activities to implement the Drin MoU for the two years to come, is provided by the Drin Project Document and the Strategic Results Framework therein. The project document is fully aligned in content with the Drin Action Plan approved by the Ministerial Meeting in 2013; the Project document has *de facto* updated the Drin Action Plan.

The content of Workplan 2019 is based on the results achieved the previous years. Its content is in line with the Drin Project and the ADA NEXUS project.

Action

- The meeting will be presented the areas of action and activities planned for 2019 along with the accompanying timeframe and provide input and guidance as necessary.

Background Documents

- Workplan 2019

9. Any other business (13.45-14.30 h)