

***COMMON FORUM on Contaminated land in the
European Union
Meeting 5-10-2005 Bordeaux (at CONSOIL)***

Meeting agenda and information



September 22, 2005

Dr. Joop J. Vegter

List of Participants

Up till now the following persons have confirmed to be present:

Harald Kasamas
Dietmar Mueller
Anna-Maija
Eddy Van Dyck
Victor Dries
Thomas Joindot
Andreas Bieber
Francesca Quercia
Miech Steenwinkel
Joop Vegter
Erik Høygaard
Paul Bardos
Sheena Engineer
Paul Nathanail
Yvonne Osterlund
Claudio Carlon
Henry Halen
Dominique Darmendrail
Hasznos Gabor
Bob Harris

COMMON FORUM ON CONTAMINATED LAND

Bordeaux 5-10- 2005

Agenda

Wednesday 5-10- 2005. Location: CONSOILconference, room will be indicated at the conference. If necessary consult the information desk.

14:00	Welcome and start of the meeting Introduction to the agenda: 1] Financial situation concerning the funding of the secretariat 2] Common Forum membership and guests 3] Plans for COMMON FORUM activities 4] Next COMMON FORUM meetings 5] Any other business	JoopVegter
16.00	Conclusions and closing of the meeting	Joop Vegter

Information about the meeting agenda

The meeting will take place on the free afternoon of the CONSOIL conference. This means that there is no lunch. There are many opportunities for lunch in town or close to the conference building, moreover some of us already have lunch meetings on this day. Coffee and tea will be available during the meeting. The focus of the meeting will be on organisational matters and plans for future COMMON FORUM activities. There are no plans for presentations or in depth policy discussions on the agenda. I feel that CONSOIL already provides many opportunities to have these discussions.

1] Financial situation concerning the funding of the secretariat

At a previous COMMON FORUM meeting (The Hague, 17 November 2004) a decision was made to try to fund the secretariat as an international project. The Dutch Ministry of Environment took the responsibility to become the main contract holder, on the condition that enough EU member states could contribute financially to the project. The perspectives for multinational financial support are such that the Ministry has given me the green light to start with the project on 01 August 2005. However at that time the contributions did not completely cover the costs of the project. Miesch Steenwinkel, who manages the COMMON FORUM contract on behalf of the Dutch Ministry, will inform you about the current state of affairs. It is important to discuss at the meeting which status the contributing countries will have compared to the non-paying members. A formal steering committee will be too bureaucratic and will need additional meetings. Furthermore the COMMON FORUM stated at the Vienna meeting that all countries should have their say in the general COMMON FORUM activities and subjects for discussion. This requires a very "flat" organisation. On the other hand some special status for the contributing members is necessary to justify the contribution. I propose to make an "Agenda Committee" which will be consulted by the secretariat to plan the details of a COMMON FORUM meeting. The Agenda Committee will also review the results of the project and advise the secretariat if changes are necessary.

We need to make a decision about this in Bordeaux to clear the COMMON FORUM agenda for more important contaminated land and groundwater related matters in future meetings.

2] Common Forum membership and guests

Up till now COMMON FORUM has been an informal group with regular members and occasional guests, although the outside world considers COMMON FORUM as a formal network of contaminated land policy makers from national ministries and policy advisors from national agencies. We should discuss at the meeting about the status of COMMON FORUM meeting participants, especially the representatives from EU organisations and other networks. This is important if COMMON FORUM wants to take a position in EU policy development, because it would be impossible for EU representatives to make formal statements in favour or against their own organisation.

I propose to make a distinction between COMMON FORUM members and (very important) guests. Other solutions may be possible as long as COMMON FORUM statements are clearly coming from the Ministry/ Agency group.

3] Plans for COMMON FORUM activities

The main field of interest of COMMON FORUM is to promote sustainable resource management of the soil and groundwater system whether it is contaminated or not. Our home base is contaminated land management. Many EU and national developments can have important consequences for contaminated land management and it is important to follow these, to discuss these and to give our best advice for the future based on our experiences. Some issues can be discussed at COMMON FORUM meetings without in depth analysis but there are a number of issues that require a more thorough analysis before discussing them at a meeting. In view of the planning of future COMMON FORUM meetings it is important to identify the issues that require in depth preparation. In email discussions the following topics have been proposed:

- The land status report.
- Contaminated land inventories and how to make them comparable internationally.
- Funding mechanisms for orphan sites especially in relation to the wish to prevent distortion of competition by “state aid”.
- How to use the groundwater directive as an incentive to remediate contaminated land and groundwater without being restricted in the choice of environmentally friendly solutions like monitored natural attenuation.
- The relation with prevention of local contamination (IPPC and national approaches)
- How to use the EU liability directive as an incentive to promote remediation without getting entangled in complicated legal debates that freeze any progress in this area.
- The relation between excavated soils that can be reused elsewhere and the EU waste regulations.

The capacity of the secretariat for doing in depth research in this area and the time available for COMMON FORUM members to discuss this is of course limited. Some prioritisation is needed. Maybe some other issues are even more important. A COMMON FORUM discussion in Bordeaux on the focus of the activities of the secretariat would be helpful.

4] Next COMMON FORUM meetings

The industry and service provider network on contaminated land NICOLE is organising a meeting in Sardinia (1&2 december) on the impact of EU directives on contaminated land management. The subject is of major concern for COMMON FORUM as well. The secretariat proposed to have a COMMON FORUM meeting just before the NICOLE workshop, on 30 november at the same place (Cagliari, Sardinia, Italy). Francesca Quercia is currently investigating the feasibility of this idea. There is room for a COMMON FORUM session in this workshop (see attached very early draft programme). Joop Vegter and Harald Kasamas volunteered to provide input to this session. Also some Italian input is expected. The COMMON FORUM meeting in Bordeaux could provide further guidance. The combination of a policy oriented discussion before the NICOLE workshop and discussions on specific EU

directives in the NICOLE workshop is clearly equivalent to a traditional COMMON FORUM meeting, with the added value of discussions with industrial problem owners and with “the practice” (service providers).

In view of the developments of the EU soil policy package (directive, communication and impact assessment) it will be very important to meet in spring 2006. Preferably in a new EU member state. In Vienna we suggested a meeting in Hungary. In the Bordeaux meeting we should assess the feasibility of this idea.