

Reflection Group

ManagEnergy Reflection Group: Mid-Term Strategy 2005 – 2007

Final

Introduction

The ManagEnergy Reflection Group is part of the ManagEnergy initiative by the European Commission, DG TREN, and was formed in the year 2002. The Commission set up ManagEnergy to support local actions - website, annual conference, seminars, etc. MERG was set up to reflect on programmes and strategic issues.

The ManagEnergy Initiative and also the Reflection Group were agreed by the Commission for another 3 years in the beginning of 2005.

Based on a self-assessment of the work by the group at the meeting in Austria in July 2005, the strategy and action plan formulated in 2003, the concept paper after the 2001 conference and on discussions in previous meetings the following strategic orientation for the coming years has been formulated.

It is suggested that this document is seen a living document, to be adapted whenever necessary and serving as the common ground for the work of the Reflection Group (MERG).

1. Objectives

As laid down in the previous strategy papers, the ManagEnergy Reflection Group is an informal think-tank, set up by the Commission, as a global thinking group for local actions on energy. In summary, the objectives of the Reflection Group are to:

- **advise** the Commission on Community legislation, programmes, local initiatives, partnerships and good practice that can help identify policy priorities of the EU
- **suggest** supplementary areas of action, which can be particularly recommended on the basis of the experiences at local and regional level
- **disseminate** Community policies and project results to actors at the local and regional level

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It is noted by the group that the original objectives are still valid and of value: to establish a two-way forum of communication and reflection between the Commission and local energy actors, including European networks.

The Commission, its legislation and programmes, benefits from the expertise of local actors, knowing better about the barriers, their needs etc. (bottom-up added value). The local energy actors benefit from, according to their needs, better formulated EC programmes and measures.

The Reflection Group is therefore important in helping to bring the European Commission closer to the European citizens, and offering a high-level voice for local and regional energy agencies at the decision-making table.

The **group is composed** of representatives for actors that are active on energy issues at local and regional levels. These organisations include mainly National Associations of Local and Regional Energy Agencies, relevant European Networks and Associations and experts from countries where no association exists so far.

The scope of MERG's work shall not be too broad to have real impact in defined boundaries. The **target groups and areas** for contributions from MERG are:

- The ManagEnergy Initiative
- The EIE programme and other relevant energy related programmes
- Selected legislative initiatives
- Initiatives, campaigns, projects by DG TREN/directorate D, with a focus on dissemination
- national associations of energy agencies and European networks

2. Strategic orientation

Concerning the future work the following areas for target activities are identified:

1. To reflect on **ManagEnergy** (website, workshops, dissemination) and other **dissemination activities/campaigns**
2. To reflect on the development of the **Energy Intelligent Europe II programme**: work programme, modalities and the ability of agencies to participate
3. To offer **informed advice** on strategies, such as the **Green Paper** on energy efficiency, especially concerning the needs of the local level for sustainable energy action (but noting that there are too many policy papers to comment on them all)
4. To support the **formation of new energy agencies**, esp. in New Member States, and deliver ideas to **strengthen the capabilities of existing ones**
5. To support **national associations** of local and regional energy agencies in performing similar functions

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6. To reflect on how **clean transport issues** can be taken up by local and regional energy agencies
 7. To facilitate the **communication** between the Commission and local energy agencies and actors by using the networks, information channels of the members to distribute information to the local level and gather input from there. This includes briefing EC officers about the role and contributions of local energy actors.
- It has been emphasised by the group that the **ManagEnergy initiative** is running well and is providing useful information for local energy actors. At the moment there is not a big need for additional input from the group. Suggestions for further improvements will be made when appropriate or when specifically asked for.
 - MERG will try to consider **other EU programmes** with a dissemination role in the field of sustainable energy - FP6/FP7 programmes, especially as regards dissemination of project results, Concerto (part of FP6), Regional Development Funds (Interreg) and the coming CIP. It was noted, however, that they were secondary to Energy Intelligent Europe (EIE).
 - In the future MERG will focus **more on programmes** (like EIE) and on suggestions for specific projects instead on legislation.
 - **Co-operations and linkages with other networks and key actors** (e.g. MEPs) shall be intensified in order to promote the specific roles the LEAs can play and to support sustainable energy actions at local level. A promising start has been established with EnR, the European Network of National Energy Agencies, which shall be continued.
 - The group and the national associations are ready to play a more active role regarding **applications for new energy agencies** under EIE (giving advice to the applicants before submitting the proposal, advising the Commission before funding new agencies).

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3. Tasks

The group will work on the following tasks, for which task co-ordinators have been appointed:

1. Opinion Paper on the Energy Efficiency Green Paper

(Gerry Wardell, Kostas Konstantinou)

This paper shall focus on the most important issues for the local level and for MERG and shall be complementary to other opinions provided. The steps are:

- a) Identify relevant areas and issues in a draft paper
- b) Ask MERG for comments and input (questionnaire, meeting)
- c) Compile opinion paper

2. Action on new member states and candidate countries

(Roman Doubrava, Tomaz Fatur)

The purpose of this paper is to develop ideas and specific proposals for action for ManagEnergy, the EIE programme, MERG members, DG Tren etc. on:

How can the awareness among local authorities for energy issues be raised?

How can more local/regional energy agencies be established in NMS and CC?

How can national actors be convinced to support the creation of energy agencies?

- a) Develop draft paper based on previous work done by MERG and on input from group members: analysis, strategy, proposals for specific measures
- b) Present and discuss at MERG meeting

3. Public roles of Local and Regional Energy Agencies

(Ian Byrne, Gian-Mario Varalda)

This task shall clarify and present the public roles of local/regional energy agencies, taking into account the results of the ECUBA study. The paper will provide arguments for supporting and funding the work of the agencies and can serve therefore as a basis for inputs regarding the EE Green Paper, the EIE programme and for communication with the national governments and European parliament.

- a) Input and discussion at a MERG meeting
- b) Draft a paper and send to the members of the group
- c) Discussion and finalising at next meeting

4. Participation of local/regional energy agencies in EIE

(Boris Papousek, Otmar Schlager)

It has been noted by the group that only some agencies continue to participate in EIE due to several barriers. This paper shall analyse the barriers and develop

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suggestions how the participation of local/regional energy agencies and other local actors can be encouraged and increased.

- a) Develop draft analysis and discuss at MERG meeting
- b) Send draft out to the group for comments and ideas
- c) Discuss and finalise at next meeting

5. Input to the work programme and modalities of the EIE II programme

As the Energy Intelligent II programme is about to be developed in more detail, this is also seen as highly relevant for MERG's objectives in the near future.

For this task no co-ordinators have been appointed so far.

6. ManagEnergy

The reflection on the ManagEnergy initiative is one of the core tasks of the Reflection Group. As mentioned, there is no need for additional input at the moment, so this task will be taken up again when appropriate or when specifically asked for.

7. Co-operation with EnR

The started intensified co-operation with EnR shall be continued. Once a year a MERG representative is invited to participate in an EnR meeting (EnR is already a member of MERG). As a first focal point the issue of supporting the establishment of new local energy agencies in NMS was identified. This shall be further developed in conjunction with Task 2 above. Additionally, the reported problems with national co-financing of EIE projects shall be brought to the attention of the national agencies.

Further initiatives and activities from the Commission are expected to emerge in the coming years. MERG will react on them up to date and present its input and opinion, when asked for, or take up additional tasks within the strategic framework at its own initiative.

Concerning the internal organisation of the Reflection Group the following task shall be performed:

- Clarify membership of group to ensure transparency
- Better coverage from the new member states and candidate countries. (Roman Doubrava agreed to co-ordinate this activity)
- Ask the Commission for specific formulation of their expectations and for feedback, if and how the reflections are taken into account

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- Evaluate possibility of putting together a proposal for funding MERG activities in order to have more resources available (which are very limited at the moment). Seek possibilities to cover travel costs (e.g. to EnR meetings).

4. Organisational issues

4.1 Membership

- (1) There are three categories of members in the Reflection Group:
 - National associations/networks of local and regional energy agencies
 - European networks and associations: CEMR, Energy Cités, EnR, Fedarene, Islenet
 - experts from countries where no association exists so far
- (2) DG Tren/D participates in the meetings and takes care of the secretariat of the group. In addition, representatives of the IEE Agency and of the ManagEnergy service provider can be invited to participate depending on the agenda.
- (3) Each national association or network and the European networks nominate a representative as a member to the Reflection Group.
This is done in writing (by email) to D3 through the authorised representative of the association.
- (4) In addition, DG Tren/D invites experts from the local level ad persona from countries where no association exists, on the recommendation of the group.
- (5) As conditions of membership, participants in the group should agree:
 - to collect information from their members (usually agencies in a member state)
 - to disseminate information to the same actors
 - to actively contribute to the preparations of the MERG meetings
- (6) Each member can nominate an permanent or temporary alternate member for the event he is not able to attend the meeting.
He names his alternate by email to DG Tren/D3 in advance of the next meeting.
- (7) The actual list of all MERG members can be found at:
www.managenergy.net/refgrp.html.
DG Tren/D3 together with the ManagEnergy service provider takes care of updating the list when necessary.
- (8) These rules and conditions shall be implemented from the next MERG meeting in February 2006 on.

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4.2 Roles of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Task Co-ordinators

(a) Chairperson

The role of the Chairperson shall be:

- Preparation of 3 MERG meetings per year in collaboration with the European Commission; invitations and preparation of the agenda
- Chair the MERG meetings
- Follow-up of the discussions, which are initiated in the MERG meetings and summarise the input for the next meeting.
- Representing MERG on different occasions: conferences, meetings with other stakeholders, networks etc.

The Chairperson shall not have the role of a formal secretariat, but rather the role of initiator of discussion, channel of information and first contact point for the EC and the ManagEnergy team in the preparation of the MERG meetings.

(b) Vice-Chairperson

The role of Vice-Chairperson shall be:

- Act on behalf of the Chairperson in the event that the Chairman is unavoidably absent.
- Take the Minutes of the meeting.
- Assist the chairperson in preparing the MERG meetings

Further, the Vice-Chairperson shall normally be appointed to the position of Chairperson in the subsequent year. This has the advantage that it will help the incoming Chairperson to prepare for the task and it will also benefit the MERG by helping to ensure continuity of leadership.

(c) Task Co-ordinators

The role of Task Co-ordinators shall be:

- Prepare input regarding the specific task to the group
- Facilitate discussion among the MERG members
- Compile and summarise inputs from the members
- Draft and finalise papers to present the results

Task Co-ordinators are appointed by the group to lead and co-ordinate specific tasks.

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4.3 Rules for Election

- (1) The Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson shall be elected for a period of one year, from January 1st until December 31st, in the last meeting of the previous year.
- (2) Election shall be by simple majority open-voting, by show of hands
- (3) In the event of a tie the current Chairperson shall have the casting vote
- (4) One vote per current Reflection Group member *and* who is actually present at the meeting at the time of voting. The Reflection Group members are listed on the ManagEnergy website (www.managenergy.net/refgrp.html).
- (5) The incoming Chairperson, who shall normally be the outgoing Vice-Chairperson, shall be formally elected to the position of Chairperson for the subsequent year, unless there are objections. Any objections must be notified to the currently acting Chairperson in writing five days before the election.
- (6) Nominations for the new Vice-Chairperson shall be submitted to the Chairperson at least five days before the election.
- (7) The same shall apply for the election of the Chairperson in the event that there is no Vice-Chairperson.

Compiled by:

Boris Papousek

Chairperson 2005

ManagEnergy Reflection Group

Based on previous documents, prepared by Gerry Wardell, and on the discussions in the MERG meetings.