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MEETING DOCUMENT

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Working Party on the Environment
N° Cion doc.:	ST 11566/23 + ADD 1
Subject:	Soil Monitoring Directive: Informal VC of the members of the WPE on 2 February 2024 – Presidency steering note

With a view to the Informal VC of the members of the WPE meeting on 2 February 2024, delegations will find attached a Presidency Steering Note on the Soil Monitoring Law Directive.

Informal videoconference of the Working Party on the Environment (WPE) – 2 February 2024

Soil Monitoring Law

Presidency Steering Note

On the 29th of January, the Presidency discussed in the afternoon the sampling methodology proposed in Part A of Annex II of the Soil Monitoring Law proposal. With the support of the Commission, the Presidency tested the method on its territory, as a case study. The documents presented by the Presidency and the Joint Research Centre were shared through the Delegates portal (doc. 1346/2024 dd. 29 January 2024). The presidency kindly invited Delegations to inform the Presidency by 31/1:

- if they wished to run a simulation of the Soil Monitoring methodology proposed in this Directive to determine the number and location of the sampling points (Annex 2 part A);
- if they would need help from EJP Soils experts to run the simulation.

On 2 February 2024, an informal videoconference of the members of the WPE (10h30 to 13h30) is organised to:

- inform experts from Delegations on the methodology proposed in the Soil Monitoring Law and its associated computer code,
- to explain the practical organisation of the simulation.

The aim is to obtain the results of the delegations' test runs to underpin the discussions of experts on the monitoring methodology in a follow-up videoconference (20 February). The output of these discussions at the expert level will be followed by discussions of Delegations during the WPE of 26 February.

Both videoconferences (2/2 and 20/2) are open to:

- Delegations and their experts on the topic (2 connections per Member State),
- Presidency and their experts involved in the testing for BE case study,
- The Commission (DG ENV and JRC) facilitating the testing process,
- EJP soil representants facilitating the testing process.

The proposed agenda for the videoconference on 2 February is:

1. Introduction (Presidency)

Welcoming of the participants, definition of the objective of the meeting, timeline and approval of the agenda.

2. Information on the current method proposed in SML for sampling strategy and its translation into the JRC computer code (DG ENV+JRC)

After an introduction of the Commission's view around this testing phase, information will first be provided to experts in order to understand the principles of the method proposed by the Soil Monitoring Law. Then the translation of these principles in a computer code will be presented based on a document accompanying the code and input data, as well as the package that will be provided to Delegations. The starting point chosen for the computer code will be specified.

3. Tests to run and practical information for interaction (JRC + Presidency)

The purpose and description of the different tests proposed to experts from Delegation and EJP soil dedicated core group will be provided. Such tests are aiming at structuring Delegations' feedback for the meeting of 20/2 to best extract collective experience in view of Rev2 of the Soil Monitoring Law. Suggestions from testers can still be formulated to improve the process.

Explanation on the way to interact between JRC and the testers from different MS and EJP soil will be given, as well as the way to centralise all relevant information and results from the testers.

4. Brief presentation of EJP soil (EJP soil)

EJP soil will present its overall objective, consortium composition and project timeline, as well as the main results related to monitoring schemes. EJP soil will also specify what work still needs to be done within the project and the next steps that are envisaged ("whish list") with a focus on sampling design. EJP soil will finally give some first proposal on how they can practically support Delegations for the simulation to determine the sampling points.

5. Identification of testers (Presidency)

The Delegations will be invited to confirm their participation to the tests and their needs in EJP soil support if not already indicated earlier. They will also be invited to provide names, affiliations and mails of their testers to JRC and the Presidency such that the relevant information and data can be exchanged as well as the link to shared documents for testers.

6. Next steps (Presidency)

The actions following this meeting will be listed: preparation of national data if relevant (listing and brief description of existing maps and monitoring points), access to the package from JRC, testing phase by interested Delegations, helpdesk from JRC for questions from testers, intermediate online meeting if necessary, compilation of results and recommendations from Delegations' experts, preparation of the informal videoconference of the WPE on 20 February to discuss the tests results and draw some first recommendations to be put forward to the WPE on 26 February.

7. Aob