European Commission

TAIEX-EIR PEER 2 PEER

A new tool bringing together
environmental implementation policy experts

The Commissioner for the Environment, Karmenu Vella, has underlined that good implementation requires sufficient administrative capacity at all relevant levels: national, regional and local. This is not only a matter of having enough financial resources but also of having the skills and expertise to address implementation gaps and their underlying root causes. Exchange of good practice among Member States may therefore become a vector of better implementation.

On 3 February 2017 the European Commission adopted the **Environmental Implementation Review (EIR)** package[1]. It contains besides a Communication with horizontal policy conclusions, 28 country reports with an analysis of the state of implementation of EU environmental policy and law per Member State. The country reports include suggested actions per Member State. The EIR will be a two-yearly cycle of analysis, dialogue and collaboration on the ground.

Across the EU, thousands of people are involved in this implementation who possess a wealth of knowledge and invaluable know-how which could be exchanged in order to improve implementation at national, regional and local level. Spreading good practice – to be adapted to the specific situations in different Member States – can be made possible through a focused peer-to-peer exchange instrument among public bodies implementing EU environmental policy and law.

Peer exchange initiatives already exist in networks such as the IMPEL (European Union Network for the Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Law)[2], but there is no comprehensive tool yet covering the main implementation challenges identified in the EIR country reports.

Against this background, after consulting the Member States' Environment Ministries, the European Commission's Directorate-General for the Environment has taken the initiative to establish a new tool for peer-to-peer exchange of expertise among authorities dealing with the implementation of EU environmental policy and law. It is called TAIEX-EIR P2P and is based on the already existing Technical Assistance and Information Exchange (TAIEX[3]) Instrument of the Commission's Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations. Established more than twenty years ago, TAIEX supports public administrations in the enlargement and neighbourhood countries in the approximation, application and enforcement of the EU acquis through peer-to-peer exchanges of public officials. In 2015, a TAIEX-REGIO P2P Tool was established to support the EU's regional policy.[4] The TAIEX-EIR P2P builds on this successful and well-established tool and applies it to environmental laws and policies in the context of the EIR.

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[1] COM(2017) 63 final. "The EU Environmental Implementation Review: Common challenges and how to combine efforts to deliver better results."
All the EIR documents are available on http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/index_en.htm

[2] https://www.impel.eu/

[3] Further information on the TAIEX instrument is available on http://ec.europa.eu/taiex

[4] http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/how/improving-investment/taiex-regio-peer-2-peer/

QUALITY-CONTROLLED

There are several in-built mechanisms for the quality control of experts and exchanges.

LIGHT

Exchanges are focused on a concrete and specific topic. Short-term expert exchanges are organised with as little bureaucracy as possible.

FLEXIBLE

It allows for different types of exchanges (expert missions, study visits and workshops) which are based on the needs identified by the authorities implementing EU environmental policy and law in Member States.

RAPID

Exchanges can be launched rapidly once needs have been identified – on average within 2 months from the moment when a request for assistance is approved.

TARGETED

Exchanges are focused on a concrete and specific topic which is covered by the EIR reports.

PEER 2 PEER

EXPERT MISSIONS

EU Member State experts can be sent to institutions in other Member States that have requested peer advice and exchange of experience on a specific topic. Expert missions can last between 2 to 5 days.

STUDY VISITS

Employees (maximum 3) from a requesting institution can be sent on a working visit to other EU Member State institutions to learn from peers and exchange good practices. Study visits can last between 2 to 5 days.

WORKSHOPS

Single or multi-country workshops can be organised in a requesting institution. Workshops would normally last 2 days.

TAIEX-EIR P2P can arrange and cover travel and accommodation costs and per diems for experts travelling on missions or to workshops, and travel and accommodation for up to 3 participants in study visits.

However, certain costs – such as catering – would have to be covered by the institution requesting assistance / the hosting institution.

The working language for TAIEX-EIR P2P activities is English. However, interpretation may be arranged under request, when duly justified.

The assistance is provided at request of public institutions involved in the implementation of EU environmental policy and law in the EU Member States, such as:

- National, regional and local departments and agencies
- Coordinating authorities
- Inspection and audit authorities
- Permitting authorities
- Regional or local environmental implementation businesses entrusted with a public task, and with the application supported by an authority
- Networks of experts involved in environmental implementation and enforcement

The request for assistance shall be submitted via an e-Application link http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/p2p_en.htm
It is subject to approval by the European Commission.

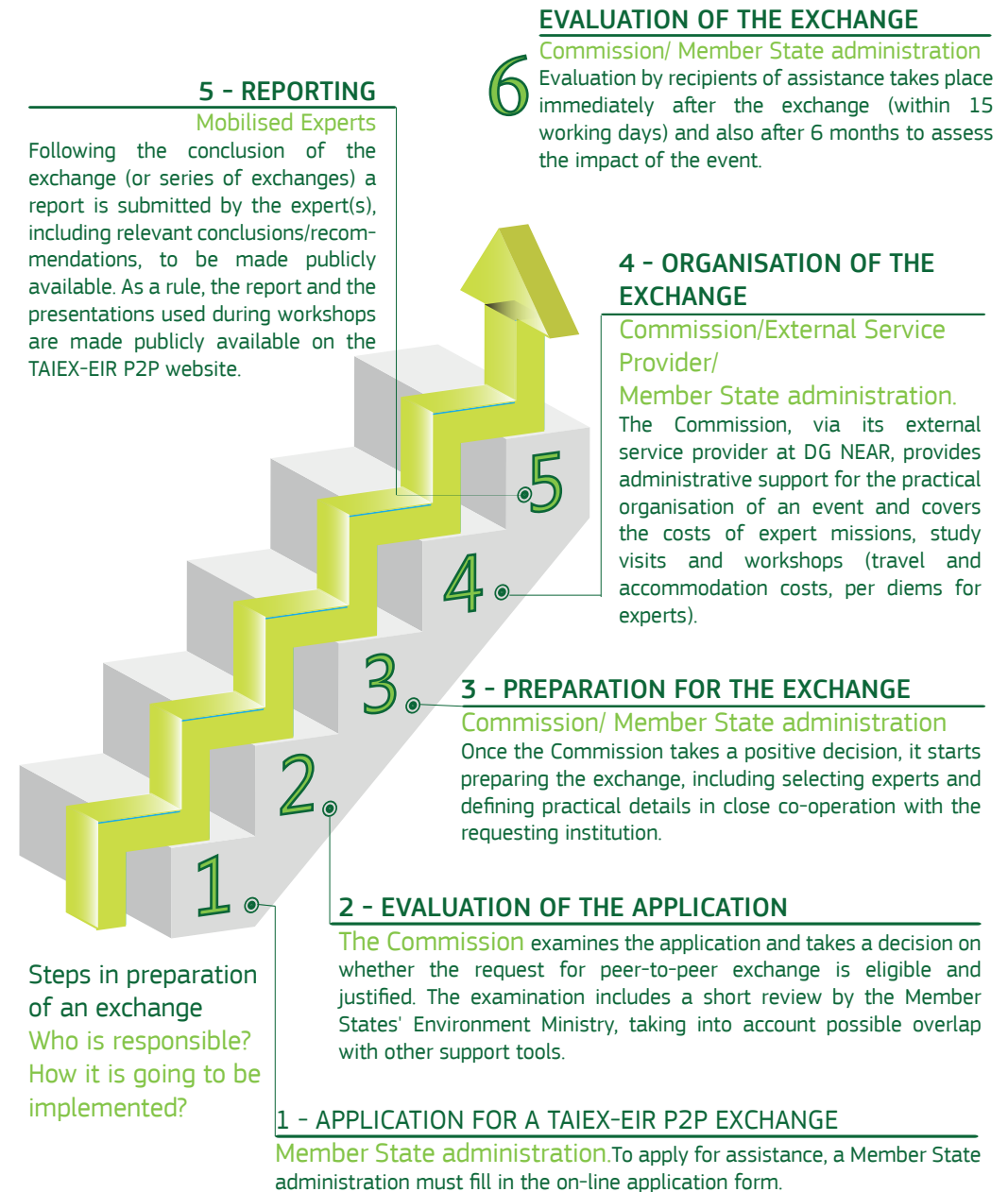## WHAT ARE THE MAIN AREAS OF TAIEX-EIR P2P ASSISTANCE?

TAIEX-EIR P2P assistance will finance expert exchanges on EU environmental policy and law that are linked to the issues covered in the EIR country reports or on common challenges and root causes of implementation gaps identified in the EIR.Member States can make use of this tool to exchange good practices on the fulfilment of requirements on for example waste recycling, nature protection, improvement of air quality, or water quality and management. As the root causes of implementation gaps include environmental governance aspects such as those referred in Chapter 5 of the EIR country reports (e.g. administrative capacity, skills, coordination mechanisms, access to justice, environmental liability, compliance assurance, reporting and sharing of environmental information), these challenges can also be addressed through the P2P tool.

In case there are more applications than can be supported by the budget, priority will be given to the main challenges identified through the country specific suggested actions in the EIR reports.

EVALUATION OF THE EXCHANGE
Commission/ Member State administration
Evaluation by recipients of assistance takes place immediately after the exchange (within 15 working days) and also after 6 months to assess the impact of the event.

5 - REPORTING
Mobilised Experts
Following the conclusion of the exchange (or series of exchanges) a report is submitted by the expert(s), including relevant conclusions/recommendations, to be made publicly available. As a rule, the report and the presentations used during workshops are made publicly available on the TAIEX-EIR P2P website.

4 - ORGANISATION OF THE EXCHANGE
Commission/External Service Provider/
Member State administration.
The Commission, via its external service provider at DG NEAR, provides administrative support for the practical organisation of an event and covers the costs of expert missions, study visits and workshops (travel and accommodation costs, per diems for experts).

3 - PREPARATION FOR THE EXCHANGE
Commission/ Member State administration
Once the Commission takes a positive decision, it starts preparing the exchange, including selecting experts and defining practical details in close co-operation with the requesting institution.

2 - EVALUATION OF THE APPLICATION
The Commission examines the application and takes a decision on whether the request for peer-to-peer exchange is eligible and justified. The examination includes a short review by the Member States' Environment Ministry, taking into account possible overlap with other support tools.

Steps in preparation of an exchange
Who is responsible?
How it is going to be implemented?

1 - APPLICATION FOR A TAIEX-EIR P2P EXCHANGE
Member State administration.To apply for assistance, a Member State administration must fill in the on-line application form.

If you:

☐ work for a central, regional or local Member State administration in one of the institutions responsible for management and implementation of EU environmental policy and law, at national, regional or local level; this may also be a company established by an authority, mandated to execute public tasks;

☐ are willing to share your knowledge and experience with peers from other EU Member States, and your organisation allows you time for this;

☐ are eager to engage in exchange of good practices in the implementation of environmental policy and law.

TAIEX-EIR P2P will take care of the rest, including the costs.

You can register to become a TAIEX expert via: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/p2p/index_en.htm . Please make sure that your organisation agrees with your registration.

As an expert, you can be called upon to participate in seminars, workshops, expert missions and study visits on topics matching your specific profile.

A Guide for experts and speakers containing detailed information on practical arrangements related to, for example, remuneration and travel will also be made available to you.

WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION?

TAIEX-EIR P2P website
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eir/p2p_en.htm

#EIRP2P