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Subject: [EOWEB] Expert Group Consultation

Categories: New not treated

Sender

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Your data

Part 1 - Contact information

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Language you would like to receive an answer in en - English

Part 2 - Data

Subject Expert Group Consultation
Consultation Expert Groups European Commission.

1. Which specific Commission expert groups do you consider to lack a balanced representation of relevant areas of expertise and interest in their membership? What, according to you, is the root cause of the unbalanced composition of the Commission expert groups identified by you?

In short all the expert groups that covers and impacts large financial profits and dependence on maintaining status quo are sensitive for "infiltration" of large corporations and financial institutions fighting to maintain current positions. The main problem is that the EU Commission places the cart in front of the horse - lacking a clear view of what the EU should achieve as long-term goals before involving powerful actors to define the goals for them, goals that are formulated in the main interest of those in deep need to keep the status quo

Content and current processes / markets.

In each segment the long term goals should be defined by organizations, institutions and individuals NOT working in these large corporate entities - any one involved with defining long term goals must be excluded from this defining work if they are employed or in deep dependence on any of these larger entities. This include also externally financed researchers.

At later stages the large corporations can come in as reference organizations covering implementation processes and structures but should NOT have a major say in the definition of the long term goals.

2. The Commission's horizontal rules on expert groups allow for the Commission to appoint individual experts in their personal capacity. In your experience, does this possibility give rise to concern in terms of

the balanced composition of expert groups and/or conflicts of interest?

I have experienced as an evaluator that an individual evaluator in a group clearly was acting on external pressure or loyalty (we managed to neutralize that specific evaluator). An individual expert employed by a organization dependent on the results of the decisions made should only be taken in as an expert for a very specific and very well defined purpose - the overall long-term goals defined by "non-dependents". There is a reason for large corporations to allow their employees being involved in these expert groups - the financial loss for the individual expert can be large if there is no support from the employer and then there is the issue of being allowed to spend the time. And the corporations do want to have a payback for these resources delegated to the participation in the expert group. This inflicts hidden pressure on the employee acting as an expert. It increases the risks for conflicts of interest.

3. Do you consider that the current level of transparency regarding the composition of Commission expert groups, in particular through the Register of Commission Expert Groups and Other Similar Entities, is sufficient? In particular, does the information made available by the Commission allow you to ascertain which interests are represented by the members of Commission expert groups? If not, where do you see room for improvement? Do you consider that the current level of transparency regarding the work of expert groups, in particular through the publication of agendas and minutes, is sufficient?

The main issue is not transparency but the ability of the EU Commission to involve the "user layer" of the solutions provided in the form of regular citizens, communities and public actors in combination with researchers and thinkers that are able to think in long-term scenarios wider than the product / market development cycles for individual sectors and large corporations. By dividing the expert groups into two distinct layers, one "giving directives" to the other regarding evaluation of implementation processes much of the problems with hidden lobbying can be mitigated. That is of the "directive development" layer constitutes of people independent of large corporations delivering services and products and having no real economical incentive to push the recommendations in other directions than the long term best ones for the overall community.

4. Where the Commission publishes calls for application for membership in expert groups, do you consider that these calls provide for selection criteria which sufficiently take into account the need for a balanced composition of expert groups? If not, where do you see room for improvement? In your view, could the Commission do more to raise awareness about these calls, with a view to encouraging applications? If so, what concrete steps could it take in this regard?

Room for improvement - creating forums for public sector specialists, researchers in vital areas and long term planners to work and "educate" themselves outside the expert groups settings, coordinating their points of views and allow them to better define long-term targets and strategies. The experts from the corporations mostly act according to strategic, fairly short term plans defined from the market plans and development plans for products, the "customer" side do not have these tools available. Thus, creating forums and structures / processes for these actors to define their ultimately more complex needs and long term strategies needs to be formed. The public sector and the policy defining sector must be educated and given platforms for collaboration to define their long term plans as good as possible. The creation of expert groups specialized in long term planning and strategies without involvement of commercial interests can support this.

5. Do you have any experience in applying for membership in a Commission expert group? If so, did you face any problems in the application process? If not, are you aware of any such problems faced by civil society organisations? Based on your experience, do the costs inherent in participation/the lack of

comprehensive reimbursement schemes discourage civil society organisations from applying for membership?

No experience. Not applied for participation in an expert group.

6. Please give us your views on which measures could contribute to a more balanced composition of Commission expert groups.

7. Do you have any other comments?