RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE ZERO POLLUTION STAKEHOLDER PLATFORM

THE ZERO POLLUTION STAKEHOLDER PLATFORM,

Having regard to the standard rules of procedure of expert groups\(^1\),

HAS ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING RULES OF PROCEDURE:

**Point 1**

**Operation of the group**

The group shall act at the request of DG ENV or its co-chairs in compliance with the Commission’s horizontal rules on expert groups\(^2\) (‘the horizontal rules’).

**Point 2**

**Convening a meeting**

1. Meetings of the group are convened by the co-chairs either on their own initiative or at the request of a simple majority of members after DG ENV in consultation with the Committee of the Regions has given its agreement.

2. Joint meetings of the group with other groups may be convened to discuss matters falling within their respective areas of responsibility.

3. In principle, meetings of the group shall be held on Commission premises, Committee of the Regions premises or virtually, depending on the circumstances.

**Point 3**

**Agenda**

1. The secretariat shall draw up the agenda under the responsibility of the co-chairs and send it to the members of the group.

2. The agenda shall be adopted by the group at the start of the meeting.

**Point 4**

**Documentation to be sent to group members**

1. The secretariat shall send the invitation to the meeting and the draft agenda to the group members no later than thirty calendar days before the date of the meeting.

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\(^1\) C(2016) 3301, Annex 3.

\(^2\) C(2016) 3301.
2. The secretariat shall send documents on which the group is consulted to the group members no later than fourteen calendar days before the date of the meeting.

3. In urgent or exceptional cases, the time limits for sending the documentation mentioned in paragraphs 1 and 2 may be reduced to five calendar days before the date of the meeting.

**Point 5**

**Opinions of the group**

1. As far as possible, the group shall adopt its opinions, recommendations or reports by consensus.

2. In the event where consensus cannot be reached, a vote can take place where the outcome of the vote shall be decided by simple majority of the members. Members who have voted against or abstained shall have the right to have a document summarising the reasons for their position annexed to the opinions, recommendations or reports.

**Point 6**

**Sub-groups**

1. DG ENV or the co-chairs may set up sub-groups for the purpose of examining specific questions on the basis of terms of reference defined by DG ENV. Sub-groups shall operate in compliance with the horizontal rules and shall report to the group. They shall be dissolved as soon as their mandate is fulfilled.

2. The members of sub-groups that are not members of the group shall be selected via a public call for applications, in compliance with the horizontal rules.

**Point 7**

**Invited experts**

DG ENV or the co-chairs may invite experts with specific expertise with respect to a subject matter on the agenda to take part in the work of the group or sub-groups on an ad hoc basis.

**Point 8**

**Observers**

1. The World Health Organisation (WHO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) shall be granted an observer status, by direct invitation.

2. Public entities other than Member States’ authorities, such as third countries’ authorities, including candidate authorities, Union bodies (such as the European Economic and Social Committee), offices or agencies (such as the European Environment Agency) and

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3 C(2016) 3301, Articles 10 and 14.2.
international organisations may be granted an observer status on request, by direct
direct invitation.

3. Observers shall nominate their representatives and back-up representatives.

4. Observers’ representatives may be permitted by the co-chairs to take part in the discussions
of the group and provide expertise. However, they shall not have voting rights and shall
not participate in the formulation of recommendations or advice of the group or its sub-
groups.

Point 9

Written procedure

1. If necessary, the group’s opinion or recommendations on a specific question may be
delivered via a written procedure. To this end, the secretariat shall send the group members
the document(s) on which the group is being consulted.

2. However, if a simple majority of group members asks for the question to be examined at a
meeting of the group, the written procedure shall be terminated without result and the co-
chairs shall convene a meeting of the group as soon as possible.

Point 10

Secretariat

DG ENV and the European Committee of the Regions shall provide secretarial support for
the group and any sub-groups.

Point 11

Minutes of the meetings

Minutes on the discussion on each point on the agenda and on the opinions delivered by
the group shall be meaningful and complete. Minutes shall be drafted by the secretariat
under the responsibility of the co-chairs.

Point 12

Attendance list

At each meeting, the secretariat shall draw up, under the responsibility of the co-chairs, an
attendance list also specifying, where appropriate, the organisations, Member States' 
authorities or other public entities to which the participants belong.

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4 The names of the representatives of organisations, Member States’ authorities or other public entities may be included only subject to their prior freely given, specific, informed and unambiguous consent, in compliance with Article 3(15) and Article 7 of Regulation 2018/1725.
**Point 13**

**Correspondence**

1. Correspondence relating to the group shall be addressed to the secretariat, for the attention of the co-chairs.

2. Correspondence for group members shall be sent to the e-mail address which they provide for that purpose.

**Point 14**

**Transparency**

1. The group and its sub-groups shall be registered on the Register of Commission expert groups (‘the Register of expert groups’).

2. As concerns the group composition, the following data shall be published on the Register of expert groups:
   
   (a) the name of Member States' authorities;
   
   (b) the name of member organisations; the interest represented shall be disclosed;
   
   (c) the name of observers.

3. All relevant documents, including the agendas, the minutes and the participants’ submissions, shall be made available on the Register of expert groups or via a link from the Register to a dedicated website, where this information can be found. Access to dedicated websites shall not be submitted to user registration or any other restriction. In particular, DG ENV shall publish the agenda and other relevant background documents in due time ahead of the meeting, followed by timely publication of minutes. Exceptions to publication shall only be possible where it is deemed that disclosure of a document would undermine the protection of a public or private interest as defined in Article 4 of Regulation (EC) N° 1049/2001.

**Point 15**

**Access to documents**

Applications for access to documents held by the group shall be handled in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001.

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5 These exceptions are intended to protect public security, military affairs, international relations, financial, monetary or economic policy, privacy and integrity of the individual, commercial interests, court proceedings and legal advice, inspections/investigations/audits and the institution's decision-making process.

Point 16

Deliberations

In agreement with DG ENV, the group may, by simple majority of its members, decide that deliberations shall be public.