



IMPEL's Strategic Work Programme 2016-2020

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This strategic work programme builds on more than 20 years' experience within the IMPEL network in supporting countries on the practical implementation of EU environmental law. Its purpose is to give strategic direction and to set priorities for IMPEL's work over the next 5 years, reflecting the needs of our members and key implementation challenges. It will help guide decisions on how IMPEL's resources will be invested in specific projects and activities.

It reflects the priorities of the [7th EU Environment Action Programme to 2020 'Living well, within the limits of our planet'](#) which has as a key objective to improve the implementation of EU environmental law.

The strategic programme is intended to be used as an important reference document for key groups within the IMPEL Network:

- the *General Assembly*, for considering and agreeing the strategic direction and priorities for IMPEL's programme and, recognising the need for flexibility, for agreeing changes to the programme over the next 5 years, should this be necessary;
- the *Board*, for managing IMPEL's resources to reflect the priorities set out in the 5-year strategic programme;
- the *Programme Management Group*, for bringing together and proposing an integrated annual work programme that reflects the priorities of the 5-year strategic programme; and
- the *Expert Teams*, for developing and proposing priority projects each year that reflect the strategic priorities in the 5-year programme.

The detailed priorities of each of the five Expert Teams are set out in Appendix 1.

The programme is informed by the results of a recent [research project on implementation challenges](#) that has helped us to gain a better understanding of the nature and underlying causes of the practical implementation challenges faced by regulatory organisations. It also reflects important priorities put forward by our member organisations in discussion with the five Expert Teams.

It reflects the important changes in IMPEL's ways of working, structure and governance that have taken place over the last two years following agreement of a



[new strategic direction for IMPEL](#). The intention is to allow these new ways of working to embed and to develop and strengthen over the next five-year period.

The programme also reflects IMPEL's core aims, including identifying and sharing good practices and helping to support more efficient, effective and consistent approaches to the interpretation, implementation and enforcement of EU environmental law.

Our mission

Our mission is: *to contribute to protecting the environment by promoting the effective implementation and enforcement of EU environmental law.*

Our priorities

We have 5 key priorities for the next five years:

Priority 1: Target our work to help overcome the challenges in implementing EU environmental law.

Using the outcome of recent research we have improved knowledge and understanding of the practical implementation challenges faced by regulatory organisations in our member countries.

We will:

- Use this knowledge to shape and prioritise projects that specifically address areas where implementation problems are being encountered.
- Continue to update our knowledge and understanding of implementation challenges through periodic questionnaire surveys involving our members, network partners and, where appropriate, other stakeholders.
- Organise regular dialogues with the European Commission to discuss on-going and new implementation challenges.

Priority 2: Engage with and respond to our members' needs.

IMPEL is a network of member organisations. It is vitally important that we listen and respond to our members' needs. It is equally important that our members make sure that the benefits of IMPEL's projects are taken up in their organisations to help improve efficiency and effectiveness of their operations.



We will:

- Continue to carry out a programme of country visits by the IMPEL Board to help improve awareness of the benefits of IMPEL's work at a senior level and to encourage participation in projects and programmes.
- Develop a better understanding of the main challenges faced by public environmental authorities, how their needs can be met, and how the benefits of IMPEL's programme can be embedded in their organisations.
- Encourage senior-level participation in decision-making, particularly through General Assembly meetings.
- Strengthen the important role of the National Coordinators in promoting country and organisation participation in IMPEL's programme.

Priority 3: Further develop the 5 thematic programmes and Expert Teams.

The new structure built around five thematic work programmes is now established. The strategic plans for how each of these programmes will develop over the next five years are described further from page 7 in this document.

We will:

- Apply and improve the agreed processes for defining and prioritising new projects and activities, taking into account the specific participation interests of our members.
- Further develop the Programme Management Group that has a key role in bringing the five themes together into a single integrated programme.
- Encourage wider participation in Expert Team meetings and involvement in decisions on prioritisation of new projects.
- Improve the agreed procedures for approval and post-project evaluation of projects and the promotion of their results.

Priority 4: Build the Network and seek new members to contribute to and benefit from our work.

The IMPEL Network has grown significantly over the last 20 years and now has more than 50 member organisations in 35 countries. We need to attract new members to develop the communities that are necessary to develop new areas of work, particularly nature protection and water and land.

We will:

- Invest in research to better understand and map the responsibilities of public authorities and other public utility organisations responsible for the practical implementation of EU environmental law across IMPEL's 5 thematic areas.
- Work through the network of National Coordinators to identify key new organisations and to encourage them to join and engage with IMPEL's programme.



- Encourage membership by regional as well as national authorities.
- Use country visits as an opportunity to engage with potential new members.

Priority 5: Strengthen cooperation with other national, European and international organisations and networks.

There are many organisations and networks operating at national, European and international levels in the field of environmental protection. It is vitally important that we reach out and engage with them to encourage sharing and learning on best practices and to improve cooperation in tackling trans-frontier and global problems.

We will:

- Identify and map key national, European and international organisations relevant to IMPEL's areas of activity and target those with which cooperation would be most beneficial.
- Regularly review and update the Board's external engagement programme, including seeking opportunities to engage with country and international networks and organisations as part of Board meetings.
- Invite relevant networks to IMPEL events and use invitations to speak and participate in meetings, conferences and workshops as key opportunities to engage with other networks.
- Develop and track progress with MoUs with key national and international organisations and networks.

The ways we will work

In taking forward the above priorities and actions there are several important ways in which we will work to ensure that our members and other stakeholders benefit from their investment in IMPEL's programme.

Inform policy with practical experience and expertise

IMPEL's focus is to help to improve the implementation of EU environmental law. We are not responsible for policy-making – that is a matter for the formal EU institutions and the Member States. However, we want to ensure that, where appropriate, the practical experience and expertise within our member organisations is utilised in the development and review of policy. We will seek to provide technical advice to the European Commission and other relevant institutions through attendance at relevant workshops and meetings and through development of practical methodology and guidance.



Help countries build capacity and achieve compliance more quickly

Information on implementation across the EU suggests that the rate of progress is not evenly distributed and can differ significantly between countries. Sharing of know-how amongst practitioners can help organisations develop practical solutions to implementation problems more quickly and more efficiently than by working alone. In carrying out our work programme we will seek to, wherever possible, identify and share good practice with our member organisations. We will use a range of interventions through our work programme to facilitate the sharing of practical experience and expertise, including: peer review, through the IMPEL Review Initiative (IRI); technical workshops and seminars; staff exchanges; joint activities, such as inspections; development of practical tools methodology and guidance; targeted training; use of 'Basecamp' for problem solving and for the exchange of data and information.

Coordinate action across borders

Many of the implementation challenges facing our member organisations are trans-boundary in nature. Tackling issues such as waste and wildlife crime requires coordinated management by authorities in different countries, both within and outside Europe. The achievement of good ecological status in Europe's rivers requires an integrated river basin management approach that often requires coordination across borders between countries. IMPEL will continue to make an important contribution to cross-border coordination, for example, by identifying and mapping the responsibilities of different authorities in countries; sharing intelligence and information between authorities; carrying out coordinated campaigns on monitoring and surveillance and to improve compliance and enforcement.

Facilitate communication between different regulators through the compliance and enforcement chain

Successful implementation of environmental law requires collaboration between the different actors involved in compliance and enforcement. These include organisations and individuals involved in: environmental permitting; monitoring; compliance promotion and assessment; enforcement action; prosecutions; and the judiciary. We will seek to improve communication and coordination between the different actors in the compliance chain by: joint actions between European Networks, including the European Network for Prosecutors on the Environment (ENPE), European Forum for Judges on the Environment (EUFJE) and ENVI CrimeNet and facilitating workshops and conferences bringing together relevant communities of practitioners.

Develop innovative approaches and methods

Many of our member organisations are facing increasing constraints in financial and staff resourcing. We aim to support our members by using our programme to develop innovative approaches and methods for environmental regulation that will help them



to carry out their roles more efficiently and effectively. For example, we will continue to develop and refine risk-based tools and procedures to allow authorities to target their effort to achieve the greatest benefits for the environment and public health. We will facilitate the sharing of new developments in the application of cutting-edge technologies, for example in environmental monitoring and surveillance, and the use of the Internet for the dissemination of information and community engagement.

Funding and resources

At present, around one third of our income comes from membership fees and voluntary contributions from members. The remainder currently comes from EU LIFE+. Every year, the Programme Management Board will develop and propose an integrated programme of prioritised projects across the five Expert Teams, consistent with the funding available. The General Assembly will consider and approve the programme and IMPEL's overall operating budget. The Board will manage the agreed overall budget. It is important to recognise that the majority of IMPEL's resources are made up of expert staff time given freely by member organisations to managing projects and in contribution to IMPEL's management structure, including Expert Teams, the Board and the General Assembly. Other valuable in-kind contributions include free conference facilities and further support of meetings.

Measuring our success

It is very important that we have reliable feedback on how IMPEL's programme is benefitting our members so that we can take action to continuously improve it and ensure that it achieves the best value from the resources available. We need to improve our understanding of how the knowledge, guidance and tools created in IMPEL's projects are taken up in member organisations and applied to improve the implementation of environmental law. Each member country will therefore produce a short annual report that summarises the extent of participation in Expert Teams and projects, and provides feedback on the benefits that have been realised.

Engagement and participation

Our aim is to improve the overall level of participation in Expert Teams and project groups, moving towards a position where every country is actively engaged in each of the Expert Teams and the leadership of projects is more widely shared across member organisations. The annual report will therefore provide the means for gathering and reporting information on the level of participation by countries.

Our success is also dependent upon attracting new member organisations that can help to develop and contribute to the five thematic areas of our work programme. The annual report should provide information on progress with recruitment of new members, their roles and responsibilities, and how they can contribute to each of the Expert Teams.



Evaluating the benefits received by our members

The annual report should provide feedback on the benefits received by member organisations as a direct consequence of engagement in IMPEL's work programme. This should address key questions, such as:

- Has participation in IMPEL's programme helped your organisation to overcome specific challenges in implementing EU environmental law?
- Has compliance with the requirements of EU environmental legislation improved and have there been consequent benefits for the environment, people and wildlife as a direct result of engagement in IMPEL's programme?
- Is your organisation operating more efficiently and effectively as a result of applying the know-how, tools and techniques acquired from IMPEL's projects and activities?
- Are senior officers responsible for your organisation able to tell us that the outputs from IMPEL's programme are being taken up and embedded in their organisations and that they are receiving the benefits that they expect from their membership and investment in IMPEL?

The detailed structure of the annual report is to be developed and agreed by the group of National Coordinators.



Appendix 1

Strategic Plans for the Five Thematic Programmes: 2016 to 2020



Industry and Air

Context

The regulation of emissions from industry has a long history in Europe and has been the subject of a series of EU Directives over the last forty years. Despite this, assessments of the impact of industrial emissions show that they are still causing significant damage to human health, ecosystems and the economy.

IMPEL has identified the key implementation challenges related to industry and air regulation. The Industry and Air Expert Team (I&AET) will focus its work on addressing these challenges, as well as other priorities identified by member organisations (including noise issues and odours from farming).

Aims

The main directions of I&AET activities over the next five years are to support member organisations in addressing key challenges in the implementation of the requirements of EU legislation in the following key areas:

- Best Available Techniques (BAT); going beyond BAT; and practical implementation of BAT/BREF notes.
- Compliance with Industrial Emissions Directive (IED) provisions in order to achieve Air Quality Standards (AQs) in areas with high density of industry; application of Emission Limit Value (ELV) ranges (BAT and BREF notes) in relation to AQs; exceedances of AQs in city centres in relation to industry regulation; revised BAT setting, including new ELVs in glass and cement sectors.
- Minimum content of IED Baseline Reports focusing on soil and groundwater contamination.
- Minimum content resources for IED Inspections (topics in relation to identified high risks, covering all relevant media, covering all or only a few aspects, using check lists in relation to risk criteria, and announced/unannounced inspections).
- Monitoring challenges: self-monitoring and operator reporting under IED; Differing sampling frequency for air emissions; lack of air quality monitoring stations; industrial soil and groundwater monitoring.
- Resource challenges: lack of expertise at decentralised levels; lack of resources and trained staff; charging regimes as a possible solution for overcoming the lack of resources.
- Regulation challenges including: industrial noise problems; agricultural and industrial odour problems; pollution caused by IED farming activities.



Outcomes

The main outcome of the work of the I&A ET is to overcome implementation challenges and provide a level playing field for industry and air regulation across Europe. This will be done by:

- Setting up an enhanced network of experts on industry and air regulation;
- Fostering cooperation and coordination between different regulatory bodies (permitting, inspection and surveillance bodies) with a view to streamlining and optimising the use of inspection and surveillance resources;
- Developing guidance and tools (e.g. electronic records of inspection and surveillance work) for achieving a more effective and efficient implementation of industry and air regulation;
- Optimising the communication and active dissemination to the interested public of the results of expert team work.

Delivery

The desired outcomes will be achieved through:

- Projects: for example, Supporting IED Implementation (multi annual project), IED Baseline Report, and Lessons learnt from Accidents;
- Joint inspections and site visits;
- Conferences; for example, conference on IED Implementation;
- Peer reviews - IMPEL Review Initiative (IRI) scheme (integrating the ET outcomes into the IRI process).

Partnerships

In order to perform the planned activities and deliver the proposed outcomes active engagement from IMPEL member organisations is needed. All member organisations should appoint at least one member for the I&A ET. IMPEL Board visits to member countries shall address this issue too. The European Commission is a key partner and stakeholder for the I&A ET. The proposals coming from the EC will be integrated into ET annual work programme. Other important partners are the IPPC Bureau, European Environmental Agency, European Chemical Agency, ECENA and industry sector associations.



Waste and Trans-Frontier Shipment of Waste

Context

The objectives and targets set in European legislation have been key drivers to improve waste management, stimulate innovation in recycling, limit the use of landfills, and create incentives to change consumer behaviour. Improved waste management also helps to reduce health and environmental problems, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and avoid negative impacts at local level such as landscape deterioration due to landfills, local water and air pollution, as well as littering. Proper waste management is a key element in ensuring resource efficiency and the sustainable growth of European economies.

Waste is an area of policy where the European Union (EU) is very active. Its involvement has developed over some 35 years but there are still enormous problems in ensuring that the waste laws it adopts are transposed into national law and then properly implemented by all the Member States.

The remit of the IMPEL Waste and Trans-frontier Shipment of Waste (TFS) Expert Team has widened. The TFS Cluster was set up in 1992 as an informal network in order to harmonise the enforcement of European regulations on trans-frontier shipments of waste. This group has now broadened its remit to consider the implementation of all EU waste legislation.

A recent study by IMPEL looking into the remaining challenges in implementing EU environmental law confirmed that significant challenges still existed, with the waste management sector being the most frequently cited.

Working as a network of practitioners, IMPEL will shape its strategic priorities, networking and future work plans to address the project findings. There are several important things that the Waste and TFS Expert team can do to overcome the barriers to effective implementation. Sharing of knowledge and good practice between countries and developing new approaches and techniques can help to apply scarce resources more efficiently and effectively.

Aims

It is clear that further effort needs to be put into improving communication and cooperation between organisations on all levels across various networks to combat waste crime. There is a need to share best practice on stopping organised crime and coordinating action against waste criminals. The Expert team will continue to play an important role in sharing best practice on waste regulation and enforcement and transfer of know how between countries that are making good progress and countries that are facing implementation challenges to help improve overall level of compliance and achievement of required actions and targets thus leading to a level playing field in the waste sector.



There is a need to continue to develop an active international community of practitioners both within and outside the EU to deal with trans-frontier shipment of waste and further developing the intelligence-led systems and procedures for inspection and enforcement.

There is a need for regulators and industry to develop improved systems for the tracking of waste from its point of generation through its movement to final treatment or disposal.

The Expert team will also use the experience and practice developed on TFS to benefit other areas of waste regulation.

Outcomes

- All Member States are represented in the Expert Team to cover all areas of waste legislation.
- The capacity of IMPEL members is strengthened, helping them to implement new legislation and improve existing implementation.
- There is stronger collaboration and networking on all levels including Police, Customs, prosecutors and judges, Asian and African networks.
- Waste crime is reduced and the contribution to the fight against waste crime at national, European and international level is enhanced.
- The tracking of waste nationally and internationally is improved.
- Mechanisms and platforms are in place to enable the exchange of information and best practice between inspectors.
- A successful annual conference is delivered.
- The development of waste legislation is improved through the provision of technical advice and information.

Delivery

- Build up the expert team by organising workshops, joint inspections and exchange of inspectors
- Enhance collaboration with other networks by organising joint meetings, training sessions, share good practises
- Meetings and conferences with Expert team members/other network members
- Develop guidance and tools for inspectors
- Carry out studies/surveys/reviews of present practices

Partnerships

The Expert Team's Steering Committee will review project proposals to ensure they meet the aims of the Expert team and steer the direction of the Expert Team. Individuals within the Expert Team will be required to act as Project leads to manage projects through their various phases ensuring outcomes are progressed. It is hoped that IMPEL members from across all the Member States will participate in the various projects. The outcomes will not be obtained without the input of the wide range of stakeholders and networks. These include experts in regulating waste legislation, Police, Customs, Interpol, Europol, DG Environment, Basel Secretariat, ENPE network, Asian network, REN network, ENFORCE, and INECE.



Nature Protection

Context

The EU headline target is to halt the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services in the EU by 2020 and to restore them in so far as feasible. The main legislative instruments for ensuring conservation and sustainable use of nature are the Birds¹ and Habitat Directives². The EU Timber regulation is also an important instrument. The EU State of Nature³ report provides insight and knowledge to underpin further actions needed to achieve the objectives of both Directives contributing to the EU biodiversity strategy. It is clear that much stronger conservation efforts are needed.

In the period 2007-2012 the overall status of species and habitats in the EU did not change significantly, with many habitats and species showing an unfavourable status and a significant proportion of them deteriorating still further. On the other hand, some species and habitats covered by the legislation are showing signs of recovery. This is illustrated by success stories in different parts of Europe. Also the Natura 2000 network is playing a major role in stabilising habitats and species with an unfavourable status.

This State of Nature report provides important input to the 2015 Fitness Check of EU nature Directives, the results of which are being implemented in 2016. The Fitness Check looks at a wide range of issues related to the effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, relevance and EU added value of the legislation. The Expert team will address key challenges in this area by focusing its activities on major pressures and threats to terrestrial and marine ecosystems and helping to find solutions to help improve the implementation of EU nature protection law.

Aims

Effective implementation of the Directives relating to nature conservation contributes to public confidence, legal predictability and a level playing field. This requires an effective and efficient system of inspections and surveillance, good access to justice and public access to information. The Expert Team on Nature Protection aims to contribute to the 4th priority in the 7th Environmental Action Programme in order to maximise the benefits of the EU's environment and nature legislation by improving implementation. The Expert Team will also contribute to the Roadmap towards Eliminating Illegal Killing of Birds and the Action Plan on Wildlife Trafficking.

The Expert Team will focus on the quality and quantity of inspections and surveillance, effectiveness in the enforcement chain of detection – prosecution – sanction, sharing of intelligence and information, promoting cooperation with networks of practitioners, collaboration with NGOs and public participation. The ET will facilitate knowledge sharing by the exchange of good experiences and good practises and by executing

¹ Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds.

² Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.

³ COM (2015) 219 Report on the status of and trends for habitat types and species covered by the Birds and Habitats Directives for the 2007-2012 period as required under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive and Article 12 of the Birds Directive



peer reviews ('green' IRIs). These peer reviews equip authorities and enforcement bodies with the knowledge, tools and capacity to improve the delivery of benefits from that legislation, and to improve the governance of the enforcement process. The ET also will organise joint inspections to share best practises and for the trans-boundary collaboration in investigating criminal (including organised crime) cases. In order to do this successfully it will be necessary to further build up and extend a European network of experts in the nature conservation area.

The Expert Team will also work to address pressures on nature arising from different sectors. This is particularly important in the regulation of agriculture where more effort is required to coordinate the two key control mechanisms: cross-compliance and inspections. Exchange of good practices and guidance on risk assessment approaches in this area will be beneficial. The Expert Team will also work closely together with the Water and Land ET on the achievement of good ecological status in water bodies and in controlling changes in hydrological conditions, which present one of the main threats to freshwater ecosystems.

Outcomes

- All IMPEL member countries are represented in the ET.
- NGOs are represented as observers and partners in the ET by their umbrella organisations.
- Effective collaboration is achieved with the European networks of environmental prosecutors and judges.
- Guidelines on best practices are produced to improve the enforcement chain of detection-prosecution-sanction and are made available on the IMPEL website.
- Guidelines and tools are produced to improve governance of the enforcement process, based on the findings of the 'green' IRIs.
- A programme of yearly 'green' IRIs with follow-up workshops in the following year is executed.
- Effective trans-boundary collaboration is achieved between relevant authorities and networks on the investigation and enforcement of criminal cases.
- A digital platform is developed to exchange intelligence and information on criminal cases, including modus operandi between authorities and collection of information from NGOs.
- Good practices are shared and guidance is produced on the regulation of the agriculture sector with respect to the nature protection, particularly on the coherence between cross-compliance and inspection regimes.

Delivery

- Build-up the green expert team by organising workshops and joint inspections.
- Enhance collaboration with the networks of environmental prosecutors and network of judges by organising joint meetings and training sessions, and sharing good practices.
- Carry out 'green' IRIs.



- Build up a digital platform for the exchange of exchange of intelligence and information on crime cases and modus operandi between authorities and for the collection of information from NGOs.
- Prepare a 3-yearly conference.

Partnerships

The effective implementation of EU legislation on nature protection requires cooperation and collaboration with a range of organisations and networks, both in public authorities and NGOs. These include: The European Commission - DG Environment, Bern Convention, Birdlife Europe, FACE, CABS, WWF, EU TWIX, and Interpol.



Water and Land

Context

Implementation of EU legislation on water and land is identified as one of the top challenges in recent IMPEL research on the implementation of EU environmental law. The objectives of several major Directives, including the Water Framework Directive (WFD), the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD), and Directives on Nitrates, Urban Waste Water Treatment, Ground Waters, and Flood Risk Management, as well as key EU Thematic Strategies, including the Marine and Soil Strategies, remain to be fully achieved in many Member States. For example, the European Commission's review of progress with River Basin Management Plans in meeting the requirements of the WFD showed that only just over half of freshwater bodies across the EU currently achieve the required quality level of good ecological status. Diffuse source pollution from agriculture, over-abstraction of water and physical modification of water bodies are key underlying causes of failure to achieve good status.

Implementation problems may arise at several levels: in the transposition of EU legislation into national laws; the setting of environmental objectives and plans in Member States; and the enforcement of the requirements, for example through permitting and inspection regimes. The work programme of the Water and Land Expert Team (W&LET) will address implementation challenges in each of these levels.

Aims

- Support IMPEL members in providing relevant know-how, guidance and tools on the implementation of EU Directives and Strategies relating to water and land. Priority needs include improved information gathering through monitoring and reporting, in several key areas:
 - diffuse-source pollution from agriculture, households, and failing waste water treatment and sewerage systems
 - over-allocation of water resources and over-abstraction of water
 - levels of priority chemicals in water bodies
 - physical modification of water bodies (affecting hydro-geomorphology and the achievement of good ecological status);
 - restoration of water and wetland habitats.
 - risk analysis for supporting development planning
 - land management support and soil assessments
 - flood protection issues and the related possible environmental consequences of measures to tackle flood risks.
- Support IMPEL members in the prevention of pollution at source, tackling infringements and supporting compliance assurance activities relating to:
 - contaminated sites
 - industrial installations and activities
 - urban waste waters
 - agriculture and, in particular, the prevention of diffuse source pollution, for example, from nitrates and pesticides
 - illegal abstraction of water and over-abstraction of waters



- achievement of required water quality standards for bathing waters and drinking waters
 - re-use of treated waste waters
 - hydro-morphological pressures from the building of structures, for example, for energy production, flood risk management and other causes of modification of water bodies that affect the achievement of good ecological status.
- Develop guidance and tools, including checklists, for inspections for industry and agriculture sectors and other activities relevant to water and soil protection.
 - Work with the Nature Protection Expert Team to support the development of an integrated approach to the regulation of the agriculture sector, including the harmonisation of cross-compliance and environmental inspection regimes.
 - Work with the Industry and Air Expert Team on the permitting and enforcement of IED installations in relation to water status and land contamination.
 - Increase IMPEL membership from organisations that are responsible for monitoring, assessment and reporting functions in relation to EU legislation and those that are responsible for pollution prevention and control, for example, in the agriculture sector.

Outcomes

- The capacity of member organisations is enhanced, for example, in key areas such as the use of new technologies in earth observation and geo-spatial instruments.
- There is improved sharing of experience and best practice amongst member organisations, for example, through:
 - the development of pan-European guidance manuals
 - a survey of activities carried out by IMPEL members on problems and best practices in the W&L area
 - study-visits to organisations responsible for environmental regulation and enforcement, and comparison and exchange of tools and methods of risk assessment
 - development of technical networks to share common problems and solutions
 - gathering of information (e.g. from controls, inspections, monitoring) on the nature and underlying reasons of significant pressures from different activities
 - comparison and exchange on the design of risk-based monitoring programs.



- Member organisations benefit from peer reviews through the IMPEL Review Initiative (IRI), including the accomplishment of an IRI in the Water and Land area and the extension of an IRI to include development planning activities.
- New members and partners are identified to extend technical networks, for example, through: a desk survey of relevant organisations, visits and meetings, and cooperation with technical working groups under the EU WFD Common Implementation Strategy WFD.
- Effective dialogue with key stakeholders is achieved, for example, with the European Commission and other organisations responsible for policies and legislation implementation in order to steer priorities and programmes and provide technical advice and information to support the development of environmental legislation.

Delivery

The ET will deliver the outcome of the activities and projects through:

- development of guidance documents and manuals
- meetings and conferences, within IMPEL and with stakeholders
- technical workshops
- exchange visits, study visits, stages
- further development of thematic networks of technical experts.

Partnerships

Key partners include: INECE, NEPA, WaterCore, Common Forum (at present, there are active contacts with Common Forum, stemming from “DECO” project), voluntary organisations and NGOs operating in W&L field.

Key stakeholders include: the European Parliament and DG Environment of the European Commission, with regard to:

- Directorate-General for Environment Unit B1: Agriculture, Forests and Soil
- Directorate General for Environment Unit C1: Quality of Life, Water & Air (with particular regard to WFD Common Implementation Strategy)
- Directorate General for Environment Unit C2: Marine Environment & Water Industry
- EU Committee on the WFD Common Implementation Strategy.



Cross-Cutting Tools & Approaches

Context

IMPEL's member organisations range from Ministries with a national focus to regional agencies and associations of regional associations. These organisations may have a thematic basis (e.g. Water), a cross-thematic basis, or be functionally set-up to deal with only part of the regulatory cycle (e.g. Inspectorates) or all of the regulatory cycle. These organisations may not even all be required to implement the EU environmental *acquis* yet they all face similar challenges namely how to effectively implement legislation to protect the environment whilst being efficient with tax payers' money.

The Cross-Cutting Expert Team (X-C ET) is primarily designed to support members to implement legislation in an effective and efficient manner such that learning can be shared, capacity built and new developments explored. It works by identifying and addressing the common, overarching issues of implementation and enforcement that emerge from the work and findings in the four other Expert Teams.

Aims

- Improve understanding of key challenges in the implementation of EU environmental law and how they can be overcome through periodic surveys of member and partner organisations.
- Help to build capacity of member organisations through peer review and post review support, for example, through the IMPEL Review Initiative (IRI) and follow-up projects designed to support 'opportunities for development' identified during IRIs.
- Provide support and guidance related to a refresh of the EU Recommendation for Minimum Criteria of Environmental Inspections (RMCEI) and implementation of any potential new Commission instruments on Compliance Assurance.
- Develop tools, systems and processes to implement aspects of the regulatory cycle e.g. permitting, risk assessment, inspection, compliance assurance techniques, enforcement, and reporting that could be used horizontally across the four thematic Expert Teams.
- Develop new technology and new ways of working to support the implementation of the regulatory cycle, for example, in the use of drones, monitoring equipment, handheld and mobile technology, and back-office support systems.



- Support development of better regulation, refit and fitness checks, for example, the streamlining of monitoring and reporting.
- Support better implementation and development of cross-cutting legislation such as the EU Environmental Liability Directive, the EIA Directive, and EMAS.

Outcomes

- Improved understanding of key challenges in the implementation of EU environmental law and how they can be overcome in order to support better implementation of the EU environmental *acquis*.
- Optimised spend of the public purse through capacity building, shared learning and development (ie. not having to re-invent the wheel for everything).
- Enhanced levels of compliance through the adoption of complimentary techniques alongside traditional regulatory methods.
- Better, more fit for purpose, legislation designed to yield better environmental outcomes.

Delivery

The outcomes will be delivered through traditional IMPEL methods such as projects, peer reviews and conferences. These will be enhanced, where appropriate, with the development of scientific papers for journals, e-learning, webinars and the use of new communication methodologies, such as Twitter, where required.

Partnerships

The X-C ET will work with key partners to achieve its outcomes including the relevant Units within DG Environment, the other four thematic Expert Teams; other international enforcement and environmental networks and organisations.

The X-C ET will also work with other organisations exploring new compliance assurance techniques and centres of academic expertise.