

Radwaste Governance News

A newsletter on ARGONA, Cowam in Practice and OBRA - three innovative projects on governance. No 1, August 2007.

Time for implementation!

The European Commission has launched three projects to deal with the governance of radioactive waste management (rwm). The projects have participants from fourteen countries in Europe including waste management organizations, authorities, academia, consultant companies, municipalities and NGOs. Together the projects take a comprehensive approach to governance and focus on implementation. The intention is that they shall lead to better processes that properly address public concerns and to high quality decision-making processes notably related to the disposal of radioactive waste in underground repositories. Key issues are the implementation of transparency and participation in policy making, inclusive governance and dissemination of knowledge. This edition introduces the three projects ARGONA, CIP and OBRA. Subsequent editions will discuss project developments, events of interest such as meetings and conferences, and results achieved.



Illumination of Transparency and the Link to Democracy

The ARGONA project will demonstrate how participation and transparency link to the political and legal systems. The project will analyze different ideas of transparency and develop new approaches for nuclear waste management and beyond. ARGONA is coordinated by the Swedish Nuclear Power Inspectorate (SKI) and managed by Karita Research.

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A Cooperative Research on Inclusive Governance

Cowam in Practice (CIP) aims to make actual progress in the governance of radioactive waste management. The project is based on core participation from stakeholders in five countries, in the first place local communities, with a view to provide results directly relevant to their concerns.

CIP is a continuation of two previous programs, COWAM 1 and 2.

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An Observatory for Good Governance

The main goal of OBRA is to assess the feasibility of a European Observatory for long-term governance of rwm. The observatory would provide information to, and meet concerns from, local and regional communities. OBRA focuses on the dissemination of knowledge in radioactive waste management, the encouragement of interaction between stakeholders and multi-disciplinary education.

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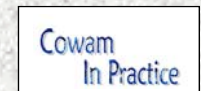
This newsletter provides information on ARGONA, CIP and OBRA, the three projects on radioactive waste governance selected by the European Commission under the 6th Euratom Framework Programme for Research and Training on nuclear energy (2002-2006). The newsletter will be published bi-annually, with extra editions when appropriate, and can be downloaded through a shared web site of the three projects:

<http://www.radwastegovernance.eu/>



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ARGONA – Arenas for Risk Governance

The nuclear waste management community has entered a phase focusing on stakeholder participation and engagement of social sciences, but there is still a need for greater transparency and participation. ARGONA will further develop these issues by the examination of the roles of mediators and public consultation, the studying of methods of risk communication and the development of new approaches to transparency and participation.

The goal is to increase awareness among decision-makers and stakeholders, develop guidelines for transparency and disseminate good risk communication strategies to the nuclear waste community as well as other fields, such as biotechnology and the oil industry.

Fourteen organizations from eight countries are involved in ARGONA. Some participants are from nuclear waste management programs, others are researchers, non-governmental organizations, public interest groups and local authorities. Both decision-makers and stakeholders are involved.

Work Packages

◆ Work Package 1:

Policy Making Structures

The first package explores policy making structures in EU and participating countries. It clarifies the role of transparency and participation in the legal and political systems. Information will be analyzed from a questionnaire survey sent to key stakeholders.

◆ Work Package 2:

Theoretical Perspectives on Participation and Democracy

This package defines and analyzes deliberation, representative democracy and transparency. The results will be a foundation for later parts of the project.

◆ Work Package 3:

Mediators of Issues and Mediators of Process

This package studies mediators, who facilitate public engagement by translating complex technological issues into practical concerns. Actual case studies will be analysed with the goal to study the relationship between methods of public engagement, and to inform key decision makers on the roles of mediators.

◆ Work Package 4:

Risk Communication

WP4 explores different meanings of risk and risk communication and takes cultural aspects into account to create a program to improve public awareness about risks of nuclear waste.

◆ Work Package 5:

Evaluation, Testing and Application of Participatory Approaches

WP5 consists of several sub-packages which review public participation in specific countries, tests new approaches, investigates the role of local referenda and compensations and develops guidelines on approaches to the siting of a repository.

◆ Work Package 6: Guidelines

This WP develops guidelines for participation and transparency in decision-making processes.



Josefin Päiviö Jonsson,
Project Coordinator
and Kjell Andersson. Project Manager

Community Waste Management In Practice

Important changes are expected in several EU Member States in the next five years. The period is appropriate to follow the implementation of governance principles in radioactive waste management (rwm), get feedback and make recommendations for further improvement.

The goal of CIP is to follow up and analyse five innovative national processes on rwm on the basis of COWAM 2 results with a view to support stakeholders, particularly local communities, directly in their engagement with their particular rwm programmes - and to capture the learning from that experience with a view to produce guidance for the EU.

Cowam 2 results

Over three years of cooperative research (2004-2006), COWAM 2 participants identified the latest advances and best practices in three connected areas:

- Sustainable and robust governance of long term issues
- Structuring local communities for engagement in rwm governance

- Legal and institutional frameworks and processes for inclusive governance of rwm.

The first area, long term governance, concerns the special constraints introduced by the very long periods associated with rwm. COWAM 2 provided keys to meeting the challenges of the long term. The next two areas are strategic. COWAM 2 found that local communities are central actors in long term governance, and they must develop their capacity to participate. Advice and experience were shared. COWAM 2 highlighted the need to favour the development of appropriate institutions and legal provisions to support long term governance.

CIP methodology

◆ National Stakeholder Groups

CIP objectives will be accomplished through cooperative research conducted in five EU member states: France, Romania, Slovenia, Spain and UK. In each country a national stakeholder group (NSG) will review, from a local perspective, the governance approaches developed in their country.

◆ Investigation: Background Material and Research Briefs

The NSG will be supported by a group of experts-contractors providing facilitation skills and research material on governance for discussion in the groups. The experts prepare background and research material for discussion in the NSGs, both on the existing advice and best practices found in COWAM 2 and on specific aspects in each country involved.

◆ Integration

From the analysis of the five national processes, guidelines to the EU 27 and its Member States will be developed on the improvement of existing good practices in decision making, how to strengthen them at the local and national level and how to identify new ways of progress.



Gilles Hériard Dubreuil,
Project Coordinator
and Serge Gadbois, Project Manager



OBRA - European Observatory for Long-term Governance on Radioactive Waste

A wider societal involvement is a top-level concern in radioactive waste management (rwm). OBRA seeks to contribute to improved governance through the dissemination of knowledge to stakeholders and the promotion of interaction among them. OBRA also aims to address societal concerns and perceptions of rwm in a harmonised and systematic way.

The main aspect of OBRA is to develop a pilot program for the establishment of a European Observatory for long-term governance of rwm. This observatory would provide information to, and meet concerns from, stakeholders. OBRA will assess the feasibility of such an independent platform, analyze the results and make recommendations on how the observatory could be implemented.

Expected results are the improvement of the current model of governance on rwm, the promotion of networking and coordination tools for stakeholders, the increase of multidisciplinary education and the raising of awareness, transparency and communication. Expected beneficiaries are the academic and research community, the European Commission, implementers and the public in general.

Work Packages

◆ **Work Package 1: Setting the Baseline**

Work Package 1 will examine activities on participation and governance, focusing on rwm, and investigate different models of governance. The goal is to identify success factors to aid in the definition of the observatory.

◆ **Work Package 2: Strategic Implementation of OBRA**

This package will develop a shared proposal for the setting up and implementation of the observatory by exploring the views of project participants and stakeholders on mechanisms for knowledge transfer, interdisciplinary training, expert support and multidisciplinary education. The vision, mission and action plan for the Observatory will be defined.

◆ **Work Package 3: Implementation and Testing of a Pilot OBRA**

This part will set up and test the model developed in WP2. A trial training course developed in cooperation with the IAEA will be tested and further developed to understand the extent to which such courses may help in

◆ **Work Package 4: Knowledge Management and Assessment**

WP4 focuses on the dissemination of knowledge and especially the science-public interface. Tools include a virtual forum, communication activities and a final seminar. An assessment of the project will also be undertaken within this WP.

◆ **Work Package 5: Consortium Management**

This package focuses on OBRA management activities and coordination with other Euratom FP6 projects on governance.



Project Coordinator
Meritxell Martell



The main objective of OBRA is to assess the feasibility of a European Observatory for long-term governance on radioactive waste management. The observatory would provide information to, and meet concerns from, local and regional communities.

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Duration: 24 months
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