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OBRA

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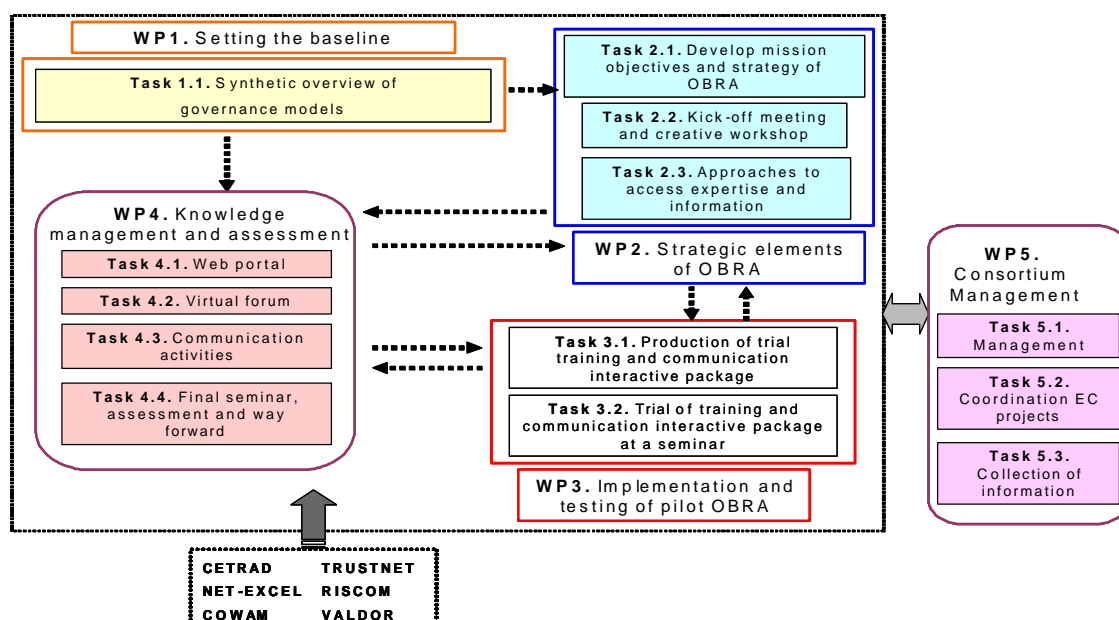
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1. Introduction

OBRA is a Co-ordination Action project under the EURATOM Sixth Framework Programme of the European Union. This 2-year project OBRA will assess the feasibility of creating an Observatory for long-term governance on radioactive waste management in Europe and will thus contribute (i) to provide access to all stakeholders to the knowledge generated by successive EU research programmes both in scientific and social sciences fields; (ii) to promote the most appropriate forms of interaction between them; and (iii) to feed back into best practice for how results from research, training and development in radioactive waste management and disposal are formulated and how their dissemination to local and regional communities is managed.

The key objectives of OBRA are: (1) to establish a European networking platform between universities, implementers, stakeholders and civil society in general, (2) to develop a model of a European Observatory for long-term governance, (3) to test the efficiency of a pilot training package as a mechanism for the transfer and dissemination of knowledge to local and regional stakeholders and (4) to make recommendations on how the model of the Observatory could be implemented.

The objectives of OBRA will be implemented through 5 different Work Packages (WP), as shown in the Figure below.



The specific work package (WP4) has been included in the project to specifically address the issue of knowledge management and dissemination at different levels, giving special emphasis to the science-public interface and the dissemination of results outside the project consortium.

2. Audience to be addressed by OBRA's Communication Action Plan

OBRA's communication action plan has the aim to communicate with actors beyond the research community in order to help spread awareness of the project itself and its implications. In particular, OBRA and its outcomes may have broader socio-economic and political implications. Therefore, the management and dissemination of knowledge will be conducted at two levels:

- a) Internal, including contractors and research projects linked to the project, like ARGONA and CIP;
- b) External, including all those interested organisations not directly participating in the project.

OBRA will contribute to the better governance of radioactive waste by providing mechanisms for all stakeholders to have access to the knowledge generated by successive EU research programmes both in scientific and social sciences fields. Therefore OBRA's Communication Action Plan will include different messages in order to accommodate the specific needs of the different stakeholders identified.

The main point of reference of OBRA comes from social sciences and includes the research community active in environmental and risk governance, and in particular in governance of radioactive waste management, as well as stakeholders in the field of nuclear issues. Accordingly, OBRA's Communication Action Plan will address *members of the public interested in the topic of governance of waste disposal or nuclear energy and actively searching for information on this subject.*

The different audiences are described below.

The scientific community from natural and social sciences

Technical and scientific knowledge generated by successive EU research programmes will be available in the OBRA platform in order to address research questions by stakeholder groups and the general public in the field of radioactive waste management. In addition, multidisciplinary approaches related to social, political and

economic issues that are addressed in social sciences research complement the technical and scientific expertise.

Therefore, the research scientific community both from the natural and social sciences fields will be addressed in OBRA's communication action plan in order to promote knowledge sharing and interaction between them.

With regards to communication to professionals and experts from universities, consultancies and research institutes involved directly and indirectly in the project, the main objectives are:

- to inform the research community about the aim, the objectives, the scope and ambition of the Coordination Action OBRA as a joint European research initiative;
- to promote and facilitate the dissemination of specialised scientific-technical information on the project and results generated by the project;
- to increase visibility of OBRA in the scientific-technical community, and
- to call attention to the role of Community-supported research in the field of governance of high level radioactive waste.

Decision-makers in radioactive waste management, including national waste management organisations and local authorities

OBRA will contribute to establishing a long-term governance model and will therefore generate results and information that are relevant and useful to support and analyse decision-making processes from the point of view of stakeholders. These stakeholders include representatives from local, regional or national governments and waste management agencies as well as members of the general public.

The key message of communication on activities within OBRA addressed to this audience consists of:

- providing concise information presented in an accessible and understandable form on the objectives, results and achievements of OBRA;
- sharing different experiences and approaches to long-term governance on radioactive waste management in different European countries;
- providing guidance on how to access the information available regarding radioactive waste management from the research undertaken in the field of social and natural sciences.

European Commission

OBRA's communication action plan intends to provide the European Commission with networking and resource improvements in order to support sound decisions related to the governance of radioactive waste at the European level. In this regard, the interaction with the other two EC funded projects on governance (CIP and ARGONA) is crucial to provide a harmonised and common European approach to governance of spent fuel and high level radioactive waste.

Regulatory bodies and associated technical safety organisations

Regulatory bodies and technical safety organisations have the responsibility for independently carrying out the regulatory function with regard to safety and the protection of human health and the environment and should be empowered to enforce legal requirements related to all aspects of radioactive waste management.

OBRA's Communication action plan has the aim to increase the dissemination of knowledge and communication networks between these bodies and the rest of stakeholders in order to provide them with the necessary resources to take accurate independent decisions regarding aspects of radioactive waste management in a more transparent way.

Electrical utilities

In order to build up trust, electrical utilities are making a major effort to satisfy their consumer's demands for information. OBRA's Communication action plan will provide them with guidance on provision of information to the general public necessary to achieve this objective.

The general public

OBRA's Communication Action Plan aims to increase public awareness regarding governance on radioactive waste management. The key messages to be transmitted to this audience through OBRA Communication Action Plan consist of:

- the provision of basic communication materials that can be used to communicate the objectives, scope and content of OBRA;
- the communication of the European dimension of long-term governance on radioactive waste management;
- the provision of guidance to access the information available regarding radioactive waste management.

Communication with EURATOM FP6 funded projects

OBRA's Communication Action Plan intends to establish links with other FP6 projects within the EURATOM programme focusing on governance issues, such as CIP and ARGONA, but also on technical issues, such as FUNMIG, NF-PRO, SAPIERR-2 and PAMINA. This communication aims at exploring possibilities for developing common initiatives or materials that can be used for communicating the scope, objectives and importance of activities supported by EC funding on radioactive waste. Furthermore, it aims at building confidence in geological disposal as a safe and sustainable and scientifically-technically accepted and acknowledged solution for the long-term management of high-level and long-lived radioactive wastes.

3. Communication tools

This section addresses the mix of communication tools that will be developed as part of OBRA's Communication Action Plan in order to address the audiences identified in section 2.

Conferences

The OBRA co-ordinator developed a list of international conferences and workshops where the members of the consortium can present the OBRA Project, its activities and results. OBRA has been presented and will be presented in the following conferences:

- The GMF seminar "Local level and energy policies" held on 11 October 2006 in Brussels.
- ICEM: The 11th International Conference on Environmental Remediation and Radioactive Waste Management that will be held in September 2-6, 2007 in Bruges, Belgium
- VALDOR: Values in decisions on risk that will take place in Stockholm in May 19-22, 2008.
- EC Euradwaste Conference that will take place in Luxembourg in October 26-31, 2008.

Partners will be encouraged to present OBRA in conferences, seminars and workshops at international and national levels. The partners will be regularly reminded about this important form of communication.

Scientific publications

The OBRA consortium will promote and encourage the publication of results from the project in highly-ranked peer-reviewed scientific journals. A publication list will be maintained at the OBRA portal.

Kick-off meeting and creative workshop

The OBRA kick-off meeting was held on 31st January in Eurajoki (Finland) and followed by the creative workshop from 1st until 2nd February 2007. The aim of the workshop was to provide the basis to define the long-term mission, the objectives and the strategy of the proposed observatory on long-term governance of radioactive waste management. Continued efforts will be made for direct involvement of key organizations, presently not represented in the project, by invitation to join the workshops.

Efforts were made to involve countries not represented within OBRA in the creative workshop. Thus, one main target group was representative organisations of the Baltic countries and two people, one from the Institute of Geology and Geography in Lithuania and another from the Institute of Environmental Geochemistry in Ukraine participated actively in the workshop.

Web portal and intranet

A web portal www.obraproject.eu has been established to provide descriptive information of the project, events, results and publications of OBRA to ensure dissemination of knowledge to a wide audience. Members of the OBRA consortium will be encouraged to create an OBRA link on each Participant's website. The WEB portal will be regularly up-dated in order to serve its purpose of providing communication of the project content, structure, activities and results to a broad community.

A consortium restricted access intranet, providing space for internal working documents, and knowledge management and transfer has also been created. Participants to the first creative workshop of OBRA have been provided access to the information of the intranet, except the management information. The intranet will be also regularly updated.

Virtual forum

A virtual forum will be set up within the intranet to enhance science-public interaction, in particular, between the different partners involved in the project and the potential participants to OBRA workshops and to the training course. The forum aims to be dynamic and participation will be highly encouraged

Newsletter

A joint newsletter between ARGONA, CIP and OBRA will be produced several times a year, every three to four months and will be distributed on-line through the common web portal. The ARGONA coordinator is responsible for organising the edition of the newsletter and each coordinator should provide the content related to each one of the projects.

Seminar to trial the training and communication interactive package

A two to three-day training seminar will be held for stakeholders invited from many countries to trial the training and communication interactive packages and share experiences.

These courses are intended for researchers in the field but can also be attended by stakeholders with a scientific-technical background. It is expected that the seminar may comprise workshop sessions, lectures, computer exercises and demonstrations. At the end of the seminar a report will be produced on the lessons learned. This report will feed into the final report. Representatives of municipalities will be invited to participate in this training course.

MSc Thesis

An MSc Thesis will be carried out in the framework of OBRA and will contribute to gain knowledge which will be transferred to both the scientific community by means of lectures, conferences and seminars and to the stakeholders, such as local communities involved in OBRA by means of GMF representation.

Specific Communication activities between OBRA, CIP and ARGONA.

- Invitation to the partners of the other two projects to attend relevant meetings of OBRA. These can include project partners at the level of coordinators only, work package leaders or the rest of consortium partners;
- The coordinator of OBRA will include the partners of the other two projects in the list of addressees in the dissemination activities. It is expected that the coordinators of CIP and ARGONA will also include the partners of OBRA in the list of addressees in the dissemination activities;
- Specific meetings will be organised between the three projects for exchange of information and coordination of work;
- cross-referencing to the work of other projects;
- a joint newsletter between ARGONA, CIP and OBRA will be produced several times a year, every three to four months, and will be distributed on-line and through the common web portal.
- An umbrella website will be created with a specific neutral name-www.radwastegovernance.eu. This portal will include a brief presentation of the topic as well as a description of common activities and links to ARGONA, OBRA and CIP. The design and text of the portal will be duly discussed with the other coordinators and approved by the three coordinators. The portal will be used for the dissemination of the newsletters.
- Access to the non-public parts (if any) of the three websites of OBRA, ARGONA and CIP will be open by the coordinators to the rest of partners of the other projects.
- A specific session on the governance of nuclear waste management will be

organised at the Euradwaste conference to be held in Luxembourg in October 2008, where the results of the three projects will be presented and discussed.

Press releases

The European Commission will be informed, one month in advance of any publications or initiatives (e.g. articles in journals, press releases, conference papers) by the Consortium which may have social, economic and/or political impact or could trigger significant media interest. All public-oriented communications concerning the OBRA project will acknowledge that the Project is supported by the European Union and state the following:

The Co-ordination action project OBRA is supported by funding under the Sixth Research Framework Programme of the European Union.

Ad hoc communication activities

The OBRA consortium will take advantage of opportunities offered by editorial coverage in the press, on television or on radio and will participate in occasional communication activities at conferences and workshops.

4. Implementation of OBRA's Communication Action Plan

A preliminary list of actions undertaken in relation to OBRA's Communication Action Plan is given in Table I.

Table I: Overview of OBRA's communication activities in the period November 2006 - March 2007

Description/type of activity	Executor and Date
Creation of an OBRA logo to enhance the visibility and to be used for all public-oriented communications regarding the project	Coordinator, November 2006
Presentation of OBRA at GMF seminar "Local level and energy policies" in Brussels	Coordinator, 11 October 2006
Presentation of OBRA at FUNMIG second annual workshop in Stockholm	Coordinator, 22 November 2006
Presentation of OBRA at ITC General Assembly	Coordinator, 14 March 2007
Preparation of abstract to present at ICEM conference to be held in Bruges in September 2007	Coordinator, January 2007
General poster	Coordinator, January 2007
Project Presentation	Coordinator, January 2007
General flyer/ brochure	Coordinator, January 2007
Creation of intranet	Coordinator, January 2007
Creation of web portal www.obraproject.eu	Coordinator, March 2007
Organisation and preparation of material for kick-off meeting and creative workshop	Coordinator and Posiva, January 2007
Drafting of OBRA's Communication Action Plan	Coordinator, February 2007