



INSPIRE

Infrastructure for Spatial Information in Europe

Summary report of the 6th INSPIRE MIG expert group meeting, 13 – 14 June 2017, Brussels

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1 Approval of the agenda and of the minutes of previous meeting

The meeting was opened and chaired by Joachim D'Eugenio, Deputy Head of DG ENV Unit E.4 Compliance and Better Regulation.

The Chair presented the meeting agenda (DOC1) and the summary of the previous meeting (DOC2). The MIG had no comments on the meeting agenda and the summary of the previous meeting.

The French expert requested to record the French opinion on the Metadata technical guidance in answer to the written procedure launched by COM after the last meeting in the minutes of this meeting (see Annex 1).

All meeting documents and presentations have been made available on the *collaboration platform of the INSPIRE Maintenance and Implementation expert Group (MIG)*¹.

Conclusions and Actions

The meeting agenda and summary of the previous meeting were approved.

The French minority opinion on the Metadata technical guidelines will be recorded in an annex to the minutes of the meeting (see Annex 1).

2 Nature of the meeting

The meeting was a non-public meeting and was attended by nominated experts of EU Member States (MS), Iceland, Norway, the Commission Services (DG ENV and JRC) and the European Environment Agency (EEA). There were no experts from the following Member States: Bulgaria, Italy, Cyprus and Greece.

3 List of points discussed

3.1 Update on Commission initiatives

3.1.1 INSPIRE REFIT follow-up

Introduction

The Chair presented the status of the REFIT follow-up. A year after the adoption of the INSPIRE REFIT report most of the recommendations are being addressed and implemented stepwise, as foreseen. End 2019 the Commission will formally evaluate the progress made.

Discussion

The approach and progress made was welcomed by the experts and the overall feedback positive.

¹ https://ies-svn.jrc.ec.europa.eu/projects/mig-p/wiki/6th_meeting_of_the_MIG

3.1.2 Reporting Fitness Check – outcome and next steps, relevance for INSPIRE

Introduction

The Chair presented the status of the Fitness Check on environmental monitoring and reporting. The Fitness Check Report² and its accompanying Action Plan³ were adopted by the Commission on Friday 9th June 2017. A horizontal stakeholder workshop will be organised end of September to present the results and discuss the follow up with those experts who have participated in previous workshops and helped prepare this Fitness Check.

The INSPIRE MIG will have to play an important role and the MIWP action 2016.5 will be the place where the follow up will be discussed. Moreover, it was also agreed that the thematic reporting groups will have a key role to play as well as the Eionet community.

The Chair further summarized the ten actions in the Fitness Check action plan. INSPIRE is perfectly set up to contribute to the outcome of the action plan and the actions fit well with the work already undertaken and envisaged in the context of the INSPIRE MIWP. The action plan lays down a roadmap for the years to come and will be used as a momentum to maximise the benefits of INSPIRE implementation for the specific use case of eReporting in the field of environment, recognising that there are, of course, also other important use cases.

Given the short notice, the Chair suggested to have a more substantial debate on the documents after everybody had a chance to review and consult these documents at national level.

Discussion

The report and action plan were very well received by the experts.

The work on reporting will be a collaborative effort on substance and process of the responsible bodies in the INSPIRE, thematic expert and reporting communities.

Conclusions and Actions

The Chair invited the experts to review the documents and share them as widely as possible.

The documents will be discussed in the kick-off meeting of action 2016.5 in September 2017 and also presented at the meeting of the permanent technical subgroup of the MIG in October.

The documents will be further discussed in the December meeting of the MIG under the heading "What does this mean for our MIWP, do we have to change/adapt something?".

² <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1497253797058&uri=COM:2017:312:FIN>

³ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/legal/reporting/fc_overview_en.htm

3.1.3 EC/EEA concept note on "INSPIRE and eReporting"

Introduction

The European Environmental Agency (EEA) and the Commission presented the concept note and the changes introduced based on the outcome of the broad consultation in the EU institutions, expert groups and Member States. The concept note is a background document that sums up the discussions on eReporting and INSPIRE and against which we will execute further actions in the MIWP. The document is shared in the public domain as part of the "Priority list of datasets for eReporting" wiki⁴.

Discussion

Member State experts pointed out that in the concept note the maturity level concept (basic/essential/premium) had disappeared. The EEA explained that in the context of e-reporting it was not felt necessary to have a long discussion on this concept when overall we still have to discuss how to develop this maturity concept further. For the use case of reporting it was decided to take this out to avoid confusion. This concept can be further discussed in view of the fitness for purpose and validation & conformity initiatives.

3.1.4 INSPIRE Reporting: MR2016 & Country fiches / Monitoring 2017

MR2016 & Country Fiches

Introduction

The Commission presented the feedback of the Member States on the INSPIRE country fiches. The country fiches show the state of implementation until 2016. An EU overview report has been prepared to highlight the overall implementation performance across Member States. The Commission invited the experts to review this EU overview and provide feedback by end of July. The Commission intends to publish the country and EU overview fiche by the end of August 2017.

Furthermore the Commission presented the status of the compliance promotion exercise that was initiated in 2015. The implementation dialogue as part of the compliance promotion has proven very effective and was valued by the Commission and the Member States. The action plans prepared by the Member States showed a common understanding and awareness of remaining issues and demonstrated the goodwill of Member States to address these. The Commission will provide feedback to Member States on the compliance promotion exercise after the country fiches have been published.

Discussion

Overall, the work done was appreciated and in general the country fiches were welcomed as a comprehensive and effective communication instrument. On request, the Commission

⁴ <https://ies-svn.jrc.ec.europa.eu/projects/2016-5/wiki/>

explained that it will publish the country fiches with a disclaimer to indicate that the country fiches are a static representation of the INSPIRE implementation status till May 2016 and that newer information is available on the INSPIRE dashboard. Where it concerns contact information Member States can propose limited updates to the country fiches to reflect the more recent situation.

The stability of the country fiche template for future comparability across different reporting years was raised as an important issue by the experts. The Chair explained that in order to provide continuity the INSPIRE Committee first has to decide on possible changes to the reporting decision. These changes might include e.g. rationalising the amount of indicators. Once the reporting decision has been changed, the continuity and stability of the proposed country fiche template can be guaranteed.

One expert from an EFTA country inquired whether EFTA countries also could get a country fiche. The Chair informed that under the EEA agreement it is for the EFTA Surveillance Authority is the mandated body to do such work. EFTA countries should contact the Surveillance Authority to further discuss this. The Commission is ready to support the EFTA Authority, if necessary.

Conclusions and Actions

Member State experts are invited to provide feedback on the EU overview report by end of July 2017.

The Commission will share all finalised country fiches with the MIG before publishing the country fiches on the INSPIRE website.

The Commission will come back to the Member States in writing in relation to the compliance promotion exercise started in 2015. The Commission does not exclude that the exercise will be continued with some countries that fail to address major implementation gaps.

INSPIRE Monitoring 2017

Introduction

The EEA presented the results of the INSPIRE Monitoring 2017 for reference year 2016. The main conclusions from this monitoring cycle were the following:

- Steady increase in the number of reported spatial data sets and services
- More than 90% of spatial data sets are reported by only 5 countries
- More than 80% of the spatial data services are reported by only 2 countries
- All MS provide XML files
- Annex I
 - Decrease of number of reported datasets
 - No increase in number and ratio of conformant datasets

The Chair further explained that any changes to the reporting process normally should take place only after the reporting decision has changed, but seen the advanced level of the common understanding and the unanimous support from the MIG it might be feasible to already start working on an optimized reporting process and system in anticipation of changes to the reporting decision once the timetable for further actions has been detailed.

Discussion

There is a need to review the indicator framework and evaluate if the existing indicators can be improved. The need was identified to define indicators that are comprehensive and support good communication and at the same time express the maturity of the infrastructure.

One Member State expert gave the example of a lower number of consolidated data sets allowing them to provide better quality for their key datasets, to demonstrate that a lower number of datasets does not necessarily indicate a poor performance.

The difficulty to find relevant data sets in large catalogues was highlighted. It was considered a core requirement to be able to find a single relevant dataset in a mountain of datasets.

The importance of synergy between the dashboard and the validator developed by the JRC for conformity indicators was raised and supported by the Member State experts and the Commission. The Chair confirmed that the dashboard will be further developed and that the permanent technical subgroup of the MIG should reflect on the further development of the dashboard once the new validator tool is released and there is clarity about possible changes to the reporting decision.

Conclusions and Actions

The Commission fully supports the discussion on indicators and would propose to the INSPIRE Committee to discuss this issue in the context of the reporting decision.

3.1.5 Study of INSPIRE data sharing, access and use (Article17 and related provisions)

Introduction

The Commission informed about a study to assess conformity, effectiveness, efficiency and coherence of INSPIRE directive 2007/2/EC data sharing, access and use (Article17 and related provisions). The study is expected to kick-off in autumn 2017 with an expected completion in the second half of 2018. This study implements one of the recommendations of the INSPIRE REFIT and aims at acquiring a detailed understanding and assessment of whether the procedural provisions of the INSPIRE Directive 2007/2/EC concerning the sharing (access and use) of spatial data and services are complied with, whether they are coherent with other relevant EU legislation and initiatives in this area and whether they are fit-for-purpose. Based on the evidence collected in this project, the Commission services will decide thereafter on the appropriate way forward.

The Commission will give a more comprehensive presentation of the study in the permanent technical subgroup of the MIG and will present the first results in the December meeting of the MIG to have a more substantial discussion.

3.1.6 Presentation of the updated geoportal

Introduction

The Commission presented the status of the development of the updated geoportal. Testing has been done by ENV and ESTAT. The available software is not ready for public release. Further work is needed on improving the performance of the system. With all metadata harvested in the portal the performance is not what can be expected from a modern web based system. Testing also had shown that it is difficult to find specific datasets in the vast amount of available datasets. One way to remediate this is by creating customised queries to show the use of the portal (e.g. priority datasets, protected sites ...) from a thematic viewpoint on a specific topic rather than a general purpose view. The unsatisfactory results also reflect the heterogeneous implementation of INSPIRE in the Member States.

A draft of the thematic view application for priority data sets will be presented to the 2016.5 kick-off meeting in September.

The Commission is still committed to release an updated version of the geoportal including such thematic views and addressing the identified performance issues.

3.2 Maintenance and Implementation Work Programme

3.2.1 2016.1 Fitness for purpose

Introduction

The Chair presented the followed roadmap and final deliverable (DOC3) of the MIWP action 2016.1. Areas of improvement have been identified and the MIG should now agree on these areas and develop a mandate for an action to be implemented in 2018. In parallel the Committee will discuss possible changes to the implementing rules.

The Chair proposed to close the MIWP action 2016.1 because as a scoping exercise it has fulfilled its purpose. The MIG is coming from the scoping phase to the concrete action phase and a new set of actions should be started under the MIWP to identify those improvements that we can make within the remit given.

In the reflection group the Commission has received input from DE, DK and NL experts sharing insights and evidence for revising the implementing rules. If other Member States have similar experience reports, they are kindly invited to share them.

The Commission (JRC) further presented three concrete actions that have been identified:

- Action 1, Development of master guidelines (INSPIRE for beginners): this would be a first entry point into the vast number of technical guidelines and would explain in easy

to understand language and easy to digest format what are the legal obligations under the Directive and where for each of them there are more detailed guidelines.

- Actions 2 & 3 mainly focus on the data specifications and the complexity of the current default encoding (Geography Markup Language, GML) that reflects one-on-one the complex structures that are used in the conceptual model. Mainstream GIS software has issues with processing these complex structures, making it difficult to use the proposed encoding. It was suggested to draft alternative encodings that can showcase the simplification approach and to work with software providers to improve the support for complex GML.

Discussion

Overall, the MIG expressed its support for the project management established and the closure of action 2016.1. Three new mandates for the new envisaged actions will be drafted and initiated.

On the three suggested actions, the following issues were discussed:

Action 1: Master Guidelines

The master guideline was discussed in detail. The master guidelines will be a strategic non-technical product driven by the MIG (draft mandate and develop product). For the development of the master guideline product, MOOC (Massive Open Online Courses) was a suggestion to explore in combination with national contributions (e.g. training material, national experiences). The master guideline would also benefit from the use of visuals/infographics.

The Chair proposed to go ahead with action 1 and launch a call for expression of interest for participation in the drafting group (1 meeting in second half of 2017) to draft the action mandate. In preparation of the drafting group the MIG is invited to share references to relevant material (national training courses, guidance documents ...).

The master guideline product should have a two-tiered approach: a common European product consisting of a general set of messages and information and empty spaces where each national authority can decide to put in their own type of documents that may already exist adapted to language requirements, national legislation and specific situation.

Action 2: Alternative simplified schemas

It is in line with the legal provisions to have your own encoding, but it is important that not every data provider comes up with his own encoding. It is suggested to work on common encodings, not individual ones e.g. flattening is an interested approach but we have to do this in a common way to keep interoperability.

Action 3: Better client software/tool support for complex GML

No specific points were raised or discussed.

The Chair detected a high level of support from the MIG for all actions and invited the JRC to take the lead on actions 2 and 3 with the view of proposing concrete mandates in the usual template (including the timetable) to be presented and discussed in the meeting of the permanent technical subgroup in October. The MIG will get this information in copy allowing discussions with their MIG-T counterparts when useful and needed. A revised version of the mandates will be made available for discussion and endorsement in the light of the MIG meeting in December.

On action 3, close collaboration between JRC and EEA is needed in view of the work EEA has already done on better support in QGIS for complex INSPIRE GML. Commercial software providers have to assure the implementation of support in their software. It has to be seen if the MIG can put pressure on software providers to make the necessary changes.

Conclusions and Actions

The MIG supports the further development of the actions suggested by DOC3. The actions will be taken forward as outlined. The Commission will send out a call for expression of interest and input in July for action 1. For actions 2 and 3 JRC and EEA work out proposals in the permanent technical subgroup of the MIG and come back to the MIG to discuss and hopefully endorse these proposals in the December meeting.

3.2.2 2016.2 Monitoring & Reporting 2019

Introduction

The Commission presented DOC4 as the outcome of the work of the expert subgroup on Monitoring & Reporting 2019. Three scenarios were proposed to further follow-up on this analysis: 1) Business as usual; 2) Change the Reporting Decision; 3) Change the Reporting Decision and Metadata IR. In view of the mandate for this action, scenario 2 is preferred. No other regulation is impacted, the reporting burden is partially addressed through automated gathering of monitoring information through metadata and the information collection is streamlined and fixed through a country fiche template. Further optimization of metadata for use and reporting purposes could be documented in the reporting guidance as part of a common implementation strategy and should be driven by real-life use cases and possible return on investment.

The Chair further added that Member States would be given the opportunity to review the document through the committee. The Committee will have to express which option to pursue before the MIG can invest any further expert work on this. Any feedback on the document is appreciated but the Commission proposed to close this work as far as the action two is concerned and will await the discussion in the Committee. It was assumed that if further refined discussion is needed the Committee will draw on the same group of experts. Once the Committee has concluded its work and a new reporting decision has been adopted a new action mandate for the reporting subgroup to implement (technical guidelines, tools ...) the changes can be drafted.

Discussion

The presented document received general support by the MIG and was accepted as outcome of action 2016.2. Limited editorial changes were suggested. The document will be updated accordingly.

Conclusions and Actions

The deliverable of action 2016.2 was accepted by the MIG and MIWP action 2016.2 closed.

The Committee will further discuss and express an opinion on the scenario to pursue.

The Commission will report back on any progress made in the December meeting of the MIG. If additional work is needed, the monitoring and reporting subgroup will be reactivated.

3.2.3 2016.5 Priority list

Introduction

The Commission and the EEA presented the status of the work on the priority list for eReporting datasets. A wiki⁵ for action 2016.5 has been made available where all relevant documents, including the latest version of the priority list, are published. Experts are kindly invited to share their feedback on the wiki in the first meeting of the 2016.5 action subgroup. Version 1.1 of the list has been made available. The list is extended with references to Eionet Core Data Flows (CDF) where applicable.

The Commission and EEA have sent out a call for nomination for the subgroup. The Commission and EEA thanked all Member States that have nominated experts. 13 MS are represented in the subgroup and there is a good and balanced representation of INSPIRE and Reporting experts. The first meeting of the 2016.5 subgroup will take place at the INSPIRE Conference in September. The scope and functioning of the subgroup will be discussed in the first meeting. The Commission has already identified 4 areas where we see the communities ready to start working on the priority datasets: emissions (started); noise (to be initiated); nature & biodiversity (CDDA pilot, probably followed by Natura2000); Invasive Alien Species (started). The Commission and the EEA will present the progress made in these domains together with a roadmap for future activities in the 2016.5 subgroup.

Discussion

Responding to the question if the Commission is aware and follows-up on the progress made in different domains of the environmental acquis e.g. MSFD (Marine Strategic Framework Directive), the Chair confirmed and assured the MIG that the Commission has taken the necessary actions to maintain an overview of the activities in the different domains. In the specific case of the MSFD the Commission and EEA participate in DIKE and TG DATA meetings. In line with the current status of the reporting debate in these expert groups only those MSFD

⁵ <https://ies-svn.jrc.ec.europa.eu/projects/2016-5/wiki/>

reporting datasets that are independent from the activities of the regional sea conventions are published in the priority list. Based on the readiness of the policy domains an annual work programme can be set up allowing us to go through the information requirements systematically e.g. work on emissions, CDDA, invasive alien species. The 2016.5 subgroup will discuss and execute the rolling planning in collaboration with policy and reporting expert groups.

The Commission has made a commitment to demonstrate, in close collaboration with the MIG, the added value that INSPIRE can bring to the reporting use case. This initiative is one of the core tasks for the coming years.

Moreover the accountability and responsibility for this action, the Chair explained that eReporting is a use case for INSPIRE, can benefit from INSPIRE but goes beyond the scope of INSPIRE. When two pieces of legislations are overlapping, DG ENV unit E.4 is the coordinating unit in DG Environment as far as reporting and INSPIRE implementation is concerned. Unit E.4 is trying to build a consensus in close collaboration with the thematic colleagues, making this a shared responsibility between the different units of DG Environment. The decisions are being made there where the decision has to reside according to the remit of the involved parties (e.g. nature reporting guideline in the nature expert group, INSPIRE guideline in the MIG). The Commission has no intention to create new governance structures or a master structure. This proposed collaborative approach with shared responsibility will be applied across the different domains trying to find pragmatic solutions.

Conclusions and Actions

The discussion will be continued in the September kick-off meeting of action 2016.5. By then the Commission will have made progress on the Fitness check action plan as well and will report back to the subgroup.

The topic will be discussed again in the December meeting of the MIG where the subgroup will present a status update on the action.

The Commission will keep the MIG informed of collaborative initiatives with other policy domains.

3.2.4 2016.3 Validation & Conformity

Introduction

The Commission (JRC) presented the status of the work on MIWP action 2016.3 (DOC5). Action MIWP-5 of the MIWP 2014-2016 addressed the topic of validation and conformity testing. The action was carried out by a temporary sub-group and was supported by contractors for the development of Abstract Test Suites and a common validator (i.e. the Executable Test Suites and the INSPIRE testing framework). The MIG agreed in December 2016 to carry over this action into the new MIWP 2016-2020 as action 2016.3.

DOC5 summarises the work carried out since November 2014 and makes suggestions for a revised mandate for this action under the current work programme. To guarantee continuity for this action, it is proposed to formally close action 2016.3 and endorse the revised action mandate (with any comments taken into consideration) by written procedure by September 2017. The revised mandate is included in DOC5 and takes into account the new requirements that have been identified (software maintenance and development of missing components for the common validator to support validation of all implementing rules, integration of the maturity level concept in the validator, gathering new requirements from people using the validator, formulating change requests ...).

Discussion

The MIG inquired about the possible release date for an operational validator and the possibility to use this validator instance as a formal reference in procurement and tendering.

The Commission informed the MIG that the contractor has provided a final deliverable that covers Annex 1 data specifications, download services (atom, WFS) and the previous version of the metadata guideline. The validator instance is running on a test infrastructure of the contractor for the moment, but JRC is working on the deployment of the software on Commission infrastructure. On the possible use of the validator as a formal reference in tendering and procurement processes, it is up to the Member States if they want to enforce the use of the validator. The validator has been developed with the ultimate goal to become the common agreed validator tool so it is probably the best candidate that you can use. An operational version of the validator will be published during summer before the INSPIRE Conference. The Commission will keep the MIG updated of the deployment status of the validator and will come back to this in writing after summer.

A workshop is planned at the INSPIRE conference to provide a first hands-on experience with the new validator tool. This opportunity will also be used to gather further feedback.

Conclusions and Actions

The MIG is invited to send written comments on DOC5 by end of July 2017.

In August the Commission will provide an updated document to the MIG for written procedure with deadline in September. The scope of the written procedure will be to endorse the new mandate and close MIWP action 2016.3.

3.2.5 2016.4 Theme specific issues

A progress report (DOC6) on the activities in the thematic clusters has been shared with the MIG as an information document for distribution within national coordination structures and networks. The MIG was invited to take note of the document. Additional information and specific questions can be addressed at the Thematic Clusters on the INSPIRE website (<https://themes.jrc.ec.europa.eu/>).

3.2.6 2016.6 Copernicus

Introduction

The Commission and EEA presented the status of Copernicus related activities and comments on the draft proposal for action 2016.6.

The involvement of the INSPIRE representatives was unclear and the scope of the action description too wide. After a meeting with DG GROW (responsible for Copernicus) about how to address Copernicus and INSPIRE synergies, it became apparent that we should not initiate an additional action under the MIG MIWP.

Independent of the proposed action 2016.6 JRC and EEA have started to work on two topics:

- *JRC workshop on a global reference grid system for geospatial data* with experts involved in Copernicus, INSPIRE but also global experts (US, Australia, NZ) to discuss the state of the art of global grid systems, their interoperability, possible convergence of global grid systems and their standardisation. The workshop should lead to common grid recommendations agreed by the community for INSPIRE/Copernicus and world-wide.
- *EEA InScope study* aiming to provide an overview of INSPIRE datasets and services that are relevant to the Copernicus land and emergency management services under the in-situ component. A workshop will be organised at the INSPIRE conference and an expert group is being set up that will be consulted by the contractor. The study is a short-term initiative with a final report expected by the end of September 2017. In the next meeting of the MIG EEA will report back on the outcome of this study.

The Commission and EEA proposed that rather than having a dedicated action under the work program with limited involvement of the Member States, the MIG will be kept informed of ongoing Commission and EEA activities and their progress. Where there are relevant activities such as e.g. workshops, Member State experts will be involved.

Discussion

Member State experts informed about the involvement of the UN-GGIM and ESTAT and the link with BIG data initiatives. The Commission confirmed that the co-Chair of the UN-GGIM Geodetic Reference Group and EUROSTAT were invited to join the workgroup.

The Commission recognized that INSPIRE could be considered to be a participant and/or possible provider of BIG DATA and maybe some lessons could be learned from the BIG DATA communities towards better use of non-structured data e.g. for the geoportal, to find specific content in a vast amount of data.

Conclusions and Actions

Copernicus is another important European use case for INSPIRE next to the reporting use case.

The Commission and EEA will report back to the MIG on the status of Copernicus projects and workgroups. Where there are relevant activities Member State experts will be involved. If necessary a mandate can be drafted for a focused action on Copernicus involving the MIG.

3.3 Collaboration with international standard setting bodies - orientation debate

An orientation debate on the past, current and future collaboration between international standardisation bodies and the INSPIRE implementation groups took place in the 6th MIG of 14 June 2017. The Chair invited OGC (represented by Athina Trakas), W3C (represented by Rigo Wenning) and ISO-TC 2011 (represented by Christina Wasström) to share their organisation's views and contribute to the discussion. The EU Coordination team (represented by Michael Lutz) presented the experiences and the outlook for the cooperation from the INSPIRE perspective. The aim was to exchange views and to determine if and how further collaboration should be strengthened. A more detailed summary of the orientation debate is provided in Annex 2.

Conclusions and Actions

The orientation debate was considered useful and timely. Further reflections within the INSPIRE community need to take place in order to identify possible concrete follow up actions.

To start with, the MIG-T was invited to discuss the issue on the basis of the summary provided in Annex 2 and come forward with recommendations for the MIG to consider in its December meeting.

Moreover, all Member States were invited to identify their national representatives in these international bodies and to ensure close coordination with the INSPIRE agenda, if this is not already the case.

The issue will be put back on the agenda with the aim of identifying more operational follow up actions.

3.4 MIG Rules of Procedure

3.4.1 Rules of Procedure

The Chair presented the updated Rules of Procedure based on the feedback received from the MIG experts and opened the floor for further question and discussion. No more issues were raised by the experts and the Rules of Procedure were endorsed unanimously by the MIG.

3.4.2 Practical Arrangements

The practical arrangements are a living document. The Chair invited the MIG to share any comment or feedback on the practical arrangements in writing.

The Commission was asked to respect the 14 day deadline for sharing meeting documents as good as possible and to notify the MIG members when new documents are made available on

the collaboration site. The Chair committed to notifying the MIG about new and updated meeting documents.

Conclusions and actions

The Rules of Procedure were endorsed unanimously by the MIG. The Commission will publish them on the INSPURE webpage.

In future the Commission will notify the MIG when new or updated meeting documents are made available on the collaboration platform.

3.5 Any other business

3.5.1 INSPIRE Conference 2017

The preparations for the INSPIRE 2017 conference were presented by the co-hosts DE/FR. The workshops are set for the 4-5 September in Kehl. The plenary and thematic sessions are planned for 6-8 September in Strasbourg. The theme of the conference is "INSPIRE a digital Europe: Thinking out of the box".

The programme of the Conference⁶ was presented. As there are other major events taking place in Strasbourg at the same time, the hosts urged the MIG to make travel arrangements early.

To raise the interest and awareness of young potentials for our areas of activity and promote the Conference (registration numbers are low at this moment), the hosts also asked the MIG to spread the word on the Conference in general and to the academic world specifically.

4 Conclusions/recommendations/opinions

The 6th meeting of the Maintenance and Implementation Group (MIG) was productive and output-driven. The specific conclusions per agenda item have been highlighted above.

5 Next steps / actions

Reporting Fitness Check – outcome and next steps, relevance for INSPIRE

- The MIG was invited to review the Fitness Check in monitoring and reporting documents and share them as widely as possible.
- The documents will be discussed in the kick-off meeting of action 2016.5 in September 2017 and also presented at the meeting of the permanent technical subgroup of the MIG in October.

⁶ <http://inspire.ec.europa.eu/conference2017/overview>

- The documents will be further discussed in the December meeting of the MIG under the heading "What does this mean for our MIWP, do we have to change/adapt something?".

INSPIRE Reporting: MR2016 & Country fiches / Monitoring 2017

- Member State experts are invited to provide feedback on the EU overview fiche by end of July 2017.
- The Commission will share all finalised country fiches with the MIG for a final review before publishing the country fiches on the INSPIRE website.
- The Commission will come back to the Member States in writing to find formal closure of the current compliance exercise. The Commission does not exclude that the exercise will be continued with some countries that fail to address major implementation gaps.

2016.1 Fitness for purpose

- The Commission will send out a call for expression of interest and input in July for action 1 - Master Guidelines.
- For actions 2 (Alternative simplified schemas) and action 3 (Better client software/tool support for complex GML) JRC and EEA work out some proposals in the permanent technical subgroup of the MIG and come back to the MIG to discuss and hopefully endorse these proposals in the December meeting.

2016.2 Monitoring & Reporting 2019

- The Committee will further discuss and express an opinion on the scenario to pursue.
- The Commission will report back on any progress made in the December meeting of the MIG. If additional work is needed, the monitoring and reporting subgroup will be reactivated.

2016.5 Priority list

- Kick-off meeting of action 2016.5 at the INSPIRE Conference in September. The Commission will report on any progress made on the Fitness check action.
- The Commission will keep the MIG informed of collaborative initiatives with other policy domains.

2016.3 Validation & Conformity

- The MIG is invited to send written comments on the presented document (DOC5) by end of July 2017.
- In August the Commission will provide an updated document to the MIG for written procedure with deadline end of September. The scope of the written procedure will be to endorse the new mandate and close MIWP action 2016.3.

2016.6 Copernicus

- The Commission and EEA will report back to the MIG on the status of Copernicus projects and workgroups. Where there are relevant activities Member State experts will be involved. If necessary a mandate can be drafted for a focused action on Copernicus involving the MIG.

6 Next meeting

The 7th Meeting of the INSPIRE Maintenance and Implementation expert Group is tentatively scheduled for 7 and 8 December 2017 in Brussels.

The 8th Meeting of the INSPIRE Maintenance and Implementation expert Group is tentatively scheduled for 21 and 22 June 2018 in Brussels (please note the change in comparison to what was announced).

An indicative meeting planning for other relevant meetings is enclosed in Annex 3.

7 List of participants

#	Surname	Name	country
1	JOBST	Markus	AT
2	FAHRNER	Wolfgang	AT
3	BUFFET	Dominique	BE
4	KISSIYAR	Ouns	BE
5	MARIC	Ljerka	HR
6	FAUGNEROVA	Jitka	CZ
7	KRONBORG MAZZOLI	Ulla	DK
8	AREN	Mariliis	EE
9	MUHLI	Panu	FI
10	VERTANEN	Antti	FI
11	LEOBET	Marc	FR
12	DOUARD	Pascal	FR
13	MEINERT	Markus	DE
14	HEUWOLD	Janet	DE
15	PALYA	Tamás	HU
16	CAMPBELL	Helena	IE
17	EKMANE	Ilona	LV
18	BECONYTE	Giedrè	LT
19	PETNIUNIENE	Palmira	LT
20	WEBER	Patrick	LU
21	XUEREB	Marica	MT
22	DE JONG	Christiaan	NL
23	DE VISSER	Ine	NL
24	SURMA	Ewa	PL
25	PATRICIO	Paulo	PT
26	DONCUTA	Marilena Daniela	RO
27	TUCHYNA	Martin	SK
28	PETEK	Tomaz	SI
29	LÓPEZ-ROMERO	Emilio	ES

30	WASSTRÖM	Christina	SE
31	STJERNLOF	Sofia	SE
32	DIXON	john	GB
33	FINNABOGADOTTIR	Eydis Lindal	GB
34	INGVARSSON	Kjartan	IS
35	KYRKJEEIDE	Kåre	NO
36	HØGVARD	Dag	NO

Commission and EU services		
Service	Surname	Name
DG ENV	D'Eugenio	Joachim
DG ENV	Robbrecht	Joeri
DG JRC	Lutz	Michael
DG JRC	Cetl	Vlado
DG JRC	Tomas	Robert
EEA	Jensen	Stefan

Representatives of international standardisation bodies		
Organisation	Surname	Name
ISO	WASSTRÖM	Christina
OGC	TRAKAS	Athina
W3C	WENNING	Rigo

Annex 1 – French answer to COM on the written procedure for the updated Metadata technical guideline

Les autorités françaises prennent acte que Commission européenne a choisi de proposer une recommandation technique, sur les conditions d'accès et d'utilisation, qui n'est pas compatible avec la mise en œuvre des autorités publiques françaises malgré les pistes encourageantes définies lors du séminaire de Malmö, en septembre 2015.

Elles considèrent que cette recommandation va être inutilement coûteuse pour les centaines d'autorités publiques françaises qui ont déjà produit des dizaines de milliers de fiches de métadonnées qui seront prochainement déclarées non conformes.

Ces éléments les empêchent de soutenir l'adoption de ce texte.

Toutefois, les autorités françaises prennent note que les autres Etats membres n'ont pas exprimé leur opposition vis-à-vis de la proposition de la Commission européenne. Elles jugent que leur refus de cette proposition retarderait simplement son adoption jusqu'à la prochaine réunion du MIG, alors que des Etats membres ont exprimé leur besoin d'en disposer rapidement.

En conséquence, les autorités françaises ont l'honneur de vous informer qu'elles s'abstiennent de voter sur ce texte. Elles demandent que cette expression minoritaire soit insérée dans les comptes-rendus.

Si elles essaieront de faire leur possible, elles ne s'engagent pas à ce que les métadonnées produites par les autorités publiques françaises soient toutes conformes au bout du délai de trois ans pour ce qui concerne les dispositions relatives à l'accès et à la réutilisation.

(The French version is the reference)

The French authorities note that the European Commission has chosen to propose a technical recommendation on the conditions applying to access and use which is not compatible with the implementation of the French public authorities despite the encouraging ideas set out at the Malmö's seminar in September 2015.

They consider that this recommendation will be unnecessarily costly for the hundreds of French public authorities that have already produced tens of thousands of metadata records that will shortly be declared non-compliant.

These elements prevent them from supporting the adoption of this text.

However, the French authorities note that the other Member States are not opposed to the European Commission's proposal. They consider that a negative vote on this proposal would simply delay its adoption to the next meeting of the MIG, while some Member States have expressed their need to dispose of it rapidly.

Consequently, the French authorities have the honour to inform you that they will abstain to take a voting position on this text. They request that this minority expression be included in the minutes.

If they try to do their utmost, they do not undertake that the metadata produced by the French public authorities will all comply within the three-year deadline with the provisions on access and re-use.

Annex 2 – Collaboration with international standard setting bodies



INSPIRE

Infrastructure for Spatial Information in Europe

Collaboration with international standard setting bodies – summary of the orientation debate and outlook

Type	Document for discussion
Creator	DG ENV
Date/status/version	12/07/2017 / DRAFT / version 1.0
Addressee	MIG and MIG-T
Identifier	MIG/6/[DOC14]
Description	At the 6 th MIG meeting in June 2017, an orientation debate took place in the presence of representatives from OGC, W3C and ISO TC 211.

- Requested actions:** The members of the permanent technical subgroup of the MIG are invited to:
- discuss the identified issues and make recommendations to the MIG by December 2017.
- The members of the MIG are invited to:
- discuss and decide in the December 2017 MIG meeting on how to take the issue forward in the MIWP 2018 and beyond.
-

1 Introduction

An orientation debate on the past, current and future collaboration between international standardisation bodies and the INSPIRE implementation groups took place in the 6th MIG of 14 June 2017. The Chair invited OGC (represented by Athina Trakas), W3C (represented by Rigo Wenning) and ISO-TC 2011 (represented by Christina Wasström) to share their organisation's views and contribute to the discussion. The EU Coordination team (represented by Michael Lutz) presented the experiences and the outlook for the cooperation from the INSPIRE perspective. The aim was to exchange views and to determine if and how further collaboration should be strengthened.

2 Setting the scene

The discussion was framed by a set of presentations which introduced the organisations, highlighted some key issues of past and ongoing collaboration with the INSPIRE community and highlighted some issues for further consideration.

First, Athina Trakas presented the OGC perspective (see [presentation](#))⁷. Second, Christina Wasström introduced the work of TC 211 and its relevance for the INSPIRE implementation (see [presentation](#))⁸. Then, Rigo Wenning shared a number of issues and insights into developments being discussed at W3C. Finally, Michael Lutz summarised the past, largely beneficial, experiences working with standardisation bodies (see *presentation PRES3 under agenda item 4*).

More information on the various organisations can be found at:

- <http://www.opengeospatial.org/ogc> (see also organisational structure and membership information).
- <http://www.w3.org/Consortium/facts#org> (see also "Spatial Data on the Web" group https://www.w3.org/2015/spatial/wiki/Main_Page).
- <http://www.isotc211.org/> (see also organization and overview of members: <https://www.iso.org/committee/54904.html?view=participation>).

All presentations set out past experiences and future expectations on the collaboration. The JRC, and to a certain extent the EEA, are involved or in contact with some of the work areas in these international bodies. But the current interaction is mainly focused on sharing information about ongoing developments (e.g. through regular presentations of INSPIRE progress at European OGC TC meetings) and on technical discussions on specific standardisation issues relevant to INSPIRE. No strategic collaboration with the INSPIRE community as a whole is currently set up.

Some issues emerging from the presentations were:

- The governance and the process in the different organisations need to be recognized and known. Effective collaboration is possible if it is happening at the right time in the right way. The key to success is contribution and collaboration at international level.
- Close collaboration and coordination between all the actors was essential and duplication as well as incompatibilities should be avoided as much as possible, since involvement in

⁷ https://ies-svn.jrc.ec.europa.eu/projects/mig-p/wiki/MIG-P_meeting_6_agenda

⁸ https://ies-svn.jrc.ec.europa.eu/projects/mig-p/wiki/MIG-P_meeting_6_agenda

standardisation processes requires resources (time and people) and persistence over time. We should avoid re-inventing the wheel!

- International standardization organization can help at "internationalizing" INSPIRE guidelines which has, e.g. a positive economic impact for European companies. Increasing need for bridging the gap between software implementations and standards.
- Adaptability to change was essential. The recent collaboration between OGC and W3C on Best Practices for Spatial Data on the Web is good example in this direction.

3 Discussions

The discussion was framed by a number of questions, in particular:

- Collaboration – is it efficient or can we do better? (including collaboration between all bodies)⁹
- Streamlining of standards - do we have too many? Are we duplicating efforts or creating unnecessary complexities / competition?
- Do we (as EU) exercise sufficient influence in these bodies? If not, how can we do better?
- Future of INSPIRE (after 2020) – should we rely more or less on standards?
- Pooling resources – can we think of joint project (e.g. funding of interoperability experiments / testbeds) or more effective working methods?

The orientation debate was lively and interactive and brought to light a number of issues. In particular the following comments and observations were made:

- Overall there is interest and active engagement at expert level but sometimes it is difficult to see how best to ensure that certain issues are being addressed.
- There were suggestions to improve networking and coordination within the INSPIRE community. Also a more regular feedback mechanism and information exchange may be useful.
- The links with wider agenda of eGovernment and digital single market was made repeatedly. We need to better understand what standards are used in eGovernment and how to create synergies with geospatial standards.
- The experience from hackthons shows that developers are mainly asking for mainstream ICT/web standards, not specific geo standards.
- The issue of flexibility vs. standardization was raised from various angles. On one hand, the question was asked whether INSPIRE is flexible and "agile" enough. This was also important in the light of developments on "big data" which aim at exploiting large, unstructured datasets. On the other hand, the need for harmonization and standardization was underlined but where there is a risk of multiplication of standards. This is why close collaboration is so important. Also national profiles may evolve quicker than the main standards – it is important to be able to keep them in sync.
- The importance of "semantic interoperability" was underlined.
- In many interventions, the importance of starting from the user perspective was stressed. This ultimately should drive all developments of standards. Multi-stakeholder platform for ICT standardisation. Art. 13 of Standardisation Regulation: EC can, after advice from platform, endorse/recognise non-official standards for use in European legislation --> will be published in the OJ

⁹ At a show of hands, about half the participants said: yes

- Should we only use de jure or also de facto standards? --> proposal to use any useful specification and then work on making them official standards
- How to choose the "right" standard if there are several? --> this is a social process (could be political or technical)
- How to find resources for standardisation work? How to sponsor standardisation activities?
- One proposal was to use the MIG/MIG-T to agree on a common line for reviews of standards and then send a delegate from INSPIRE to relevant meetings. But it was felt that it might be difficult to delegate national/organisation votes. A simpler coordination mechanism might be to create a network of experts working in different organisations. One starting point might also be a list of standards that are ok, and a list of standards on which ones we should focus our efforts (i.e. those where something "is broken")
- Standardisation is a jungle – we should create a map!
- We should work towards better alignment of INSPIRE TGs and standards, i.e. bring back the INSPIRE extensions into the mainstream standards.
- Standards do not replace implementation - they just facilitate implementation.

4 Outlook and next steps

Overall, there we high interest in further developing and strengthening the collaboration between the INSPIRE community and international standardisation bodies. Building on the successful collaboration of the past, the future areas of cooperation should be defined on a strategic level. Moreover, the awareness of what is happening in the international standardisation bodies needs to be improved. This could also lead to a more coordinated approach of the European actors in the international bodies. The aim is to align agendas and efforts over the long term so as to maximise returns for investment in spatial data management.

In practical terms, a number of concrete actions were agreed, in particular:

1. Improve coordination between INSPIRE experts and OGC, W2C and ISO TC211 experts at national level. Where INSPIRE MIG members do not have direct contact with their national members, they will establish them. Create a (mailing) list of national experts working in different organisations and standardization projects.
2. Ensure regular and systematic exchange of information by having a standing agenda item also at the MIG (it already is a regular MIG-T agenda item for some time) on "news from the international standardization bodies". Motivate MIG and MIG-T experts to actively share issues / opportunities with others in advance or at the meetings.
3. Discuss key projects or initiatives of the international standardization bodies at the MIG with the view to foster a more coordinated intervention of the European INSPIRE community.
4. Identifying areas for improving collaboration and ensuring that the European INSPIRE community is providing effective input and helping to foster valuable outputs.

For the last point, the MIG-T is invited to discuss these issues and make recommendations to the MIG by December 2017. Taking into account this input, the MIG will discuss and decide on how to take the issue forward in the MIWP 2018 and beyond.

Annex 3: Indicative MIG meeting planning 2017

The following face to face meetings for the MIG and its different subgroups are tentitatively scheduled for 2017-2018. The planning might be subject to change.

INSPIRE Committee

- 8 December 2017 (pm)

MIG

- 7th Meeting: 7/8 December 2017
- 8th Meeting: 21/22 Juni 2018

Permanent technical subgroup of the MIG

- 45th Meeting: 30 – 31 October 2017, Ispra (IT)

2016.5 Priority list of eReporting data sets - Workgroup

- 4th September 2017, Kehl (DE) – INSPIRE Conference Workshop