European Cooperation in the field of Scientific and Technical Research - COST -

Secretariat

Brussels, 18 October 2005

COST 305/1/05 REV 1

NOTE

From :	JAF
To :	COST Committee of Senior Officials
Subject :	163rd CSO meeting on 23/24 November 2005, Agenda Item 13 - Proposal for Domain Restructuring

Following the JAF meeting of 12/13 October 2005 delegations will find attached a proposal for Domain Restructuring with a view to item 13 of the 163rd CSO meeting on 23/24 November 2005.

Annex I contains a number of proposals of an operational character on which the Committee's decision is requested, whereas Annex II sets out the provisional reallocation of existing Actions to the proposed new Domains according to Annex B of the Working Group report.

Delegations are invited to submit their comments, if any, to the Secretariat by **15 November 2005** at the latest.

PROPOSAL FOR DOMAIN RESTRUCTURING:

1. The declaration of Dubrovnik Ministerial Conference 2003 noted that the number of COST Technical Committees has increased with the growing number of scientific and technical disciplines and recommended that the CSO reviews the structure of the research domains of COST, with a view to organising a more effective strategic management through smaller number of Technical Committees with an increased interdisciplinary approach.

2. At its 161st meeting in March 2005, the CSO established a Working Group to elaborate a proposal for the restructuring of the COST Domains consisting of the Chairs of the twelve COST Technical Committees (COST 256/05, Annex 5, p.23).

3. An independent Chair (Professor Bertil Andersson) of the Working Group was nominated by the CSO President.

4. The report of the Working Group, as set out in doc. COST 286/05, was circulated to COST delegations on 20 September 2005 and presented by the Chair of the WG to the JAF at its meeting on 12/13 October 2005, which expressed its deep gratitude to Professor Bertil Andersson, Chair of the Working Group, and to the Chairs of the COST TCs, members of the WG and congratulated the WG for the results obtained by consensus. The President concluded that, with the completion of the Report, the WG has accomplished its mandate and, therefore can be disbanded.

5. The JAF recommends to the CSO the approval of the following reconstruction and introduction of COST Domains and Committees on the basis of the Working Group's recommendations:

1.	Biomedicine and Molecular Biosciences	BMBS
2.	Food and Agriculture	F & A
3.	Forests, their Products and Services	FPS
4.	Materials, Physical and Nanosciences	PHYMANO
5.	Chemistry and Molecular Sciences and Technologies	CHEMOL
6.	Earth System Science, Biodiversity and Environmental Management	ESSBEM
7.	Information and Communication Technologies	ICT
8.	Transport and Urban Development	TUD
9.	Individuals, Society, Culture and Health	INSOCH

In proposing the above structure, the JAF considered that Nanosciences and Physics are interdisciplinary issues that would be addressed in all Domains, in particular in Biomedicine and Molecular Biosciences, Chemistry and Molecular Sciences and Technologies and Information and Communication Technologies.

It is proposed that the above domain structure would become operational as from 1 June 2006 with mandates of four years and would replace the current TC structure.

OPERATIONAL ISSUES

Along with its proposal on domain restructuring, the JAF recommends to the CSO a number of decisions on operational issues:

(1) to ask the COST Secretariat to prepare formal terms of reference, for approval by the CSO in March 2006, for the new Domain Committees, on the basis of the descriptions contained in the report of the Working Group and the comments from delegations, and of the other recommendations on duration of members' and Chair's mandates and to ensure that each Committee should meet sufficiently in advance of the two months deadline before CSO meetings to allow JAF time to examine new Action Proposals and submit them to the CSO.

(2) to approve that the period of membership of a Domain Committee should be for a period of up to 4 years and that membership is normally for a maximum of two full mandate periods (i.e. 8 years) for the membership of a Domain Committee (whether a country or additional member).

(3) to request COST CNCs to provide on-line nominations for the members of the newly established Domain Committees by 31 March 2006, on the basis of one representative per COST Member Country, together with proposals of up to two additional experts with complementary expertise who may be considered for additional membership of the Domain Committee. (This is in order that the new Domain Committees would be operational as from 1 June 2006 and would be able to recommend proposals for new Actions to the CSO, based on the new domain system and in response to the COST Open Call. All members of the Domain Committees would be eligible for reimbursement.)

(4) to ask the COST Office to convene the first meetings of the Domain Committees in April and May 2006 in order to elect Chairs and Vice-Chairs (for initial four year mandates); to select up to 15 additional members of the Committees (to ensure that there is a appropriate scientific coverage and to address other related issues, such as encouraging young researchers to network, including sectoral coverage and gender representation[1]) from the additional names provided by CNCs, to provisionally appoint rapporteurs for existing Actions, and to propose to the CSO the description of their Domain based on the report of the Working Group and the comments from delegations for approval by the CSO in June 2006.

(5) to approve the continued operation of the present TCs with their mandates extended until 31 May 2006, in anticipation that only one plenary meeting will be needed in the period from 1 January to 31 May 2006. In addition, to ask the CSO to agree that the present TC Chairs and Vice-chairs remain in office until this date.

(6) to approve the provisional reallocation of existing Actions to the new Domains according to Annex B of the Working Group report (in Annex II to this document).

(7) to approve the payment of a Domain Committee Chair's Support Grant of €2000 per annum, subject to availability of funds.

(8) to endorse the need to enhance inter-disciplinarity within COST through "Interdisciplinary Exploratoria" to provide for opportunities for potential high gain networking activities complementing the DCs and to ask the COST Office to prepare a proposal on its implementation.

(9) to recognise the need for regular meetings of Domain Committees to discuss matters of common interest and concern and to endorse the current system whereby the President of the CSO convenes meetings with DC Chairs as an appropriate means of addressing this request.

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[1] Guidelines for typical profile for a COST TC member as approved by the 159th CSO meeting (COST 273/04, p.4).

Provisional assignment of Existing Actions to the proposed new Domains

Notes:
Actions included are those extending beyond 2005 as listed in "About COST 2005" and those Actions approved by the CSO in June 2005.
Where there same Action is listed in parenthesis under two DCs, it is a shared Action with both DCs having rapporteurs. Where an Action appears without parentheses under one DC and with parentheses under another DC, this represents a lead DC with the other DC having a "following" interest and being kept informed of progress etc.
It should also be noted that the Actions are not all equal in size in terms of signatories or complexity or the breadth of research area covered.

BMBS: (845); 853; 857; 861; (865); (926); B16; B19; B20; B21; B22; B23; B24; B25; B26; B27; B28; B29; (D34); (E28); (E50); (E52); (P9)

F & A: 845; 849; 850; 851;852; 854; 855; 858; 859; 860; 862; 863; 864; (865); 867; 920; 921;922; 923; 924; 925; (926); 927; 928

FPS: E27; E28; E29; E30; E31; E32; E33; E34; (E35); E37; E38; E39; E40; E41; E42; E43; E44; E46; E47; E48; E49; E50; E51; E52; E53

CHEMOL: D17; D18; D19; D20; D21; D22; D23; D24; D25; D26; D27; D28; D29; D30; D31; D32; D33; D34; D35; D36; (E32); (E34); (E41); (E46); G7; G8; P10; (P12); P15; P16

PHYMANO: 529; 530; 531; 532; 533; 534; 535; 536; 537; 538; 539; 540; (E34); E35; (P11); (P12); P13; (P15); P17; P19; P20

ESSBEM: (296); 625; 627; 629; 631; 633; 634; 635; 636; 719; 720; 722; 723; 724; 725; 726; 727; 728; 729; 730; 731; 732; 733; 856; (C22); (P10); P18

ICT: (219 ter); 281; 284; 285; 286; 287; 288; 289; 290; 291; 292; 293; 294; 295; 296; 297; 298; 299; P8; P9; (P11); P14

TUD: 348; 351; 352; 353; 354; 355; 356; 357; C15; C16; C17; C18; C19; C20; C21; C22; C23;

INSOCH: (219 ter); (281); (298); A19; A20; A21; A22; A23; A24; A25; A26; A27; A28; A29; A30; A31; A32; A33; A34; A35; A36; (E33); (E39); (P10);