



Bridging the gap between policy and knowledge
on biodiversity in Europe

Guidance Note 5 The Methods Expert Group (MEG)

1) What is the MEG?

The MEG is a group of experts on Knowledge Synthesis Methods¹ selected by the Knowledge Coordination Body (KCB) following an Open Call. Membership of the MEG lasts for a term of 3 years. The MEG provides expertise in response to requests made to Eklipse by policy makers and societal actors, advising Expert Working Groups (EWGs) on appropriate knowledge synthesis methods to address the request, including their pros and cons, costs, and requirements in terms of human capital and technical tools. This voluntary contribution is estimated at 5-10% of a MEG expert's time over the duration of a request, including attending relevant face to face meetings for which Eklipse covers expenses incurred. Each MEG member is expected to support no more than one Eklipse request per year, or two if acting as secondary advisor for one of these requests. Training will be provided on Eklipse expectations and methods of engagement. Appointed MEG expert(s) are an integral part of the request, become a member of the EWG addressing the request, and their contributions are accredited in any resulting output(s) decided among the EWG such as reports or scientific publications.

2) Role of the MEG in scoping a request

When a request enters the scoping phase, the KCB Chair asks the MEG for 1-2 members to support it, based on their expertise and interests. The role of the MEG expert(s) for a request in the scoping phase is to:

- Provide information to the KCB focal point on relevant, timely and cost-appropriate methods or approaches, and discuss these options and their implications on what to expect as outputs with

¹ Methods of knowledge appraisal and synthesis, used to identify and characterise robust evidence and knowledge gaps. 'Knowledge' here refers to scientific knowledge, technical practitioner knowledge and/or Indigenous and local knowledge ('ILK').



the requester. This process will follow the Eclipse knowledge synthesis method selection process. The KCB focal point decides when and how such information is provided, and communicates this to the MEG expert at the beginning of the scoping phase. In addition, the KCB focal point guides the MEG expert on what input is required, allowing sufficient time for this input. Proposed methodological input will be included in the request's Document of Work (DOW).

- If the requester suggests a specific method in his/her request, its suitability will be examined by the MEG expert and the KCB, in terms of relevance, expectations and resources. Alternative methods may be proposed if needed, in consideration of their relative benefits and trade-offs.
- The MEG is responsible for its internal organization if appointed experts believe it would be useful to obtain input from the wider MEG prior to submitting their input to the KCB focal point.

3) Role of the MEG in supporting the Expert Working Groups (EWGs)

If, at the end of the scoping phase, the request is approved and a EWG is created, the MEG appointed expert(s) are added to the EWG, its mailing list and group workspace for the request. The MEG appointed expert(s) then have a number of tasks:

- Attending the EWG kick-off meeting, to provide information on the selection of methods in the Document of Work, and any additional information required.
- Following the progress of the EWG during development of the methodological protocol. - Providing advice and/or implementing the methods used in the protocol.
- Encouraging peer-review of the methodological protocol and final report, and suggesting appropriate external experts for this review.

The Figure below summarises the involvement of the MEG during the timeline of a request.

initiation

When request is selected, **EMB/KCB** contacts **MEG** with request details

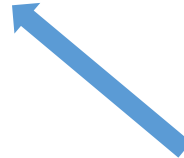


1 week for **MEG** expert(s) to volunteer for the request, as matching their expertise. Opportunity for **MEG** to discuss suggested methods.



If no **MEG** experts volunteer, the **EMB /KCB** nominates an expert with appropriate experience, or opens an ad-hoc call for external experts

Eclipse method selection tool (**MAGICKS**) used to identify appropriate methods



scoping

KCB and nominated **MEG** expert(s) suggest methods for a request during scoping phase

ongoing dialogue with requester



synthesis

The nominated **MEG** expert(s) becomes a member of the **EWG** and advises on the chosen method throughout the request

Legend

| | |
|----------------|---|
| EMB | Eclipse Management Body |
| EWG | Expert Working Group |
| KCB | Knowledge Coordination Body |
| MAGICKS | Method Application and Guidance In Conducting Knowledge Syntheses Methods Expert Group |
| MEG | Methods Expert Group |