

## ENEP GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### Towards an Accreditation System for European Environmental Professionals

Attached you will find a memorandum regarding the potential introduction of a Code of Conduct for Environmental Professionals, authored by Tinus Pulles. This would be a 'light version' of a European accreditation system. We propose to discuss the feasibility and the advantages of this proposal, within the framework of the following considerations. Also added is a discussion note written by Kristof De Smet which sheds light from a different angle on the topic, with the aim of providing extra food for a fruitful discussion during the GA.

1. For a number of ENEP members, there is a clear ambition to develop a formal accreditation system; in their view, this will help increase the recognition of the profession of their members. It will also help international transfer of professionals as a result of the mutual recognition of their credentials.
2. A major reason for ENEP to initiate the investigation into an accreditation system is financial. ENEP is in dire need of income, and as some members of ENEP can testify, maintaining a formal, 'heavy' accreditation system is not only useful for its members but also a major source of income.
3. The enforcement of any sort of system will be a responsibility of the ENEP members, because ENEP has no direct connection with the individual professionals. ENEP will provide administrative and other general services, which need to be financed somehow.
4. The maintenance and administration of an accreditation system can give an additional role to the ENEP Platform. If we administer the accreditation via the Platform, this would really set it apart from the open social networks like LinkedIn.
5. There is a clear distinction between accreditation of 'regulated professions' and of 'non-regulated professions'. Some think we should aim for a 'regulated profession accreditation', others are convinced it should be 'non-regulated'.
  - a. In favour of 'regulated':
    - a.i. If you introduce something, make it something real, something that truly gives proof of someone's professional qualifications.
    - a.ii. The distinction that comes with a regulated professional accreditation, in the form of a title, has shown to be very important in some countries (e.g., the UK), and will be an important motivator for ENEP membership.

- a.iii. To professionals, the right to carry a regulated accreditation title has true value. As a result, it would become a major source of income to ENEP – see point 2. above.
- a.iv. A ‘regulated’ system has already proven to be feasible in the UK:
  - a.iv.1. There is an ‘CEnv’ regulated code in Britain given to more than 5,000 environmental professionals;
  - a.iv.2. There is a European ‘EurBiol’ regulated code too.
- a.v. If ENEP does not make this step, someone else will and we have lost our chance to play a role here.
- b. In favour of ‘non-regulated’ (see the Code of Conduct proposal):
  - b.i. It is simple and easy to develop.
  - b.ii. A Code of Conduct is a form of a non-regulated code that presents little risks to ENEP and its members.
  - b.iii. The scope of work of environmental professionals (from lawyer to engineer, from civil servant to corporate environmental manager) is far too wide to develop a workable regulated accreditation.
  - b.iv. We could always move from the light, non-regulated version to a heavy, regulated version.

The proposal for a Code of Conduct and other ideas that exist in the Executive Committee rest on the viewpoints and experience of only a few ENEP representatives. We are aware that cultural differences exist among ENEP countries regarding a topic like this. It is important to see through the preferences that just result from these differences and define what is best for ENEP as a whole.

We would therefore like you to develop your ideas and bring forward your suggestions and preferences, to allow our Federation to choose the best way forward.