

# WMO College Position Paper on Update of the EURAD Strategic Research Agenda (SRA)

## 1 Introduction and Background

EURAD is at the mid-point of the 5 year Joint Programme and the Bureau is responsible for preparing a plan and developing and agreeing a process by July 2021 for the update of the SRA, which is to be completed by February 2023.

The EURAD SRA update serves two purposes: (i) to take stock and reflect on progress made during 2019-2023 and capture emerging needs from across the Colleges, and (ii) to act as an input for a potential future EC joint programme.

The Bureau has established a (temporary) SRA update coordination team with a representative from each College, along with support from the Project Management Office (PMO). The first action of this team is to obtain inputs from the three EURAD Colleges to establish common boundary conditions and generate shared ideas on how the SRA update should be done. This input is to be obtained via two means: (1) a half-day workshop in June 2021 with up to three attendees from each College, and (2) a coordinated response from each College to the contents of the Bureau paper “Update of the Strategic Research Agenda (SRA): Process agreement between Colleges”, issued in April 2021.

In response to the first point, the following attendees have been identified to represent the WMO College at the June workshop:

- Stéphan Schumacher (Andra, one of the WMO Bureau representatives);
- Patrik Vidstrand (SKB, one of the WMO Bureau representatives); and
- Maarten Van Geet (ONDRAF/NIRAS, chair of the IGD-TP 2020 SRA update).

This position paper presents the coordinated response from the WMO College to the questions raised in the above-noted Bureau paper.

## 2 Question 1 (Existing SRAs)

The IGD-TP SRA was updated in 2020 ([https://igdtp.eu/document/2020\\_igd-tp\\_strategic-research-agenda/](https://igdtp.eu/document/2020_igd-tp_strategic-research-agenda/)); no further updates are planned on a timescale that would influence update of the current EURAD SRA.

## 3 Question 2 (Existing SRAs)

We are not aware of SRA’s other than those cited (i.e. the IGD-TP SRA 2020, and those planned to be produced by EURADScience, the SITEX.Network and PREDIS), or any additional inputs that should be considered.

#### 4 Question 3 (EURAD SRA Scope)

The WMOs believe that the scope should remain focussed on the scientific and technical activities required for radioactive waste management.

The scope of the PREDIS and EURAD programmes needs to be complementary or both projects need to be merged into a single Joint Programme; it is important to avoid overlap and duplication. The two programmes together (or a combined single programme) need to cover the whole waste lifecycle from cradle to grave (excluding decommissioning). If the projects are merged, the role and number of mandated actors needs to be modified, with the waste producers nominated as mandated actors rather than third parties.

Pure social science research should not be included as this is not specific to radioactive waste management, but of a broader societal nature.

Strategic studies on topics without radioactive waste management RD&D needs, such as operational safety (fire risk, etc.), should not be included.

Education should continue to be excluded from the EURAD scope, as it is not radioactive waste management research, but training and mobility should be retained in the scope.

#### 5 Question 4 (EURAD SRA Scope)

The EURAD 1 knowledge management (KM) roadmap structure and current plans need to be implemented and the experience/learning gained from these activities needs to be analysed before any new KM activities are embarked upon, or new scope included in the EURAD SRA.

The WMOs support KM, but it must be recognised that populating roadmaps/KM structures requires adequate resources from the experts in the respective fields. KM activities also require strong project management to steer the projects to achieve the originally planned objective, without scope creep.

It is recommended that our previous WMO College position papers are reviewed, especially Position Paper 2019-02 on KM in EURAD and the most recent Paper 2020-01 (see <https://igdt.eu/documents/>).

There should be no duplication of existing and/or ongoing work, or activities being undertaken by other organisations (e.g. NEA or IAEA).

#### 6 Question 5 (Governance and Inclusivity)

The actions of the JOPRAD and EURAD projects mean that a broad consensus already supports the current EURAD SRA. Another broad consultation of all potential parties seems overkill and unnecessary. The challenge is now to make the EURAD SRA more focussed, as it currently contains everything of possible interest. The Colleges can conduct a ranking related to their role in EURAD and with the EURAD Vision in mind. The ultimate contribution of the proposed research activity to waste management needs to be the key ranking criterion.

#### 7 Question 6 (Governance and Inclusivity)

The WMO College agrees that Civil Society organisations can bring in their views via the SITEX SRA and that Waste Producers can bring in their views via the PREDIS SRA.

### 8 Question 7 (Goals of the SRA Update)

The EURAD SRA needs to be structured such that it contributes to reaching the EURAD Vision - the revised SRA needs to be more concrete on how it achieves this.

The SRA needs to summarise the identified research needs, but should not explicitly define how these research needs will be actioned and implemented. The detailed plan of how the research needs will be addressed should be set out in a deployment plan. The situation for budgeting (public/versus private funds) varies significantly across member countries. The deployment plan should consider how to ensure that possible national public money can be utilised in coordination with EURAD objectives.

Ranking the research needs (and reformulating them) in the SRA with respect to their contribution to the EURAD Vision could be a pragmatic first step. Ranking criteria should be College-specific, as each College has a different focus, but all research needs should target the Vision. A hierarchy of criteria should be agreed upon whereby use of the results for implementation of disposal and targeting the vision are the most important.

### 9 Question 8 (Overall Process)

The scope (based on the Vision) of the SRA update needs to be defined first, taking into account the schedule and the type of deliverables desired. Then resources need to be realistically estimated and provided. This execution of the update cannot be delegated to the bureau members and/or colleges if this requires a significant effort not already planned in EURAD.

The ultimate end-users (WMOs, as represented by the IGD-TP, and also SITEX) are in the best position to assess what will really contribute to successful construction and operation licence submissions and reviews. However, it needs to be recognised that the main focus of these organisations is not to conduct RD&D and that their involvement in overarching activities in EURAD needs to be focused, and well supported by the PMO.

The need for a major overhaul of the current SRA needs to be assessed before concluding to do so. The current SRA is only a few years old and research needs are unlikely to have changed dramatically in such a period. This SRA update should be more light-touch and simply identify deviations from the previous SRA, with a more significant review potentially integrated in EURAD 2.

There are likely to be few differences from the previous SRA, but this should not be interpreted as "but what has EURAD 1 done?". Therefore, the SRA should include a preamble that indicates that the EURAD SRA is part of a vision broader than the current 4 year programme, but rather 10 years, and it should underline the progress of EURAD 1 and explain why some topics remain in the updated SRA.

Work to address the research needs identified in the SRA should be prioritised according to procedures described in the deployment plan. Such prioritisation must be needs driven, rather than consensus driven.

See also relevant comments included in the above responses to questions.

### 10 Question 9 (Type of Documentation Needed)

The existing roadmap documentation structure seems like a good vehicle for EURAD. The Vision, roadmap, SRA and deployment plan need to be consistent and complementary, without duplication and overlap.