

# FIRST ANNUAL MEETING – CLOSING REMARKS

## Chief Scientific Officers

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## THIS MEETING

- Ever increasing crowd...
  - 250 participants "live", 150 online
- Very well organized – great hosts
- EURAD2 is on the rails and steaming ahead!

But also:

- EURAD2 is not a "free ride": we are all together advancing safe management of radioactive waste → bringing concrete solutions to the table
- What the end-users do not use, we should not be doing...



## **CHECK – OUR PRINCIPLES ARE ALIVE!**

- **Positive Participation**
- **Maintenance of Independence**
- **Balanced Programme**
- **Added Value**
- **Inclusiveness**
- **Equitable Financing**
- **Complementary Participation**
- **Tangible Results**



## WHERE ARE WE AFTER 1 YEAR?

- All Work Packages have been successfully started: all lights green!
- First results are being produced
  - Several state of the art (SOTA) reports have been published
  - First green papers from Strategic Studies are becoming available
- 2nd Wave preparation in progress in consultation with the 3 Colleges
- External Advisory Board has been established and has taken up its functioning
- Risks are under control and KPIs are in check
- Growing End user and Stakeholder community
  - More about numbers... But do we reach also the ones we need to reach?
  - Does EURAD need a more pro-active approach?



## WE ARE HERE TO SERVE THE END-USERS – EXCELLENT SESSION

- When serving the Member states, we need to generate and bring the information at the level that it will and can be taken up!
- EURAD2 provides added value for the end users
  - Networking, discussion forum, learning from others
  - Knowledge building and preservation: PhDs, early career scientists, etc. --> introduction to the community and learning wider perspectives
  - Increasing confidence in own national programme, benchmarking science
  - Joint prioritisation, fostering mutual understanding between WMO-TSO-RE
  - Efficient use and infrastructures at EU level
  - Anticipating new technologies
  - Contributing to the implementation of the national disposal programmes in compliance with EC directive 2011/70/Euratom



## WE ARE HERE TO SERVE THE END-USERS – EXCELLENT SESSION

- **We can do even better**
  - Bring confidence to the wider community and general public
  - Further integrate regulatory body
  - Importance of including predisposal topics and alternative disposal solutions to address SIMS' needs
  - Better integrate and interact with waste producers
  - Access to cutting edge knowledge and infrastructure
  - Extension of research into social sciences and humanities
- **Special attention – small inventory countries: limited resources!**
- **EURAD2 cannot do everything – where can our Partnership provide the best added value compared to other initiatives**

# KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

- **Knowledge management made a huge leap from EURAD1 to EURAD2!**
- **Many excellent initiatives and great drive: ambassadors, mobilities, L&L, school, mentors, etc**
- **SOTAs, Domain Insights, Guidance Docs: keep the pace!**
- **Gap: documents targeting policymakers and governance stakeholders: position papers can address that gap.**
- **Feedback from the end-users is key to quality development, but a challenge – provide the WP with success stories - input from all needed!**
- **Critical R&D infrastructure analysis → this is a key chance: URLs , labs - especially for the SIMs (topic get more in the focus of EURAD3)**
- **Some suggestions:**
  - Do not forget AI/LLMs –is EURAD planning cycle allowing absorbing the progress in this field to the full → as EURAD2 is innovative it would be good to be frontrunner also here
  - Position papers can further increase the outreach – specifically to those stakeholders that have little time → Can become a Task no 7
  - RD&D infrastructure analysis: learn from other similar European initiatives in other domains
  - Mobility programme: pro-active approach with making available X number of grants for certain events (annual event, trainings) in order to make sure our young generation has the means to take profit maximally from the programme



## YOUNG GENERATION SESSION

- **Dynamic – mentoring is a excellent initiative, «use cases» showed the value**
- **A good programme attracts young people by just being good!**
- **It is a give and take, works both ways:**
  - *Young to EURAD2*: Look at the Youth Vision Statement: what are the expectations towards EURAD2
  - *EURAD2 to young*: many suggestions came out of the discussion
    - List of who does what where connected to financially supported mobility
    - Forum to ask stupid questions
    - Implement PREDIS/PhD group network which worked well
    - Delegate: budget for Young Generations event
- **Wise advice from the young: Seniors are glad to answer questions, but do not have time to take initiative**





## ITALIAN STAKEHOLDERS SESSION

- **Very interesting and insightful session, bringing perspectives from government, institutional and industrial stakeholders**
- **Great perspective that ideas to start a new nuclear programme in Italy are integrated with the development of the back-end all the way towards final disposal.**
  - **Decommissioning challenges go hand in hand with developing a final repository, ensuring a smooth pathway from waste generation to disposal**
  - **Challenges for final disposal programme are known: public confidence and stakeholder participation, siting (dual track approach), characterization and WAC**
  - **National programme takes account of ARTEMIS review and needs to consider both legacy waste but also future expected waste forms**
  - **EURAD and PREDIS outcomes have already proved valuable for the Italian programme**
- **Industry perspective: talking to end user allows to define better project and make something concrete for the market and end user.**
  - **Challenges = harmonisation and standardisation of solutions at EU scale**
  - **Importance of incorporating digital technologies**



## BREAK-OUT SESSIONS

- *Involving the Civil Society* – everything is set-up and stock is taken from EURAD1 experience, the challenge is big and the expectations high, the role is key as also indicated in the PINC (2025-2050).
- *SIMS session* brought out the challenges but also opportunities that EURAD can bring. SIMS asks for their voice and priorities to be heard and taken into account when planning EURAD activities. Enormous potential of using/developing shared resources and facilities, different programmes are in different stages and not everything is needed in every stage. SIMS deserve our full attendance in EURAD2.
- *Data Management*: a vast domain, rapid developments ongoing. Easy access to data (living data!) increases its value, data being the key asset of EURAD2
- *Impact-improved dissemination*: hands-on guidance is what this science community needs. That was provided in an excellent way!



## THE TECHNICAL BREAK-OUT SESSIONS - THE SCIENCE – EXCITING!

- **Good progress in all workpackages, well coordinated by the PMO → congratulations to all! Focus is key in the following years – results need to come.**
- **While SOTAs provide a solid base, Whitepapers need to come in March 2026 (month 18) – these are key documents (CSOffs can support with review) – deliver in time and the right quality.**
- **The interactive format worked – the discussions engaged newcomers and brought broader perspectives.**



## THE SECOND WAVE

- The process is clear – and is well coordinated.
- The second wave should, through its content and its alignment with the vision, demonstrate value of EURAD2 → position us for the MFF 2028-2035 (EURAD3).
- A patchwork of topics, further elaborating on earlier WPs whereby it is not clear what is novel does not bring this message.
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> wave is about more than distributing the newly acquired money (budget 2026-27) in a bottom-up inward-looking compromise between the colleges.
- **Call on the bureau, PMO and the colleges to be ambitious, make sure we use the chance and give a clear sign with the programme for the 2<sup>nd</sup> wave.**



## GOING FORWARD – FOCUS STRATEGY

- **External Advisory Board:** well-established, valuable instrument to provide steer, needs access to the right information
- **Roadmap & SRA are established and accepted:** how to adapt/use them such that they provide maximum support for steering the EURAD2 content and ensure flexibility to new needs.
- **The opportunity to use our human and infrastructure capital by sharing is currently within reach – the SIMS are the greatest beneficiaries, a few considerations**
  - Delineation EURAD2 – other initiatives: some reflection needed in the PMO/Bureau/KM group?
  - Joint facilities, sharing facilities → network of infrastructures will gain importance
- **Strategic positioning of EURAD2 can be further enhanced with an eye on the 2nd wave and EURAD3 and also new nuclear initiatives.**
  - One stop shop for radioactive waste disposal
  - Providing solutions for all types of waste, now and in the future
  - Safety is non-negotiable and key



## CONCLUSION

- **After a successful year 1, EURAD-2 is well positioned to address Europe's nuclear waste challenges**
- **Ensure visibility, flexibility, and alignment with wider EU strategy (budget signs are positive...)**
- **Focus on integration, innovation, and support for all Member States**
- **The future seems to be nuclear, the role of EURAD2 is clear: by addressing the back-end properly we prevent the front-end from sinking ...**

**Thank you for your attention.**