



24 February 2015

*Preparatory document No. 5*

# Agenda item 6.b – Silver literature review

---

## a) Introduction

In December 2014, the Assembly requested the Secretariat to assess different options to ensure that the silver literature review can be conducted at an efficient cost. Indeed, the literature review related to silver and especially to nano silver is a very important task but is very resource-consuming due to the huge amount of publications which are issued on a regular basis (for example, during the last 6-monthly literature review, about 500 papers were screened, of which about 75 were found relevant and reviewed). The actual number of relevant papers is obviously beyond PMC's control. Realistically, a certain amount of time will be required to process relevant papers.

We would like to emphasise that the PMC has been mindful of the budget in the past already and limited the papers to be processed to the essential: searches are only reviewing/ processing relevant papers (Klimisch 1 and 2 in most cases). It is suggested to not change the actual search terms as otherwise we might be missing relevant papers.

It is worth also to underline the fact that a good quality and regular literature review could help saving significant funds for doing testing (e.g., for developing a soil SSD), which we would have had to conduct otherwise.

The Secretariat assessed the different options and proposes here below a solution to ensure that the literature review can still be performed in the best conditions but at reasonable costs.

## b) Several options

Options	Pros	Cons
Status quo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Good quality service delivered so far by the consultants</li><li>• Ensure compliance with REACH regulation for a</li></ul>	High costs



24 February 2015

*Preparatory document No. 5*

	dossier which is already under scrutiny	
Streamline current searches <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduce frequency of lit. searches to 1/a</li> <li>- Reduced reporting (table format)</li> <li>- Combine searches and IUCLID input</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Same quality as status quo, but at lower cost</li> <li>• Straightforward to implement</li> <li>• Could save ca. 2000 GBP = 2700 Euros by reducing searches</li> <li>• Combined searches/ input could reduce time per paper from 3,5h to 2,5h = ca 3000 Euros saved</li> </ul>	Rel. modest savings (ca. 6000 Euros = 15% of WCA costs)
Request new/revised offers <sup>1</sup>	Could increase competition between consultants and decrease costs	Adding another layer of complexity in an already quite complicated system. Could be inefficient for the staff managing the project if another consultancy were involved.
Mutualisation of efforts with Silver Institute	Could halve the costs	No legal obligations for the Silver Institute to conduct such a type of review on a regular basis – risk of non-compliance regarding REACH.
Mutualisation of efforts with Silver Task Force (in charge of silver biocides registration)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could halve the costs.</li> <li>• The Silver Task Force replied positively to the offer.</li> </ul>	Legal obligations are different under biocides therefore timing and frequency could be different and inconsistent – risk of non-compliance regarding REACH.
Internalization of a part of the tasks (conduct actual search, produce master list of studies)	Could save ca 6300 Euros (15% of WCA budget for the literature review)	Will increase the workload of existing staff without a significant financial additional value.
Internalization of the work (above scope + reviewing papers + IUCLID input)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PMC team is under reorganisation due to recent changes in the staff – good opportunity to reshuffle the tasks</li> </ul>	Not possible with the current staff (KR, KA)



24 February 2015

*Preparatory document No. 5*

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Only a part of the existing budget (78 536 Euros) needs to be kept for the outsourcing of the literature review on HH (25 000 Euros).</li><li>• Gives some flexibility in the future regarding literature review work in general</li></ul>	
Collaboration with University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Very efficient on a costs basis</li><li>• Good quality expected</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Timing issue – University timeline not always consistent with industry timeline – risk of incompletion</li><li>• Possibly different focus (research vs Reach)</li></ul>

<sup>1</sup> Offers have been requested to other consultants: the offers received are all similar to estimated budget.

<sup>2</sup> The Silver Task Force has been contacted to check their interest but no reply so far.

### **c) Recommendation**

Based on the above analysis the Secretariat recommends to perform, in 2016, the environmental literature review in-house when new staff member will be appointed. In 2015, it is suggested to outsource the work to a consultant, preferably to the consultant selected to fulfil the gap left by RN and to find an agreement with the Silver Task Force to share the related costs.

**FOR APPROVAL:** *Secretariat recommendation to perform environmental literature review in-house (if RN replacement is approved) in 2016 and include Ag literature review in the work to be done by the consultant fulfilling the gaps left by RN and share the costs with the Silver Task Force.*