



European NGO Network on Green Public Procurement

European NGO Network on GPP – Advanced GPP training session

20 June Brussels

Summary of the day

Welcome and update about last activities

Estela Grana welcomes all present NGOs and provides an overview of the Network activities and the goals of the session, which include:

- to get more in depth on specific aspects of GPP
- Discuss support the Network can offer

Currently there are 33 participants from 17 countries in the Network; participants are encouraged to invite other relevant NGOs to the Network.

Feedback received on topics of interest from participants – was used to set the agenda for this meeting, but will also be used for future activities, such as webinars.

Ongoing activities:

- The first webinar took place in April (available online for those who missed). Next to take place in October – theme still to be set
- Quarterly newsletter being published – to include advice on upcoming tenders
- Support from the Network – several requests received from many participants. Currently reviewing this.

Legal and practical dimensions of GPP

Presentation: [Legal framework for GPP](#) - Abby Semple from *Public Procurement Analysis*.

Some important aspects about the legal framework for GPP are explained.

During the presentation, following points are discussed:

- How GPP can be a useful role for NGOs, in keeping track and making Public Authorities aware of the various regulations and directives, both at European and national level
- Comprehensive overview of the sectoral specific legislation on EC GPP website
- Why is not possible to ask for additionality in relation to electricity – not linked to subject matter
- Central purchasing bodies (CPB) have a lot of influence in procurement procedures. It is a good idea to offer them support. It is pointed out by Els Verwimp that some CPBs might be reluctant to working with NGOs, especially if they have their own certification systems. Abby Semple points out that CPBs seem more open to GPP in the last years.



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Using ecolabels in GPP

Presentation: NGOs engaging in the field of GPP – Carsten Wachholz, EEB

During the presentation, following points are discussed:

- Ecolabels provide an easy route in for NGOs working on GPP. Need clear, practical basics on what to do. The first step for a NGO should be to assess how many products are out there, which meet the label (to see if it would be feasible to refer to it in a tender);
- How to prove equivalence? The contracting authority must decide on what this means – can ask the bidder themselves to demonstrate equivalence. Estela Grana points out that this works legally, but what about the practical point of view? Discussion about the equivalence between different labels with “similar” levels of ambition;
- The safest way to refer to Ecolabels might still be to refer to the requirements of the label and then require that label as verification or equivalent;
- Carsten Wachholz refers to a database which shows labels and criteria available for different products. NGOs can play a role here in explaining these to public authorities;
- The experience of Els Verwimp is that ecolabels can be referred to for the procurement of specific products, such as office supplies or cleaning products, as there are well established. But for other product groups, it's better to use the criteria behind this.

Deutsche Umwelthilfe -

Presentation: Air pollution and GPP – DUH activities – Peter Feldkamp, Deutsche Umwelthilfe.

Peter Feldkamp presents current activities of Deutsche Umwelthilfe in the field of air pollution; their lawsuits against 17 German cities not complying with air pollution levels and their work measuring NOx emissions from vehicles and looking for technical solutions regarding construction machinery and retrofitting vehicles such as buses.

Main discussion points:

- How do public bodies react and cooperate once they have been sued? Answer: in many cases they have to cooperate and look for a solution. It is important to keep the momentum, especially when related news are hot in the press. Luis Moreria from Quercus points out that they try this, but it is hard to maintain attention in the media for longer periods and very difficult to co-operate with authorities that have been sued.
- How is it ensured that construction machines comply with the criteria? Answer: Each company has to have its vehicles approved beforehand, then there is a central agency which checks compliance during the contract.

Roundtables

Following roundtables are organised:

- Topic A: What can be done at each stage of a procurement process? What goes in a tender document? Facilitator: Abby Semple, PPA



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- Topic B: Ecolabels - examples of how they can be used in procurement. Facilitator: Carsten Wachholz, EEB
- Topic C: Working with public authorities on GPP - how to identify opportunities and start the conversation. Facilitator: Estela Grana, ICLEI
- Topic D: Organising a GPP awareness raising workshop. Facilitator: Gražvydas Jegelevičius, BEF Lithuania
- Topic E: Green energy, energy services and lighting. Facilitator: Els Verwimp, Government of Flanders
- Topic F: Cleaning and waste management. Facilitator: Abby Semple, PPA
- Topic G: Clean vehicles and mobility. Facilitator: Els Verwimp, Government of Flanders
- Topic H: Food and catering/forest products. Facilitator: Simon Clement, ICLEI

Closure

Estela Grana describes the next steps for the network and upcoming activities, which include:

- Discuss activity plan in your organization and submit it to the Network secretariat
- Quarterly newsletters will include references to potential tenders for GPPF
- Next webinar to take place in October 2017 – topic to be fixed
- Support from the network to be delivered
- Next meeting – April 2018