

ATTENDEES

CHAIR	Karin Wessman (EKN)
BU SECRETARIAT	Eve Hall, Paul Heaney, EK Grey
ATIDI	Clement Yapo
ATRADIUS DSB	Irene Visser, Sabine Dankbaar
BPIFRANCE	Alexine Bourgeois, Lea Freneaux
CESCE	Julio Fernandez-Giro Ayuga
CREDENDO	Geert Goossens, Anne Corstjens
DZ Bank	Ralph Lerch
EDC	Gwladys Tapsoba
EIFO	Toke Philipsen Prahm, Tessa Lykke Andersen
EKN	Victor Carstenius
FINNVERA	Pekka Karkovirta, Nina Karisalo
ICIEC	Salih Suwarelzahab
MIGA	Maria Margarita Cabrera Boero
SAUDIEXIM	Suhaib Alhosainy
UKEF	Emmanuelle Dot, Elsa Kyander, Taras Bains

Apologies from: Marlena Hurley (US DFC)

SUMMARY

Karin Wessman, Head of Sustainability at EKN, and the new Chair of the Climate Working Group (CWG), welcomed the CWG members to the meeting.

The main agenda for the call was to update the group on **2024 strategy and realigned workplan** and reflect on Dubai workshop. We started with introducing the extended CWG membership (FINNVERA, CESCE, CREDENCO, SAUDI EXIM, ICIEC) and the representatives new to the call.

Introduction

The Chair introduced the refreshed 2024 workplan for the CWG that will be proposed to the BU MC on 26 February 2024. The theme for 2024 is “internal outreach” with the aim to engage wider BU membership and carry out activities that reach deeper levels inside member organisations. Effectively, the Climate Working Group is evolving into Climate Working stream, encompassing wider BU community, and this internal reorientation will help to focus on BU membership. BU CWG’s main role will continue as the connector to both internal and external expert community.

Status Update

The CWG was established in early 2022 with the goal to accelerate the BU membership’s climate policies and practices within export credit, trade finance and political risk insurance. It launched with a relatively small number of sustainability and policy level experts. In addition to representatives from

ECAs, multilateral investment insurers and private insurance companies, the CWG includes experts from development institutions and commercial banks.

So far, the group's main focus has been on sharing our members progress in product innovation, financing opportunities, alignment around low-carbon methodologies and policies, and promoting collaboration with various stakeholders. This has been delivered via CWG regular calls, webinars, online video library, resource library, and culminating with an in-person meeting at the end of 2023.

Outcomes from the Dubai workshop

The CWG held a workshop for BU members and CWG affiliates in Dubai on 6 December 2023. The workshop was hosted by ECI and coincided with COP28. The idea was to bring together sustainability experts and climate leaders who were already attending the UN Climate Change Conference - and to provide all BU members an opportunity to participate alongside the climate expert community.

The workshop ran at full capacity with over 40 participants from over 20 organisations present, mostly ECAs and multinationals as well as representatives from commercial banks.

The main goals of the workshop were to reflect on COP28 outcomes, process what these mean for the export credit community, and take stock of best practices and actions that deliver climate impact. The workshops explored:

- What are the outcomes of the global stocktake on climate action?
- How to translate main climate themes into practical impacts to the export finance industry?
- What collaboration opportunities are available for ECAs and banking partners to achieve impact and fill gaps in ECA offerings?
- What are different pathways to decarbonisation?

We have published video recordings from main panel discussions on BU website: <https://www.berneunion.org/Stub/Display/254>

From these discussions, we have summarised topics that the CWG plans to focus on in 2024. ANNEX A lists the main identified themes.

Objectives and proposed activities for 2024

The CWG was initially established as a small group, planning and creating climate-related content for the wider BU membership.

Over time, interest and participation in the group has grown. At the same time, exchanges *within the group*, between the sustainability experts of our members have become a valuable part of the initiative.

In recognition of this maturation of the initiative, in 2024 our aim is to involve the widest set of BU members directly in the work of the CWG, scaling activities and outputs to reach and support the climate journey of the entire membership.

Expand the core advisory group:

- Invite new participants to the CWG, also to ensure broader geographical representation
- Encourage active participation and contribution to online library and video resources

- Continue with CWG calls but focus main effort on expert knowledge sharing via webinar and online format, making it more accessible to all members (can be targeted as technical or policy level discussions)

Engage the BU community by creating a wider platform:

- Create a designated, *member managed mailing list* of sustainability experts and policy level practitioners from all BU members for regular communications, engagement and visibility
- Continue sourcing *member specific website content* across all workstreams by asking BU members to share their new products, policies, ECA case studies
- Continue sharing *relevant reports*, including progress reports, bridging the knowledge gap
- *Integrate* sustainability practitioners and CWG activities into wider Berne Union agenda, i.e., Financial Incentives / Climate Innovation Showcase at 2024 Spring Meeting in Oslo; Climate Workshop at 2024 AGM in Hamburg
- Organise *joint sessions and workshops* with other parts of BU, particularly the Young Professionals
- Publish a *dedicated BULLETIN issue on climate* progress to amplify the messages to BU members and vice versa

Looking at 2025 onwards:

- Potentially, a larger in-person climate finance event
- Berne Union members' climate journey mapping exercise / sustainability survey
- Networking platform as part of wider BU community building project
- Promotion of climate activities externally (e.g. contribution to external publications, or creation of an info brochure on how the industry supports climate)

CWG Role in External Stakeholder Engagement

Since inception, one important objective of the CWG has been to connect the BU community with a wider set of stakeholders on matters relating to climate. There are a growing number of groups and initiatives focused on climate issues, and many of these focus on alignment around specific climate policy commitments.

The unique contribution of the CWG is as a broad-based and open platform for information sharing, including helping our members to stay abreast of what is happening within other groups and organisations externally.

Through the networks of CWG participants, we are engaging with and receive updates from groups including:

- Finance in Common, and IDFC
- ICC banking commission export finance sustainability working group
- GFANZ and the newly launched Net Zero Export Credit Agency (NZECA) Alliance
- E3F
- Network of MDBs

This is an important function which helps ensure that the CWG can remain complimentary to other climate initiatives with which BU members are connected.

Our focus externally is on information sharing, building awareness and ensuring BU members are well connected to wider developments and dialogues around climate.

FOLLOW UP AND NEXT MEETING

Feedback is invited from the CWG members on the proposed workplan, including prioritisation and preferred mode of delivery for the proposed topics.

In addition:

- What other types of resources could CWG create which can support BU members in their climate journey in the longer term? E.g., regular climate research / survey among BU members (similar to ECA mapping exercise), or creation of a climate information database (similar to country cover policy database)
 - What information around climate are you seeking from your peers? What is useful for your planning / strategy / reporting / benchmarking in this respect?
 - What information are members willing to share around their approaches to climate?
 - Is there complimentary information available among all BU member groups (public, private, multilateral)?
 - How regularly would such a survey / database need to be updated to remain useful?

Next call: TBC

ANNEX A – Climate Finance Topics for 2024

Based on industry practitioners at the Dubai workshop, the following climate finance topics were identified for upcoming webinars, etc. The next step is to prioritise these and assign a preferred mode of delivery as well as contributors for the proposed topics.

- **Common carbon pathway methodology / standards / reporting**
 - Net zero methodology
 - Portfolio assessment
 - Transparency on portfolios
 - Different approaches and reporting standards
 - IFC standards link
- **Wider climate risk assessment theme**
 - Climate risk affecting credit and country risk
 - Understanding the relationship between political and climate risk
 - Risk discussion with reinsurance
 - Business risk and opportunities
- **Culture change**
 - Adapting risk assessment models and training deal teams on climate risk
 - Sustainability as a separate function, not integrated
 - Supporting cultural change / awareness building inside the organisation and with stakeholders
 - YP involvement / future
- **Back to basics / educational themes**
 - Carbon footprint and neutrality
 - Understanding emissions
 - Understanding underlying technologies – what works, ask an engineer
- **Spotlight on global adaptation / transition / trends**
 - The balance between energy security (driven by hydrocarbons) and sustainability
 - Some leading EU countries are still using coal
 - How ECA climate frameworks fit in national strategies
 - Impact on investors, exporters – ECA sweet spot for accepting higher risk
 - Fair transition
 - What is a “credible” transition plan / pathways to decarbonisation
 - Transition finance
- **Products / incentives**
 - Exchange of knowledge - practical issues, mistakes to avoid, lessons learned
 - Practical examples
- **Climate landscape**
 - Partnership and collaboration – include banks to expand conversation re alignment, progress, players
 - What practitioner level collaborative forums exist
 - What do different climate groups do and how they differ