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**Assignment**

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**ASSIGNMENT**

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**IMPORTANT NOTICE**

**This document presents a fictitious scenario. It has been produced solely for the purpose of this exercise. All references to existing countries, international organisations, private companies, departments and their representatives, etc. have been invented purely as examples. Any views expressed should not be taken to represent the opinions of those bodies or persons. When dealing with this assignment, participants should therefore rely solely on the information presented in the exercise and not on any prior expertise in the field.**

For this exercise, you will take on the role of Kim, an Administrator in the Communication Unit of the European Commission's Flora and Fauna Department. All the necessary information is provided. It comprises a number of emails, reports and other documents that you will have to analyse in order to be able to deal properly with the assignment given to you. This is your first day in your new job. As the document you will draft could potentially be circulated through inter-service consultation and/or be shared with national authorities, it is necessary to write it in English.

It is important that you accept the scenario as it is presented. Although in real life you would have access to other sources of information and would be able to consult your colleagues, in this exercise you are limited to the information provided. You are, however, allowed to make logical assumptions where information is missing or incomplete.

This case study is designed to assess the following competency: Communication. No previous knowledge is required to deal with the assignment.

Your task will be to present solutions to a number of problems based on the information given by various parties (and available for you to read in the following pages). On the day of the test, you will be given a specific task and then 45 minutes to take the test. Make sure you explain the reasoning behind your ideas and include all the information on which you wish to be evaluated.

Please note that it is strictly prohibited to refer to any notes you have prepared in advance or to take notes during the test.

**Please note:  
today is Thursday 1 September 20XX  
Last year was 20XX-1, next year will be 20XX+1**

**Abbreviations**

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**ABBREVIATIONS USED**

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|                   |                                       |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Commission</b> | European Commission                   |
| <b>EU</b>         | European Union                        |
| <b>EuroDat</b>    | Statistics and Data Department        |
| <b>FFD</b>        | Flora and Fauna Department            |
| <b>MS</b>         | Member State(s)                       |
| <b>UN</b>         | United Nations                        |
| <b>UWF</b>        | Union of Widonian Farmers             |
| <b>WFAC</b>       | Widonian Food and Agriculture Council |

**Background**

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**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

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**Widonia**

Widonia is a Member State (MS) of the European Union (EU). Employing over 25% of the country's workforce and accounting for nearly 10% of its Gross Domestic Product, agriculture is a significant contributor both to Widonia's economy and to the supplies of food consumed in Widonia.

**Nitrogen fertiliser**

Over the past ten years, small farmers as well as major crop producers in Widonia have applied nitrogen fertiliser, mainly in the spring. When applied to soil, nitrogen fertiliser can increase crop growth and yield by providing plants with a readily available source of nitrogen, which they need for producing proteins, DNA and other vital components.

The nitrogen fertiliser production process depends heavily on natural gas, and a spike in gas prices in March 20XX led to a 150% increase in nitrogen fertiliser prices compared with the previous year. As a result, Widonian crop producers and farmers either delayed or reduced their purchases of nitrogen fertilisers this year, which will lead to lower yields from the autumn 20XX harvest and ultimately to higher food prices and less stable levels of food affordability and supply in Widonia.

**Phasytol**

Widely used in agriculture to control weeds and increase crop yields, phasytol is a non-selective herbicide, which means that it can kill any plant it comes into contact with, whether weed or crop. It has proven to be very effective at stopping the growth of a wide range of weed species commonly found throughout Widonia. One of the main benefits, among several, of using phasytol in agriculture is that it allows farmers to control weeds without requiring any expensive and labour-intensive manual weeding or mechanical cultivation. However, phasytol is often used on genetically modified crops that have been engineered to resist it.

One advantage of using phasytol and nitrogen fertiliser in combination is that it improves the efficiency of both products. By removing competing vegetation, the phasytol can help reduce the amount of nitrogen in the soil that is lost to weeds, allowing more of the fertiliser to be taken up by the crop. At the same time, the nitrogen fertiliser can help to enhance the effectiveness of the phasytol, as plants that have access to more nitrogen are better able to metabolise the herbicide.

However, the use of phasytol is not without controversy: some studies have suggested that it may have negative impacts both on human health and on the environment. As a result of these concerns, the use of phasytol is subject to regulation in many countries. Some countries have banned or restricted the use of phasytol, while others continue to allow its use subject to certain restrictions and specific precautions. After assessments conducted by the European Council for Chemicals, the EU approved the use of phasytol, with some restrictions, but only until the end of 20XX. A new regulation will prohibit all use of phasytol from the date it comes into force, 1 January 20XX+1.

## Welcome mail



## Mail Message

MESSAGE

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## WELCOME TO FFD



From Natasha Suardi, Unit Manager, Communication Unit, FFD  
Date Thursday 01/09/20XX  
To Kim, Administrator, Communication Unit, FFD

Dear Kim,

Welcome to the Communication Unit of the Flora and Fauna Department (FFD). We have been eagerly awaiting your arrival, as our department is currently busy preparing our next citizen event, Fertivent, which will take place in MS Widonia in the last week of October. Organised in partnership with the Widonian Food and Agriculture Council (WFAC), whose mission is to contribute to the supply and affordability of food in Widonia by developing sustainable ways to grow crops, the goal of Fertivent is to secure the continued trust of Widonian citizens in the European Institutions.

As you will soon be involved in these preparations, I first want to provide you with some context:

- The EU will not extend its approval of phasytol at the end of 20XX. However, in the short term, using phasytol is still the best option for Widonian farmers, because it is relatively inexpensive and widely available. Moreover, it increases the efficiency of nitrogen fertiliser, which has now become more expensive as a result of higher gas prices.
- Even though MS Widonia is taking some measures to offset the impact of the new Phasytol regulation and the increased cost of nitrogen fertilisers, Widonian citizens still have a lot of questions as they face an uncertain future.

Attached to this email is an overview of some key aspects of Fertivent that have already been discussed but that might need to be explored further.

On a final note, our Department Manager, Julie Duré, is meeting the managers of the other Commission departments next week to finalise the list of the next citizen events to be organised.

Kind regards,

**Natasha Suardi**

**Attachment****Attachment****Status update: Fertivent preparations**

[...]

**1.4 Target groups**

The main goal is to maintain the trust of Widonian citizens in the European Institutions by encouraging an open discussion and inviting them to ask questions. Therefore, Widonian farmers and crop producers are the event's main target group. In addition, consumer representatives, retailers, environmentalists, scientists, etc., as well as ordinary citizens from this MS are expected to attend the event and to contribute to the discussion.

**1.5 Location**

Ms Duré has a meeting with the WFAC on 2 September 20XX to discuss the relevant factors and considerations for choosing the location for Fertivent.

The FFD can cooperate with the specialised Security Service of the Commission to make sure the Commission's security protocol will be respected at the chosen venue.

**1.6 Promotion**

Fertivent needs to be widely promoted to raise awareness among and attract potential participants. Registration for the event will close three weeks before it starts to ensure there is sufficient time to arrange all practical details.

**2 Agenda**

The agenda for Fertivent has not yet been finalised. At the moment, only the kick-off speech by Ms Duré (FFD) has been scheduled; we are still looking into the possibility of having a networking brunch, but the rest of the programme is still under discussion.

**2.1 Kick-off speech**

At the start of Fertivent, Ms Duré will make a kick-off speech that summarises the Commission's position. She will speak about the impact that the new EU Regulation on phasytol will have on agriculture in Europe and, more specifically, in Widonia.

**2.2 Questions from citizens**

As always during citizen events, Widonians will be free to ask any questions, whether or not they are related to a topic under the Commission representative's portfolio and the main theme of the event. Our manager will therefore need to be prepared to answer questions from citizens and to respond to stakeholders that might have opposing views.

[...]

**3.1 Reporting**

As is the case following any citizen event, information about what was discussed and what took place should be widely shared. An official record should be kept of all discussions, focusing on what citizens and local stakeholders had to say and what their concerns or aspirations were.

[...]



## Guidelines for organising an external event

24/01/20XX

[...]

### 2. Location

- Large meeting rooms in government buildings in the MS are usually booked well in advance for national and international events. (...)

### 3. Security

- The Commission's security protocol lays down basic security rules that must be followed for all local external events (co-)organised by the Commission.

[...]

### 5. Agenda

Compiling a fixed programme of activities will help ensure that everyone (the Commission, sponsors, attendees, etc.) knows what is happening and when. This can help the event run smoothly.

#### 5.1. Possible activities

- **Kick-off speech:** By choosing to focus on a narrow selection of areas, the speaker can discuss a number of specific topics in more depth, which will enable them to provide attendees with more thorough analysis and thereby create better understanding.
- **A discussion panel:** A formal setting in which a group of experts (typically between three and five experienced officials from the Commission) are invited to share their views and expertise on a particular topic in front of an audience composed of members of the public.
- **An informal citizens' dialogue:** Citizens are split into groups of between 10 and 20, with each group discussing a specific topic. Afterwards, (a representative of) each group can share their key takeaways in a plenary session.

[...]



**7. Communication**

- It is standard practice to officially inform the public about all events organised by the Commission.
- To ensure broader exposure, a link to the Events page on the Commission's website can be shared via, for example, a press release or social media.
- Keep in mind that crafting a well-written and effective press release can be time consuming.

**8. Speakers**

- It can take a few weeks to find, contact, and come to an agreement with someone to make a speech at the beginning of an event.
- The names of the speakers should not be announced publicly until it is 100% certain that they will be present.
- It is highly recommended to conduct a background check on all external persons invited as speakers.
- The speeches given by speakers usually precede all other activities during a citizen event.

**9. Reporting**

- The college of commissioners receive a weekly newsletter that provides them with an overview of the topics discussed and the cities in which events took place.
- The information shared with other departments should be sufficiently detailed, include opposing views from the speakers and provide possible links with the political context.
- In order to make the most effective use of attendee feedback (e.g. Were the participants' expectations met? Were their questions answered? How do they feel about the EU? etc.), a structured method of gathering feedback must be in place.

[...]

## Email 1



## Mail Message

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## SOME SUGGESTIONS ON FERTIVENT



From Maurice Kalu, Unit Manager, International Affairs Unit, FFD

Date Monday 22/08/20XX

To Natasha Suardi, Unit Manager, Communication Unit, FFD

Dear Natasha,

I just heard about the recent decision to hold Fertivent one month later than originally planned (at the end of October instead of at the end of September). Therefore, I hope that I am still in time to share our Unit's suggestions.

To start with, we believe that our department manager should not limit the scope of her kick-off speech to the impact that the new Regulation on phasytol will have on agriculture, which falls under our Department's portfolio. In fact, narrowing the list of topics to be covered may leave our manager less well prepared to address citizen questions in sufficient detail if such questions fall outside the scope of the topics introduced in the kick-off speech. Widonian citizens will probably have questions related to many other relevant topics that are dealt with by various Commission departments.

On a related note, one of the main driving forces behind the new Regulation on phasytol was the negative impacts that this product can have on the environment: loss of biodiversity, risk of developing herbicide-resistant weed species, damage to aquatic organisms and also to honey bees and other pollinators. We therefore believe that it would be best to start Fertivent by discussing this background information.

We also need to take into account the fact that our manager is not from Widonia, nor does she have any affiliation with that MS. Therefore, not many Widonian citizens will be familiar with her work, and her presence will probably not have a big impact from a promotional point of view. Which brings me to my next point: we believe that the WFAC should become involved in promoting Fertivent, as it has more direct contact with Widonian farmers and crop producers.

Finally, given the symbolic significance of government buildings, we feel that holding Fertivent in one of the Widonian government's buildings will confer official recognition on the event and convey the importance with which it should be regarded to Widonians.

Kind regards,

**Maurice Kalu**

## Email 2



WFAC

## Mail Message

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## FERTIVENT



From Fred Kreul, President, WFAC

Date Tuesday 23/08/20XX

To Julie Duré, Manager, FFD

Dear Julie,

Hope all is well. I am reaching out to you again about the organisation of Fertivent.

Before going into the details, I wanted to let you know that WFAC, in cooperation with the Widonian government, are already taking tailored measures regarding food supply and prices in an effort to compensate for the impact of the new Phasytol regulation. Following a recently launched national information campaign, Widonian citizens are already very much aware of those measures.

Regarding Fertivent, we believe that it would be a good idea to remind citizens during your kick-off speech of the main reasons for the new regulation: the impact of phasytol on the environment. This can help citizens to put the EU's decisions into perspective, which can only increase your credibility as the Commission's representative. We believe that the topic of health should also definitely be included in the kick-off speech. Given that 25% of the country's workforce is employed in agriculture, it is important that farmers and crop producers in Widonia carefully evaluate potential risks to the health of agricultural workers and consumers before widely adopting any alternative herbicides. Additionally, many concerned citizens have questions about the impact of this new regulation on employment, and they are really hoping to hear some good news to reassure them that the future of their businesses and jobs is secure. In conclusion, we are afraid that covering only a limited number of topics in the kick-off speech will mean that you have to leave out important information about related topics that citizens may find relevant or interesting, which could create the impression among citizens that the EU only wants to promote its own agenda.

On a related note, we expect that citizens who are unable to attend Fertivent would like to see a summary of what was discussed: the key points made, how speakers responded to the citizens' questions, etc. We should also be prepared for journalists and stakeholders sharing their opinions in the press, not only on what they liked but also on what they found frustrating about Fertivent.

Finally, we might want to think about seating arrangements. Dividing attendees into homogenous groups (by profession and/or background) will allow them to interact with others in similar industries or with similar interests, leading to more specialised discussions. Additionally, it may be more difficult for the moderator or officials to manage the dynamics within diverse groups.

Kind regards,

**Fred Kreul**

## Email 3



WFAC

## Mail Message

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## FERTIVENT



From Ayaz Yilmaz, Marketing Manager, WFAC

Date Thursday 25/08/20XX

To Natasha Suardi, Unit Manager, Communication Unit, FFD

CC Emanuel Kaiser, Administrator, Logistics Unit, FFD

Dear Natasha,

Hope all is well. You asked for our help to promote Fertivent. Could you elaborate on what is expected of the WFAC? Please note that we first need to consider any such requests carefully because our resources are already stretched. We are also currently organising other activities and events; therefore, we cannot implement all possible promotional actions for Fertivent. For example, creating and erecting billboards is quite expensive at such short notice. Drafting and sending out personal invitations, on the other hand, would require too much time and administration: updating contact information, covering data protection requirements, sending a lot of emails or posting a lot of letters, etc.

We expect that a large number of Widonian citizens will want to attend Fertivent: if the promotional campaign is effective, we estimate that the number could reach 300. However, not all interested parties may be able to attend Fertivent in person or be willing to travel long distances to participate. Therefore, it could help if Fertivent was held in Hiwi, the capital of Widonia, as the city's central location will make the event more convenient to reach for people travelling from the far north or far south of Widonia (please see map of Widonia, attached). Furthermore, public transport links between the main train station in Hiwi and the surrounding region are well developed, which again will make it easier for participants to travel to the chosen venue.

Regarding the venue, we have found that people often regard government buildings as impersonal and institutional in nature, which could detract from your chances of connecting with citizens. On the other hand, a business hotel could be a friendlier sort of venue where attendees feel more comfortable – it might even encourage more citizens to come to Fertivent.

Finally, we believe that the invited speaker should be someone with a wide network of connections in Widonia, as they will have a much clearer understanding of what the locals are interested in and will also be more familiar with the local challenges. This will also allow them to provide more detailed information – incorporating local, Widonian points of view – when answering questions.

Thank you for taking our thoughts into consideration.

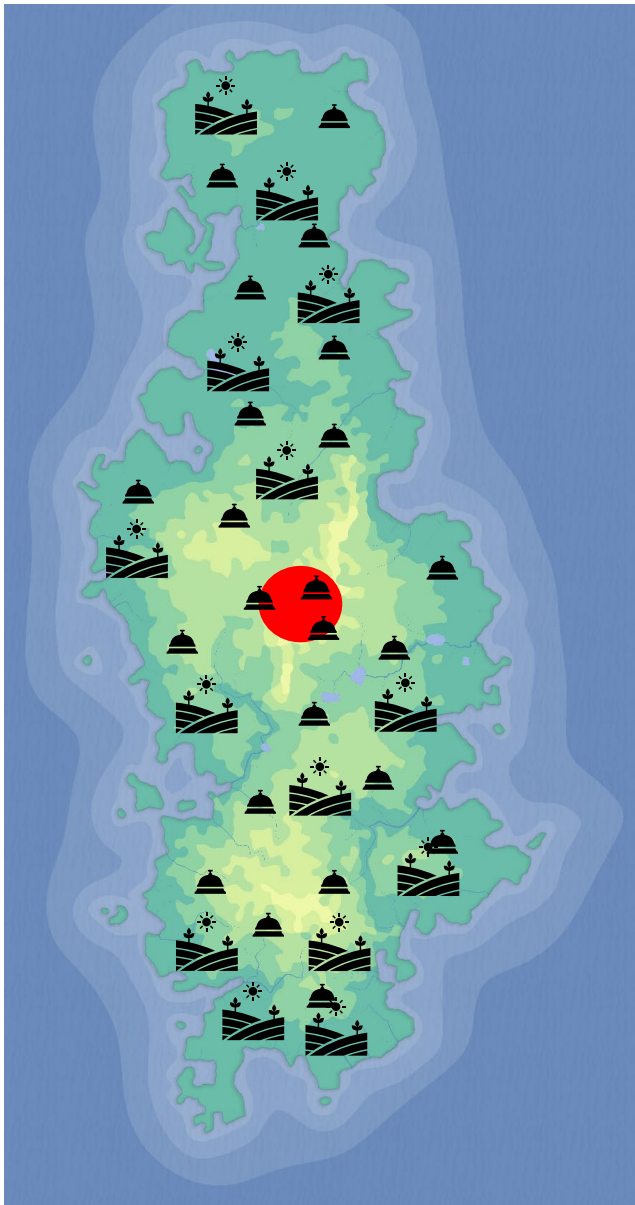
Kind regards,

**Ayaz Yilmaz**

Map

Map

# Map of Widonia



|      |
|------|
| >75% |
| >50% |
| >25% |
| >10% |
| <10% |

Percentage of the total population that are farmers or crop producers



Hiwi



Business hotel: well-maintained facilities, such as meeting rooms, catering, audiovisual equipment, reception desk for identity checks, and other amenities



Countryside: Widonia's main cities are separated by large distances, with vast swathes of countryside in between

## Email 4



## Mail Message

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## FERTIVENT



From Bence Nowak, Advisor, FFD  
Date Wednesday 24/08/20XX  
To Julie Duré, Manager, FFD  
CC Natasha Suardi, Unit Manager, Communication Unit, FFD

Dear Julie,

As you requested, I have reviewed the email from the President of the WFAC (23 August 20XX). Please see my thoughts below.

Firstly, I believe that if the kick-off speech focuses on a fixed set of preselected topics, it will help steer discussions/questions during the entire event in the direction of these topics. In other words, the kick-off speech will frame the discussion. I agree with the WFAC that your speech would be the ideal opportunity to create awareness about the health risks linked to the use of phasytol. While sharing the Commission's position, you could encourage Widonians to continue educating and informing themselves about the use of safe alternatives to phasytol. I would, however, avoid any mention of employment. The impact of the EU's new Phasytol regulation on employment is a very sensitive subject in Widonia, and it would be better not to share any premature conclusions, since the Commission is still brainstorming on how to provide help in this area. For the same reason, I believe that we should also avoid broaching the topic of the impact that the new regulation will have on food supply and affordability. In fact, the Commission does not yet have any concrete solutions in place to help secure the supply and affordability of food in the MSs that will be most heavily impacted by the withdrawal of phasytol and the increased costs of nitrogen fertiliser. It would be nice, however, if the kick-off speech ended with a message of hope, to set the tone for the rest of the event.

Secondly, the WFAC mentioned something about reporting to citizens after the event. I believe that we could publish a report via the Commission's and the WFAC's websites rather quickly. This option also has the advantage of allowing the information to still be edited or added to later on. Alternatively, we could also email a feedback survey to all citizens who registered for the event. Such a survey, collecting both qualitative and quantitative feedback, could be administered easily and quickly.

Finally, I was thinking about building further on the WFAC's idea of dividing citizens into groups and holding interactive activities during Fertivent. For example, experienced officials from the Commission could engage in and guide the group discussions and facilitate the participation of citizens in an informal dialogue, encouraging them to listen to one another and to speak about their own personal experiences and insights. These officials could also ensure that citizens have enough time to speak, and they are also experienced in eliciting the opinions of people who may be less willing to take the floor. What do you think?

Kind regards,

**Bence Nowak**



## Mail Message

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### FERTIVENT



From Bence Nowak, Advisor, FFD  
Date Friday 26/08/20XX  
To Julie Duré, Manager, FFD  
CC Natasha Suardi, Unit Manager, Communication Unit, FFD

Dear Julie,

Below are my thoughts on the new email from the WFAC (25/08/20XX). To allay some of the WFAC's worries, I believe that hosting Fertivent online (rather than in person) could offer a solution to all Widonians who are interested in the event. It could even expand the event's reach beyond just Widonia: people in other EU MS might be just as interested in the topics being discussed as Widonians are. The kick-off speech, in particular, might attract international interest, since it will provide an overview of the Commission's position on the new Phasytol regulation.

However, if we do decide to hold the event in person, I would not opt for a business hotel as the venue, as only a few hotels from the bigger international chains have meeting rooms large enough to host a large number of participants. It would also be the first time that such an event was held outside governmental buildings in Widonia. I am also not convinced by the WFAC's suggestion to hold Fertivent in Hiwi, the most highly urbanised region of Widonia. It might be better to choose a venue in a rural area in the north or south of the country, where the majority of our target audience lives. Finally, I am hesitant about the idea of inviting well-known citizens as speakers, as they might have their own agendas or be affiliated with particular organisations or causes that conflict with the Commission's message.

On another note, I heard that you will soon have a meeting to discuss and decide on the next citizen events to be organised. Last week, the manager of the Finance & Economy Department shared a list of topics on which he hopes to organise an event in 20XX+1. Maybe you could do the same? I realise that this will require you to take a longer time frame into consideration, but limiting the scope of the upcoming meeting only to the immediate future creates the risk of decisions being made in isolation, and we could easily lose sight of our longer-term goals or issues. Moreover, it would make attending the meeting less worthwhile for some departments. The Space Department, for example, organises only around three citizen events per calendar year (albeit big international conferences that require a lot of preparation). This means that they are unlikely to still have plans to hold any other citizen events in the remainder of this year.

Speaking about future events, I believe that our department should hold a citizen event on threatened ornamental plant species in the EU. Such an event could help build public support for conservation efforts and increase the likelihood of government funding for local initiatives.

Thank you for taking my input into consideration and sharing it with your relevant colleagues.

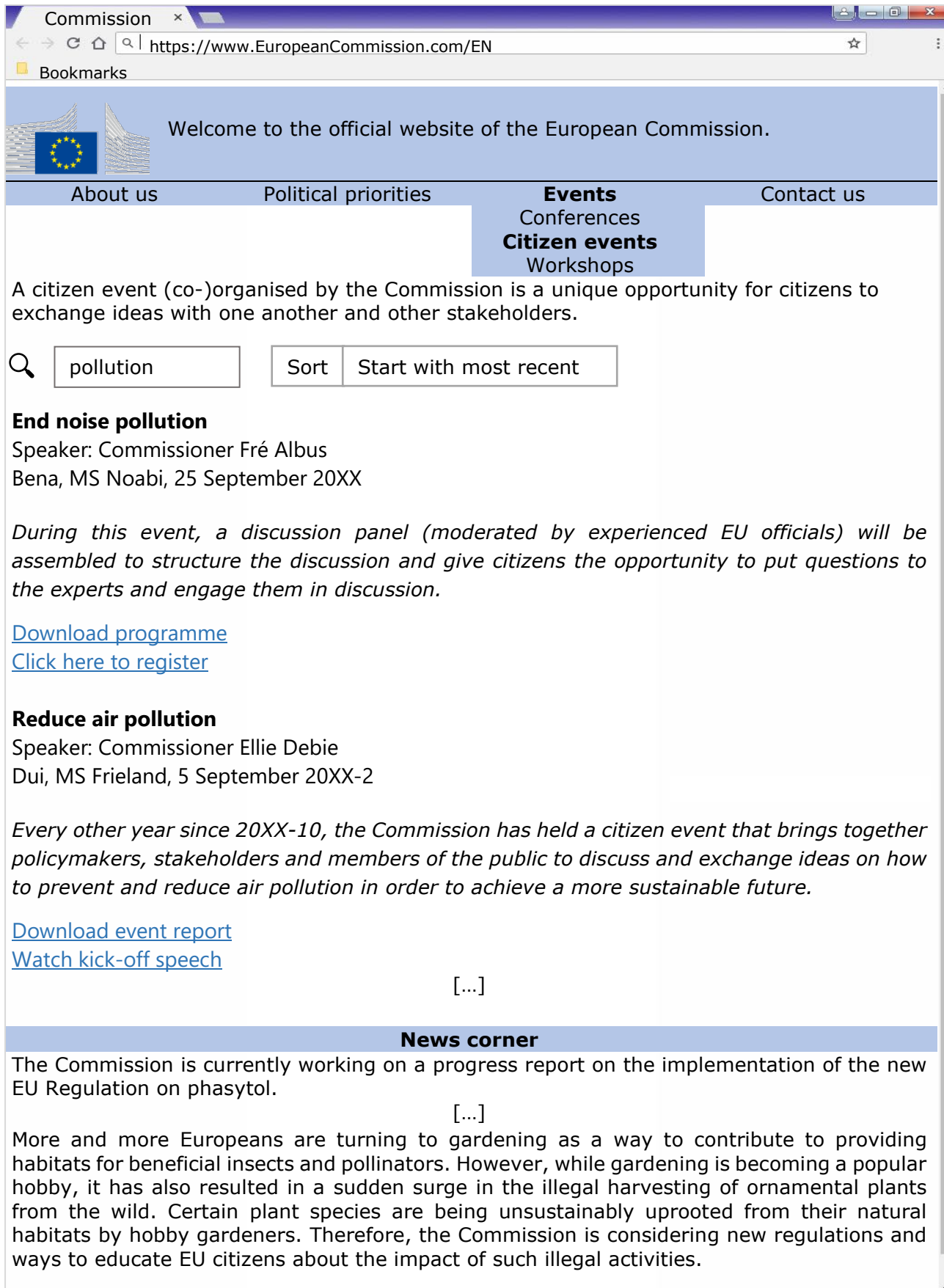
Kind regards,

**Bence Nowak**



## Web page 1

## Web page



Commission x  
https://www.EuropeanCommission.com/EN

Bookmarks

Welcome to the official website of the European Commission.

About us Political priorities **Events** Contact us  
Conferences  
**Citizen events**  
Workshops

A citizen event (co-)organised by the Commission is a unique opportunity for citizens to exchange ideas with one another and other stakeholders.

pollution Sort Start with most recent

**End noise pollution**  
Speaker: Commissioner Fré Albus  
Bena, MS Noabi, 25 September 20XX

*During this event, a discussion panel (moderated by experienced EU officials) will be assembled to structure the discussion and give citizens the opportunity to put questions to the experts and engage them in discussion.*

[Download programme](#)  
[Click here to register](#)

**Reduce air pollution**  
Speaker: Commissioner Ellie Debie  
Dui, MS Frieland, 5 September 20XX-2

*Every other year since 20XX-10, the Commission has held a citizen event that brings together policymakers, stakeholders and members of the public to discuss and exchange ideas on how to prevent and reduce air pollution in order to achieve a more sustainable future.*

[Download event report](#)  
[Watch kick-off speech](#)

[...]

**News corner**

The Commission is currently working on a progress report on the implementation of the new EU Regulation on phasytol.

[...]

More and more Europeans are turning to gardening as a way to contribute to providing habitats for beneficial insects and pollinators. However, while gardening is becoming a popular hobby, it has also resulted in a sudden surge in the illegal harvesting of ornamental plants from the wild. Certain plant species are being unsustainably uprooted from their natural habitats by hobby gardeners. Therefore, the Commission is considering new regulations and ways to educate EU citizens about the impact of such illegal activities.



## Minutes 1



Commission

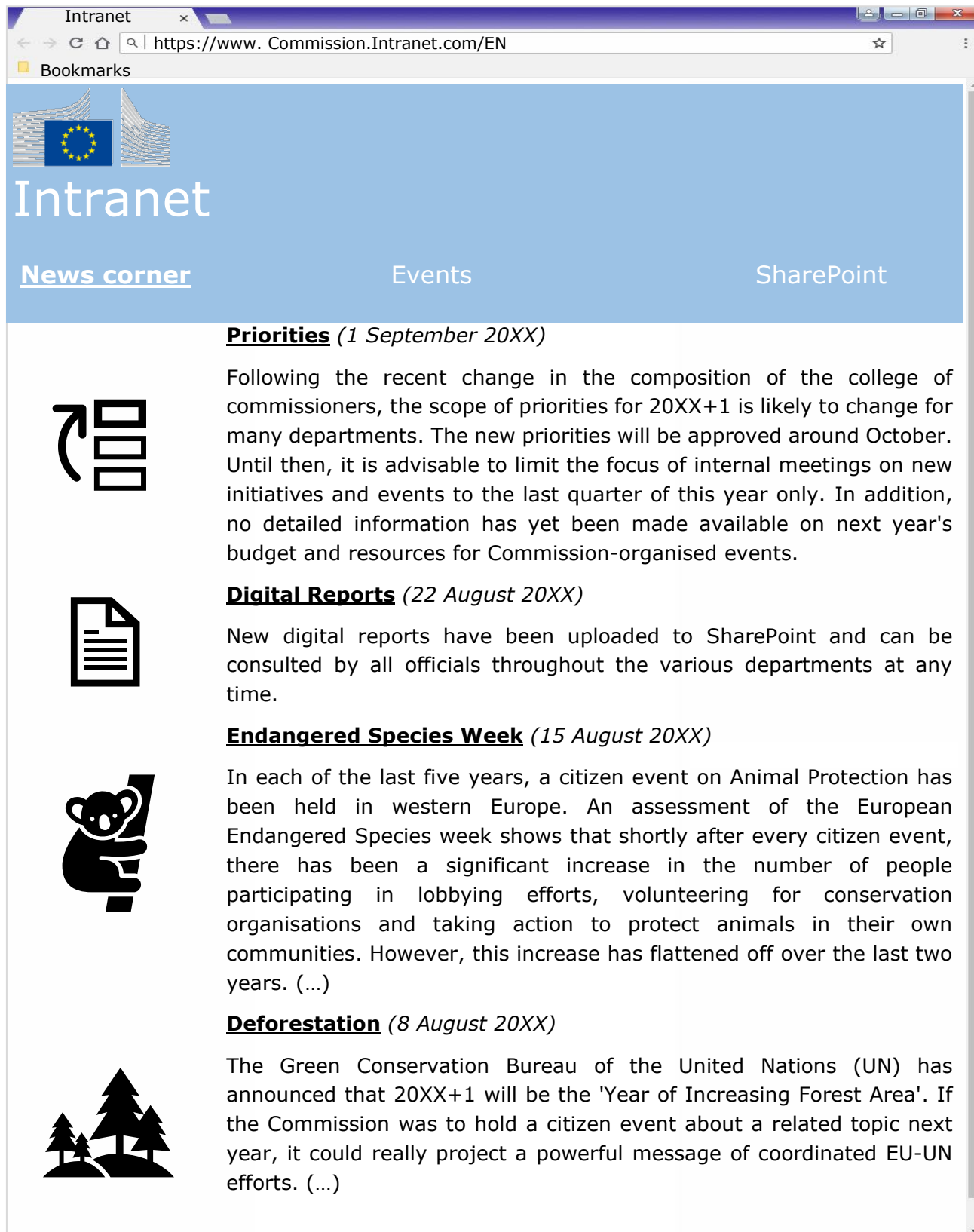
## Meeting minutes

## EXTERNAL EVENTS

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| <b>Date and time:</b> | 22/08/20XX – 09.00–09.30  |
| <b>Attendees:</b>     | Bence Nowak, Advisor, FFD; Abid Korošec, Administrator, Technologies Department; Alfie Hansen, Administrator, Finance & Economy Department, Isabella Rossi, Administrator, Space Department |
| <b>Topics:</b>        | Conference on Biodiversity, Tech Conference, Next citizen events  |

## AGENDA TOPICS


| CONFERENCE ON BIODIVERSITY |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| ◆                          | A week after the Conference on Biodiversity took place in Hiwi on 1 August 20XX, an online focus group was assembled from among a sample of attendees to collect feedback about the event. It was obvious that some participants in the focus group dominated the discussion, while others were hesitant to speak up.   |
| TECH CONFERENCE            |   |
| ◆                          | During the Tech Conference, attendees joined workshops in homogenous groups (i.e. per profession) and reported that they were able to build relationships withing the groups that could be beneficial to their professional lives in the future.  |
| ◆                          | After the Tech Conference, a debriefing meeting was held at the Commission to facilitate the interactive sharing of information among representatives from different departments.   |
| NEXT CITIZEN EVENTS        |   |
| ◆                          | In order to provide a clear and specific focus for the meeting on 8 September, the suggestion was made to limit the scope of such meetings to a single quarter of the year. Focusing on the upcoming three months (in this case, October-December) could create a sense of urgency and would allow matters to be discussed in greater depth; it may also encourage managers to reach a consensus on the spot. |
| ◆                          | In order to increase the impact of the annually recurring citizen event on Animal Protection, it could be interesting to hold it somewhere in eastern Europe in December. The last time an eastern European country hosted this event was in 20XX-6.  |
| ◆                          | Since only a select portion of the population is interested in threatened ornamental plant species, there is a risk that a citizen event on this topic may not attract a significant number of attendees, which in turn will limit its actual impact.   |



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Bookmarks


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[News corner](#) Events SharePoint


**Priorities** *(1 September 20XX)*

 Following the recent change in the composition of the college of commissioners, the scope of priorities for 20XX+1 is likely to change for many departments. The new priorities will be approved around October. Until then, it is advisable to limit the focus of internal meetings on new initiatives and events to the last quarter of this year only. In addition, no detailed information has yet been made available on next year's budget and resources for Commission-organised events.


**Digital Reports** *(22 August 20XX)*

 New digital reports have been uploaded to SharePoint and can be consulted by all officials throughout the various departments at any time.

**Endangered Species Week** *(15 August 20XX)*

 In each of the last five years, a citizen event on Animal Protection has been held in western Europe. An assessment of the European Endangered Species week shows that shortly after every citizen event, there has been a significant increase in the number of people participating in lobbying efforts, volunteering for conservation organisations and taking action to protect animals in their own communities. However, this increase has flattened off over the last two years. (...)

**Deforestation** *(8 August 20XX)*

 The Green Conservation Bureau of the United Nations (UN) has announced that 20XX+1 will be the 'Year of Increasing Forest Area'. If the Commission was to hold a citizen event about a related topic next year, it could really project a powerful message of coordinated EU-UN efforts. (...)

## Minutes 2



FFD

## Meeting minutes

## UPCOMING EVENTS

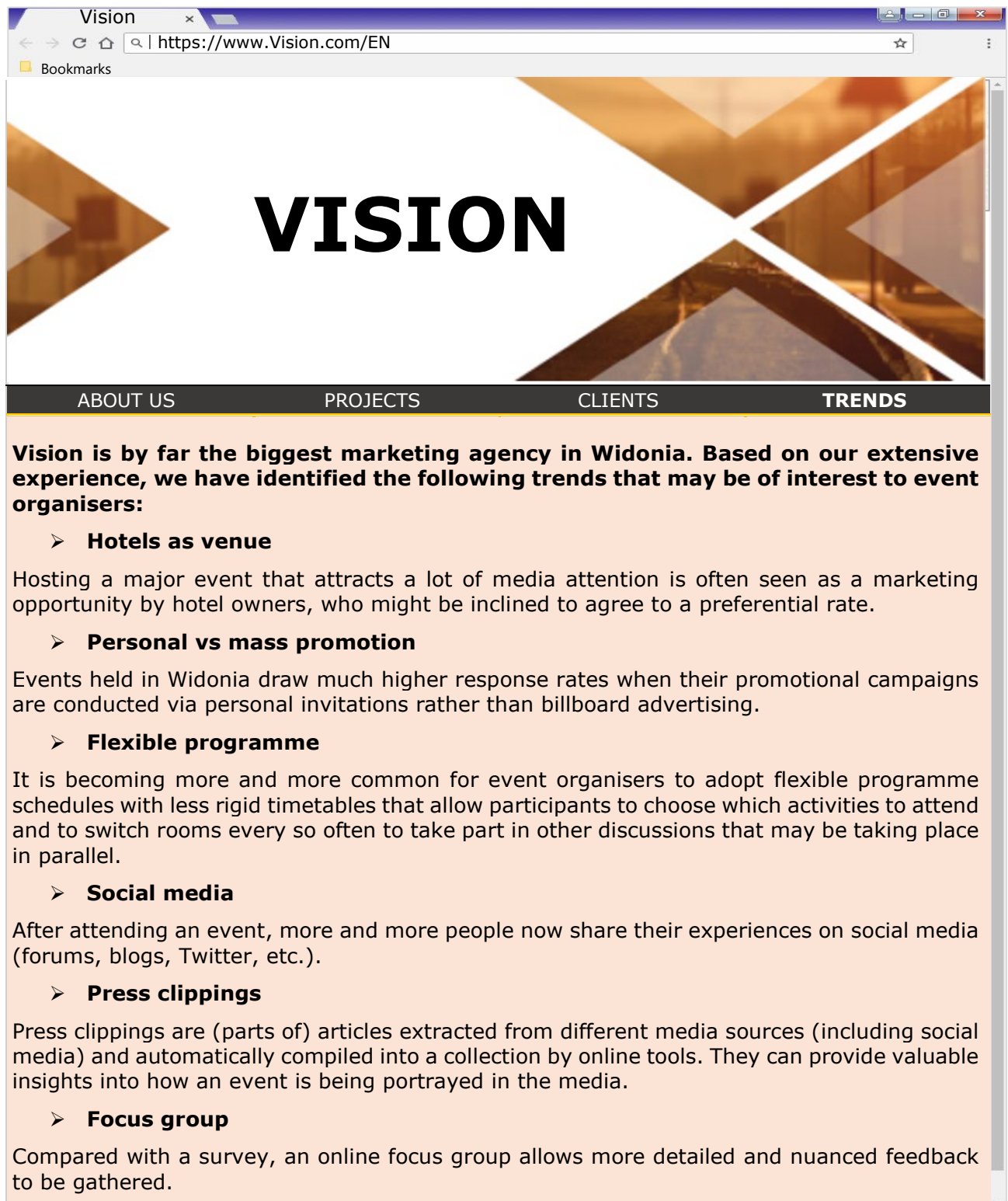
|                       |                                |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Date and time:</b> | 15/08/20XX – 10.00–11.00       |
| <b>Attendees:</b>     | Administrators, FFD            |
| <b>Topics:</b>        | Fertivent, Next citizen events |

## AGENDA TOPICS

| FERTIVENT           |  |
|---------------------|--|
| ◆                   | While the withdrawal of phasytol and the increase in nitrogen fertiliser prices are problems in various EU MS, Fertivent will focus on local challenges and solutions. Therefore, this event might be less relevant to people from other MS.   |
| ◆                   | A venue has not yet been chosen. When the idea of Fertivent was first discussed at the beginning of the summer, the Widonian Minister for Industry and Agriculture offered to help by making a meeting room in one of their government buildings available free of charge.   |
| ◆                   | Various Commission departments (Economy, Health, etc.) have expressed an interest in being able to learn more about what was discussed at Fertivent.   |
| ◆                   | The progress report on the implementation of the new Regulation on phasytol will be published on the Commission's website in December. The link to the progress report will be shared widely with all relevant stakeholders in Europe.<br>⇒ Adding a section on Fertivent to the progress report can help feed the policymaking process.   |
| NEXT CITIZEN EVENTS |  |
| ◆                   | The EU is clearly ahead of the UN in terms of its commitment to halting deforestation. In fact, the draft EU Action Plan on Forest Protection was an important source of inspiration for the UN's Green Conservation Bureau to choose 'Increasing Forest Area' as its topic of the year for 20XX+1. Therefore, the Commission has no reason to wait until next year to begin organising an event to publicise the latest European efforts to halt deforestation. |
| ◆                   | The Commission has not yet decided on a specific theme for the European Endangered Species week. Focusing on a number of threatened ornamental plant species (Chidors, for example) and holding a citizen event on such species in the same week will bring more attention to this important topic and hopefully attract a wider audience.   |
| ◆                   | The idea to organise another citizen event on Air Pollution was also put on the table. There is always a great turn-out at these events, as many European citizens are interested in the prospect of ensuring cleaner air for their children in the future.  |

## Web page 3

## Web Page



Vision

https://www.Vision.com/EN

# VISION

ABOUT US PROJECTS CLIENTS TRENDS

**Vision is by far the biggest marketing agency in Widonia. Based on our extensive experience, we have identified the following trends that may be of interest to event organisers:**

- **Hotels as venue**

Hosting a major event that attracts a lot of media attention is often seen as a marketing opportunity by hotel owners, who might be inclined to agree to a preferential rate.
- **Personal vs mass promotion**

Events held in Widonia draw much higher response rates when their promotional campaigns are conducted via personal invitations rather than billboard advertising.
- **Flexible programme**

It is becoming more and more common for event organisers to adopt flexible programme schedules with less rigid timetables that allow participants to choose which activities to attend and to switch rooms every so often to take part in other discussions that may be taking place in parallel.
- **Social media**

After attending an event, more and more people now share their experiences on social media (forums, blogs, Twitter, etc.).
- **Press clippings**

Press clippings are (parts of) articles extracted from different media sources (including social media) and automatically compiled into a collection by online tools. They can provide valuable insights into how an event is being portrayed in the media.
- **Focus group**

Compared with a survey, an online focus group allows more detailed and nuanced feedback to be gathered.

**Report 1**

**Communication  
Networks Department**

**Report extract****28/02/20XX****Informational Report on external events held by the Commission between  
20XX-3 and 20XX**

[...]

**3.4 Communication channels**

- Press releases are the Commission's most long-standing public communication channel and are widely used for promoting events.
- However, the Commission has invested heavily in its social media presence over the last few years. Information relating to events is being shared more and more via the Commission's social media channels.
- Using the Commission's website as a communication channel has some limitations: only regular visitors to the Commission's website will come across information about citizen events on the Events page. Event reports are also often published only on the Commission's website (and the websites of other sponsors). Again, the downside is that only visitors to these websites will see the report.

[...]

**5 Conferences and workshops**

- In the past three years, there has been a significant increase in the number of online conferences and workshops hosted by the Commission. These events have been as successful, in terms of attendee numbers, as in-person events.

[...]

**6 Citizen events****6.1 Speakers**

- The person invited as speaker has a major influence on the number of citizens attracted to an event.
- A significant advantage of inviting someone with a high profile from the Commission as speaker is that they will have better insight into the overall situation throughout Europe.
- When more than two speakers are invited to speak at the same event, there is often insufficient time for citizens' questions.

[...]

## Web page 4

## Web page



EuroDat

https://www.EuroDat.com/EN

Bookmarks

**Euro Dat**

Home News Projects **Research Updates**

Last updated on: 22/08/20XX

**Below are the most recent research updates from the Statistics and Data Department.**

**Study on citizen events in the last five years**

Key findings:

- Commissioners, high-level EU officials, administrators, local politicians, researchers, etc. have all been invited to speak at various citizen events. The only factor that seems to have an influence on the number of citizen attendees attracted to an event is how well-known the invited speaker is.
- Events are perceived as being high quality whenever there is a high correlation between the citizens' prior expectations and the actual content of the event.
- Billboards erected at strategic public locations have proven an effective way to reach a wide audience when promoting citizen events.
- Only a small minority of attendees post about these events on social media, and mostly these are people with very strong positive or negative opinions.
- Numerical data, which can be gathered easily from event participants via a feedback survey, can help organisers draw conclusions faster than data gathered by other feedback collection tools.
- An online focus group involves only a small number of participants who may not be representative of the entire group of citizens who attended the event.

[Download the full study](#)

**Report on the impact of Commission events on air-pollution**

There has been no significant reduction in non-industrial pollution within the EU over the last five years. Efforts to organise another citizen event on the topic would be unlikely to bring about the desired outcome if other actions, such as revising the current regulations, were not taken beforehand.

[Download the full report](#)

**Study on threatened plant species**

Illegal trade in threatened ornamental plant species has been significantly cut as a result of the stricter legislation adopted by the EU. This explains why threatened ornamental plant species have not been regarded as a hot topic within the EU over the last five years.

[Download the full study](#)

## Forum



FFD

## FFD Internal Discussion Forum

| > KICK-OFF SPEECH AT FERTIVENT  |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| Tim   | 16/08/20XX  |   |
|    | Hello. Our manager will soon begin preparing the kick-off speech for Fertivent. Hopefully, Widonian citizens will be pleased with the information they receive, even if some of the answers to their questions do not meet their expectations.  |   |
|   |   | <a href="#">QUOTE</a> <a href="#">REPLY</a> |
| Andreas   | 16/08/20XX  |   |
|    | Hi Tim, I'm not convinced they will be happy. Take the supply and affordability of food, for example. If the goal is to build trust, starting the discussion by saying 'we know that this new Regulation heavily impacts the supply and affordability of food, but we don't know how we can help you' is hardly the best idea. The topic of health is similarly problematic: the subject matter might lead to a lot of technical questions about not only the type of alternative herbicides to use but also the safest/most appropriate methods of using such alternatives. If our manager doesn't have the appropriate answers to such technical questions to hand, it could end up destroying rather than building trust in EU Institutions. |   |
|   |   | <a href="#">QUOTE</a> <a href="#">REPLY</a> |
| Freya   | 16/08/20XX  |   |
|  | I understand your worry, Andreas, however, unanswered questions can always be followed up on by visiting the Events page of the Commission's website.   |   |
|   |   | <a href="#">QUOTE</a> <a href="#">REPLY</a> |
| Andreas   | 16/08/20XX  |   |
|  | Hi Freya, that is correct, but I nevertheless believe that attendees will still be disappointed if their questions cannot be answered on the spot.  |   |
|   |   | <a href="#">QUOTE</a> <a href="#">REPLY</a> |
| > FERTIVENT AGENDA  |   |   |
| Freya   | 18/08/20XX  |   |
|  | Hi colleagues. I hear that the idea of having a flexible programme for Fertivent is on the table. However, we shouldn't forget that a flexible programme may require more planning as regards logistics, such as managing room assignments, tracking attendance, and managing seating and audio-visual equipment.   |   |
|   |   | <a href="#">QUOTE</a> <a href="#">REPLY</a> |
| Andreas   | 18/08/20XX  |   |
|  | Hi Freya, you make good points, but for events of at least one full day, it should be perfectly feasible to adopt a flexible programme, as lunch breaks can be used as buffer time and for doing the necessary follow up. I would not, however, include an informal dialogue in the programme, as these are less structured and so require more effort to manage than a discussion panel.   |   |
|   |   | <a href="#">QUOTE</a> <a href="#">REPLY</a> |

|   |   |              |              |
|---|---|--------------|--------------|
| Tim   | 18/08/20XX  |              |              |
|    | Indeed, Andreas. On top of that, compared with other activities, the quality and results of an informal dialogue depend much more on the citizens involved.   |              |              |
|   |   | <b>QUOTE</b> | <b>REPLY</b> |
| <b>&gt; REPORTING ABOUT FERTIVENT</b>   |   |              |              |
| Henry   | 17/08/20XX  |              |              |
|    | Hello, does anyone have any idea to what extent the digital reports uploaded to SharePoint are read in depth, and whether they generate further ideas or actions in other departments?  |              |              |
|   |   | <b>QUOTE</b> | <b>REPLY</b> |
| Bea   | 17/08/20XX  |              |              |
|    | Hi Henri, I don't think there are any logs about that. Speaking of reporting, it will be interesting to get citizen feedback after Fertivent, however, it would also be good to somehow keep track of what sort of information citizens are sharing on social and other media.  |              |              |
|   |   | <b>QUOTE</b> | <b>REPLY</b> |
| <b>&gt; NEXT CITIZEN EVENTS</b>   |   |              |              |
| Bea   | 19/08/20XX  |              |              |
|    | Hi colleagues! Endangered Species week is fast approaching. To use the momentum, the Commission could hold a citizen event on Animal Protection during that week, as they have in the past. What do you think?  |              |              |
|   |   | <b>QUOTE</b> | <b>REPLY</b> |
| Henry   | 19/08/20XX  |              |              |
|  | Hi Bea; the impact of last year's similar event was watered down a bit by the many local initiatives organised by different stakeholders. It might be better to prioritise a citizen event on air pollution. Stakeholders have been asking about when the event will take place again. They are looking forward to it, as previous editions have provided them with very useful networking opportunities. |              |              |
|   |   | <b>QUOTE</b> | <b>REPLY</b> |
| Freya   | 19/08/20XX  |              |              |
|  | Hi Henry. Many people criticised the last event held on air pollution for being at odds with the goal people were trying to achieve. After all, people had to travel far, from all EU MS, to attend the event, thereby contributing to CO <sub>2</sub> pollution. Why not hold a citizen event about something else, like deforestation?  |              |              |
|   |   | <b>QUOTE</b> | <b>REPLY</b> |
| Tim   | 20/08/20XX  |              |              |
|  | Good idea Freya, but although the draft EU action plan on deforestation has already been presented, inter-institutional discussions on some of the proposed actions are still ongoing. It will take a few months to adopt the action plan formally. Therefore, it might be better to hold a citizen event on deforestation only after the action plan has been finalised.                                 |              |              |
|   |   | <b>QUOTE</b> | <b>REPLY</b> |
| Freya   | 20/08/20XX  |              |              |
|  | I see, but on the other hand, ideas discussed during a citizen event can be channelled into policy making, can they not?  |              |              |
|   |   | <b>QUOTE</b> | <b>REPLY</b> |



**Report 2****Report extract**  
25/08/20XX**Overview of new initiatives****Phasytol**

- The FFD has already assessed the economic impact of the withdrawal of phasytol in all MS. Even though no specific actions have yet been formulated, it was recently decided to make EU funding available to help crop producers and farmers in the most impacted MS, including Widonia.

**Endangered animals**

- Many new initiatives are in the pipeline. For example, the FFD has just started negotiations to partner with European trade organisations and companies from various industrial sectors to pool knowledge and resources to accelerate the development, validation and acceptance of alternative approaches to animal testing.
- As animal testing is an emotive topic that can help draw greater attention to the wider issue of animal protection, it will be helpful to give this initiative high visibility and to inform citizens and other stakeholders of all the relevant details. Therefore, it might be better to hold off from holding a citizen event on Animal Protection until next year, when more concrete information about this new initiative can be shared.

**Deforestation**

- Deforestation has become a major problem throughout Europe in recent years. Raising awareness of the issue and promoting deforestation-free European supply chains will be an important part of the soon-to-be-adopted EU Action Plan on Forest Protection.
- If a citizen event on deforestation were held this year, the outcome could be used to finalise the action plan and align it with EU citizens' most recent expectations.

## Email 6

**Consumer Union  
of Widonia****Mail Message**

MESSAGE

New

Reply

Reply All

Forward

Delete

Move

## FERTIVENT



From Yves Debruyne, President, Consumer Union of Widonia

Date Monday 22/08/20XX

To Julie Duré, Manager, FFD

Dear Ms Duré,

We are very pleased to hear that the Commission is holding Fertivent, as we believe it will provide the ideal occasion for you to build bridges and re-connect with Widonian citizens. On that note, we hope that you will elaborate in more detail on how the withdrawal of phasytol will impact health. All Widonians, whether employed in agriculture or not, deserve to be given some reassurance that people's health was at the forefront of the EU's thinking when it decided to withdraw phasytol and consider alternatives. On the other hand, the average Widonian citizen will not immediately see the environmental impact of the new Regulation in their daily lives, so all in all, it might be better to focus only on the topics that most of the attendees are primarily concerned with.

We do hope that this will be an in-person event, rather than an online one. In-person events lend themselves much more to greater levels of interactivity and the building of meaningful connections, as they provide more opportunities for participants to have informal discussions during breaks. We recommend that Fertivent be held in central Widonia, the most highly populated region in the country. Holding Fertivent in this region would bring the event physically closer to many citizens and potentially increase overall attendance. On top of that, the capital Hiwi has the most venue options, which will make it less difficult to find a suitable venue that meets all criteria and offers a good price/quality balance.

Finally, we would also like to share our interest in a future citizen event on deforestation. In the EU, deforestation is heavily driven by production and consumption choices. In order to encourage consumers to choose products from deforestation-free supply chains and thereby bring about substantial changes in the industry, we believe that a citizen event needs to be held as soon as possible.

Kind regards,

**Yves Debruyne**

## Online discussion platform



UWF

## Online discussion platform

UWF  
OMF

HOME

NEW POST

MESSAGES

FRIENDS

SEARCH

**ANTHONY OLIVER**

Published on 25 August 20XX

Hi fellow farmers and crop producers of the Union of Widonian Farmers (UWF); soon we will be forced to replace phasytol with alternative herbicides. The impact on our health will depend on the safety of those alternatives: some may be safer than phasytol, while others may pose similar or greater risks. Since many of us will need to use alternative herbicides in the future and farmers are the intended audience, it would be a mistake for the Commission not to introduce this topic during Fertivent. What do you think?



**SOFIE BRYE** Hi, I totally agree. Like many farmers, I really depend on phasytol. Currently, when phasytol is used in accordance with the instructions on the product label but does not control weed growth adequately, the producers will compensate us financially if an investigation confirms that no other controllable factor was responsible for the poor result. But will this be the case for the alternative herbicides?



**JAN KAMPENS** Moreover, gross margins are already tight on most Widonian farms because of the increased cost of nitrogen fertiliser and the limited ability of farmers to absorb extra costs or cope with a reduced income. Therefore, any changes that increase the risks associated with crop production could cause significant harm to the long-term financial viability of Widonian farms and also to employment levels in the agriculture and retail sectors.



**SOFIE BRYE** Returning to the topic of Fertivent, I hope that the Commission's representative will also speak about the impact on the supply and affordability of food. We farmers will not have any choice but to pass on our increased costs to consumers. (I mean, the increased costs due to both the withdrawal of phasytol and the higher prices of nitrogen fertiliser). Higher food prices, of course, is something that affects every Widonian citizen to some degree.



**AHMED DEMIR** By the way, have you heard that the Widonian government is to provide training to farmers on safe alternatives to phasytol? If asked technical questions about health and safety, the Commission's representative could refer farmers to this training as well.

# WIDONIA WEB CHRONICLE

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## **Virtual Vigilance Conference**

Monday, 29 August 20XX

We are sorry to inform you that our local event on online safety has had to be postponed. With preparations for the Widonian general election in November 20XX in full swing, it was too difficult for us to find an available meeting room in a government building at the end of October. [Read more.](#)

## **Elections**

Friday, 26 August 20XX

The incumbent president of Widonia, who comes from a farming family, is still widely popular. [Read more.](#)

## **Endangered animals**

Tuesday, 16 August 20XX

Animal testing has increased in eastern Europe.

The non-profit organisation 'Safe Wildlife' has been very active lately educating citizens throughout eastern Europe about animal habitats and ways to help protect them. It has already held successful workshops in several eastern European countries and has made it its mission to have an impact in every eastern European country by the end of next year. [Read more.](#)

## **Riot at the Conference on Biodiversity**

Monday, 1 August 20XX

During the Conference on Biodiversity, a group of extreme environmentalists chose to engage in violence rather than constructive discussions. [Read more.](#)

Looking for a business hotel to host an event in Widonia? In October, when the cool-down period between the summer and winter travel season peaks, it is much easier to find available business hotels. Several hotels from the international chain **Prime Connect Hotel Group** have experience of hosting big events and are used to adapting to stricter security rules. [Order our brochure here.](#)

**TIP:** If you have the option to choose a region, bear in mind that the costs of holding an event in Hiwi are higher than would be the case in any of the more rural areas of the country, given the higher cost of living and more expensive infrastructure in Hiwi.



### Phasytol

70% of Widonia's farmland lies close to our country's northern and southern coasts: these regions will therefore be impacted the most by the new EU Regulation on phasytol.

Starting in December 20XX, the government will provide specialised training to educate farmers on innovative agricultural working methods, with particular focus on using the possible (safe) alternatives to phasytol that are available on the market.

[...]

### Events

The WFAC will hold a local fundraiser in Widonia during Endangered Species week (first week of December).

[...]

### Readers' letters

'The withdrawal of phasytol would be beneficial because it would lead to a reduction in exposure to this chemical. Phasytol has been linked to a number of health concerns, including cancer.'


*(Lorenzo Ricci, President of Say "No" to Phasytol)*

'A study by the University of Widonia's Biology Department shows that phasytol also has many positive side-effects on the environment. For example, phasytol plays a role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions by reducing the need for the mechanical manipulation of surface soil.'

*(Elif Kaya, President of the UWF)*

'Many small farmers in Widonia have adopted the working methods of their parents and grandparents (including the use of phasytol), and not all of them are eager to expend the time and effort it would take to undergo extra training that goes against those methods.'

*(Devi Kumar, a Widonian agricultural scientist and host of popular YouTube podcasts on agriculture in Widonia)*




The Farmer's Eye<sup>x</sup>

← → ↻ 🏠 🔍 | https://www.FarmersEye.com/EN ☆

📌 Bookmarks

### The Farmer's Eye is the best fertiliser (a blog by Georges Delacrois)



Hi there! I am sure you all know by now that the use of phasytol will no longer be permitted in the EU from next year onwards. Many citizens are relieved, at least according to 'Say "No" to Phasytol', an organisation of Widonian citizens worried about the long-term consequences of using this substance. However, it is important to note that the scientific community is divided on the issue, with some studies suggesting that phasytol is safe when used properly. Moreover, phasytol residue on the surface of plants has also been deemed safe for human consumption. Given the controversial nature of this topic, I firmly believe that the Commission's representative should avoid making any reference to health-related concerns during the Fertivent kick-off speech. In addition, to ensure order, keep the peace and prevent polarising discussions from dominating the event, it would also be safer not to mention anything at all about the impact on the environment. The reason I'm saying this is that the UWF, one of the largest unions in Widonia, has gotten into heated discussions online with EcoWido, an extreme Widonian environmentalist group.

I would like to use this platform to publicise some worries shared by many of us. Compared with those of phasytol, production costs are higher for alternatives like Diquat and Glufosinate. Not only does this make these options more expensive for small farmers like me to use, but it also makes it impossible for producers to offer a decent level of compensation if these products fail to provide adequate results. While the production costs for alternative products containing acetic acid or similar active ingredients are lower, they are clearly not as effective as phasytol-based products. Therefore, their producers offer much lower compensation when the product fails to provide adequate weed control. At the end of the day, farmers who are forced to use an alternative herbicide have no choice but to absorb the extra costs incurred, thereby increasing their business risk. This is why the new Phasytol regulation is making many Widonian citizens who work in agriculture (and their families) fear for their businesses and jobs. We are all hoping to hear some good news at Fertivent.

Finally, as usual, I want to conclude my blog with a new insight to keep you all up to date with how our environment is doing. Did you know that the illegal trade of ornamental plants is a real issue? According to a recently published Statistics and Data Department (EuroDat) study, criminal activity like this is largely under-reported. The illegal removal of plants from the wild, mainly in our neighbouring MSs of Ninadi and Bamora, poses a direct threat to one of Europe's most iconic flowers, the Chidors, whose natural ecosystem is being disrupted and whose numbers are being depleted beyond the plant's capacity to regenerate naturally. The only way to stop this dangerous and illegal practice is to give greater publicity to this problem immediately.

**Published on 25/08/20XX**

## Minutes 3



FFD

## DEBRIEFING MEETING

## Meeting minutes

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| <b>Date and time:</b> | 08/08/20XX – 09.00–10.00  |
| <b>Attendees:</b>     | Julie Duré, Manager, FFD; Tom Wouters, Administrator, Technologies Department; Marija Perić, Advisor, Communication Networks Department; Jari Mäkelä, Manager, Finance & Economy Department |
| <b>Topics:</b>        | Debriefing on the Conference on Biodiversity  |

To ensure the efficiency of this debriefing meeting, only a few representatives from selected departments were invited.

| Location    |  |
|-------------|--|
| ◆           | Because of the last-minute change of date for this conference, it was impossible to book a hotel as the venue. Widonian business hotels are usually in high demand during peak season, and they advise people to book hotel rooms and even facilities more than two months in advance. In the end, the conference was held in a Widonian government building. For future events, it is good to know that government buildings in Widonia have advanced security measures in place to ensure a safe and secure location. These measures are fully compliant with the Commission's security protocol for local events. |
| Activities  |  |
| ◆           | Attendees were not allocated seats randomly but were divided into diverse groups to encourage interaction between people from different backgrounds and professions. In this way, attendees could learn more from one another by sharing their diverse perspectives and insights.  |
| ◆           | During the discussion panel, the floor was held mainly by the experts (e.g. Commission officials) rather than by citizens.   |
| Focus group |  |
| ◆           | The online focus group's moderator was able to adjust his follow-up questions based on the feedback already shared by participants in the focus group. This facilitated a flexible and responsive approach to collecting feedback. As a result, the online focus group provided in-depth and detailed feedback. Nevertheless, it was obvious that some participants dominated the discussion, while others seemed hesitant to speak.   |
| ◆           | Feedback from the online focus group shows that many attendees were frustrated and disappointed that some important panel discussions had to be cut short because of time constraints, while other topics could have been dealt with in less time than originally planned. One lesson learned is that a fixed programme may be too rigid for some events.  |
| ◆           | Feedback from the online focus group also shows that many attendees were happy that they were able to build meaningful relationships during the in-person Conference on Biodiversity and that the Conference had made an emotional impact on them.   |
| ◆           | The feedback also shows that speakers from Widonia were regarded as the most credible by local people.   |



**Report 3**

**Communication  
Networks Department**

## **Report extract**

**28/02/20XX**

### **Citizen survey results Widonia**

At the beginning of 20XX, the Communication Networks Department conducted a citizen survey across 20 Member States to gather information on the average citizen's connection with EU institutions and on their experience of events organised by EU institutions. We opted to use a feedback survey, as this allows those who do not like speaking publicly to also openly share their opinions. This extract shows the results of the survey conducted in Widonia, using simple random sampling for selecting respondents.

- Which segments of the Widonian population that the Commission actually reaches via their social media platforms remains unclear.
- The average Widonian citizen does not know the names of the commissioners.
- An informal citizens' dialogue has proven a powerful tool for building mutual understanding and trust among all participants.
- Whether Widonian citizens prefer to be divided into homogenous or diverse groups at events organised by EU institutions is also still unclear.

(...)