

Relationship between MELODI and DoReMi

MELODI Document No 2

November 2009

Introduction

As their names aptly suggest, the two bodies are indispensable to each other, and in the beginning of the HLEG strategy implementation phase only make sense together: to conceive a new symphony and supervise its performance in a context where different musicians have so far tended to prefer acting as soloists or playing together in a small chamber orchestra, it is necessary to learn to work together, to practice together, and to start playing complex “multi instrument” music together in a full-size symphonic orchestra. This specific relationship between MELODI and the NoE DoReMi is imbedded in the 2008 EURATOM call for proposal which took into account the results of the HLEG report. The key features of this relationship are described in this MELODI document n° 2, and are illustrated as shown in the diagram in annex.

The HLEG strategy implies three major changes from the current situation of low dose risk research in Europe:

- to mobilize synergies between national research and training (R&T) low dose programmes, much beyond what has been done so far,
- to mobilize synergies between all disciplines necessary to investigate the low dose scientific issues with a fresh mind, much beyond what has been done so far,
- to mobilize resources at EU level in such a way as to clearly encourage the above two.

Five national organisations, involved in the HLEG work, have so far committed themselves towards the first challenge, through the signature of a letter of intent (LoI) to start the multidisciplinary European low dose initiative, called MELODI.

These organisations are currently engaged in setting up the MELODI Platform, with the ambition to gather in an open structure all institutions and other stakeholders in Europe with a long-term commitment in all kinds of low dose risk research and radiation protection. These should include all establishments and laboratories, already belonging or not to the “historical” EURATOM family, which share a common interest in solving the “overarching scientific questions” raised in the HLEG report. These “non-historical” EURATOM laboratories are expected to increase the multidisciplinary competence of MELODI to accompany its move from mainly biophysical models of radiation protection to more biochemistry and

molecular biology based approaches. They are also needed to reinforce MELODI's plural, transparent and independent expertise.

The main objectives of MELODI are to develop a strategic research agenda for low dose research in Europe (SRA) and road maps which will describe how the strategic goals can be met.

Less than one year after the adoption of the HLEG report, it is encouraging to note that some major recommendations have materialised and had a head start:

- The Stuttgart MELODI workshop gave visibility to this important step forward, and disseminated the information about the next steps towards the operational constitution of the MELODI Platform and its interaction with the future NoE.
- After commissioning the HLEG report, the EU has committed budgetary resources at a significant level in order to support a network of excellence (NoE) which will support the implementation of the HLEG strategy by MELODI, giving at the European level a clear policy signal of encouragement. With respect to the creation of this NoE, DoReMi is a successful proposal in response to the EURATOM call for proposal FP7-Fission-2009, deadline 21 April 2009, and is now finalising the negotiations with EC for the grant agreement.

However, because of what may be perceived as an overlap, or at least as an uncharted area, between the respective objectives of MELODI and DoReMi, which are both supported by some of the same Lol signatories, it is necessary to clarify the relation and mode of cooperation between the two. For this purpose, it is proposed to examine which key deliverables are expected from each structure:

MELODI key deliverables

MELODI is mainly expected to develop a long term SRA for research and training in Europe on low dose risk issues, which is sufficiently supported by all stakeholders (including the scientific community, in EURATOM and beyond) to allow the EC and member states to rely on it to guide EU and national research and training (R&T) policies in this field (notably for the preparation of future FP programme calls). To do this, MELODI must succeed in building up an integrative platform, involving in an open and credible way all interested parties, without losing sight of the HLEG strategy which it is committed to implement in its principles.

So, in short, the four key deliverables for MELODI are:

- 1) its legitimacy as a representative open scientific and societal forum on low dose risk issues,
- 2) the development and maintenance over time of a SRA, including scenarios for R&T priority work on one hand and the accompanying measures to foster scientific trans-national and trans-discipline cooperation (development and use of experimental infrastructures, training, etc...) on the other hand,
- 3) to maintain the dialogue with EU and international institutions on issues related to low dose risk research policies,
- 4) to provide, through its Scientific Committee, a resource of SRA coherent reference expertise which can be used to contribute to an independent scientific evaluation of research proposals, either at national level in MELODI participating member states, or in EU sponsored projects, such as those to be funded through the DoReMi NoE.

MELODI will do this, over time, by processing information and ideas produced by its constituent parties, including the scientific community, which naturally include (amongst others) the DoReMi “sub-community”. It seems clear from this analysis that several years will be necessary to reach this goal in a credible way. However, the implementation of the HLEG strategy cannot wait several years to start being implemented without losing credibility.

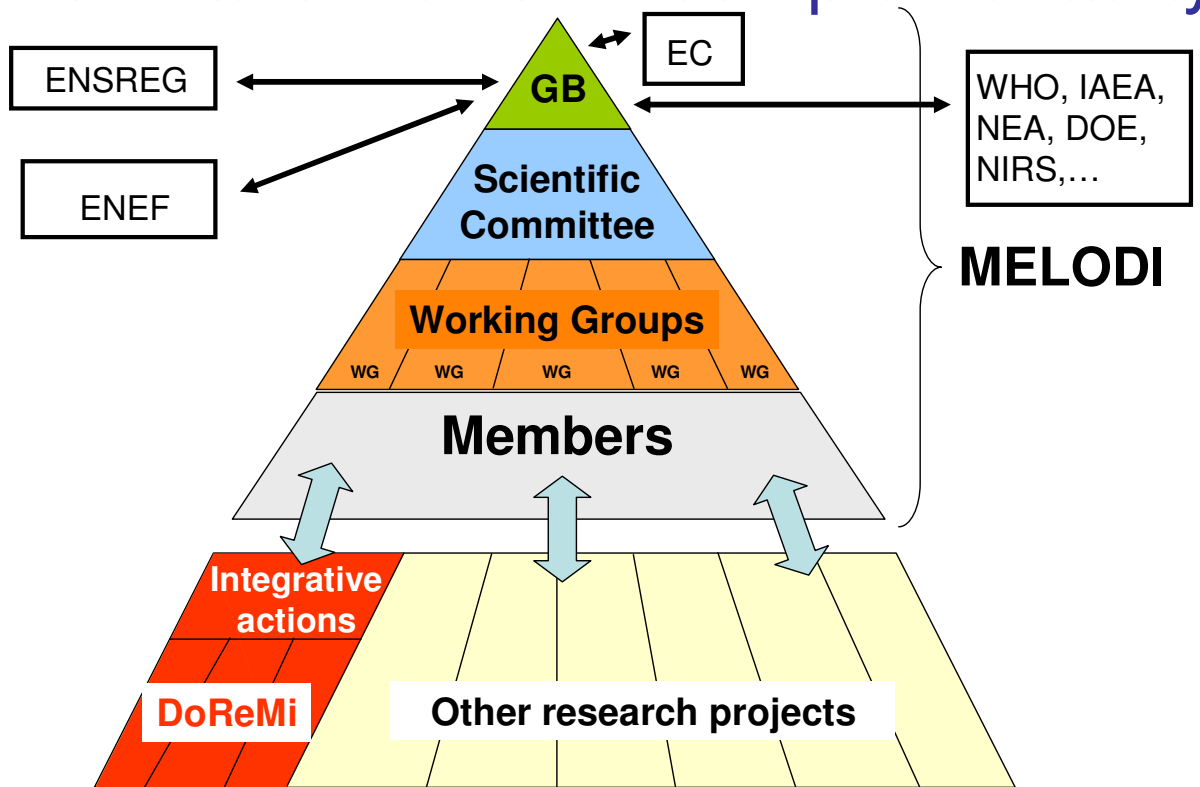
DoReMi key deliverables

DoReMi is the necessary complement to MELODI, aiming to achieve fairly short term results in order to prove the validity of the HLEG approach, and to contribute to the development of MELODI. Such objectives and timeframe are typically consistent with what can be expected from a NoE, which is why the EC included the possibility of such a scheme in its 2008 call. The resources invested by the EU and by member organisations in the NoE will therefore aim to:

- 1) develop and implement a “transition research agenda” (TRA) with a short to medium term time scale, which would attempt to capture the essence of the HLEG strategy,
- 2) implement the TRA within the limited time frame and organisational perimeters of the NoE,
- 3) contribute to the wider development of MELODI, by bringing its scientific input into the open dialogue of the Platform and by supporting it through its dedicated resources (in agreement with the contract clauses to be finalised with the EC),
- 4) take into account the results of MELODI work on the SRA for the successive calls for R&T actions within the NoE. These open calls are expected to progressively bring in new partners into the working structures of both organisations. The NoE will also be able to take advantage of the MELODI Scientific Committee structure in order to optimize its own independent scientific evaluation process.

In practice, DoReMi Work Packages WP2, WP3, and WP4 will develop support structures for MELODI, on research infrastructure in Europe and on education and training operating in such a way that their deliverables feed directly as “draft contributions” into the working groups of MELODI. DoReMi WP5, WP6, and WP7, which are concerned with the scientific issues of the shape of the dose effect relationship, the individual radiation sensitivity and non-cancer effects of radiation, respectively, will produce scientific deliverables from their research and training operational activities, which should constitute the first operational stepping stones on the SRA roadmap. These results as well as the experience feedback from such should also contribute to the furthering of MELODI goals, particularly at the time when the NoE will be nearing its completion. For this purpose, scientists in DoReMi WP’s should become also actively involved in MELODI working groups, where the ongoing Low Dose Risk research strategies will continue to be developed year after year.

MELODI and DoReMi: complementarity



1st MELODI Workshop
Stuttgart, 28-29 September 2009

