

Minutes of the fifth meeting of the CAFE Steering Group

held on 15-16th April 2002

FINAL VERSION

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

The meeting was chaired by the European Commission's Directorate-General for the Environment, Unit C1 ("Air and Noise"). The chairman Peter Wicks introduced two new members of the CAFE Secretariat: Stefan Jacobi and Andre Zuber, both national experts detached to the Commission to work with the CAFE programme. The chairman also announced that another colleague (Michel Sponar) would join the Secretariat as of 1 May.

The meeting took place in parallel with the Green Week event and all the participants were invited to participate in the different sessions and side events, and particularly to participate in the session with the theme on air pollution "Is air pollution harming children?". The chairman also announced that the CAFE Technical Analysis Group (TAG) would meet during the two day event to discuss the integration of small scale and hot spots in baseline scenarios and integrated assessment modelling.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Some slight changes of the agenda were suggested by the chair. A parallel session on sulphur in fuel required that item 4 on the agenda had to be divided into two parts. The Commission suggested also to give some first results from a study on ships emissions after item 4. These changes and amendments of the agenda were adopted by the meeting.

The meeting notes from the last meeting held in Brussels on 10-11 December 2001 had been circulated to the members of the Steering Group. Comments and remarks had been received and considered in the redrafted version, which was put on the CAFE programme web page (<http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/air/cafe.htm>). The Steering group had no further comments or corrections and the meeting notes from the fourth meeting were adopted.

3. UPDATE OF THE CAFE WORK PLAN

3.1. The updated work plan

The Work Plan for CAFE had been discussed at some length during the previous meeting. Since then, the Commission had done some further analysis particularly on the logistics of the programme and the feasibility of delivering the thematic strategy by the end of 2004. No updated plan had been sent out to this Steering group meeting since the fundamentals of the work plan had been retained. The Commission gave an outline of the major elements and milestones as well as the main changes and updates on the CAFE work plan.

The Commission stressed that the work plan was continuously evolving and would be updated at regular intervals and put on the CAFE web site. Members of the Steering group were welcome to provide comments to the work plan at any time.

3.2. CAFE and the thematic strategy on air quality

The concept of the thematic strategy on air quality had been further developed by the CAFE Secretariat. The CAFE programme would provide the basis for the development of the thematic strategy, both for the development of the technical and scientific basis and for the involvement of major stakeholders in Europe. The thematic strategy on air pollution was the first strategy out of seven to be developed by the Commission. The document may be an autonomous Commission paper (similar to a White Paper) or a proposal for a joint Council and European Parliament decision. It would in any case take the form of a political guidance document setting out the policies and measures needed to reach the objective to reduce the levels of air pollution to levels that do not have a significant impact on human health and the environment. Such a strategy would give the *outline of actions* requested to meet the objectives, while the detailed regulations in terms of legislative proposals would follow later. The CAFE programme was therefore expected to continue also after the thematic strategy had been presented/adopted.

The Commission still intended to come forward with the thematic strategy in 2004. Even given the clarifications concerning the nature of the strategy, this would require that all the logistics work out in the anticipated way and that there are no major unexpected difficulties.

The Steering group supported the view that the thematic strategy should be a political document, for which the CAFE programme would provide the technical and scientific basis.

3.3. Establishment of Working groups

The working groups within CAFE had also made some progress. The working group on implementation had continued its work and several issues would be discussed during this and future meetings. Two other groups were being established (see agenda item 5).

3.4. Effects review

The Commission reminded participants that the review on air-pollution health-effects had been commissioned to the World Health Organisation (WHO), which was required to provide advice to the CAFE programme next year. Michal Krzyzanowski from WHO gave a short report, explaining that a WHO Working Group (based on the Scientific Advisory Committee) would come forward with draft conclusions in January 2003, and with an edited report answering the questions asked by the 4th SG meeting by June 2003. The work of WHO draws on a number of Centres of Excellence in Europe and the United States as well as on the network of air-pollution health-scientist within AIRNET.

Members of the Steering group expressed concerns on the nature of the advice from WHO. They stressed the need to obtain clear guidelines, which can be used for target setting.

Also for effects on vegetation there had been some work done by the ECE/CLRTAP working group on effects. Stefan Seum, on behalf of the CLRTAP Chairman of the

Working Group on Effects, gave a short report, explaining that the work is closely following the working plan. Concerning the critical level for ozone a decision will soon be taken on the use of either a “modified critical level I” or the use of “critical level II” approach. This also has an importance for the CAFE programme.

It was emphasised that the effects reviews are important elements of the CAFE programme since this information feeds into the target setting of the integrated assessment forming the basis for the thematic strategy. The timing of the effects reviews remained a critical issue.

3.5. CAFE Baseline and integrated assessment modelling

Work on the baseline scenario and integrated assessment modelling was closely following the original work plan, although slightly delayed. The discussion from the last meeting of the steering group and inter-service Commission consultations had resulted in a finalised technical annex of the call for tender. The Commission announced that this call for tender would be published shortly very soon after the meeting¹.

For the scenario analysis three classes of scenarios are foreseen: the baseline scenario, main alternative scenarios and variant scenarios. The outcome of the preliminary and subsequent scenario runs would to a large extent guide us in the development of the thematic strategy.

3.6. Further work to be done

In some areas the work plan for CAFE needed to be further developed:

- In particular for the details on policy options and measures more analysis and discussions were needed before a detailed work plan can be developed. This part of work is very close to the development of the thematic strategy, which has to consider also other factors such as community action plans, sector specific strategies and non-community policies and measures.
- Consultation with stakeholders remained an integral part of CAFE. This is done within the Steering Group as well as in consultant studies, such as under the contract of the baseline scenario and integrated assessment modelling. Consultations with stakeholders may be seen as a part of the review process of the outcome of the CAFE programme. Also other forms of reviews, such as peer reviews, are foreseen, particularly for technical and scientific background information.

The Steering group expressed different opinions on the involvement of the general public in the CAFE programme. On the one hand concerns were expressed that the outcome should not be subject to “popularity opinion polls” and on the other hand concerns were expressed that the public should be given timely and targeted information from the CAFE programme.

The issue of how to integrate small scale air pollution and hot spots remains an open question in CAFE. The topic was to be discussed within the CAFE Technical Analysis

¹ The open call for tender was published on 27 April 2002.

Group (TAG) and a note had been prepared by some members of the Steering group. For the time being no final decision had been taken to integrate these important aspects into the baseline scenarios and the integrated assessment modelling.

Members of the Steering group expressed their opinion that all scales should be taken into account in the CAFE programme. However, the actions required to meet objectives of air quality may have to be taken at EU-wide, national and local levels.

4. LOCAL SCALE ASSESSMENT AND MODELLING

The importance of addressing air quality at the local scale was stressed by some members of the Steering Group in advance of the meeting. The CAFE Secretariat also saw the need to clarify the role of the local scale with regard to the baseline scenario and had tabled a note for the meeting as a basis for discussion.

The discussion at the meeting covered the following aspects.

Assessment by Member States in the context of compliance checking

While the Steering Group did not see the need for further harmonisation of the assessment methods, a clarification of the scale at which hot spots have to be assessed was required. It was proposed to present this clarifying note to the Art 12-Committee to give it more binding than a guidance report.

Development of the CAFE baseline scenario and integrated assessment

So far integrated assessment models cannot resolve scales less than 50x50 km². The call for tender issued by the Commission would not require explicitly any finer resolution. It had yet to be seen whether information to be expected from the City-Delta study organised by JRC would be sufficient or whether further studies will be necessary. This question was addressed at a TAG meeting on 16 April. The minutes of that meeting will be made available to the Steering Group.

WHO recommendations on air quality targets

In general local scale air quality data are not taken into account for any health impact assessment as the health information itself cannot be evaluated at that scale.

5. WORKING GROUPS

5.1. Working Group on Particulate Matter

The Commission presented the state of play regarding the working group on particulate matter (WG PM) under the CAFE program. Referring to the minutes of the SG meeting from December 2001, two general major tasks of that group were agreed upon:

- to review the attainability of the PM₁₀ limit values with regard to current ambient air levels and contributions from long range transport and local sources;
- to set targets for PM for the integrated assessment.

The SG was asked to discuss the Terms of Reference (Annex I), drafted by the Chairs of the WG (UK and DE) and the Commission. A main part of this discussion dealt with a possible overlap with the WG on Target Setting and Policy Assessment with regard to target setting for PM. The Commission assured participants that it would take care to provide a close co-operation between the two WG's. In general it was felt to be favourable to keep these tasks with the WG PM because of the specific expertise that the WG will be able to provide. It was clarified that the preparation of a review report with regard to Art. 10, 1999/30/EC is not in the scope of the WG PM (see agenda item 7.6). Concerning possible future targets for PM it was pointed out that the information provided by the WHO (see section 3.4) had to be considered, and that the discussion should not be restricted to certain characteristics (e.g. mass concentration) or size fractions of PM.

Subject to these clarifications the SG agreed with the outline of the future work of the WG PM.

The first meeting of the Working Group will be held on 13 May in Berlin. The list of participants of the WG (Annex II) will be expanded to include representatives of ETC/ACC and WHO to assure close links to those sources of information.

Finally, the Commission informed that a 'Guidance on a preliminary reference method for the sampling and measurement of PM_{2.5} under 1999/30/EC' has been drafted. The paper has to be finalised as a Commission Decision, following the rules of Art. 11, 96/62/EC.

5.2. Working Group on Target Setting and Policy Assessment

The Commission presented the state of play concerning the Working Group on Target Setting and Policy Assessment. The intention to set up such a working group had been discussed at the previous meeting and the present draft terms of reference (TOR) was based on those discussions and on some further considerations. It was emphasised that the list of tasks outlined in the draft TOR represented the tasks as we see them today; some tasks may have to be added as a result of separate studies within CAFE. The WG was to be seen as representing a "mosaic" of stakeholders within Europe (including accession candidate countries). The Commission presented the list of members proposed by the SG so far, and indicated that a final decision would be made prior to the first meeting, to be held before the summer holidays.

The Steering Group was asked to provide feedback on whether the draft TOR adequately reflected the work required, whether the list of suggested members represented a "mosaic" of stakeholders as intended, and how they saw the mode of co-operation between the WG and the SG.

Participants generally welcomed the draft TOR.

Concerning membership it was suggested that all Member States should be invited to participate. The need for more participation from accession candidate countries in CAFE groups generally was also stressed. The Commission indicated that they would consider extending the invitation to all Member States, despite concerns about the impact on meeting size.

Concerning co-operation with the SG, participants emphasised the need for strong links and regular reporting from the WG so that the SG could be fully involved in reviewing proposals from the WG. The need to ensure close links with the UN-ECE CLRTAP's Task Force on Integrated Assessment Modelling (TFIAM) was also pointed out. The Commission agreed that regular reporting was important and that a report from the WG should therefore be on the agenda of each SG meeting. The meeting reports of the WG were to be put on the CAFE web page.

6. REPORTING AND REVIEW OBLIGATIONS

A list of reporting and review obligations provided by the CAFE Secretariat was welcomed by the Steering Group. A more complete version would be placed on the Commission's AQ webpage.

Attention was drawn to the Questionnaire² 2001/839/EC³ on annual reporting first due by 30 September this year. Member States might not be able to report on all items as monitoring is only mandatory from 19 July 2001. According to Art 11 (2) (a), 96/62/EC, the Commission will publish a list of zones showing exceedences before the end of this year.

7. IMPLEMENTATION RELATED ISSUES

7.1. WG on Implementation

Jürgen Schneider, the chairman of the WG, provided information on the current state of the work. The group will focus on giving guidance on the plans and programmes required by Art 8, 96/62/EC. It will also address the action plans to be prepared according to Art 7, 96/62/EC. The WG felt that it could not give guidance with regard to Art 6, 2001/81/EC, the reason being their lack of expertise in this field in combination with the short time available.

The Steering Group agreed in general with the focus of the WG. It was recommended to aim at giving a structure for the reports instead of prescribing detailed formats. Any measures discussed in the context of implementation must be aligned with the work of the WGs on PM and on TSPA. In particular any emission projections and scenarios should be considered when assessing background concentrations. To give a more binding character to this guidance report and further recommendations on implementation it was recommended to present them to the Art 12-Committee for adoption. The Steering Group is asked to propose items where guidance or clarification is considered necessary.

The Steering Group felt that it was indispensable to give a structure for the reports required by Art 6, 2001/81/EC. It was recommended to use reporting under the UN/ECE and climate change protocols as a starting point. EEA offered its support with regard to this. The CAFE Secretariat asked the Steering Group to provide any concepts developed so far in Member States as soon as possible. It will then decide on the best way to provide the necessary guidance.

² available as Excel-sheets from the Commission's AQ webpage in all languages

³ As corrected by OJ L 12 of 15/01/2002, p 70

7.2. Ad-hoc WG on Ozone

According to Art 7 and 9, 2002/3/EC the Commission is requested to provide guidance on short-term action plans and precursor monitoring. A first draft was compiled from contributions from the ad-hoc WG, but not yet endorsed by it. The draft was made available to the Steering Group in advance.

The Steering Group appreciated the general outline of the report as well as the fast progress of the work. The CAFE Secretariat asked for comments by 24 April to provide a 2nd draft of the report. The ad-hoc WG will hold its 2nd meeting on 17 May to finalise the report, which will then be presented to the Art 12-Committee for adoption.

The JRC will take care to launch the necessary comparison exercise according to the requirements in Annex VI, 2002/3/EC.

7.3. Guidance on Exchange of Information

The annexes of Decision 97/101/EC were revised by Decision 2001/752/EC. The Working Group that supported the Commission in preparing that revision has provided a corresponding guidance report. The report was made available to the Steering Group in advance of the meeting. Any further comments were requested by 24 April at the latest since it was foreseen to place the report on the Commission's Air Quality Webpage by that date.

7.4. Report on Preliminary Assessment

Several Member States had provided additional voluntary information on the preliminary assessment under Art 5, 96/62/EC. The CAFE Secretariat felt that a compilation of the information would be useful. A corresponding draft report was made available to the Steering Group in advance of the meeting.

Though the report was appreciated in general the Steering Group felt that no information referring to the results in individual Member States, and in particular no maps, should be included. A revised report would be placed on the Commission's Air Quality Webpage.

7.5. Commission report on "old" directives

The Commission is obliged to publish a report on the state of implementation of the so-called "old" air quality directives 80/779/EEC, 82/884/EEC and 85/203/EEC for the period 1997 to 1999. A draft of that report was made available at the meeting and will also be sent by e-mail. Any comments are requested by 15 May at the latest. Afterwards the formal adoption via Inter-Service Consultation will be launched.

7.6. Outline of Report under Art. 10, 1999/30/EC

An outline of the Commission's review report required by Art. 10, 1999/30/EC, was circulated to the Steering Group in advance of the meeting. The report is not going to address all of the items mentioned in that article as some of them - in particular with regard to latest scientific findings - are an integral part of the CAFE thematic strategy and will be covered by the corresponding reports.

In the course of the work input will be needed from Member States, EEA, JRC and others. The Steering Group will be continuously informed on the ongoing work and is encouraged to give its views.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8.1. Information items

The next meetings of the Steering Group will be held 11-12 September 2002 and 26-27 November 2002.

Germany announced a workshop on compliance issues to be held either in Berlin or Potsdam early April 2003. Details will be available soon. The objective is to exchange information and experience on how to comply to the AQ directives.

The Netherlands invited Steering Group members to participate in a series of workshops on the use of new instruments such as emission trading to reach environmental objectives.

8.2. Questions and updates of CAFE issues

In response to questions from participants the Commission provided the following updates/clarifications:

- links to air quality websites within Member States and accession candidate countries will be incorporated into a new version of the CAFE web site, to be launched shortly;
- the review on deposition issues foreseen in the work-plan presented in December is delayed but will be carried out later this year;
- in addition to the priority substances for review by WHO already identified (ozone, PM and NO₂), the work commissioned to WHO includes an update of the scientific findings and recommendations to CAFE on other pollutants of concern.

9. CLOSING OF THE MEETING

The chair closed the meeting.