

Minutes of the second meeting of the CAFE Working Group on Target Setting and Policy Assessment held in Brussels on 6 November 2002

Final 3 February 2003

1. WELCOME, ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND THE MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

André Zuber, from the CAFE Secretariat chaired the meeting and bid the members welcome. There had been some minor changes in the WG: for the UK John Rea replaces Martin Williams and Spain is represented through Julio Lumbreras. A list of attendees is attached.

The draft agenda was presented and on the item point of “any other business” forthcoming WG meetings was added. The agenda was adopted.

The minutes from the first WG was sent to the members of the WG in mid June. No comments have been received. The Commission proposed some clarifications on the minute’s point 3. The minutes were adopted. The final minutes will be put on the CAFE web page as soon as possible.

2. CAFE AND THE WORKING GROUP WORK PLAN MAIN ELEMENTS

2.1. Indicators for CAFE and Target Setting:

- A first set of indicators should be prepared for the beginning of 2003. No major observations were formulated concerning the proposed timing or work plan content.
- A presentation of the results of the RAINS model review should be integrated in the work plan of the working group. This may take place before the Steering Group meeting of December 2003.

2.2 Policy Assessment:

Michel Sponar made a presentation (see slides annexed) on the first reflections concerning *ex-post* evaluation in the CAFE context (corresponding to work plan point 2.3 – policy assessment).

- The Commission has to produce in 2003 a report on the implementation of the air quality first daughter directive (1999/30/EC). This report could be presented and discussed in the present WG as a contribution to the policy assessment exercise. This has to be decided by CAFE Secretariat.
- *Ex-post* evaluation of the costs and benefits of measures (also on local or short-term actions) is considered to be of major importance since such information will allow a comparison with *ex-ante* estimates of costs and benefits. Earlier experiences have shown that the costs are often over-estimated in *ex-ante* evaluations compared to costs evaluated *ex-post*. This type of information may be very useful for further policy development.

- The role of the WG on implementation was briefly discussed. That WG is clearly devoted to practical implementation of the directives and not to evaluation of the policies. Some members of the WG on TS and PA emphasised the importance of such work, which is presently made in the Working group of implementation.
- Some participants mentioned existing studies on *ex-post* evaluations, e.g. in Sweden or in the US notably on the Clean Air Act. The UK experience was also mentioned (organisation of workshop on evaluation in two steps: first experts and then general public). Another interesting study is currently being undertaken by the ECE CLRTAP WG on Effects on the evaluation of progress achieved under the Convention the past 25 years. The results of these studies will be transmitted to the CAFE Secretariat.
- Concerning short term and local actions, the upcoming European Commission communication on ozone should be useful. Local air managers should be involved in the evaluation exercise of local and short term actions.
- Some participants' pointed out the difficulty to find the answers to some questions such as on what should have happened if there was no EU legislation. On the other hand, this question is very relevant for the future new Members States.

After a lengthy discussion, the following conclusions were endorsed:

- (1) It is considered as useful to undertake *ex-post* evaluation but it is necessary to define properly the questions to be raised. A first draft set of questions was distributed and the WG members were invited to give comments.
- (2) The present working group has an interest to follow and provide guidance to this exercise. At the moment, no additional working group will be created.
- (3) It is necessary to find more information from other evaluation processes achieved in or outside the EU (notably in the US) in order to develop a more appropriate methodology. The methodology must be adapted to each type of question. A splitting between European, national and local level should be useful.
- (4) Two items are considered as high priority for "ex-post" evaluation: local and short-term actions as well as costs and benefits assessments. These issues are not yet covered sufficiently well in Europe.
- (5) A clear link must be kept with the contractor responsible for the development of the CAFE baseline scenario and the IAM (IIASA in particular) in order to ensure consistency between *ex-ante* and *ex-post* evaluation.

3. Indicators for CAFE

Andre Zuber introduced the note on indicators. The draft conclusions and list of indicators have been discussed with IIASA (Markus Amann) and EEA (R. Van Aalst). IIASA has confirmed the feasibility of the proposed list, EEA has made some remarks (see below).

The indicators are proposed to be grouped in three classes according to the different target groups:

- technical indicators to be used by “experts”,
- selected indicators for policy makers, and
- selected indicators for the general public.

The first set of technical indicators must be selected as soon as possible, the others are less urgent.

3.1 General discussion on the cover note

- A definition of indicators should be included in the analysis. In an earlier document of the working group the definition of indicators was taken from the EEA web page. The indicator and its value should not be given in isolation, additional information should be added on the metrics of the indicator as well as the context under which the indicator has been developed.
- It was agreed that deposition should be included in the parameters to be studied and that emissions should be considered as a priority indicator (also remark from EEA).
- The notions of “effects”, “exposure” and “impact” were discussed and divergent views were presented. It was felt that no precise difference between the term “effects” and “impact” can be defined. The CAFE Secretariat should propose a more detailed definition.
- The phrasing on the robustness of the indicators will be adapted (notion of “best available data”). In addition, for each indicator an idea on “uncertainty level” should be introduced, as well as a clear definition of the contents (metrics and explanatory text of the indicators). Rob Maas summarised the work done to reduce uncertainties for emission factors (contract with TNO) and to check country’s inventories.
- The wording of the first bullet of 2.2 will be adapted to be in phase with the 6. EAP.
- Industry representatives (UNICE) expressed their concerns about the very large number of indicators to be used in the CAFE programme and that there was a lack of information on the context and the objectives (i.e. the use) of the different indicators.

3.2 List of indicator

Andre Zuber thanked the members of the WG for their very useful answers to the questionnaire on the proposed list of indicators. Although the list is not extensively long it could appear later that some indicators might have to be abandoned due to lack of data. In that sense, the present list should be considered as a “desirable but not necessary feasible” list.

It is worth noting that modelled data will be used for policy development and that reliable monitoring data are essential in order to evaluate the model and to get an estimation of the uncertainties of each indicator.

The list was analysed in detail (a new list taking into account the following comments is attached to these minutes):

Driving Forces:

- Ecosystems and cultural heritage will be moved from this section to the impact indicators. Availability of data was discussed, some work has been undertaken under CLTRAP (WG on Effects) and by Italy (on cultural heritage). It is not sure that the results will be available in time concerning cultural heritage. For ecosystems, maps of sensitive areas are available that cover acidification, eutrophication and ozone damage. A comparison of these maps (based on scientific criteria) with the “official” mapping (reflecting the member State choice) required through the Natura 2000 Directive should be achieved.
- Composition of GDP and GDP per country as well as consumption of different types of fertiliser will be added. It worth noting that the metrics proposed are based on available EUROSTAT statistics.
- Interest rate is considered as an exogenous data and is fixed implicitly to 4% (constant).

Pressure:

- POP’s and HM are maintained even if they are not considered as priority substances in the CAFE programme (which covers all atmospheric pollutants).
- Emissions will be divided between “urban” emissions and the others. Availability of data will be checked (Auto-Oil 2 programme, City Delta project, information from Member States, TREMOVE calculations for transport). If these data are essential and not available, this could be mentioned in the future thematic strategy as a gap to be covered in future policy development. The size of the cities to be considered as “urban” should be decided notably on the basis of EEA reports and data availability, one possibility is to use the same size as defined in the air quality directives i e 250,000 people.
- Emissions originating from other countries (out of the domain of EMEP and RAINS) and having an influence on air quality in Europe will be included in the “impact” section.
- Concerning PM, only primary emissions should be considered as an input, secondary PM are calculated on the basis of other emissions (which means that secondary PM will be moved to the State section).

State:

- State (and impact) indicators will be also presented in terms of relative and absolute exceedances (similar to AOT) or probability of exceedances of critical loads/levels and limit/target values, and WHO recommendations.
- PM (2.5 and 10) will be added in the Regional air quality indicator
- Due to weak policy relevance, the indicator on changes of pH in precipitation was removed.
- Yearly average (in addition to summer average) for ozone will be included.

- Concerning hot spots, a second study (complementary to the City Delta project) is envisaged by the CAFE Secretariat in order to better understand interactions between rural, urban and hot spots pollution levels. As Air Quality limit values must be respected everywhere, this idea is supported by the WG.

Impact

- Concerning health indicators, it is agreed that some modifications in the metrics could appear on the basis of the work of WHO. This concerns particularly ozone for which the AOT notion could be changed. In the case of linearity relationship between morbidity and mortality, it could be possible to suppress one of both indicators in the view of benefit monetary analysis.
- The two indicators on health will be joined, and mortality and morbidity for each pollutant will be included.
- The indicator on visibility will be kept except if it is too difficult (and/or expensive) to collect relevant data. Roob Maas will check available information on that point, notably from the US where it is considered as a more important issue. Some information is also available from France.
- Concerning Nitrogen atmospheric burden to coastal areas and seas, it should be useful to have an idea of the relative contribution of atmospheric pollution compared with other sources (agriculture, waste waters, etc.). The nitrogen atmospheric burden to the lakes and rivers will be added.
- More information is needed (from UNECE) concerning the feasibility and opportunity to introduce an indicator on odour nuisances. A few members would prefer to keep that for the local level.

Response:

- An indicator on €spent per unit of benefit will be introduced.
- It is important to keep and develop further indicators on equity such as changes of employment opportunities, income and cost distributions between countries and sectors e.g. through marginal costs. Sustainability indicators are more difficult to define and should appear as a separate indicator.

Conclusions:

Taking into account the above-summarised comments, the list is accepted as a first work basis. A more advanced list will be discussed during the next WG meeting.

4. Discussion on Harmful effects

Andre Zuber introduced the note on “Harmful effects and target setting for CAFE”. The objective is to have a common understanding of the notion of “Harmful effects” and associated notion such as “significant negative impact” or “adverse effects”. These notions are used in various official documents (6th EAP, Directives) without a clear definition of their meanings. The Commission has made a first attempt of clarification in the use of the different terms in risk assessment (see distributed note).

- Following a discussion around these notions, it was clear that the views of the members diverged on the exact meaning of the terms. Nevertheless, within the area of air quality management there is a long tradition of risk analysis, the work within the CAFE should follow that tradition and not introduce further terms with unclear definitions and use.
- It was proposed to distinguish pollutants for which there are clear thresholds for effects from those where there is no threshold. For the first category, it could be considered that there are no harmful effects below the threshold value. For the others, a political judgement is necessary on what is “acceptable” for society in order to define the concept of “significant negative impact”. Other members pointed to the fact that probably all pollutants follow a dose-response curve that is S-shaped, and that has to be accounted for in setting the level for significant effects.
- Some members pointed out that a choice on “acceptable” level of air pollution has already been made when fixing critical loads or limit values. They propose to use existing standards and WHO recommendations. Andre Zuber emphasised that more recent risk assessments may influence the choice of what is acceptable, for instance knowledge on the negative effects of PM has evolved from the time when the limit values were fixed. Industry representatives (UNICE) felt that the choice of level for harmful effect or adverse effect is outside the competence of the WG on TS and PA. They meant that such work can only be done by effects expertise like that found in the WHO.
- A. Zuber asked for further comments, pointing out that this note (as the other) could be integrated in a report of the working group. However, this is not yet decided and must be discussed later.

5. Terms of reference for peer review

A first draft of a technical annex for the review of the RAINS model has been prepared by the CAFE secretariat jointly with Roob Maas and the UN ECE CLRTAP secretariat. The review will be focused on the scientific validity of the RAINS model, not on validation of input data, which is done through other procedures.

The review of the RAINS model may begin in August 2003 and should be finished by the end of 2003. This timing will allow to correct (if necessary) the development of the Baseline scenario for which a provisional draft is planned for August 2003.

As it will be difficult to find required competent reviewers, that do not have a vested interest, suggestions on potential members of the review team are welcome. Names and CV's should be forwarded to the CAFE secretariat. This request should be extended to the Steering Group members (by E-mail).

The technical annex will be adapted according the following comments:

- Point 4.5-Questions: the text will be adapted concerning the integration of non-technical measures in RAINS.
- Point 10-Budget: the time allocation will be adapted as apparently 2 weeks for the reviewers should be insufficient.

Due to the late transmission of the note to the members, it is proposed to welcome additional comments up to next Monday (11/11).

6. Any other business

6.1 Working Group on PM: Stefan Jacobi (EC) gave a brief overview of the progress done in the PM working group. The minutes of the last meeting held in September in London will be forwarded to the members of this WG. The goal is to produce a final position paper by the second half of 2003. Some parts of this position paper are already under production, for others input from WHO is needed. A workshop on PM is already foreseen on the 11 and 12 of June 2003.

6.2 Other ongoing contracts: Matti Vainio (EC) informed that the kick-off meeting for the "REMOVE" model development was held the day before the working group meeting. He also informed that the terms of reference for the cost-benefit analysis in the CAFE context are presently under preparation and should be ready by the end of the year.

6.3 Next meetings: Taking into account the next Steering Group meetings (17/2, 2 and 3/6, 1 and 2/12 2003), the following dates are accepted for the next TSPA meetings: 30/1, 6/5 and 12/9 in Brussels.

7. Actions to be taken: summary

The following actions are expected from the WG participants:

- Communication of references on relevant *ex-post* evaluation studies and further comments on list of questions for *ex-post* evaluation distributed during the meeting (point 2.2- deadline: end of November).
- Further comments on the conclusions on "Harmful effects" (point 4- no deadline set).
- Additional comments on the proposed technical annex for RAINS review (point 5- Deadline: 11/11).