

Preparing draft “*Guidelines on Effects*”

Draft guidelines for reporting on the monitoring and modelling of effects of air pollution to human health and the environment under the Convention

Information note prepared by the Coordination Centre for Effects (CCE), Working Group on Effects

The Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution has from the beginning emphasized the importance of monitoring and evaluation of air pollution effects to its policymaking. The work is implemented by the International Cooperative Programmes (ICP) of its Working Group on Effects. The effects-oriented activities under the Convention provide monitoring and modelling data and indicators on the status and development of effects. However, specific requirements for national reporting in the text of the Convention and its protocols mainly address the emissions, for which guidelines and guidebooks have been prepared. The evaluation of effects, together with atmospheric studies, contribute to the assessment of the effectiveness of control measures. However, effects studies are the only means to address the sufficiency of emission abatement.

The Executive Body of the Convention, at its meeting on 10–13 December 2007, took note of the benefits of sharing the existing effects monitoring and modelling infrastructure with other policy processes. It also recommended keeping effects assessment and work on indicators firmly linked together. The Convention uses critical loads (a risk indicator for detrimental impacts) to develop emission reduction strategies and used monitoring and modelling data to assess policy success and further emission control needs.

The Extended Bureau of Working Group on Effects, at its meeting on 5–6 February 2008, agreed to prepare general voluntary guidelines for effects monitoring (“*Guidelines on Effects*”). They would enhance and harmonize efforts across the ICPs for an improved response to the needs of the Convention. It requested the Coordination Centre for Effects (CCE) to take the lead in this preparatory work.

The proposed draft “*Guidelines on Effects*” would prescribe **what** countries need to report, while the “**how**” is already described in the technical manuals of ICPs. Note, that the distinction between “*Guidelines on Effects*” and technical manuals is comparable to the distinction between “*Emission Guidelines*” and the “*Emission Guidebook*”.

The work of the European Commission on revising its national emission ceilings directive has indicated interest to accommodate effects indicators. They would help to assess the effectiveness of emission abatement. In 2007 the Extended Bureau of the Working Group on Effects with the secretariat prepared an informal information note for the European Commission on Convention’s effects-oriented activities, participation and selected main indicators on impacts.

The main objectives of the proposed “*Guidelines on Effects*” would be to:

- (a) Enhance the policy use of results from effects-oriented activities;
- (b) Strengthen the participation of Parties to the Convention work on effects;
- (c) Harmonize the reporting of results to all stakeholders;
- (d) Highlight the role of effects-oriented activities in compliance of protocols;
- (e) Propose new reporting mechanisms for use of effects-oriented bodies under the Convention.

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The proposal is to prepare “*Guidelines on Effects*” during 2008. The draft will be presented for all effects programmes, preferably at their annual meetings in spring 2008, for discussion, review and feedback. Based on the responses, a revised draft document would be presented for the Working Group on Effects in its twenty-seventh session on 22–24 September 2008. During the process, the Working Group on Strategies and Review will be informed on the progress. A revised document would be prepared by the Extended Bureau of the Working Group on Effects, to be presented to the Executive Body in December 2008.