

Emission inventory adjustments and Parties' emission projections reporting to the Convention

A non-technical discussion paper

19/08/2023

Drafted by Co-Chairs of the TFEIP following discussions in the TFEIP community and consultations with a group of stakeholders.

1 Context and Aims

- At its 2023 annual meeting (18-20th April 2023), the Task Force on Emission Inventories and Projections (TFEIP) discussed the possibility of including emission inventory adjustments in Parties' reporting of emission projections to the Convention. The TFEIP co-Chairs agreed to consult with other stakeholders before drafting a discussion paper for submission to the joint EMEP/WGE Steering Body ahead of their meeting on 11-15th September 2023.
- A group of stakeholders met twice¹ to discuss this issue, including connections to the reporting under the EU NEC Directive. This group consisted of the EMEP Chair and representatives from: the TFEIP, the Centre on Emission Inventories and Projections, the Convention secretariat, and the European Commission.
- This paper provides an overview of the issue and points for consideration which could be discussed at the joint EMEP/WGE Steering Body Meeting to decide the most appropriate next steps.

2 Overview

What are emission inventory adjustments?

- There are several "flexibilities" associated with reporting emissions under the Convention and its Protocols. To date, the only reporting flexibility that has been used by Parties is the "adjustment to emissions inventory". Under certain circumstances, this allows the historical emission inventory submission to include a "national total for compliance" that differs from the "national total" (using a best science approach).

Why consider allowing the inclusion of emission inventory adjustments in emission projections?

- Parties are only permitted to apply for emission inventory adjustments for historical years in which they are in non-compliance and when this adjustment contributes to bringing them into/closer to compliance for a given historical year.
- Parties may be in a position where they currently report projected non-compliance with ERCs, but have in the past applied for, and have had accepted, an adjustment that (if it continued to be accepted), results in the Party complying with ERCs in subsequent years. Under these circumstances, projections may over-estimate the risk of non-compliance for future years.
- The likelihood of achieving ERCs in future years could be more accurately reflected if Parties with approved (historical) emission inventory adjustments include the impact of the

¹ At the extended EMEP Bureau meeting (24-26th April 2023) and during a web conference call (10th August 2023).

emission inventory adjustments on emission projections submitted to the Convention, in addition to projections compiled using a best science approach.

3 Practical, Technical, and Legal Considerations

The principle of including the impact of emission inventory adjustments in emission projections reporting could be accepted only where:

1. The impacts reported within the projections submission are derived from an adjustment that has previously been approved under the historical emission inventory review process,
2. Inclusion of reporting impacts from adjustment in projections reporting is an option for the relevant Party, not a requirement, and
3. This optional additional reporting does not affect existing reporting requirements, such as the need to report emission projections based on a best science approach i.e. it is optionally reported as additional information (cf. emission inventories “national total” vs. “national total for compliance”).

4 Proposed way forward

The EMEP/WGE Steering Body may wish to discuss the points presented in this paper, conclude whether it does/does not support the possibility of including, in addition to best science estimates, the effects of previously approved emission inventory adjustments in emission projections reporting, and identify actions accordingly.