

Inf Doc. to the 43rd Session of the Executive Body to the UNECE Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution
(Agenda Item 7: Draft 2024-2025 workplan for the implementation of the Convention).

Note on Revision of the Ammonia Guidance Document

Note from the co-chairs of the Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen

Background

During the 61st session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review (September 2023), the Task Force raised questions about the word count and approach for revising the Guidance Document on Preventing and Abating Ammonia Emissions (ECE/EB.AIR/120, in short the 'Ammonia Guidance Document') (see WGSR-61: Agenda Item 4: Inf. Doc "Revision of Ammonia Guidance Document: questions and outline"). This ongoing revision is listed as Item 2.2.6 for the Draft 2024-2025 workplan for the implementation of the Convention.

As a result of discussion during WGSR-61, it was agreed with the Task Force chairs that an additional 10,000 translated words could be added to the current Ammonia Guidance Document (according to the UN word limits). The Ammonia Guidance Document is the authoritative global reference on control of ammonia emissions, and as such is already 46,000 words. Therefore the document is already longer than the word limit and hence the use of the maximum allowable additional 10,000 words translated into the official UNECE languages.

Update

On 16-17 November, experts from of the Task Force (under the lead of the Task Force's Expert Panel on Mitigation of Agricultural Nitrogen, EPMAN) met at Aarhus, Denmark and on-line to start detailed discussion of the revision of the Ammonia Guidance Document.

The experts agreed that they would prefer to take a different approach to revising the Guidance Document to the proposed approach emerging from WGSR-61. In particular, the experts noted that it is roughly 10 years since the last update of the Ammonia Guidance Document and that there is substantial new information, which would be difficult to limit to 10,000 words. The experts also noted that there were efficiency improvements, which could see some parts of the existing document shortened, but that more words would need to be added. Importantly, the experts noted that they were planning to dedicate a substantial amount of their time on a voluntary basis, and therefore the preferred to prepare a document of which they and the Parties could be proud, i.e., a world-leading document suitable for the years ahead. They therefore requested a different approach so as not to constrain their work unreasonably.

Proposed solution

The Task Force experts propose the following solution, involving the preparation of two parts of the new guidance document:

- 1) **Executive Summary:** A completely new document of up to 10,000 words including all figures, tables and references to be translated. This document will focus on providing the most critical information, including key efficiencies of abatement methods reported, and key principles. This document would then be submitted an official document for translation into the UNECE languages.
- 2) **Full version of the Guidance Document (excluding the executive summary):** A full revision of the document according to the needs of the latest evidence. This may lead to some shortening of existing sections, as well as as new chapters and annexes. While the Task Force chairs will encourage economy of words, it is expected that there will be more than 10,000 additional new words. This document is to be submitted to WGSR as an Inf. Doc. (i.e. not translated). The full version will be presented in such a way as to enable Parties to see clearly which parts of the document have changed compared with the existing guidance document. It is planned for this version to include colour graphical images and photographs from the outset, to ensure that all material is reviewed by experts and parties.

Way forward

It is understood that the WGSR may recommend both parts of the document for adoption by the Executive Body. Doing this would have the benefit of ensuring that the Gothenburg Protocol, its Annex IX and other international legislation would refer to the full Guidance Document, not just the limited text that is included in the Executive Summary.

Following anticipated revisions by WGSR and adoption by the the Parties at the Executive Body, the Task Force plans to publish the Guidance Document in a colour format, combining the Executive Summary and the full text (parts 1 and 2).

Actions

The Task Force:

- *Invites* feedback from the Executive Body to enable agreement on the proposed approach;
- *Reiterates* its request for funds to support the process, including support for stakeholder workshops, which would strengthen consensus and encourage uptake of the approaches outlined by the Guidance Document.