

Recent developments in the environmental policy of the EU



EU-CA 6thWGECC Meeting 10-11 July, Astana



Presentation

1. Circular Economy Strategy
2. Sustainable Development Strategy
3. EU Air Quality Policy
4. Ongoing and forthcoming



Main points

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Circular Economy

Closing the loop -
An EU Action Plan for the
Circular Economy

From a Linear Economy...



...to a Circular Economy



Circular economy systems keep the added value in products for as long as possible and eliminate waste.

They keep resources within the economy, so that they can be productively used again and again and hence create further value.



What are the limitations of a Linear Economy?

Lost value of materials and products

Scarcity of resources

Volatile prices of resources

Waste generated

Unstable supply of raw materials

Environmental degradation & climate change



What are the benefits of a Circular Economy?

The value of products, materials and resources is maintained in the economy for as long as possible

Waste generation is minimised

Boost to the economy and competitiveness by creating new business opportunities, and introducing innovative products and services

Brings economic, social and environmental gains

Key action areas





Key actions include:

- Funding of over €650 million under Horizon 2020 and €5.5 billion under the structural funds;
- Actions to reduce food waste including a common measurement methodology, improved date marking, and tools to meet the global Sustainable Development Goal to halve food waste by 2030;
- Measures in the Ecodesign working plan for 2015-2017 to promote reparability, durability and recyclability of products, in addition to energy efficiency;
- A revised Regulation on fertilisers;
- A strategy on plastics in the circular economy;
- A series of actions on water reuse including a legislative proposal on minimum requirements for the reuse of wastewater.

The Communication includes a clear timeline for the actions proposed and a plan for a simple and effective monitoring framework for the circular economy.



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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: 1 UNIVERSAL AGENDA, 17 GOALS





The EU's response to the UN 2030 Agenda

Package adopted on Tuesday 22 November 2016:

- **Communication "Next steps sustainable European future"**
- **Staff working document**
(overview how Commission initiatives contribute to the SDGs)
- **Proposal for a new European Consensus on Development**
(proposes a shared vision and framework for development cooperation for the EU and its MSs, aligned with the 2030 Agenda)
- **Communication on a renewed partnership with African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries**



Not starting from scratch, few actions on environment ...

SDG 6 – comprehensive water legislation, water reuse minimum requirements to come

SDG 12 – circular economy package in constant development, e.g. plastics strategy

SDG 14/15 – Birds/Habitats Directives, Biodiversity Strategy 2020, Ocean Governance

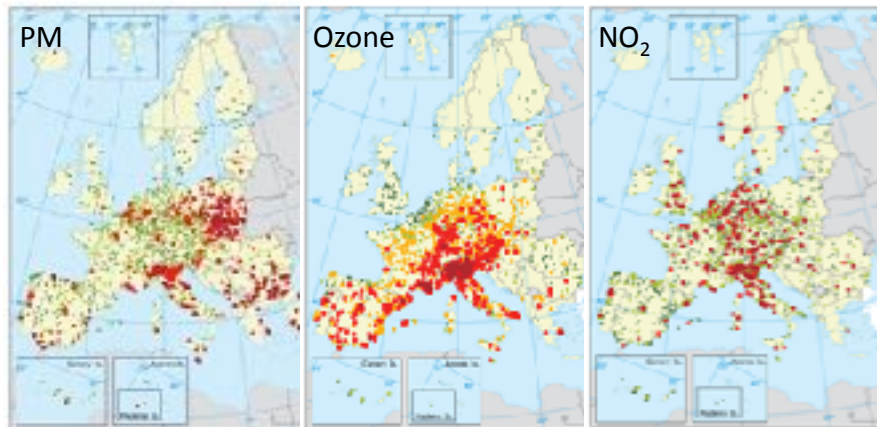
SDG 3/11 – NEC Directive

Main points

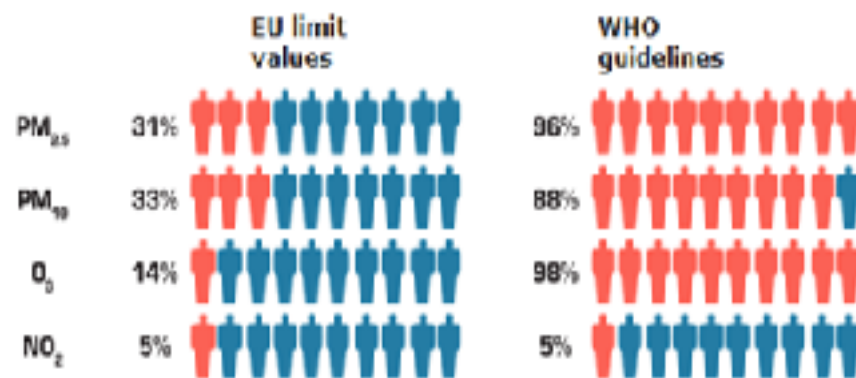
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Air quality today in the EU

significant remaining challenges to resolve



- Health & Environment Impacts
 - > 400.000 premature deaths each year
(10 times the amount of people dying prematurely in traffic)
 - > 30% EU citizens exposed to air pollutant levels above EU standards
 - > 90% EU citizens exposed to air pollutant levels above WHO guidelines



- Socio-Economic Impacts
 - Direct economic costs: €23 billion per year
(€15bn lost workdays, €4bn healthcare costs, €3bn crop yield loss and €1bn damage to buildings).
 - External costs: €300-900 billion per year
 - 436 million restricted activity days
(incl. 121 million lost workdays)



The Commission Clean Air Policy Package

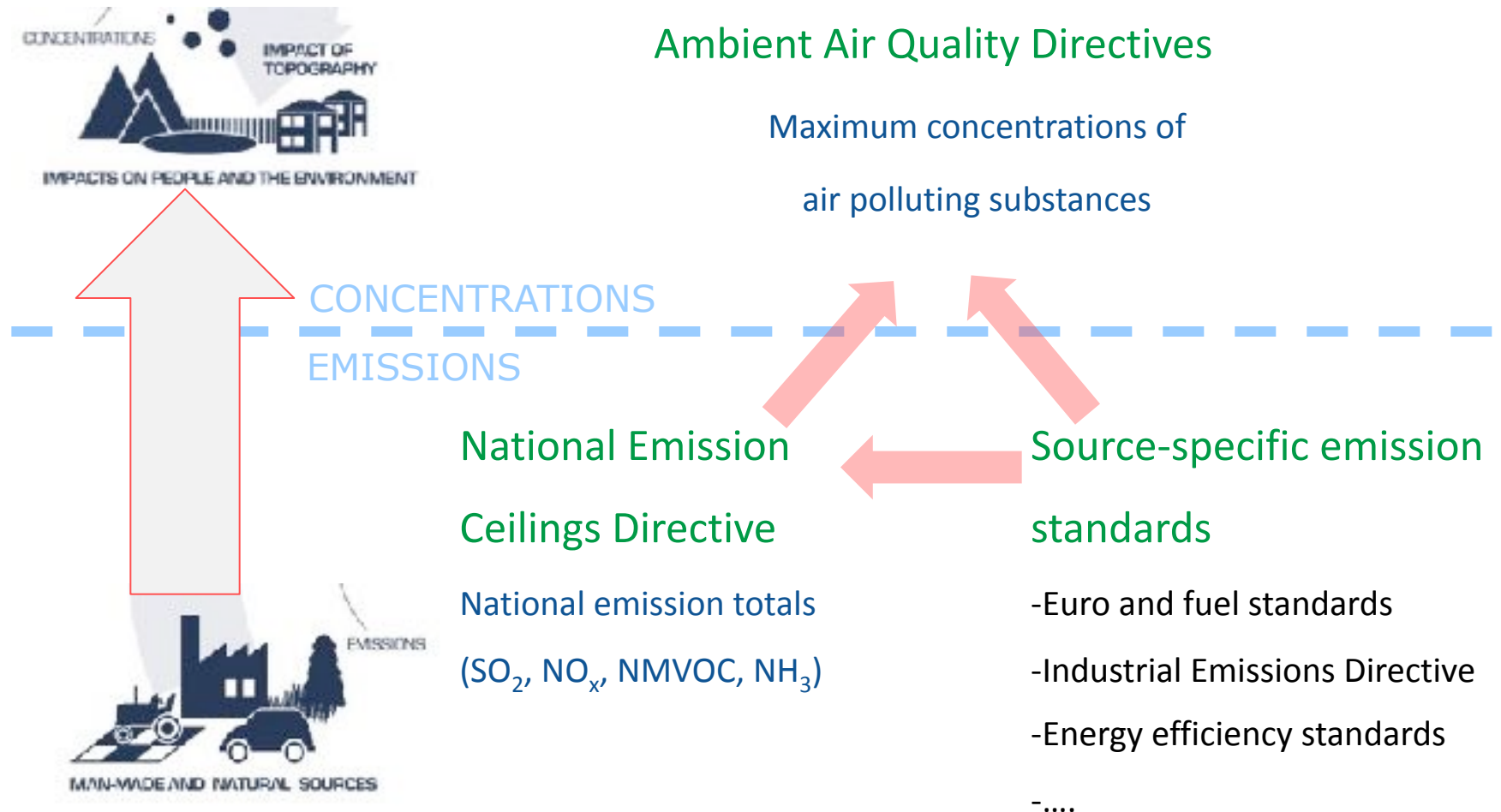
18 December 2013

- ❑ Communication setting out the 2-stage approach (2020 and 2030) and the objectives – a Clean Air Programme for Europe
- ❑ Proposal for a revised Directive on National Emission Ceilings (NECD) setting levels for 2020 and 2030
- ❑ Proposal for a new Directive on controlling emissions from Medium Combustion Plants ("MCPD")
- ❑ Fully implementing EU legislation, including the EURO 6 for vehicles and standards for small heating appliances, responsibility for Member States to take action as well.
- ❑ Ratification instrument for the Gothenburg Protocol amendment

Clean Air Policies in Europe – An Overview

Ambient Air Quality Directives

Maximum concentrations of
air polluting substances





Clean Air Policies in Europe – An Overview

The **international** context

- UN ECE Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution (CLRTAP) and its Protocols (e.g. Gothenburg Protocol for 2010 and 2020)

The main **European Union** air policy instruments

- Ambient Air Quality Directives (AAQD): Maximum concentrations to be attained across the EU (SO₂, NO₂, PM₁₀, benzene, lead, CO, O₃, arsenic, cadmium, nickel, PM_{2.5} and BaP)
- National Emission Ceilings Directive (NECD): National emission inventories and caps to limit transboundary pollution (SO₂, NO_x, NMVOC, and NH₃)
- Source-specific performance standards: Euro and fuel standards, Industrial Emissions Directive, energy efficiency standards, etc.

The main **Member States** air policy instruments

- Air Quality Plans & Programmes (AAQD)
- National Emission Inventories, Projections, and Measures (NECD)
- Fiscal measures, urban mobility measure, ...

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Some ongoing advancements...

EU Became a party to CITES Convention

Implementation of the Nature Action Plan

Green Financing Platform with the **EIB and national banks**

Ratification package will allow EU to ratify Minamata Convention on Mercury once concluded

Assessment of the contribution of Circular Economy to the **Bio-economy Strategy**



...and forthcoming

Plastics Strategy

Pre-demolition assessment guidelines for the construction sector

Development of **indicators for the assessment** of the environmental performance of buildings

Interface chemicals, products and waste legislation

Environmental legislation implementation

Minimum requirements for reused water



Thank you for your attention!

DG Environment: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/environment/index_en.htm