

E-news update September 5 2006

In this issue:

ENERGY AND EMISSIONS

- 1.1. Romanian NAP published for consultation
- 1.2. Tests Show Promise for New Environment Friendly Technologies
- 1.3. Survey predicts private sector to play important role in solving climate change
- 1.4. US direct action: How American cities have bypassed Bush on Kyoto
- 1.5. California Strikes Accord on Global Warming Bill

CLIMATE IMPACTS

- 2.1. Climate change will reach point of no return in 20 years, says expert

CONFERENCES

- 3.1. The Renewable Resources - Sustainable Future –forum

PUBLICATIONS

- 4.1. The White House and the Kyoto Protocol: Double Standards on Uncertainties and their Consequences
- 4.2. The third report from the Working Group on Climate Change and Development

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 5.1. Invitation for comments – JI project in Romania
- 5.2. Invitation for comments – JI project in Ukraine
- 5.3. Climate Deal cyber action
- 5.4. UK Environment for Europe Fund

ENERGY AND EMISSIONS

1.1. Romanian NAP published for consultation

The Romanian Government has published its draft National Allocation Plan (NAP) for the period 2007 and for 2008-2012 for public consultations. Romania has developed the 1st and 2nd NAP as one integrated document using the same methodology and input data, whenever possible, and aims to notify the European Commission of both NAPs at the same time.

In total 222 installations have been identified. The total amount of allowances are 81.32 Mton in 2007 and 457.39 Mton in 2008-2012. About 47% of national emissions are covered by the EU-ETS.

Romania has applied a two-step approach to allocation with sector caps for the energy sector, metals, cement, lime, glass, ceramics, and cellulose and paper. The historical reference year emissions have been taken as the average of the two years with highest emissions in the period 2001-2004. Top-down macro economic production and emission projections have been leading in the allocation on sector and installation level. Reductions in carbon intensity have been accounted for on sector level. Romania intends to allocate a bonus for early action and efficient cogeneration. A new entrants reserve and a Joint Implementation reserve for current and new JI projects have been set aside.

The NAP has been developed over the last 5 months by MEWM in close cooperation with the Ministry of Economy and Commerce and the Ministry of Administration and the Interior. The Dutch Government has provided technical assistance through a consortium of Ecofys, CAP SD and local consultants. The National Environmental Protection Agency has been responsible for the inventory of installations. The Institute for Studies and Power Engineering (ISPE) has supported the analytical work.

The draft NAP (main document and annexes) can be found on the website www.eu-ets.ro and on the website of the Ministry of Environment and Water Management (MEWM) www.mmediu.ro. The English translation will be available soon. On the website, draft Ministerial Orders on the monitoring and reporting guidelines and on permitting are also published for public consultations (in Romanian only). MEWM welcomes comments on the draft NAP until September 29th, 2006.

1.2. Tests Show Promise for New Environment Friendly Technologies

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September

2006,

<http://yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/4d84d5d9a719de8c85257018005467c2/b57e194f75be69ab852571dc004ecd66!OpenDocument>

Emissions of the most potent greenhouse gas, sulfur hexafluoride (SF₆), could be history in less than four years, according to results of pilot tests conducted by the Environmental Protection Agency and the magnesium industry. Preliminary results show that alternative technologies have the potential to replace SF₆, which is used to prevent oxidation and burning of molten metal.

"By investing in innovative technologies, our country's environmental well being will improve," said Bill Wehrum, EPA acting assistant administrator for Air and Radiation. "The Bush Administration understands that international collaboration will lead the way in identifying technologies that protect our global environment."

Led by EPA's SF₆ Emission Reduction Partnership for the Magnesium Industry, a group of companies and researchers from Australia, Canada, Japan, and the U.S. conducted the tests and emission measurements for cutting-edge, climate friendly melt protection technologies that promise significant environmental benefits.

EPA's Magnesium Partnership is a cooperative effort between EPA and industry to reduce and eliminate emissions of sulfur hexafluoride from magnesium production and casting processes through cost-effective technologies and practices. Eliminating emissions from SF₆ about three million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent annually is roughly equal to emissions from 500,000 vehicles per year.

The Bush Administration has committed financial, international and domestic resources to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The president's policy achieves near-term reductions, while investing in long-term solutions. In 2004, EPA's voluntary partnerships prevented over 60 million metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions, equivalent to the annual emissions from over 40 million vehicles. EPA's climate programs continue to exceed the agency's greenhouse gas emissions goals and are on target to meet the president's goal to reduce greenhouse gas intensity 18 percent by 2012.

More information about EPA's SF₆ Emission Reduction Partnership for the Magnesium Industry: <http://www.epa.gov/highgwp/magnesium-sf6/>

1.3. Survey predicts private sector to play important role in solving climate change

31 August 2006

Companies and business associations will be the most effective organizations in developing and implementing solutions to climate change, according to a recent survey.

And such solutions are urgently needed: Experts doubt that the current progress on climate change will be fast enough to avert major, irreversible damage, and one third believe it is already too late.

The survey, conducted by GlobeScan with the support of the COM+ Alliance, explored sustainability experts' views on approaches to climate change for the post-2012 period after the expiration of the Kyoto Protocol.

Almost half of the experts (46%) believe that the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) will play a major role in defining or implementing climate change solutions over the next five years - second only to the European Union (79%). The Council is also named as one of 13 organizations/entities currently most influential in defining or implementing climate change solutions, and - alongside the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) - the preferred source of information on this topic.

What will climate change solutions look like? Experts predict that economic instruments, new science and technology, and regulatory approaches will be the most effective approaches in the post-Kyoto world. More see the development of renewable energy sources as an effective solution to climate change than those who think that bio-fuels, clean coal combustion or carbon capture and sequestration are the best solutions. Among financial mechanisms explored, carbon taxes and emission trading are seen as potentially the most effective instruments.

Sixty-five percent of the respondents expect that private sector companies and business associations will be leading the implementation of appropriate solutions in the coming years, though currently governments are seen to be influencing society's reaction to climate change the most.

"Experts clearly expect the private sector to play an increasingly important role in addressing climate change. Other findings, however, suggest that companies require a clear policy context from governments before investing heavily in developing solutions to climate changes", says the survey.

The Formative Research for the Climate Forum: A Survey of Sustainability Experts and in-depth Interviews with Climate Change Solution Providers, conducted by the international opinion research firm GlobeScan Incorporated with the support of COM+ Alliance, explored sustainability experts' views on approaches to climate change for the post-2012 period to understand the network of influence within the climate change community that will determine what types of solutions are developed and implemented in the coming years.

GlobeScan and its partners will use the research to help design and build a global panel of 5,000 influential climate change "solution providers" who will be surveyed regularly and the results broadly publicized. These proposed "Climate Forum" surveys will successively build on each previous one to quantify and analyze areas of agreement and contention within the climate change debate.

More: <http://www.wbcsd.org/plugins/DocSearch/details.asp?type=DocDet&ObjectId=MjAyMjU>;

Download the survey: <http://www.wbcsd.org/includes/getTarget.asp?type=d&id=MjAyMjY>.

1.4. US direct action: How American cities have bypassed Bush on Kyoto

1 September 2006, The Independent

It is not just the state of California that is bypassing the authority of the US government to take action on global warming.

The mayors of more than 300 cities across the country have signed a Climate Protection Agreement in which they have pledged to meet the emissions-cutting timetable laid down by the Kyoto Protocol - regardless of what the Bush administration decides.

Some of those cities, such as Seattle, which took the lead on drafting and lobbying for the agreement, are bastions of liberal politics and environmentalism, acting out their ideological convictions. Others, though, such as the exclusive Colorado ski resorts Vail and Aspen, are also motivated by a powerful self-interest. If global warming continues unabated, the Rocky Mountain snowpack will melt and there will be no skiing in Vail, Aspen or anywhere else by the end of this century.

Seattle's Mayor, Greg Nickels, proposed the mayors' agreement when Kyoto came into effect at the start of last year. By June 2005, he had 140 signatories, and the number has more than doubled since.

The goal is to "meet or exceed" the Kyoto target of cutting global warming pollution to 7 per cent below 1990 levels by 2012.

The agreement also contains a 12-point action plan, urging signatory cities to discourage sprawl, promote public transport, car-pooling and bicycle lanes, turn to alternative energy sources including alternative fuels for the municipal vehicle and bus fleet, plant lots of trees and introduce environmental education programmes in schools and community colleges.

Seattle, in the Pacific Northwest, is the perfect poster-child for many of these initiatives, since it sits between two heavily forested mountain ranges and is surrounded by water. Despite a long history of environmentalism and commitment to public transport, it has been struggling with smog problems in recent years because of heavy car commuter traffic from the ever-expanding suburbs.

The Colorado ski resorts, meanwhile, have taken robust action to convert to renewable energy to power their ski lifts, shops, hotels and administrative buildings.

Vail just signed a deal to buy more than 150,000 megawatt-hours of wind power per year - the greenhouse gas-saving equivalent of taking 18,000 cars off the roads. Aspen, meanwhile, commissioned a study in April that revealed the severe damage done to the environment by private jets landing at its airport. It is now working to curtail air traffic.

Aspen's top city lawyer, John Worcester, described the city earlier this year as the global-warming equivalent of "the canary in the miner's cage". "It is incumbent on all of us," he said, "to face the potential threat upon our economy and way of life as we would any other potential threat".

1.5. California Strikes Accord on Global Warming Bill

31 August 2006, Planet Ark Reuters

California catapulted to the forefront of US efforts to fight global warming on Wednesday with an accord that will give the state the toughest laws in the nation on cutting greenhouse gas emissions.

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, who has accused fellow Republican President George W. Bush of lacking leadership on climate change, said he reached a "historic agreement" with Democrats to make California a world leader in reducing carbon emissions.

"The success of our system will be an example for other states and nations to follow as the fight against climate change continues," Schwarzenegger said in a statement.

The bill now seems certain to win approval this week in a vote in the Senate and the Assembly, where Democrats hold majorities. Thursday is the last day of the legislative session ahead of November elections.

Despite opposition from within his own party, Schwarzenegger was expected to support the bill since he has made much of his environmental record in his reelection bid.

Green policies are popular among voters in environment-savvy California, the world's eighth-biggest economy and the 12th largest producer of greenhouse gas emissions.

California's Global Warming Solutions Act aims to cut emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 with an enforceable cap and mandatory reporting for top polluters like energy companies.

The United States is the world's largest producer of the heat-trapping gases that many scientists link to extreme weather like violent hurricanes and rising sea levels.

But Bush pulled the United States out of the 160-nation Kyoto Protocol to cut greenhouse gas emissions in 2001, arguing that it would hurt the economy and unfairly excluded developing nations like China.

CLIMATE IMPACTS

2.1. Climate change will reach point of no return in 20 years, says expert

5 September 2006, The Guardian

The world only has 10 years to develop and implement new technologies to generate clean electricity before climate change reaches the point of no return - something the UK government failed to appreciate in its recent energy review, according to an expert.

Speaking at the British Association festival of science in Norwich yesterday, Peter Smith, a professor of sustainable energy at the University of Nottingham, said the UK had to embark on a strategy to reduce energy use by insulating homes better and encouraging more micro-generation schemes such as solar panels.

"The scientific opinion is that we have a ceiling of 440 parts per million [ppm] of atmospheric carbon before there is a tipping point, a step change in the rate of global warming," said Professor Smith. "The rate at which we are emitting now, around 2ppm a year and rising, we could expect that that tipping point will reach us in 20 years time. That gives us 10 years to develop technologies that could start to bite into the problem."

The current level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is 380ppm.

He said the government's recent energy review had failed to address the problem and had simply reiterated two long-held assumptions: that wind power should provide 15% of electricity by 2020 and that renewable energy alone could not fill the energy gap left by the decommissioning of nuclear and the demise of fossil-fuel power stations. The solution presented was to build a new generation of nuclear power stations.

"Astonishingly, the review pays hardly any regard to the principle energy asset which this country enjoys, namely its rivers, estuaries, coastal currents and waves," said Prof Smith. "Huge amounts of energy could be harvested using existing technologies, which could meet the nuclear shortfall several times over." A tidal energy barrage across the Severn river, for example, could have a peak output of around six gigawatts, more than 10% of the country's peak demand.

"The technology is robust, simple, it's basically a water-wheel," said Prof Smith. "To say it is too innovatory, which the government has done, is rubbish."

There are several sites around Britain with similar energy potential, including the Channel Islands, he said.

According to the Energy Savings Trust, homes in the UK have the potential to provide 40% of their own electricity using micro-generation. "The ultimate goal for our homes is to make them near carbon-neutral and, at best, make them net contributors of clean energy," said Prof Smith. "In the long term, a combination of demand reduction and the full complement of renewables could make the UK virtually carbon free."

But he was not optimistic that the government would make these changes voluntarily. "What will overcome [government apathy] is when there's a two-metre rise in the Thames so that the House of Commons is under water," he said. "The tragedy is that there needs to be a fairly catastrophic event

to motivate politicians to take action, [so] they feel confident that the public will vote for them next time."

The Met Office believes the Thames estuary is the most vulnerable place in northern Europe to major storm surges. The existing barrage could be overwhelmed at almost any time, and estimates suggest this could cause £30bn of damage to London and the surrounding areas.

CONFERENCES

3.1. The Renewable Resources - Sustainable Future –forum

During Finnish EU presidency, the Finnish forest sector wishes to contribute to competitiveness, sustainability and well-being in Europe, by pointing out the multiple potentials related to renewable natural resources, e.g. forests and wood.

The Finnish Forest Association invites European deciders and opinion leaders from the fields of forestry, environment, rural development, energy, and industrial ecology to participate to this cross-sectoral, future-looking forum and output oriented forum. The working methods include interactive approaches and modern group work methods to highlight the role of renewables, and to compile messages to ongoing policy and strategy processes. For further information on the event, please visit the website <http://www.smy.fi/renewableresources/index.html>.

The Renewable Resources - Sustainable Future -forum will take place in Helsinki on 2nd November 2006. An evening reception will be organised the previous night and a half-day excursion for the interested will be organised on November 3rd. The registration is free of charge, but the participants are expected to pay their transport to Helsinki and their accommodation at the Congress site.

They have 5 open places for registration to the forum to the persons who find interest in the use of renewables and it's relation to competitiveness and European well-being. If you are interested, please send a message to renewableresources@smy.fi or to the project manager tina.byring@smy.fi.

PUBLICATIONS

4.1. The White House and the Kyoto Protocol: Double Standards on Uncertainties and their Consequences

Tulkens, Philippe and Tulkens, Henry, (June 2006). FEEM Working Paper No. 89.06 Available at SSRN: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=910811>.

Abstract: This paper compares the level of uncertainty widely reported in climate change scientific publications with the level of uncertainty of the costs estimates of implementing the Kyoto Protocol in the United States. It argues that these two categories of uncertainties were used and ignored, respectively, in the policy making process in the US so as to challenge the scientific basis on the one hand and on the other hand to assert that reducing emissions would hurt the economy by an amount stated without any qualification. The paper reviews the range of costs estimates published since 1998 on implementing the Kyoto Protocol in the US. It comments on the significance of these cost estimates and identifies a decreasing trend in the successive estimates. This implies that initially some of the most influential economic model-based assessments seem to have overestimated the costs, an overestimation that may have played a significant role in the US decision to withdraw from the Protocol. The paper concludes with advocating that future economic estimates always include uncertainty ranges, so as to be in line with a basic transparency practice prevailing in climate science.

4.2. The third report from the Working Group on Climate Change and Development

The report catalogues the impact of climate change and environmental degradation ranging from drought in the Amazon to floods in Haiti and elsewhere; vanishing glaciers in Colombia to extreme cold in the Andes; and hurricanes, not only in Central America and the Caribbean, but also in southern Brazil.

Up in smoke? Latin America and the Caribbean: The threat from climate change to the environment and human development can be downloaded in English: <http://www.neweconomics.org/gen/uploads/15erpvfzxbipu552pnoo1f128082006213002.pdf>.

And Spanish: <http://www.neweconomics.org/gen/uploads/15erpvfzxbipu552pnoo1f128082006213236.pdf>.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

5.1. Invitation for comments – JI project in Romania

DNV Certification is currently making a determination of the New 20MW cogeneration equipment in CET Timisoara Centru project in Romania. The project, proposed as Joint Implementation (JI) project between Romania and The Netherlands, is an energy sector project, which consists of installing a new cogeneration combined cycle of about 20 MWe (gas turbine + heat recovery steam generator + steam turbine) in the existing cogeneration plant. The goal of the project is to upgrade the existing heat production plant CET Timisoara Centru with new cogeneration capabilities.

We herewith invite comments from Parties, stakeholders and observers in accordance with the JI rules and modalities. Comments may be provided during a period of 30 days until 1st October 2006 on the DNV Climate Change webpage <http://www.dnv.com/certification/ClimateChange/>. After that the project is closed for comments, but the project documentation is still available for review.

5.2. Invitation for comments – JI project in Ukraine

The TÜV NORD JI/CDM Certification Program has been commissioned to carry out the validation of the project "Donbasskaya 3 - Utilisation of Coal Mine Methane (CMM) for heat generation and flaring".

Project description: In the Donbass area very large amounts of CMM occur. At the time most of the CMM is released to the atmosphere using degassing wells, which are often placed in the steppe far away from residential and industrial areas, so that is often impossible to use the CMM for heat generation economically. Because the electricity price is very low in Ukraine and there are no existing laws for supporting environmentally friendly energies like CMM, CMM can not be used in cogeneration units for power generation at economical conditions. Consequently most of the CMM in the Donbass area is released unused into the atmosphere.

In this project CMM from the suction system of the coal mine Donbasskaya 3, which is concurrently in construction, should be used in a boiler for heat generation. Additionally a flare for further methane destruction should be installed.

Actually there are three existing redundant steam boilers in operation with an output of 25 t/h steam each. The boilers are fired with coal and supply the coal mine facilities with heat (steam).

In this project one of the existing boilers should be fuel-switched. The boiler should be upgraded with a CMM burner system and henceforth be fired with CMM instead of coal.

Due to the large amount of CMM occurring on the coal mine, additionally a flare with a firing capacity of 5.0 MW should be installed. If the experience with the flare will be good and the amount of CMM remains high, further flares may follow.

According to the modalities for the validation of JI-projects, we invite all interested parties, stakeholders and observers to comment on the project. The PDD can be downloaded from our website: <http://www.global-warming.de/e/1512/>.

The project is open for comments from 2006-08-30 on for 30 days.

5.3. Climate Deal cyber action

The global climate is in high danger of catastrophic change. Because we consume too much energy too inefficiently, we release large amounts of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere that heat up the planet.

Everyone needs to help fight the crisis. You can make small changes to your own lifestyle, but even your best efforts will not save the climate unless governments pull their weight, too, and get tough on greenhouse gas emissions. Currently, governments are not doing enough!

If thousands of people show their government that they are ready to act, governments will not be able to shy away from doing their bit, too! So we invite people to challenge their governments with a personal "Climate Deal", showing that you are ready to fight climate change, and that you demand real government action in return!

A typical "Climate Deal" could be: "I will use my bike more often. In return the government should give more support to renewable energy!" -- but there are plenty of other ideas.

Join the action: Upload your photo and leave your personal "Climate Deal" at <http://www.foeeurope.org/climatedeal>.

