

Air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions: monitoring mechanism and implementation of the Kyoto Protocol

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The European commission presents the sixth annual progress report for monitoring Community greenhouse gas emissions and the second report under of Council Decision 280/2004/EC concerning a mechanism for monitoring Community greenhouse gas emissions and for implementing the Kyoto Protocol.

This report analyses actual emissions data from 2003, together with projections of emissions assuming scenarios 'with existing measures' and 'with additional measures'. These projections are aggregated Member States projections that will be analysed in depth in the future as not all Member States provided updated projections. The projections include the use of flexible mechanisms under the Kyoto Protocol, i. e., Joint Implementation, the Clean Development Mechanism and international emissions trading.

By 2003, EU-15 GHG emissions had decreased by 1.7% from the base year level and reached 4180 million tonnes CO₂-equivalents. This reduction is a little more than one fifth of the EC's Kyoto target. Without Kyoto mechanisms, the distance to the target has doubled from 2002, to 3.5 index points. Including Kyoto mechanisms, total GHG emissions were still 1.9 index points above the linear target path in 2003. The projections show that the EU-15 will meet their Kyoto Protocol emission reduction commitment of -8% when additional measures are implemented along with the use of flexible mechanisms. Those Member States that are above their targets urgently need to take additional measures and use the Kyoto flexible mechanisms in order to ensure that they will meet their Kyoto target.

The EU is also determined to take further action. The second phase of the European Climate Change Programme (ECCP) started in 2005. The Commission plans to review progress and explore new actions to exploit cost effective emission reduction options. ECCP II will include carbon capture and storage, emissions from road vehicles, aviation and strategies to adapt to the effects of climate change. The role of the EU in reducing vulnerability and promoting adaptation will also be explored. In addition, further policy initiatives in the field of energy efficiency and renewable energy are foreseen.