

Consultation on options for revision of the EU Thematic Strategy on Air Pollution and related policies

Section 1/6: Introductory Questions

A. Are you responding to this consultation as an individual or on behalf of an organisation? -single choice reply-(compulsory)	On behalf of an organisation
A1. What type of organisation do you represent? -single choice reply-(compulsory)	government (national)
A2. Does your organisation work mainly on an EU-wide basis or in a single country? -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Focus on a single country
A3. Please indicate the country where your organisation is located: -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Netherlands
A4. Please indicate the name of your organisation: -open reply-(compulsory)	Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment
A5. Please indicate your name and title: -open reply-(compulsory)	Eduard Dame - senior policy coordinator European Affairs
B. Do you now work on air pollution issues, or have you done so in the past? -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, air pollution has been the main focus of my professional work

D. Please feel free to provide any further details regarding your answers to the introductory questions: -open reply-(optional)

Notwithstanding that the answers and comments provided by this consultation are coordinated at national level between all ministries having an interest in the policy field of air pollution and have political commitment, the Netherlands reserves the right to reconsider its positions once the proposals of the Commission are published, inter alia taking into account the Impact Assessment to be prepared by the Commission and additional impact assessments at national level. The national agencies RIVM and PBL intend to make use of this consultation independently and their input can be different.

Unless you specify otherwise, your contribution will be published on the Commission's website. Please indicate here if you wish your contribution to be anonymous.(For full information please refer to the Specific Privacy Statement point 3) -single choice reply-(compulsory)	You can publish this contribution as it is.
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Section 2/6: Ensuring compliance with EU air quality requirements and coherence with international commitments in the short term

1. How should the EU modify or supplement its approach to ensure compliance with current air quality legislation? (Please choose one or more responses) -multiple choices reply-(compulsory)	Additional non-legislative options: for example by establishing partnership agreements with MS that focus Member State efforts to address non-compliance with air quality objectives -
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	Strengthening emissions controls: for example more stringent emissions ceilings or source controls that support the attainment of air quality limit values
1a. Which options should be considered as additional non-legislative measures? (Please choose one or more responses) -multiple choices reply-(compulsory)	Partnership implementation agreements negotiated between the Commission and Member States in infringement, where further legal action would be suspended subject to proper implementation of agreed transparent and binding programmes to address air pollution
1c. Which options should be considered to set more stringent obligations on air pollution emissions? (Please choose one response) -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Combine, in a matched approach, more stringent national ceilings under the NEC Directive with more stringent source controls at EU level
1d. What further level of ambition (if any) should the revised NEC Directive aim for in 2020? (Please choose one response) -single choice reply-(optional)	Other (Please describe below in question 2)

2. Please feel free to provide written comments on the course of action to ensure compliance with the current air quality legislation: -open reply-(**optional**)

Local air quality is a result of transboundary air pollution, regional background concentrations and local sources. Cities and regions responsible for air quality are sometimes forced to take expensive and drastic measures (for example infrastructure) while further reduction of transboundary air pollution in other Member States (also as a result of better compliance towards for instance the IED) and lower background concentrations due to more stringent source control measures at EU-level, would be far more cost-effective. The questions in these chapter are related to 2020. For the long term the Netherlands prefer a matched approach which combines more stringent national emission ceilings with more stringent but still cost-effective and feasible source control measures EU level which should also have public support (third answer of 1c). However, in practical terms 2020 is too close to achieve further emission reductions coming from additional measures already by 2020. From this point of view the 2020 ceilings could be slightly more stringent than those coming from the Gothenburg protocol, but not more stringent than a business as usual scenario (answer 1d).

Section 3/6: Further reducing exposure to damaging air pollution in the medium to long term

Sub-section 3.1: Ensuring coherence between air pollution and climate change policies

3. How should future EU air pollution policy interact with a new climate and energy framework for 2030? (Please choose one response) -single choice reply-(compulsory)	It should maximise the synergies between the policies, and set out additional measures to reduce air pollutant emissions and improvements to air quality
4. Should specific complementary action in the EU be pursued to curb emission of short-lived climate pollutants (SLCP) and their precursors, to improve both air quality impacts on health but also to boost climate mitigation in the short term? -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes
4a. Should specific complementary action be pursued to curb black carbon emissions?	Yes (please describe below in question 5)

(Please choose one response) -single choice reply- (optional)	
4b. Should specific action to address ozone precursors that are short-lived climate pollutants, such as methane, be reinforced? (Please choose one response) -single choice reply- (optional)	Yes (please describe below in question 5)
5. Please feel free to provide comments on the interaction between air pollution and climate change policies: -open reply- (optional)	
<p>The interaction between air pollution and climate changes policies should be addressed to the extent possible. Reducing the emissions of black carbon through source control measures for domestic heating, open wood/agricultural burning (prohibited in the Netherlands), inland shipping and Non Road Mobile Machinery contributes positively to both environmental problems. Therefore, the impact assessment should therefore address the benefits for air pollution and climate change. The revised Thematic strategy on Air Pollution Assessment should also address the negative impacts of biomass burning stimulated by climate policies which should be limited to the extent possible.</p>	
Sub-section 3.2a: Strategic approach and target year of future air pollution policy	
6. Which target year should be the main focus of the revised Thematic Strategy? (Please choose one response) -single choice reply-(compulsory)	2030
6a. If the target year is 2030, should the EU set an interim target for Member States to achieve for 2025 to strengthen the achievement of the 2030 objective? (Please choose one response) -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, interim targets should be set on a mandatory basis, e.g. via national emissions ceilings
Sub-section 3.2b: Strategic approach and target year of future air pollution policy	
7. How much additional progress should EU air pollution policy pursue in the revised Thematic Strategy? (Please choose one response) -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Substantial progress beyond the climate and energy framework, towards the maximum achievable pollution reduction
8. Please feel free to provide comments on the level of ambition: -open reply-(optional)	
<p>Emission ceilings based on emission reductions coming from additional measures could be set for the target years 2025 and 2030 . These ceilings would be intermediate (but mandatory) towards the ultimate goal of a clean air without significant negative impacts on human health and nature. The objectives for these target years should not necessarily follow the objectives of the TSAP, because these are related to GAINS model settings of 2005. In the meantime the model settings has been scientifically updated. It could be suggested to follow the approach used for the revision of the Gothenburg Protocol and to develop similar LOW, LOW*, HIGH and HIGH* scenarios. An Impact Assessment in which these scenarios are fully explored in terms of feasibility, all costs and benefits including those in the field of climate change, should support the process of further decision making starting with a proposal by the Commission.</p>	
Sub-section 3.3: Setting Priorities	
9. How should EU air pollution policy give priority to addressing either human health or the environment? (Please choose one response) -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Other (Please describe below)
10. Please feel free to provide comments on setting priorities: -open reply-(optional)	
Many measures to reduce air pollution have a positive effect on the improvement of human health and nature. With this in mind priority	

setting is still an issue due to the fact that primary particulate matter only affects human health. If priority setting is linked to the year in which air pollution should no longer give cause to significant negative impacts, there is a strong argument to set for human health an end year closer in time (range 2030 -2040) than for the protection of nature (around 2050). However, for certain vulnerable ecosystems full protection is already needed at the mid-term. If priority setting is linked to the measures needed to obtain certain targets for human health/environment and to the related costs and benefits, priority for nature could be given in cases where an irreversible loss of biodiversity is expected. In any case, priority setting should follow a sound cost-benefit analysis with a particular interest to the marginal costs, indicating what each extra Euro invested would bring in terms of better protection of human health or nature.

Sub-section 3.4: Choice of policy instruments

Negotiate new emission reduction commitments for 2030 under the Gothenburg Protocol which are aligned with the ambition level determined for the revised strategy. To be effective, this option would require action to ensure that EU neighbouring countries join and ratify the 2020 emission reduction targets.

4

-single choice reply-(optional)

In the National Emissions Ceiling Directive, establish emission ceilings for the 2025-2030 period which are aligned with the ambition level determined for the revised strategy.

3

-single choice reply-(optional)

In the Ambient Air Quality Directive, adapt the AQ limit values for the 2025-2030 period to more stringent levels corresponding to the ambition level determined for the revised strategy.

2

-single choice reply-(optional)

In EU legislation on emission sources, set more stringent emission requirements for industrial activities, motor vehicles and other air pollution sources, where cost-effective.

1

-single choice reply-(optional)

Use non-legislative methods, such as existing EU funding schemes, urban air quality programmes, research and innovation actions or awareness raising (please specify in following question). -single choice reply-(optional)

5

Other instruments (please provide comments in question 12).

-single choice reply-(optional)

12. Which other instruments should be used? -open reply-(optional)

Mere a remark than another instrument: it is difficult to give priority to some of the mentioned measures as they are heavily interrelated. The goal is to improve the air quality (the AAQD), but some of the most cost-effective ways of reaching that goal is to lower the emission of air pollutants. And the latter can only be achieved by source legislation. From this point of view one can argue that the Air Quality Directive, the National Emission Ceilings Directive and EU source control legislation are more or less on equal footing and cannot be treated separately.

Section 4/6: Revising the Ambient Air Quality Directive

Sub-section 4.1a: Aligning with latest scientific and technical knowledge

13. Should the indicative limit value for PM_{2.5} of 20 µg/m³ for 2020 be made mandatory? -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Yes

14. Should the PM_{2.5} or other limit values in the AAQD be made more stringent to bring them closer to WHO guidance values? (Please choose one response) -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Yes, review the limit values and bring them closer to WHO guidance values

Sub-section 4.1b: Aligning with latest scientific and technical knowledge (black carbon)

15. Should monitoring and regulation be introduced for black carbon/elemental carbon? (Please choose one response) -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Yes, introduce monitoring requirement

16. Should any other components of particulate matter be addressed in the AAQD? -open reply-(optional)

Sub-section 4.1c: Aligning with latest scientific and technical knowledge (ozone)

17. Which binding limit values (if any) should the AAQD set for ozone? (Please choose one response) -single choice reply-(compulsory)

No change

Sub-section 4.2a: Management framework

18. Should any limit values be removed from the AAQD? If so, which? -open reply-(optional)

- For PM10 two limit values exist: a daily and yearly averaged limit value. The daily averaged limit value for PM10 could be omitted, provided that the yearly PM10 limit value is tightened to a level comparable with the current daily averaged limit value. - For NO2 currently both a yearly averaged limit value and an hourly limit value exist. It is worthwhile to examine whether the same policy goals (i.e. similar support for, and guidance of, abatement policy development and implementation through abatement measures) can be achieved through the yearly limit value only. In that case the hourly limit value could be withdrawn. - Although ambient concentrations of SO2, CO and Pb have decreased substantially to levels far below the limit values, it is preferred to maintain the related limit values. When concentrations are below the 'lower assessment threshold' as indicated in the AAQD, the directive allows to reduce the monitoring substantially. Measurements at only a few locations will help to keep track of further trends and signal possible (unexpected) increases in concentrations.

Sub-section 4.2b: Management framework

19. Should any *other* monitoring and reporting obligations be reduced in the AAQD? If so, which? -open reply-(optional)

Sub-section 4.2c: Management framework

20. Should zone-specific plans be consolidated into coordinated national plans? (Please choose one response) -single choice reply-(compulsory)

Yes

21. Should cooperation among Member States be reinforced to better address transboundary pollution flows that affect local air quality problems? (Please choose one response) -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes, cooperation should be reinforced, but in other ways (pls specify in following question).
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22. Please feel free to provide comments on the options for the revision of the AAQ Directive: -open reply-(**optional**)

An alternative answer for question 21. could be that a neighboring Member State should be legally obliged to prepare joint air quality plans on request only. Such a request could come from the Member State at stake or from the Commission.

Section 5/6: Revising the National Emission Ceilings Directive (NECD)

Sub-section 5.1: Aligning with latest scientific and technical knowledge

23. Should national emission ceilings be adopted for black carbon/elemental carbon? (Please choose one response) -single choice reply-(optional)	Yes
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24. Should national emissions ceilings be introduced for other new pollutants? (Please provide written comments if you would like to propose ceilings for other pollutants) -open reply-(**optional**)

National emission ceilings for other air pollutants could be considered for those also contributing to long-range transboundary air pollution. Before a national emission ceiling can be set, it is needed that the national emission emissions inventories are adequate. This is might be the case for PM2,5 and methane, but not yet for BC, other fractions of particulate matter and certain VOC's highly contributing to the formation of ozone. Therefore, the complete answer to question 23 is: yes, but later when reliable emission inventories for BC are in place.

Sub-section 5.2a: Management framework

25. Which mechanisms for flexibility should be introduced into the NEC Directive management framework? (Please choose one or more responses) -multiple choices reply-(optional)	Allowing Member State compliance for the Directive's ceilings to be measured on the basis of a multi-year average - Allowing limited adjustments of Member State emission inventories for compliance check, under specific circumstances and after approval by the Commission
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Sub-section 5.2b: Management framework

26. Should coordination be required between the national and local levels in respect of emissions reduction measures and local air quality management? (Please choose one response) -single choice reply-(compulsory)	Yes
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27. Please feel free to provide comments on the options for the revision of the NEC Directive: -open reply-(**optional**)

- The existing deadline for reporting the national emission inventories should be aligned with CLTRAP and move to the 15th of January.
- The frequency for drawing up and reporting emission projections should be every two year instead of yearly. The obligation to draw up emission projections should be made permanent and continue after the target years.
- A national programme (Article 6) is only needed if the projections indicate a possible exceedance of the national emission ceiling.
- The use of emission inventory reports that meet the criteria of completeness, accuracy, consistency, comparability and transparency should become binding. The deadline for reporting should be 15 March.

Section 6/6: Addressing major air pollution sources

Sub-section 6.1: Road transport

<p>Introduce with minimum delay the new test procedure to ensure that real world emissions of Euro 6 light duty diesel vehicles are as close as possible to the type approval limit values</p> <p>-single choice reply-(optional)</p>	2
<p>Strengthen EU-wide requirements for in-service compliance with emissions standards, to ensure that light-duty vehicles on European roads continue to produce low emissions over their lifetime</p> <p>-single choice reply-(optional)</p>	1
<p>Develop a new, more stringent standard to be mandatory for motor vehicles after 2020</p> <p>-single choice reply-(optional)</p>	4
<p>Develop a supplementary more stringent standard, not mandatory, to be used by national and local governments in a harmonised way wherever air quality exceeds EU standards (e.g. to establish low emission zones), or to establish incentives at MS level to increase penetration of cleaner vehicles</p> <p>-single choice reply-(optional)</p>	
<p>Introduce standards to retrofit existing heavy duty vehicles (e.g. trucks, buses) to reduce their air pollution emissions</p> <p>-single choice reply-(optional)</p>	6
<p>Introduce a mandatory road charging scheme for heavy duty vehicles that incorporates air pollutant emissions ("eurovignette directive")</p> <p>-single choice reply-(optional)</p>	
<p>Develop additional test-cycle components specific to the driving patterns of special purpose urban vehicles (e.g. buses and refuse collection vehicles), to ensure that pollution control technologies operate effectively under real urban driving conditions</p> <p>-single choice reply-(optional)</p>	5
<p>Other (please provide comments in question 29)</p> <p>-single choice reply-(optional)</p>	3
<p>No additional measures should be introduced</p> <p>-single choice reply-(optional)</p>	
<p>Don't know</p> <p>-single choice reply-(optional)</p>	

29. Please feel free to comment on your answers regarding regulation of road transport emissions: -open reply-(optional)

Also for heavy duty vehicles a method for evaluation of off cycle emissions (Real Driving Emissions) has to be developed and introduced in the Euro VI legislation. The existing In Service Conformity requirements do not fully guarantee the absence of off cycle emissions previously experienced with Euro III, IV and V, because the most critical engine load conditions for urban air quality are excluded from data evaluation.

Sub-section 6.2: Off-road transport and non-road machinery

Extend the scope of application of current Stage IV NRMM standards to additional power classes and applications, including stationary applications -single choice reply-(optional)	
Introduce as soon as possible a more stringent Stage V standard for non-road machinery, aligned with the limit values of the most stringent Euro VI regulation for heavy duty road vehicles, which would further reduce especially PM emissions. -single choice reply-(optional)	1
Ensure that approval emission tests reflect the machinery's emissions in real world circumstances -single choice reply-(optional)	2
Ensure that there are incentives for retrofitting and/or replacing older inland waterway vessels' engines by newer and cleaner ones -single choice reply-(optional)	3
Other (please provide comments in question 31) -single choice reply-(optional)	
No additional measures should be introduced -single choice reply-(optional)	
Don't know -single choice reply-(optional)	
31. Please feel free to comment on your answers regarding regulation of emissions from off-road transport and non-road machinery: -open reply-(optional)	

Sub-section 6.3: Agricultural sector

Set tighter emission ceilings for ammonia for 2020 and 2030 in the NEC Directive, leaving flexibility to Member States on how these ceilings can best be reached -single choice reply-(optional)	3
Where cost effective, introduce new or revise existing EU legislation to establish EU-wide specific rules for e.g. improved manure storage, management and spreading techniques -single choice reply-(optional)	1
Promote good practices in manure management and manure spreading in Member States through support from the Rural Development Fund -single choice reply-(optional)	4
Introduce measures to ban or restrict the burning of agricultural waste -single choice reply-(optional)	2

Other (please provide comments in question 33) -single choice reply-(optional)	
No additional measures should be introduced -single choice reply-(optional)	
Don't know -single choice reply-(optional)	

33. Please feel free to comment on your answers regarding regulation of emissions from the agricultural sector: -open reply-(optional)

Promote or prescribe low emission housing. Include air scrubbers as best available technique in the IED BREF documents. Also include “combined” air scrubbers to promote reduction of both ammonia and aerosols. ETU, verification of techniques should be expanded to include agro-technologies. Another cost-effective way to reduce NH3 emissions is the use of emission low techniques for the storage and the application of manure. The Commission could consider proposing binding measures at EU level, taking into account experiences with these kind of measures already in force in the Netherlands.

Sub-section 6.4: Small/medium combustion sector

34. Which additional measures should be taken to address air emissions from small and medium combustion installations (below 50 MW)? (Please choose one or more responses) -multiple choices reply-(optional)	Extend in future the forthcoming harmonised limit values under the Ecodesign Directive (2009/125/EC) to control emissions from installations above the Ecodesign capacity threshold (please elaborate in question 35 up to which capacity level). - Other (please elaborate below)
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35. Please feel free to comment on your answers regarding regulation of emissions from the small/medium combustion sector: -open reply-(optional)

Large combustion plants (>50 MW) have the biggest potential for emission reduction. These emission reductions can be achieved without new EU legislation and policies, just by bringing more quality and speed in the implementing process of the Industrial Emission Directive (2010/75/EU) at both EU level (BAT reference documents) and national level (updating permits). Small/medium combustion plants are relatively numerous, but their contribution to emissions is limited, although they may have local effect (odor, dust). Thus we need simple measures with low burdens to keep efforts and results in balance. Permitting regimes are far too burdensome. EU-wide emission limit values could be taken into consideration but these should in any case match those already in force in the Netherlands.

Sub-section 6.5: Shipping sector

36. Which additional measures should be taken to address air emissions from the shipping sector? (Please choose one or more responses) -multiple choices reply-(optional)	Promote the extension of the Sulphur Emission Control Areas to additional EU sea areas such as the Irish Sea, the Gulf of Biscay, the Mediterranean and/or the Black Sea provided that such a measure is cost-effective. - Other (please elaborate below)
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37. Please feel free to comment on your answers regarding regulation of emissions from the shipping sector: -open reply-(optional)

Cost-effectiveness is not the only condition for the designation of the NOx Emission Control Area in EU regional sea areas, and the introduction of PM emission controls in EU regional sea areas. Any measure should also avoid distortion of the level playing field for harbors in these areas. Another issue that the measures can be enforced with relatively easy means. May be there are even more conditions. All relevant conditions should be fulfilled and underpinned by an Impact Assessment.

Final comments

38. Please feel free to provide any further comments related to the revision of the Thematic Strategy on Air Pollution: -open reply-(optional)

Air pollution is both a local and a transboundary problem caused by the emission of certain pollutants which either alone, or through chemical reaction lead to negative environmental and health impacts. The transboundary nature of air pollution must not be

underestimated since many air pollutants like PM, ozone, SO₂ and NO_x can be transported over hundreds or even thousands of kilometers in the atmosphere and pass over national boundaries. A national study of the Netherlands estimated that two thirds of the anthropogenic particulate matter originates from sources outside the Netherlands and that only a third originates from sources within the country. At the same time the exported amount of particulate matter from the Netherlands is larger than the import. This example shows clearly how difficult or even impossible it is for a Member State to respect the air quality legislation without other Member States taking action as well. Exactly this is the added value of the NECD. Thus, the abatement of air pollutants is a shared responsibility of all Member States, however supported by appropriate EU source control legislation. The Air Quality Directive, the National Emission Ceilings Directive and EU source control legislation are indissoluble interlinked. The answer to question 11 should be understood with the text above in mind. The monitoring of key indicators to assess the effects of a further reduction in emissions of air pollutants is essential for review and policy follow-up. The monitoring and reporting of indicators of the effects on human health of emissions of PM_{2,5} (urban background concentration) and ozone precursors (regional ozone concentrations) is already covered by the Community legislation on air quality. What is missing is a similar monitoring and reporting regime for the effects on nature. Such a regime could be introduced in the NECD, subject to an Impact Assessment, implementing at the same time article 6 of the Gothenburg protocol. Regarding question 14 we would like to state that the answer goes for PM_{2.5}. Changes of other limit values need to be decided after more information about the feasibility is available. Any additional action needed to ensure compliance with the current air quality legislation should not bring a significant amount of administrative burden. Procedures should be kept as simple as possible.