



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

ENVIRONMENT

Sectoral Committee
Weekly Update
03.09.10

Contents

Greenhouse Gas Emissions - Pg 2

*European Seas: Good Environmental Status
- Pg 3*





Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee

COM (2010) 427 - REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL on the feasibility of drawing up lists of areas in third countries with low greenhouse gas emissions from cultivation

The Renewable Energy Directive sets out sustainability criteria for biofuels and bioliquids. For biofuels, corresponding criteria are set out in the Fuel Quality Directive. They apply to biofuels and bioliquids produced in the EU and to imported biofuels and bioliquids. A part of these sustainability criteria is a mechanism to ensure that the biofuels and bioliquids used to meet EU targets have greenhouse gas savings of at least 35% compared to the fuels they replace. In order to facilitate compliance with this criterion, the Directive contains default values for greenhouse gas savings for different fuel production pathways.

The Directive requires the Commission to report, by 31 March 2010, on whether a similar approach to that for Member States can be implemented with regards to materials cultivated in third countries. This is the report complying with that obligation.

In light of the report, the Commission is of the view that, while desirable, it is not yet feasible to set up legally binding lists of areas for third countries where a major component of the underlying calculation is uncertain and can easily be questioned, and where third countries have had no possibility to contribute on the methodology and data used. It is therefore not appropriate, at least at this stage to produce legislative lists for third countries based on the current modelling of N₂O emissions from agriculture. However, it is important to enhance the understanding of the topic and survey the data used in view of a new assessment in 2012. The Commission has thus published the preliminary results of the Joint Research Centre work together with all necessary data and description of methodology to support such a process on the webpage of the Centre. It will use this as the basis for a discussion with third countries in the framework of its dialogue and exchange with them under Article 23(2) of the Directive.

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:0427:FIN:EN:PDF>



Malta-EU Steering & Action Committee



Europe's seas: Commission sets out criteria for good environmental status

On Wednesday 1st September the Commission adopted a decision outlining the criteria necessary to achieve good environmental status for Europe's seas. This will help Member States to develop coordinated marine strategies within each regional sea, ensuring consistency and allowing progress to be compared between regions. The definition of the criteria is a requirement under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive which aims to achieve good environmental status in all EU marine waters by 2020.

The Commission decision on the criteria for Good Environmental Status of marine waters focuses on different aspects of marine ecosystems including biological diversity, fish population, eutrophication, contaminants, litter and noise. While some criteria has already fully developed some others still need further refinement.

Good Environmental Status means that the overall state of the environment in marine waters provides ecologically diverse and dynamic oceans and seas which are healthy and productive. Use of the marine environment must be kept at a sustainable level that safeguards potential uses and activities by current and future generations. This means the structure, functions and processes of marine ecosystems have to be fully considered, marine species and habitats must be protected and human-induced decline of biodiversity prevented.

To achieve the EU's objective of good environmental status for all marine waters by 2020, Member States have to develop marine strategies which serve as action plans for applying an ecosystem-based approach to the management of human activities. Regional cooperation is required at each stage of the implementation of the Directive.

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:232:0014:0024:EN:PDF>