

Decision 2012/12
Guidance for adjustments under the 1999 Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone to emission reduction commitments or to inventories for the purposes of comparing total national emissions with them

The Executive Body,

1. *Recalling* that Parties to the 1999 Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone (Gothenburg Protocol) shall implement the necessary policies and measures to fully comply with their emission reduction commitments listed in annex II, as well as the other obligations in the Protocol;

2. *Underlining* the need for Parties to continuously improve their emission inventories based on the best available science and data quality criteria as defined in the Guidelines for reporting emission data under the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (ECE/EB.AIR/97) (Reporting Guidelines) and the *EMEP/EEA¹ air pollutant emission inventory guidebook*;

3. *Recalling* the provisions of the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended by its decision 2012/2, in particular article 3, paragraph 11 quinquies, and article 13, paragraph 2;

4. *Recalling also* its decision 2012/3 on adjustments under the Gothenburg Protocol to emission reduction commitments or to inventories for the purposes of comparing total national emissions with them, which, inter alia, requested the Steering Body to the Cooperative Programme for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-range Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe (EMEP) to provide draft guidance to be considered at its thirty-first session;

5. *Recalling further* its decision 2012/4 on provisional application of amendments to the Protocol, pending their entry into force;

6. *Aware* of the need to provide timely, specific and practical guidance to Parties with a view to facilitating the use of an adjustment procedure in accordance with the Protocol as amended;

7. *Conscious* of the need to develop additional guidance for the adjustment to inventories and to emission reduction commitments listed in annex II of the Protocol as amended;

8. *Noting* the work of the Task Force on Emission Inventories and Projections;

9. *Decides* to adopt guidance for adjustments to emission inventories and to emission reduction commitments, as set out in the annex to this decision.

¹ Cooperative Programme for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-range Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe (EMEP) and the European Environment Agency (EEA).

Annex

Guidance for the application of adjustments to emission inventories and to emission reduction commitments

Part I

General procedures

1. Any Party applying a new adjustment to its emission inventory shall notify the Convention secretariat through the Executive Secretary by 15 February at the latest, when submitting its full national inventory using best available science. The Convention secretariat shall inform the Steering Body to the Cooperative Programme for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-range Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe (EMEP) and all Parties of the notification. The secretariat shall also inform the Implementation Committee, in case referrals or submissions have been made to the Committee related to that Party's reduction commitments. All supportive information requested in this decision shall be provided as part of the Informative Inventory Report, or in a separate report, by 15 March of the same year that it is being submitted for review by the EMEP Steering Body.

1 bis. Any Party proposing an adjustment to any of its emission reduction commitments shall submit its proposal to the Executive Secretary of the Commission, including the supporting documentation as requested in this guidance. The Executive Secretary of the Commission shall forward the proposal to the EMEP Steering Body and all Parties. All supportive information requested in this guidance shall be provided as part of the Informative Inventory Report, or in a separate report for review by the EMEP Steering Body. The review of a proposed adjustment to emission reduction commitments shall take place prior to the proposal being discussed by the Parties at a session of the Executive Body.

2. A Party's supporting documentation for an adjustment to its emission inventory or emission reduction commitments shall include:

(a) Evidence that the Party exceeds its emission reduction commitments listed in annex II of the Protocol, in accordance with paragraph 1 of decision 2012/3;

(b) Evidence of to what extent the adjustment to the emission inventory reduces the exceedance and possibly brings the Party in compliance;

(c) An estimation of whether and when the reduction commitment is expected to be met based on emission projections without the adjustment, thereby using best available science;

(d) A full demonstration that the adjustment is consistent with one or more of the three circumstances listed in paragraph 6 of decision 2012/3, with supporting evidence provided as follows. Reference can be made, as appropriate, to relevant previous adjustments:

(i) For new emission source categories:

a. Evidence that the new emission source category is acknowledged in scientific literature and/or the *EMEP/EEA air pollutant emission inventory guidebook*;

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- b. Evidence that this source category was not included in the relevant historic national emission inventory at the time when the emission reduction commitment was set; and
 - c. Evidence that emissions from a new source category contribute to a Party being unable to meet its reduction commitments, supported by a detailed description of the methodology, data and emission factors used to arrive at this conclusion;
 - (ii) For significantly different emission factors used for determining emissions from specific source categories:
 - a. A description of the original emission factors, including a detailed description of the scientific basis upon which the emission factor was derived;
 - b. Evidence that the original emission factors were used for determining the emission reductions at the time when they were set;
 - c. A description of the updated emission factors, including detailed information on the scientific basis upon which the emission factor was derived;
 - d. A comparison of emission estimates made using the original and the updated emission factors, demonstrating that the change in emission factors contributes to a Party being unable to meet its reduction commitments; and
 - e. The rationale for deciding whether the changes in emission factors are significant;
 - (iii) For significantly different methodologies used for determining emissions from specific source categories:
 - a. A description of the original methodology used, including detailed information on the scientific basis upon which the emission factor was derived;
 - b. Evidence that the original methodology was used for determining the emission reductions at the time when they were set;
 - c. A description of the updated methodology used, including a detailed description of the scientific basis or reference upon which it has been derived;
 - d. A comparison of emission estimates made using the original and updated methodologies demonstrating that the change in methodology contributes to a Party being unable to meet its reduction commitment; and
 - e. The rationale for deciding whether the change in methodology is significant;
 - (e) For a proposal to adjust an emission reduction commitment, an explanation of how the emission inventory changes are converted into the proposed adjustment.
 3. Parties may submit the same supporting information for adjustment procedures based on similar preconditions, provided that each Party submits the required individual country-specific information as described in paragraph 2.
 4. The EMEP Steering Body, in conjunction with other technical bodies under EMEP, shall review and evaluate any submitted adjustment, to assess whether the adjustment:

- (a) Fulfils the criteria in decision 2012/3 as further elaborated in paragraph 2 of this decision;
- (b) Will require additional information for full assessment; or
- (c) Does not fulfil the criteria.

Concerning adjustments of the emissions inventory, adjustments which do not fulfil the criteria shall be referred to the Implementation Committee, in accordance with paragraph 5 of decision 2012/3. Concerning proposed adjustments to the emission reduction commitments, the EMEP Steering Body shall make a recommendation to the Executive Body on the basis of its review. In its review, the Steering Body shall further consider whether there is a need to establish a possible limited time period of validity for the adjustment, or for any additional information requested in accordance with subparagraph 2 (d) (ii) above.

5. The Convention secretariat shall make the review available to the Parties, who have the option of making a submission to the Implementation Committee, in accordance with decision 2006/2 as amended.

6. The EMEP Steering Body shall also consider the need for additional guidance, and if needed develop additional guidance for consideration by the Executive Body at its future sessions. Such guidance should take into account reviewed adjustments, inter alia, to facilitate streamlining and ensure consistency between similar adjustments, and should in particular consider the need for further guidance on how to evaluate significant changes in relation to the continuous improvements of emission inventories.

7. The EMEP Steering Body shall develop templates for the adjustment procedure compatible with the Nomenclature for Reporting (NFR) and the Informative Inventory Report and report back to the Executive Body at its thirty-second session.

Part II

Guidelines for accounting for adjustments to annually reported emission inventories

8. Parties shall continue to report emission inventories in accordance with the Gothenburg Protocol requirements, the Guidelines for reporting emission data under the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (Reporting Guidelines) (ECE/EB.AIR/97) (including any amendments) and the methodologies of the latest *EMEP/EEA air pollutant emission inventory guidebook*. Reporting of adjusted inventory data shall be in addition to the reporting of best science emission estimates.

9. Parties shall report adjusted emissions data for all inventory years for which an emission reduction commitment exists, as long as the unadjusted national total actual or projected emission estimate is higher than the emission reduction commitment.

10. For each individual emission source category for which an adjustment procedure is relevant, Parties shall report the adjusted emission estimate using the template developed by EMEP in accordance with paragraph 7. Each Party shall prepare and report the “adjusted” national total emission estimate in the main worksheet of the NFR reporting template.

11. In a separate “Adjustments” chapter of their Informative Inventory Report, or in a separate report, Parties that report adjusted emission estimates shall detail the methodology,

data and emission factors for each year used in preparing the adjusted emission estimate. The adjusted emission estimates documented in the Informative Inventory Report shall be identical to those reported in the template developed by EMEP in accordance with paragraph 7.

12. For each NFR source category to which an adjustment has been applied, Parties shall use the same methodology and emission factors in preparing their adjusted estimates as were contained in their original submission. Any further change to the adjustment methodology and emission factors requires a new submission.

13. Adjusted emission estimates will only be considered if an Informative Inventory Report, or a separate report, with the necessary descriptions of the methodology, data and emission factors used in preparing the adjusted emission estimate, is submitted within the deadline referred to in paragraph 1.
