

ECCP Stakeholder conference 24 October 2005

Aviation Working Group session – Chairman’s summary report

The session was introduced by 4 presentations (slides published separately).

Mr Ron Wit from consultants CE Delft presented the findings of the study “Giving Wings to Emissions Trading” carried out for the European Commission¹.

Mr Niels Ladefoged from the Commission introduced the mandate of the Aviation working group adopted as part of the Commission’s recent Communication and the draft work plan for the group².

Mr Tim Johnson from the Aviation Environment Federation gave an NGO perspective on the issue of climate change and aviation. While the NGOs broadly welcomed the Communication and the idea of a working group, it was stressed that emissions trading is a means and not an end in itself: eventually support for such an approach would depend on both the environmental objectives and effectiveness, and the concrete design parameters of the scheme. To evaluate this 7 policy “tests” have been formulated, which were listed and explained.

Mr Arturo Benito, chairman of the infrastructure and environment committee of the Association of European Airlines (AEA) presented the views of AEA and 5 other industry associations as formulated in a joint “emissions containment policy”³. The policy emphasises the need to consider 4 distinct pillars of actions: technology progress, infrastructure improvements, operational measures and economic instruments. It also contains views on key design elements that would define the inclusion of aviation in the EU emissions trading scheme.

Summary of discussion

Following the presentations, the chairman invited comments from the floor. These can be summarised as follows:

- Representatives from the low fares airlines emphasised that, if aviation was to be included in the EU emissions trading scheme, then as regards coverage, the scheme should cover all flights to and from EU airports in order to avoid having a greater impact on airlines only operating within Europe. As regards allocation methodology, they emphasised the investment which had been made to increase efficiency and the need to ensure that any methodology takes into account early action and provides opportunity for environmentally sustainable growth.
- As regards the impact on the existing emissions trading scheme, representatives of participants in the EU ETS expressed concerns about the idea of including aviation

¹ Available at http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/climat/aviation_en.htm

² Available at <http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/climat/eccp.htm>

³ Available at http://www.aea.be/dbnetgrid2/htmleditor/UploadFiles/AEA_FINAL.pdf

and emphasised the need to evaluate the possible impact on existing sectors in the EU ETS in particular the impact on allowance prices. The Commission explained that the allowance price depends first and foremost on the total cap across all sectors. The Commission confirmed that representatives from the sectors covered by the EU ETS would also be included in the aviation working group.

- As regards the practical arrangements for inclusion in the scheme, it was asked whether the question of a gateway is still being considered. The Commission confirmed that this is one of the issues which will be considered by the aviation working group.
- It was noted that there are other efficiencies which could be made which would reduce emissions, for example in relation to air traffic control. The Commission confirmed that the proposed inclusion of aviation in the ETS is part of a comprehensive approach to the climate impact of aviation. The work which is taking place in relation to research into cleaner air transport, improving air traffic management and a more consistent application of energy taxation should continue and be strengthened.
- As regards the timing for the inclusion of aviation in the EUETS, it was asked whether aviation could now not enter the scheme before 2013. The Commission confirmed that no decision had yet been taken and that the timing would depend in part upon the duration of the legislative process. Typically the process of adopting legislation takes around two years plus the time allowed to Member States to transpose the requirements into national law. In addition, the Commission also explained that it was important that expanding the scope of the scheme to aviation is considered alongside the content and timing of other potential refinements to the scheme which are being considered as part of the ongoing review of the EU ETS.
- It was also highlighted that the work of the group should take note of developments in the UNFCCC and ICAO.