



Event Report

**EPPA Regional Workshop on the Implementation of the Sulphur
Directive**

13 December 2021

Live video conference



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NIRAS **umweltbundesamt^U**

The project implemented by the Consortium of NIRAS (lead)
and Umweltbundesamt GmbH

1 The event

EPPA's second regional workshop on the Implementation of the Sulphur Directive took place on the 13th of December 2021, via live video conference. The workshop was organized in cooperation with TAIEX, and under the EPPA project work programme, namely activity 4.3 "Sulphur Directive capacity building". It targeted the following EPPA beneficiaries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia¹, and Turkey.

The participants came from the relevant authorities of the EPPA beneficiaries involved in environmental policy. They represented the Ministries with the environment and trade portfolio, in addition to environment agencies. Details are available in the list of participants. Civil society was represented by NGOs from the beneficiaries, namely NGO Green Home (Montenegro), KADOS/EUROSOLAR (Turkey), Co-Plan Institute for Habitat Development (Albania), and the Advocacy Training and Resource Center (Kosovo). The EU Delegations in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Turkey were also present.

The speakers represented the experience of EU Member States, including Sweden and Hungary. Additionally, the workshop mobilized contributions from the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA), the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC), the Energy Community Secretariat, and EPPA experts. Details are available in the agenda; the presentations can be downloaded in both the TAIEX website and in the EPPA project website.

The aim of this workshop was to provide advice and guidance so as to strengthen the national capacity of countries benefiting from the Environment Partnership Programme for Accession (EPPA) to effectively address the implementation challenges relating to the Sulphur Directive and measures to reduce Sulphur emissions in ports. Special emphasis was placed on recent developments on international level by the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) and the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC).

2 Proceedings and conclusions

EMSA presented the conclusions of the first edition of the European Maritime Transport Environmental Report (EMTER), the first compendium covering the environmental aspects of the maritime transport sector in the EU. A joint EMSA-EEA publication, EMTER presents a factual analysis of the relationship between the maritime transport sector and the environment, an important sector given that 90 % of world trade is moved by sea. Like many other human activities, maritime transport undoubtedly exerts pressures and has an impact on our environment. Shipping is a source of greenhouse gases, the maritime sector contributing 13.5 % of the total EU GHG emissions from transport (slightly less than aviation), and other air pollutants such as sulphur oxides (SO_x) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x). Model estimates show that in 2019 SO_x emissions from ships calling at EU and European Economic Area ports amounted to 16 % of the global SO_x emissions from international shipping (this number increases to 22 % for NO_x emissions). These environmental pressures are expected to keep increasing as global trade volumes increase. Nevertheless, sulphur emission control areas in Europe's seas have contributed to the management of risks and reduction of the emissions and we have seen that in some areas, concentrations have dropped by 60% in the last five years. This drop is particularly evident in the North and Baltic Seas and is linked with the establishment of Sulphur Emission Control Areas, areas where there is a lower limit on the amount of sulphur within the fuel. There are other areas where significant progress in pollution reduction has been made, for example for oil spills. We know that between 2010 and 2019, while the oil trade has increased by 20% and the satellite-controlled area increased by 60 %, we are detecting fewer spills of all sizes per km². In the future, the further development of "green" shipping technology will be essential to reduce emissions. This will partially be accomplished by increasing the share of ships moved by alternative fuels, and the implementation of on-shore power supply, enabling vessels to switch to clean electricity while in ports. The European Maritime Transport Environmental Report will be revised in 2024. It is expected that new environmental indicators could be included and for the existing ones to

¹ Serbia did not nominate participants.



be updated. EMSA is keen to engage with all interested parties who are willing to perform new research, help close existing knowledge gaps and support the overall process.

In line with these efforts to reduce air pollution from ships, REMPEC presented the latest developments on the designation of the Mediterranean Sea, as a whole, as an Emission Control Area for Sulphur Oxides (Med SO_x ECA) pursuant to Annex VI to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL), notably the adoption of the related decision by the 22nd Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean and its Protocols (COP 22) (Antalya, Turkey, 7-10 December 2021). COP 22 agreed to submit the joint and coordinated proposal on the designation of the Med SO_x ECA to the 78th Session of the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC 78) scheduled for 2022, for its consideration. If approved, the Med SO_x ECA is expected to enter into force in January 2025, seeking a reduction of sulphur content in fuel oil to a maximum of 0.10 % m/m. The Mediterranean Action Plan of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP/MAP)-Barcelona Convention Secretariat, under the coordination of REMPEC, was mandated by COP 22 to progress on exploring the feasibility of a NO_x ECA in the Mediterranean Sea, as a whole, during the 2022-2023 biennium.

The workshop provided an overview of measures taken to reduce air emissions in EU ports as best practice examples that can be adopted by the EPPA beneficiaries. They include the monitoring of specific pollutants, like PM₁₀, SO₂, and NO_x, against regulatory requirements and provision of services like on-shore electricity and alternative fuels, upgrading port infrastructure, differentiated port fees, mobility plans and investments favouring less-polluting inland transport. This approach has been successful leading to significant reduction of emissions in ports since 2000.

As an example of specific national policies in landlocked countries, the experiences with the reduction of sulphur emissions of Austria and Hungary were presented. Hungary has significantly reduced its emissions since the 2000s. In the last 2 decades the majority of emissions come from power plants and heat production, as well as household-based combustion, with only a minor share originating in transport. A major contributor to the reduction of SO₂ emissions was a new decree on the sulphur content of liquid fuels (2014 and several later amendments) and investments in the technology and infrastructure behind the public electricity and heat sector, as well as in fuel refineries.

In Austria, the Sulphur Directive has to be implemented in the legislation of the 9 Austrian Federal Province, in addition to a law for power plants. Being a landlocked country does not exempt a country from transposing and implementing the directive a priori, but only if the directive cannot be realized in a Member State under any circumstance, which is usually the case only for geographical reasons. At the Federal Province level, the legislation focuses on household heating, regulating in particular fuels and fuel quality, emission limit values, heating systems technical requirements, technical regulations for buildings, and inspections. The law for power plants transposes the directive's limit values of sulphur dioxide for heating oils used in industrial activity. In terms of shipping, the sulphur content in gas oil is applicable in Austria to inland ships, predominantly in the Danube River. Fuel quality is monitored regularly on fuel stations and boats, based on EN and ISO sampling and analysis protocols.

Workshop outputs

The workshop's main outputs were:

- Strengthened national capacity of EPPA beneficiaries to effectively to implement the Sulphur Directive.
- Shared best implementation practices of the Sulphur Directive by EU Member States, both in maritime ports and inland context.
- Awareness raised on recent policy developments and actions at international level by the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) and the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC).
- Awareness raised on the cross-sectoral nature of the Sulphur Directive.



Endnotes

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSC 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

Annexes

Annex 1: Agenda (provided as a separate document)

Annex 2: List of Participants (provided as a separate document)

Annex 3: Presentations (provided as a separate document)



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