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**Report for the Stage 3 *ad-hoc* review of emission
inventories submitted under the UNECE LRTAP
Convention:**

2023

BELGIUM

FINAL REPORT

CONTENT

INTRODUCTION	3
PART A: GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CHAPTER AGRICULTURE.....	5
PART B: SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE SECTOR AGRICULTURE.....	6
PART C: SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE GRIDDED EMISSION DATA FOR THE SECTOR AGRICULTURE.....	10
REVISED ESTIMATES AND TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS CONSIDERED AND/OR CALCULATED BY ERT	12
LIST OF MATERIALS PROVIDED TO ERT.....	13
LIST OF ADDITIONAL MATERIALS PROVIDED BY THE COUNTRY DURING THE REVIEW	13
ANNEX I TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS AND REVISED ESTIMATES	14
ABBREVIATIONS.....	15
LIST OF REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS.....	17

INTRODUCTION

1. The mandate and overall objectives for the emission inventory review process under the LRTAP Convention is given by the UNECE document 'Updated methods and procedures for the technical reviews of air pollutant emission inventories reported under the Convention'⁽¹⁾ – hereafter referred to as the 'Review Guidelines 2018'.

2. Paragraph 7 (c) of the 'Review Guidelines 2018' defines that Stage 3 Reviews may be annual centralized reviews or ad hoc reviews. Paragraph 18 of the 'Review Guidelines 2018' further specifies that such ad hoc reviews could, for instance, focus on specific source sectors, specific pollutants such as heavy metals or persistent organic pollutants, gridded and projections data, or on other areas as requested by the Implementation Committee and that where appropriate, ad hoc reviews could be conducted in line with the present Methods and Procedures for the In-depth (Stage 3) review.

3. At its eighth joint session in September 2022, the Steering Body and the Working Group on Effects approved the plan that the in-depth review in 2023 focuses on emissions from agriculture with a special emphasis on ammonia, NMVOC and NO_x emissions including gridded data. While the focus was set on NH₃, NMVOC and NO_x emissions, also all other pollutants covered by LRTAP Convention and its protocols (i.e. SO₂, NO_x, NMVOC, NH₃, plus PM₁₀ PM_{2.5}, BC, priority HMs and POP_S) have been checked for the time series years 1990 – 2021 to the extent possible. For these other pollutants especially completeness of reporting was assessed.

4. This report covers the results of the Stage 3 Review (ad hoc review) 2023 of Belgium's air emission inventory submitted under the UNECE LRTAP Convention. The review was coordinated by the EMEP Centre on Emission Inventories and Projections (CEIP) acting as Review Secretariat. The review took place between April and June 2023 and was performed as a desk review between 31 March to 5 May 2023 and an in-person meeting between 22 of May 2023 and 26 May 2023 (centralized review). The following team of nominated experts from the Roster of Experts performed the review.

Agriculture experts:

Ms. Armine ARTENYAN (Republic of Armenia)

Ms. Ajla BASOVIC (Montenegro)

Ms. Aleksandra NESTOROVSKA-KRSTESKA (North Macedonia)

Mr. Lasha AKHALAIA (Georgia)

¹ Decision 2018/1 adopted by EB: *Updated methods and procedures for the technical review of air pollutant emission inventories reported under the Convention*. ECE/EB.AIR/142/Add.1
http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2002/eb/air/EB%20Decisions/Decision_2018_1.pdf

Mr. Hakam AL-HANBALI (Sweden)

Ms. Susana LOPEZ-APARICIO (EU/ETC(EEA))

Ms. Simone MAYER (Austria)

Ms. Andjelka RADOSAVLJEVIC (Serbia)

Ms. Kristina Tonhauzer (Slovakia)

Mr. Tim VAN DER ZEE (Netherlands)

Experts for gridded emission data:

Ms. Christine BRENDLE (Austria)

Mr. Christopher EVANGELIDES (United Kingdom)

Mr. Christian MIELKE (Germany)

5. Mr. Ben RICHMOND (United Kingdom), Ms. Rikke ALBREKTSSEN (Denmark), Mr. Etienne MATHIAS (France), Ms. Kristina SAARINEN (Finland) were the lead reviewers. The review was coordinated by Ms. Sabine Schindlbacher and Mr. Bernhard Ullrich (EMEP Centre on Emission Inventories and Projections - CEIP).

6. The review was performed on the basis of CLRTAP emission data officially reported by Belgium, due by 15 February 2023. The Informative Inventory Reports (IIR), reported due by 15 March 2023 under the CLRTAP, informed the review.

7. The EMEP/EEA Guidebook 2019² was used as a base for the review.

8. The emission inventory of Belgium was received on 15 February 2023 and thus by the deadline of 15 February. The Informative Inventory Report was received on 15 March 2023 and thus by the deadline of 15 March. Belgium provided two successive resubmissions of the emission inventory, on 15 March 2023 and 20 March 2023. These resubmissions have been considered for the review.

² EMEP/EEA: EMEP/EEA air pollutant emission inventory guidebook 2019, EEA Report No. 13/2019 European Environment Agency, Copenhagen. Available at: <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/emep-eea-guidebook-2019> EU 2019

PART A: GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE CHAPTER AGRICULTURE

9. The ERT recognises the level of effort undertaken by Belgium in providing an inventory including a significant level of detail.

The IIR describes the methods used for the sector agriculture transparently. The ERT considers the agriculture part of the inventory submission to be of very good quality in terms of completeness and of very good quality in terms of accuracy, comparability and consistency.

To improve the overall quality of the agriculture air emission inventory the ERT recommends Belgium to

- provide a detailed description of applied methodologies, data sources, choice of emission factors and activity data for all categories in the IIR where some gaps were noted by the review.
- apply a Tier 2 or higher method to all key categories.

PART B: SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE SECTOR AGRICULTURE

10. Table 1 provides the findings from the 2023 CLRTAP Stage 3 Review including those not implemented from previous CLTRAP Stage 3 Reviews. While the focus was set on NH₃, NMVOC and NO_x emissions, also all other pollutants covered by the LRTAP Convention and its protocols (i.e. SO₂, NO_x, NMVOC, NH₃, plus PM₁₀ PM_{2.5}, BC, priority HMs and POP_s) have been checked for the years 1990 – 2021 to the extent possible, especially regarding the completeness of reporting. The implementation of the recommendations will be followed up in a future CLRTAP inventory review.

Table 1: Findings from the CLRTAP Stage 3 Review 2023 for the Sector Agriculture³

ID	Pollutants	NFR category	Key Category	Tier level	Type	TAC ₁ C ₂ C ₃
BE-2023-3D-1	NO _x , NH ₃	3Da2c	No	Indeterminate	R	T
<p>Observation The ERT noted that Belgium has reported emissions from compost and digestate applications since 2013 in Wallonia (IIR, p. 170). The ERT noted that the sources of this information were not specified, and it was also unclear to the ERT whether the emissions were not reported before 2013 due to a lack of data or because the activity did not take place. During the review, Belgium explained that the data on compost and digestate activities evaluated in agriculture come from the annual reports of the site owners sent to the Walloon Soil Protection Authority in the Walloon Public Service for the Environment. Belgium indicates that this reporting is not mandatory, so it depends on the goodwill of the website owners. Before 2013, compost and digestate were in their infancy and almost non-existent or unmonitored. Belgium explained that monitoring of these activities is improving over time.</p> <p>Recommendation The ERT recommends Belgium to include this information in the IIR, i.e. to describe why emissions in this category are not calculated before 2013.</p>						
ID	Pollutants	NFR category	Key Category	Tier level	Type	TAC ₁ C ₂ C ₃
BE-2023-3F-1	All	3F	No	Indeterminate	R	T

³ Note: There are four possible types of findings: R: Recommendation, TC: Technical Correction, PTC: Potential Technical Correction; RE : Revised Estimate

The findings have been assigned to one or more of the following criteria: TACCC T (Transparency), A (Accuracy), C₁ (Completeness), C₂ (Comparability), C₃ (Consistency) for definitions of these criteria see EMEP/EEA Guidebook 2019

Observation

The ERT noted that the burning of agricultural residues is prohibited by law in Wallonia (Arrete du Gvt Vallon du 13 juin 2014 fixant les exigences et les normes de la conditionnalite en matière agricole: article 22. L'agriculteur ne brule pas les paille chaumes et autres résidus de récolte produits sur ses parcelles) (IIR p. 173). The ERT also noted that in Flanders, too, the practice of burning agricultural residues has been prohibited by law since 2014 (<https://navigator.emis.vito.be/mijnnavigator?vold=62333>). It is not clear whether these activities took place in Flanders before 2014, before the law, nor whether the law has certain exceptions where burning is allowed. During the review, Belgium indicated that this law replaced earlier laws that prohibited open burning. Belgium also explained that the law includes several exceptions, namely the burning of plant waste in the field from agricultural operations on own farms and from the maintenance of landscape elements, however, it was determined that the amount of field burning is negligible to not occur.

Recommendation

The ERT recommends that Belgium include information on the legislative framework on residue burning before 2014 in the IIR in order to achieve consistency across the entire time series of data.

ID	Pollutants	NFR category	Key Category	Tier level	Type	TAC ₁ C ₂ C ₃
BE-2023-3B-1	All	3B	Yes	Tier 2	R	T

Observation

The ERT noted in the IIR (page 158) that since 2015 the agricultural census is not detailed as necessary (according to authors). Therefore, Wallonia uses regional statistics for some data from 2013. It is not clear to which categories this applies. During the review Party explained that the regional statistics are used for sheep, goat and horses categories.

Recommendation

The ERT recommends Belgium to specify in the next submission of the IIR, that regional statistics are used for sheep, goat and horses categories since 2013 due to missing details in national agricultural census.

ID	Pollutants	NFR category	Key Category	Tier level	Type	TAC ₁ C ₂ C ₃
BE-2023-3B-2	PM ₁₀	3B	Yes	Tier 1 and Tier 2	R	A

Observation

The ERT noted that in Flanders a national emission factor has been developed which corresponds to a Tier 2. However, in Wallonia Tier 1 EMEP EEA 2019 Methodology is used for calculating PM₁₀ Emissions in Sector 3B. Categories 3.B.3, 3.B, 3.B.4.g.ii are key categories for PM₁₀ and it is recommended to use Tier 2 for key categories. During the review Party explained that monitoring is much more developed in Flanders and data is more available than in Wallonia where agriculture is less intensive. The Party explained that they are trying to collect data from the largest Walloon farms and if new data become available to improve PM emissions calculations, Belgium will integrate them in the next submissions.

Recommendation

The ERT recommends Belgium to specify the difference in agriculture intensity between the different regions of Belgium and include the application of Tier 2 for the entire country for key categories in the improvement plan.

PART C: SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE GRIDDED EMISSION DATA FOR THE SECTOR AGRICULTURE

For the 2023 Review of the gridded emission data the focus was set on NH₃, NMVOC, NO_x and PM_{2.5} emissions.

11. The methods used by Belgium to grid sectoral emissions are described transparently in the IIR.

12. The description includes data sources that have been used for spatial distribution.

13. Gridded emissions reported for GNFR K_AgriLivestock and L_AgriOther are consistent with the corresponding NFR categories reported in Annex I.

14. Table 2 provides no findings from the ERT related to the gridded data of the reviewed submission.

Table 2: Findings from the CLRTAP stage 3 review 2023 for gridded emissions from the sector agriculture⁴

ID	Pollutants	GNFR category	TAC ₁ C ₂ C ₃
No recommendation			

⁴ The findings have been assigned to one or more of the following criteria: TACCC T (Transparency), A (Accuracy), C₁ (Completeness), C₂ (Comparability), C₃ (Consistency) for definitions of these criteria see EMEP/EEA Guidebook 2019

REVISED ESTIMATES AND TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS CONSIDERED AND/OR CALCULATED BY ERT

15. In the Appendix of the 'EMEP/UNECE Review Guidelines 2018'⁵ it is stated that if the ERT considers that emissions are significantly under- or overestimated, the Party is during the review invited to submit 'Revised Estimates' that address the issue raised. Should the Party decline to do this, or should it not be possible to agree on the quantification of a Revised Estimate i.e. the ERT does not accept a Revised Estimate provided by the Party, the ERT may calculate a 'Technical Correction'. The threshold for significance for a Technical Correction for the in-depth review in 2023 was set at 2% of the national total, i.e. a finding that has been identified to result in an over- or underestimate of emissions of more than 2% of the national total. The methods for calculating Technical Corrections are set up in the 'EMEP/UNECE Review Guidelines 2018' and use the EMEP/EEA Emission 'Inventory Guidebook' as a reference for methods and emission factors.

16. The ERT did not calculate any Technical Corrections and Belgium did not provide any Revised Estimates.

⁵ https://www.ceip.at/fileadmin/inhalte/ceip/3_review/advance_version_ece_eb.air_142_add.1.pdf

LIST OF MATERIALS PROVIDED TO ERT

1. Belgium Annex I reporting template
2. Belgium Stage 2 S&A report
3. Belgium Stage 1 report 2023
4. Belgium IIR 2023
5. Repdab-Report
6. Extended checks

LIST OF ADDITIONAL MATERIALS PROVIDED BY THE COUNTRY DURING THE REVIEW

1. Responses to the questions raised by ERT during the review.
2. Material received from the Party during the Review
 - No additional information was provided by the Party either before or during the review.

ANNEX I TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS AND REVISED ESTIMATES

The ERT did not calculate any Technical Corrections and Belgium did not provide any Revised Estimates.

ABBREVIATIONS

This list includes abbreviations commonly used in the Review Reports

AD	Activity data
BaP	Benzo[a]pyrene
BC	Black Carbon
C	Confidential
Cd	Cadmium
CEIP	Centre on Emission Inventories and Projections
CLRTAP	Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution – ‘the Air Convention’
CO	Carbon Monoxide
E-PRTR	European Pollutant Release and Transfer Register
EEA	European Environment Agency
EF	Emission factor
EMEP	The co-operative programme for monitoring and evaluation of the long-range transmission of air pollutants in Europe (unofficially ‘European Monitoring and Evaluation Programme’ = EMEP)
ERC	Emission Reduction Commitment
ERT	Expert Review Team
GHG	Greenhouse gas
GIS	Geo Information System
GNFR	NFR Aggregation for Gridding and LPS
HCB	Hexachlorobenzene
Hg	Mercury
HM	Heavy metals
IEF	Implied emission factor
kt	Kilotonnes
LPS	Large Point Sources
NA	Not applicable
NE	Not Estimated
NECD	National Emission reduction Commitments Directive
NFR	Nomenclature for reporting
NH ₃	Ammonia
NMVOG	Non-methane volatile organic compounds
NO	Not Occuring
NO _x	Nitrogen oxides
NR	Not relevant/Not Reported
PAHs	Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons
Pb	Lead
PCB	Polychlorinated biphenyls
PCDD/F	Polychlorinated dibenzo-p-dioxins and dibenzofurans
PM ₁₀	Fine particulate matter: particles with an aerodynamic diameter equal to or less than 10 micrometres (µm)

PM _{2.5}	Fine particulate matter: particles with an aerodynamic diameter equal to or less than 2.5 micrometres (µm)
POPs	Persistent organic pollutants
PTC	Potential technical correction
RE	Revised estimate
SO ₂	Sulphur dioxide
SO _x	Sulphur oxides
TC	Technical correction
TSP	Total suspended particulates

LIST OF REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

1. Annex I emission reporting template. Available at <https://www.ceip.at/reporting-instructions>
2. ECE/EB.AIR/111/Add.1: Decision 2012/3: Adjustments under the Gothenburg Protocol to emission reduction commitments or to inventories for the purposes of comparing total national emissions with them
https://unece.org/DAM/env/documents/2013/air/ECE_EB.AIR_111_Add.1_ENG_DE_CISION_3.pdf
3. ECE/EB.AIR/113/Add.1: 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
https://unece.org/DAM/env/documents/2012/EB/Decision_2012_12.pdf
4. ECE/EB.AIR/125: 2014 Reporting Guidelines for Estimating and Reporting Emission Data under CLRTAP
https://unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2013/air/eb/ece.eb.air.125_E_ODS.pdf
5. ECE/EB.AIR/127/Add.1: Decision 2014/1: Improving the 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
https://unece.org/DAM/env/documents/2014/AIR/EB/Decision_2014_1.pdf
6. ECE/EB.AIR/130: Technical Guidance for Parties Making Adjustment Applications and for the Expert Review of Adjustment Applications, 14 April 2015
https://unece.org/DAM/env/documents/2014/AIR/EB/ECE_EB_AIR_130_ENG.pdf
7. [ECE/EB.AIR/142/Add.1: Decision 2018/1: Updated methods and procedures for the technical reviews of air pollutant emission inventories reported under the Convention](https://www.ceip.at/fileadmin/inhalte/ceip/00_pdf_other/2019/decision_2018_1_advance_version_ece_eb.air_142_add.1.pdf)
https://www.ceip.at/fileadmin/inhalte/ceip/00_pdf_other/2019/decision_2018_1_advance_version_ece_eb.air_142_add.1.pdf
8. EMEP/EEA: EMEP/EEA air pollutant emission inventory guidebook 2016, EEA Report No. 21/2016 European Environment Agency, Copenhagen. Available at: <http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/emep-eea-guidebook-2016>
9. EMEP/EEA: EMEP/EEA air pollutant emission inventory guidebook 2019, EEA Report No. 13/2019 European Environment Agency, Copenhagen. Available at: <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/emep-eea-guidebook-2019>
10. TFEIP (2022): "Inventory adjustments in the context of emission reduction commitments (ERC)" available at: https://www.ceip.at/fileadmin/inhalte/ceip/00_pdf_other/2022/technical_guidance_for_erc_adjustments_issue1.1.pdf