ESIG Stakeholder "Solvents and the Green Deal" – 2: Zero Pollution/Clean Air"

Presentation by DG ENVI Directorate C – Quality of Life (Michael Klinkenberg & Benoit Zerger) on "Zero Pollution for Europe – what does this mean and how can this be achieved?
Michael Kinkenberg focused on the Zero Pollution Action Plan and included the policy aims of the ongoing review of the Ambient Air Quality Directives as well as the achievements and challenges of the National Emission Ceiling Directive in his presentation. Benoît Zerger looked at the review process of the Industry Emission Directive and provided examples of issues that are being investigated in the process.

ESIG's perspective and activities

a) Cooperation & participation

- Since many years ESIG members and solvents' Downstream Users collaborate via ESVOC on the topic of VOC emission from solvent use and products. Currently there are 30 associations on board next to the members of the ESIG Air Quality Team.
- ESIG is contributing to the work done in different taskforces at UNECE level of the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution - CLRTAP

b) Solvents VOC emissions

Each year EU member States have to report their emission to the Commission who provides the numbers to the Convention. Solvents emission reporting is one of the most difficult part and ESIG has developed an own top-down methodology which is a recognized tier 2A method in the EMEP /EEA guidebook

Trends are the same: emission from VOCs have stabilized over the last years with solvents being the biggest contributing sector in the meantime.

For all NMVOC emissions: Since 1990 emissions have decreased by **62 %** in the EU27+UK. More than half of the reduction was achieved in the 1990s. **The 2020 ceilings set in the National Emissions Ceilings Directive were achieved already in 2017**.

For Solvents VOCs in particular the reduction has been of **49%** over a period of 30 years (1990 - 2018) with a reduction of 27% over the last 20 years (since 2005). No substantial reductions can be noted since 2012.

This can be explained by the fact that solvents are needed to perform their function in many processes an, products & applications. It is **technically not feasible in most cases to remove all VOCs** (while retaining process or product performance). Due to the need for solvents in industrial processes and in daily life, VOC emission from solvents will always be present at a degree.

Over the last decades, solvent sales have been stabilized whilst emissions have further declined and are now stabilized too. When solvent user businesses have continued to grow this can only mean that solvents are used in those applications that need them, and/but are used responsibly & even more efficiently.

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Perspective & views of solvents' downstream users *(with contributions from paints, printing & car coating)*

Panelists presented each sector's particularities which illustrated the points from the ESIG in more detail.

Panelist explained how solvents are used in each sector and how reduction potential has been reached

Main regulatory driver in reducing VOC emissions was the IED for the industrial application.

Mainly technology changes led to decrease in solvent consumption or use, but those technology borders have been reached and none of the sectors expects any further change.

All best available techniques have just been revised and laid down in the STS BREF.

Solvents are simply essential to a certain degree.

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