

Statement by the European Commission on Air Pollution

Mr. Chair.

The European Commission aligns itself with the statement made by Germany on behalf of the European Union. I shall be brief Mr. Chair. I have three points to make.

The European Commission concluded a strategy in 2006 which assessed the air pollution benefits of further climate measures in the EU up to 2020. The study came up with some very interesting results. Reducing CO₂ emissions by around 10% in 2020 would reduce air pollutants and consequently improve human health and reduce mortality. These health benefits are estimated from 8.5 to nearly 28 billion euro per year. Reducing CO₂ emissions by 20% would mean health benefits of 15 to 48 billion euro per year. Similar impacts are expected in China and India from a recent study called GAINS-Asia.

As Norway, Israel, South Africa and others have mentioned in our discussion here, we need to address seriously the establishment of national and international emissions standards.

In the area of marine air pollution, air emissions from ships and their impacts on health and the environment have been quantified in the EU. It is clear that if no further action is taken at the international level by the International Maritime Organization, the IMO, emissions from ships in European Seas will be of the same magnitude as emissions from all land-based sources by 2020. The European Union is urging the IMO to seek reductions of air pollution from ships in the context of the Maritime Pollution Convention (MARPOL).

Finally, in the area of other mobile and stationary sources of air pollution, we urge countries here to join us in further measures through the setting up of emission limit values.

Thank you Mr. Chair