

Project Number 017841

NitroEurope IP

The nitrogen cycle and its influence on the European greenhouse gas balance.

Sixth Framework Programme

Priority 6.3

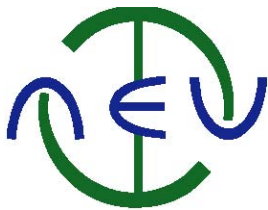
Global Change and Ecosystems

D8.2

1st Report of the External Advisory Group Feb 2006 – Jan 2007

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| Dissemination Level | |
| PU | Public |
| PP | Restricted to other programme participants (including the Commission Services) |
| RE | Restricted to a group specified by the consortium (including the Commission Services) |
| CO | Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services) |





NitroEurope IP

1. Preface

This report is an assessment of the NitroEurope IP status at the end of the first project year. The report was discussed at the meeting of the External Advisory Group (EAG) at the NitroEurope 2nd General Assembly on 8 February 2007.

EAG Members present:

- Janet Sprent, University of Dundee,
 - Tor Björn Larsson, EEA
 - Luc Maene, IFA
 - Arvin Mosier, University of Florida
 - Till Spranger, UBA
- Peringe Grennfelt, IVL

Apologies:

- Keith Bull, UNECE
 - Kaj Sanders, Ministry of Environment, NL
 - Samantha Baker, DEFRA
- Amy Sullivan, DEFRA

2. EAG views on the NEU IP

2.1. General and project management

NEU is a large project and there are many challenges in leading a project involving so many groups and such a wide scope as NitroEurope. The coordinator, SSC and the secretariat have managed to get a quick start of the project and we are impressed of the achievements reached so far.

We see several signs of that the different parts of the program have started working well and that these groups have developed a good collaboration.

There is however a risk that there will be too large expectations on the project in relation to needs from outside activities (e.g. European nitrogen assessment). It is therefore important that the project keeps to its objective and agenda.

The program has only been running for a year. It is therefore too early to make definite judgement and views should be considered as preliminary.

2.2. The role of EAG

We discussed the role of EAG and found that there is a need to rephrase the terms of reference (*see below*). The general view of this discussion was that we should put more emphasis on issues related to dissemination and implementation of results, to support the program coordinator and SSC in their work. The EAG found that their role with respect to science mainly should be on strategic scientific issues.

The EAG agreed to propose the following *terms of reference*:

1. support the project in linking the main scientific findings to
 - a. relevant international activities
 - b. policy stakeholders

2. advise the Coordinator and SSC on
 - a. strategic research issues (e.g., missing links, level of detail, upscaling to European dimension...)
 - b. science and project management (e.g., internal communication)
 - c. communication to policy processes
3. produce annual summary reviews (responding to annual project reports)

2.3. General Assembly

The two general assemblies have received a large attraction both within and outside the formal sessions. It has however been unclear to the EAG members to what extent the meeting should be seen as an administrative/technical meeting for the different sub-activities and to what extent the meeting should be a general assembly for the whole program.

We suggest that the program of the GA meeting should be reorganised to the next year in order to separate technical issues (planning of field experiments, data handling issues etc.) from scientific presentations and discussions. It may also be beneficial to separate the internal work package issues from the crosscutting and concentrate on these at the meeting.

In particular, we think that the GA meeting could benefit from a broad collection of posters (there must be many posters presented within the program during the year).

We will also recommend improving crosscutting communication in order to get an overall understanding and participation in the program. In particular we will point to the importance of improving the understanding e.g. between experimentalists and modellers. In some areas, there is a risk that the model community becomes less connected to the rest of the program.

2.4. Communication between EAG and the project management

Several EAG members noticed that they missed important information and possibilities to follow the process due to not being present the whole week. On the other hand we found that some group sessions were too technical and therefore of limited interest to EAG. Given that many members have tight agendas, our participation and engagement will be simpler if the agenda is reorganised to have the technical meetings in advance of the General Assembly (see above).

The communication and use of EAG may benefit if we receive messages when the project published important results etc.

The EAG is also looking forward to have its own portal on the web site.

2.5. Dissemination and communication

The program is well communicated within the scientific and science-administrative community. There are however policy related communities (e.g. *IPCC*, *biodiversity processes*, *bio fuels*) that would benefit from better exchange of information. EAG is willing to contribute to this process.

The web page is developing well and it is easy to reach.

2.6. Some scientific issues

The EAG discussed to some extent scientific issues related to the program and came up with three points for further consideration:

- EAG feels that it is important to establish complete nitrogen budgets at relevant experimental sites.
- Inversed modelling is an important part of the program that should be better integrated within the program.

- When defining monitoring/experimental sites and parameters (incl. spatial representation), it is important to consider other uses than those defined from immediate needs. If sites should be used for future research projects (biodiversity etc.), the choice of sites/landscapes and/or parameters may look different.

2.7. Young scientists, summer schools, gender activities etc.

Initiatives regarding young scientists, summer schools and gender aspects very valuable and successful. EAG will however encourage better contacts between young scientists, the rest of NEU community (summer schools) and EAG.

10 Feb 2007, Peringe Grennfelt, Chair of the EAG