EU emissions trading





An open scheme promoting global innovation to combat climate change

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Trading emissions to cut costs and reduce emissions worldwide





The European Union is committed to global efforts to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from human activities that threaten to cause serious disruption to the world's climate. Building on the innovative mechanisms set up under the Kyoto Protocol to the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) — joint implementation, the clean development mechanism and international emissions trading — the EU has developed the largest company-level scheme for trading in emissions of carbon dioxide (CO2), making it the world leader in this emerging market. The emissions trading scheme started in the 25 EU Member States on 1 January 2005.

A key aspect of the EU scheme is that it allows companies to use credits from Kyoto's project-based mechanisms, joint implementation (JI) and the clean development mechanism (CDM), to help them comply with their obligations under the scheme. This means the system not only provides a cost-effective means for EU-based industries to cut their emissions but also creates additional incentives for businesses to invest



in emission-reduction projects elsewhere, for example in Russia and developing countries. In turn this spurs the transfer of advanced, environmentally sound technologies to other industrialised countries and developing nations, giving tangible support to their efforts to achieve sustainable development.



The EU system is open to cooperation with compatible schemes in other countries that have ratified the Protocol. This has the potential to enlarge the market for trading.

Focussed initially on big industrial emitters which produce almost half of the EU's CO₂ emissions, the scheme gives European and foreign-owned businesses based in the EU a 'first-mover' advantage through the invaluable early experience they are gaining.

- Due to mandatory monitoring and reporting of emissions, companies are establishing CO₂ budgets and carbon management systems for the first time.
- Because CO₂ has a price, companies are engaging the ingenuity of their engineers to identify cost-effective ways to reduce their emissions, both through improving current production processes and investing in new technologies.
- A whole range of new businesses is emerging in Europe as a result of the EU carbon market: carbon traders, carbon finance specialists, carbon management specialists, carbon auditors and verifiers. New financial products such as carbon funds are entering the market.

Creating the emissions trading scheme and linking it to JI and CDM has been identified by the European Climate Change Programme as a particularly cost-effective way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This programme, a European Commission initiative launched in 2000, has brought together all relevant stakeholders to develop policies and measures to help the EU meet its Kyoto target.

countries on 1 May 2004 are committed to reducing their combined emissions of greenhouse gases by 8 % from 1990 levels by the end of the Protocol's first commitment period between 2008 and 2012. This overall target has been translated into differentiated emission reduction or limitation targets for each Member State under a 'burden sharing' agreement ('). The 10 new Member States are not covered by the EU target but in most cases have their own reduction target of 6 % or 8 % under the Protocol. They are full participants in the EU trading scheme.

The 15 Member States that made up the EU until its enlargement to 25

By combining the emissions trading scheme with CDM and JI, the EU is underlining its commitment to realising the advantages that the Kyoto mechanisms offer as a supplement to significant domestic action by industrialised countries to reduce their emissions.

(1) Council Decision 2002/358/EC of 25 April 2002 concerning the approval, on behalf of the European Community, of the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the joint fulfilment of commitments thereunder

The EU emissions trading scheme

The EU emissions trading scheme (ETS) is based on a recognition that creating a price for carbon through the establishment of a liquid market for emission reductions offers the most cost-effective way for EU Member States to meet their Kyoto obligations and move towards the low-carbon economy of the future.

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The scheme should allow the EU to achieve its Kyoto target at a cost of between \leq 2.9 and \leq 3.7 billion annually. This is less than 0.1 % of the EU's GDP. Without the scheme, compliance costs could reach up to \in 6.8 billion a year.

The ETS has been established through binding legislation (^a) proposed by the European Commission and approved by all EU Member States and the European Parliament. The scheme is based on six fundamental principles:

- → It is a 'cap-and-trade' system
- → Its initial focus is on CO₂ from big industrial emitters
- → Implementation is taking place in phases, with periodic reviews and opportunities for expansion to other gases and sectors
- → Allocation plans for emission allowances are decided periodically
- → It includes a strong compliance framework
- → The market is EU-wide but taps emission reduction opportunities in the rest of the world through the use of CDM and JI, and provides for links with compatible schemes in third countries.

(²) Directive 2003/87/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 October 2003 establishing a scheme for greenhouse gas emission allowance trading within the Community and amending Council Directive 96/61/EC



17 % Households

10 % Agriculture

4 % Other

and SMEs

While emissions trading has the potential to involve many sectors of the economy and all the greenhouse gases controlled by the Kyoto Protocol (CO₂, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons and sulphur hexafluoride), the scope of the ETS is intentionally limited during its initial phase while experience of emissions trading is built up.

Consequently, during the first trading period, from 2005 to 2007, the ETS covers only CO₂ emissions from large emitters in the power and heat generation industry and in selected energy-intensive industrial sectors: combustion plants, oil refineries, coke ovens, iron and steel plants and factories making cement, glass, lime, bricks, ceramics, pulp and

paper. A size threshold based on production capacity or output determines which plants in these sectors are included in the scheme.

Even with this limited scope, more than 12 000 installations in the 25 Member States are covered, accounting for around 45 % of the EU's total CO_2 emissions or about 30 % of its overall greenhouse gas emissions.

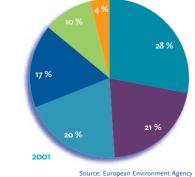
The scheme will be reviewed around mid-2006 to allow fine-tuning in the light of experience gained and to consider whether it should be extended to other sectors, such as chemicals, aluminium and transport, and to more greenhouse gases.



21 % Transport

20 % Industry

Sources of greenhouse gas emissions in the EU (2001)







Companies A and B both emit 100 000 tonnes of CO₂ per year. In their national allocation plans their governments give each of them emission allowances for 95 000 tonnes, leaving them to find ways to cover the shortfall of 5 000 allowances. This gives them a choice between reducing their emissions by 5 000 tonnes, purchasing 5 000 allowances in the market or taking a position somewhere in between. Before deciding which option to pursue they compare the costs of each.

In the market, the price of an allowance at that moment is \notin 10 per tonne of CO₂. Company A calculates that cutting its emissions will cost it \notin 5 per tonne, so it decides to do this because it is cheaper than buying the necessary allowances. Company A even decides to take the opportunity to reduce its emissions not by 5 000 tonnes but by 10 000, to ensure that it will have no difficulty holding within its emission limit for the next few years.

Company B is in a different situation. Its reduction costs are \in 15 per tonne, i.e. higher than the market price, so it decides to buy allowances instead of reducing emissions.

Company A spends \notin 50 000 on cutting its emissions by 10 000 tonnes at a cost of \notin 5 per tonne, but then receives \notin 50 000 from selling the 5 000 allowances it no longer needs at the market price of \notin 10 each. This means it fully offsets its emission reduction costs by selling allowances, whereas without the emissions trading scheme it would have had a net cost of \notin 25 000 to bear (assuming that it cut emissions by only the 5 000 tonnes necessary).

Company B spends \notin 50 000 on buying 5 000 allowances at a price of \notin 10 each. In the absence of the flexibility provided by the ETS, it would have had to cut its emissions by 5 000 tonnes at a cost of \notin 75 000.

Emissions trading thus brings a total cost-saving of \notin 50 000 for the companies in this example. Since Company A chooses to cut its emissions (because this is the cheaper option in its case), the allowances that Company B buys represent a real emissions reduction even if Company B did not reduce its own emissions.

Emission allowances

At the heart of the ETS is the common trading 'currency' of emission allowances. One allowance represents the right to emit one tonne of CO₂. Member States have drawn up national allocation plans for 2005–07 which give each installation in the scheme permission to emit an amount



of CO₂ that corresponds to the number of allowances received. Decisions on the allocations are made public.

The limit or 'cap' on the number of allowances allocated creates the scarcity needed for a trading market to emerge. Companies that keep their emissions below the level of their allowances are able to sell their excess allowances at a price determined by supply and demand at that time. Those facing difficulty in remaining within their emissions limit have a choice between taking measures to reduce their emissions, such as investing in more efficient technology or using a less carbon-intensive energy source, buying the extra allowances they need at the market rate, or a combination of the two, whichever is cheapest. This ensures that emissions are reduced in the most cost-effective way.

Most allowances are allocated to installations free of charge — at least 95 % during the initial phase and at least 90 % in the second phase from 2008 to 2012. Though only plants covered by the scheme are given allowances, anyone else — individuals, institutions, non-governmental organisations or whoever — is free to buy and sell in the market in the same way as companies.

Preparations for emissions trading in the EU Emission allocations and number of installations covered by the EU emissions trading scheme per Member State (indicative table based on national allocation plans approved up to January 2005) and their Kyoto emission targets

Member State	CO ₂ allowances in million tonnes	Installations covered	Kyoto target
Austria	99.01	205	-13 %(*)
Belgium	188.8	363	-7.5 %(*)
Czech Republic	National allocation	plan yet to be assessed	-8 %
Cyprus	16.98	13	
Denmark	100.5	362	-21 %(*)
Estonia	56.85	43	-8 %
Finland	136.5	535	o %(*)
France	469.53	1 172	o %(*)
Germany	1 497.0	2 419	-21 %(*)
Greece	National allocation	+25 %(*)	
Hungary	93.8	261	-6 %
Ireland	67.0	143	+13 %(*)
Italy	National allocation	-6.5 %(*)	
Latvia	13.7	95	-8 %
Lithuania	36.8		
Luxembourg	10.07	19	-28 %(*)
Malta	8.83	2	
Netherlands	285.9	333	-6 %(*)
Poland	National allocation	-6 %	
Portugal	114.5	239	+27 %(*)
Slovak Republic	91.5	209	-8 %
Slovenia	26.3	98	-8 %
Spain(**)	523.7	927	+15 %
Sweden	68.7	499	+4 %(*)
United Kingdom	736.0	1 078	-12.5 %(*)
Total so far	4 641.97(**)	9 089(**)	
Approximate percentage of estimated overall total	ca. 70 %	ca. 70 %	



(*) Under the Kyoto Protocol, the EU-15 (until 30 April 2004 the EU had 15 Member States) has to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 8 % below 1990 levels during 2008-12. This target is shared among the 15 Member States under a legally binding burden-sharing agreement (Council Decision 2002/58/EC dr 24 April 2002). The OMember States that joined the EU on 1 May 2004 have individual targets under the Kyoto Protocol with the exception of Cyprus and Malta, which as yet have no targets.

(**) Figures do not include some Spanish installations for which allocations are in preparation.

National allocation plans

Member States' national allocation plans (NAPs) have to be based on objective and transparent criteria, including a set of common rules that are laid down in the legislative framework establishing the ETS. The most important of these rules are as follows: -



An allocation plan has to reflect a Member State's Kyoto target as well as its actual and projected progress towards meeting it. The total quantity of allowances allocated is key in this regard. Allocating too many allowances would mean that greater efforts to cut emissions would have to be taken in economic sectors not covered by the scheme, in potentially less cost-effective ways than trading.

- Allocations to installations must take account of their potential for reducing emissions from each of their activities, and must not be higher than the installations are likely to need.
- Where Member States intend to use JI and CDM credits thereby giving their companies more scope to emit — to help them reach their national emission target, these plans must be substantiated, for example through budgetary provisions.

The European Commission has issued specific guidance on how these rules are to be applied by Member States (?). The Commission assesses NAPs on the basis of these rules, as well as EU rules on State aids and competition, and has the power to require changes or even to reject them altogether.

(1) Commission Communication COM/2003)830 of 7 January 2004 on guidance to assist Member States in the instelin an Annex III to Directive 2003/87/EC establishing a scheme for greenhouse gas emission allowance trading within the Community and amending Council Directive 96/61/EC

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Ensuring compliance

Appropriately for a market-based instrument that makes it possible to put a price on carbon, the ETS incorporates a robust framework of measures to ensure compliance that also gives a central role to economic incentives.



After each calendar year, installations must surrender a number of allowances equivalent to their verified CO₂ emissions in that year. These allowances are then cancelled so they cannot be used again. Those installations with allowances left over can sell them or bank them for the future.

Those that have not produced enough allowances to cover their emissions will have to pay a dissuasive fine for each excess tonne emitted. In the initial phase the penalty is \in 40 per tonne, but from 2008 it will rise to \in 100. Operators also have to obtain allowances to make up the shortfall in the following year, and they will be 'named and shamed' by having their names published.

Member States are also required to lay down dissuasive penalties for any infringements of the ETS rules at national level.



Monitoring and reporting emissions

Each installation in the ETS must have a permit from its competent authority for its emissions of all six greenhouse gases controlled by the Kyoto Protocol. A condition for granting the permit is that the operator is capable of monitoring and reporting the plant's emissions. A permit is different from the allowances: the permit sets out the emissions monitoring and reporting requirements for an installation, whereas allowances are the scheme's tradable unit.

Installations must report their CO₂ emissions after each calendar year. The European Commission has issued a set of monitoring and reporting guidelines (') to be followed. Installations' reports have to be checked by an independent verifier on the basis of criteria set out in the ETS legislation, and are made public. Operators whose emission reports for the previous year are not verified as satisfactory will not be allowed to sell allowances until a revised report is approved by a verifier.

Transaction registries

Allowances are not printed but held in accounts in electronic registries set up by Member States. The European Commission has set out specific legislation for a standardised and secured system of registries based on UN data exchange standards to track the issue, holding, transfer and cancellation of allowances. Provisions on the tracking and use of credits from JI and CDM projects in the EU scheme are also included. The registries system is similar to a banking system which keeps track of the ownership of money in accounts but does not look into the deals that lead to money changing hands.

The system of registries is overseen by a central administrator at EU level who, through an independent transaction log, checks each

(*) Commission Decision 2004/156/EC of 29 January 2004 establishing guidelines for the monitoring and reporting of greenhouse gas emissions pursuant to Directive 2003/87/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council

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transaction for any irregularities. Any irregularities detected prevent a transaction from being completed until they have been remedied. The EU registries system will be integrated with the international registries system used under the Kyoto Protocol.



Trading in practice

The legal framework of the ETS does not lay down how and where trading in allowances should take place. Companies and other participants in the market may trade directly with each other or buy and sell via a broker, exchange or any other type of market intermediary that may spring up to take advantage of a new market of significant size.

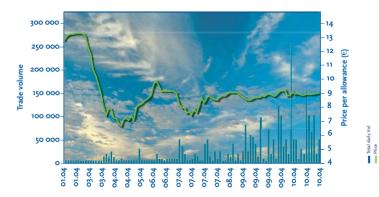
The price of allowances is determined by supply and demand as in any other market. Recent months have seen an accelerating upward trend in the volumes traded on the early 'forward' allowance market as new players enter and existing players gain in confidence.

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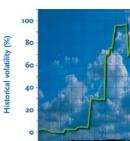
The volatility of prices has decreased correspondingly. This encouraging trend indicates that a sound price for CO_2 is on the path to being established, giving companies a good basis for putting into practice their best strategy for meeting their emission obligations.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL What's Nen

Trading volume and price of EU CO_2 emission allowances on the forward market (for 2005 delivery), **01.01.04** — **29.10.04**



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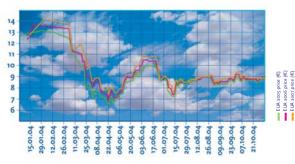
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EUA 2005, 2006, 2007 price charts 01.01.04 - 29.10.04



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EUA 2005 h. vol (20)



EUA 2005 historical volatility (h. vol.) chart 01.01.04 - 29.10.04

Benefits for partners outside the EU

Creating stable demand for credits from JI and CDM



Joint implementation and the clean development mechanism enable developed countries that have binding emission reduction or limitation targets under the Kyoto Protocol to undertake emission-saving investments in third countries and credit these savings towards their own emission target.

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CDM covers projects in countries without an emission target under the Protocol, i.e. developing nations. Reductions since 2000 are potentially eligible to receive credits called 'certified emission reductions', or CERS. JI applies to projects in countries that have agreed to an emission target other industrialised countries and countries with economies in transition — and will yield credits known as 'emission reduction units', or ERUs, once the first Kyoto commitment period starts in 2008.

The EU scheme is the first in the world that recognises most of these credits as equivalent to emission allowances (1 EUA = 1 CER = 1 ERU) and allows them to be traded under the scheme (⁵). Credits from nuclear facilities and land use, land-use change and forestry activities are not accepted.

(1) Directive 2004/101/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 October 2004 amending Directive 2003/87/EC establishing a scheme for greenhouse gas emission allowance within the Community, in respect of the Kyoto Protocol's project mechanisms





CDM and JI projects from the Netherlands

The Netherlands has already signed many contracts to buy emission credits from CDM and JI projects, thereby helping to finance the transfer of environmentally sound technology to the host countries. The CDM and JI projects include:

- → The construction of two electricity generating plants in Rajasthan, India that use locally abundant mustard crop residue, cotton stalk and rice husk renewable energy sources for fuel. Net CO₂ emissions are zero since the amount of carbon emitted by burning the biomass is equal to the amount of carbon absorbed as it grows. The electricity produced by the plants, with a combined capacity of 14.8 megawatts, will replace power generated from more heavily-polluting lignite and coal. The first plant began commercial operation in August 2003 and the second is due to do so in March 2006. This CDM project, providing additional income and employment in a relatively poor region, will yield 754 716 credits (CERs) over the period 2004–13.
- → A CDM project to install a windpark with 22 turbines generating a total of 25.8 megawatts of electricity at Huitengxite in the Inner-Mongolia Autonomous Region of China. The project, due for completion by the end of 2004, will yield 578 741 credits (CERs) over the period 2004–13 by producing 'clean' electricity that would otherwise have been generated by a fossil fuel-based plant emitting CO₂. The revenues will help to make wind power more economically viable and thus to expand in a country whose energy supply is dominated by huge coal reserves.
- → The construction of the Te Apiti Wind Farm near Palmerston North in New Zealand with a capacity of approximately 91 MW and virtually zero carbon emissions. Construction of the new wind farm started in May 2004 and the project is expected to be fully operational in 2005. The expected annual output of the wind farm is estimated at approximately 325 GWh. The business as usual situation would be the replacement of natural gas with coal, due to the shortage of gas in the near future. This JI project is likely to delay for some time the building of new coal plants. Emission reductions are estimated to equal 980 525 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent per year in the period 2005-12 and should generate 530 000 ERUs.







Thus, three years before the Protocol's first commitment period starts, the EU scheme is giving certainty to investors in the rapidly emerging market for JI and CDM projects. This encourages more investment in such projects and consequently promotes the transfer of environmentally sound technologies that help the host countries meet their sustainable development goals.

For EU companies covered by the scheme, the recognition of JI and CDM credits increases the range of options available for meeting their emission targets, improves the liquidity of the market and potentially lowers the price of allowances, thus further reducing their compliance costs.

Companies are not the only ones looking for emission reduction credits through JI and CDM. Member States intend to use such credits themselves to help meet their emission target under the Protocol. As of October 2004, Member States had provisionally indicated in their national allocation plans that they intend to procure 500–600 million tonnes of CO₂ credits for the period 2008–12. Since the majority of JI and CDM projects tend to generate emission reductions averaging between 500 ooo and one million tonnes of CO₂, EU countries' demand for emission credits can only be satisfied through a great number of such projects. As 2008 draws nearer, EU Member States are actively seeking JI and CDM projects and a number of project contracts have already been signed (see box).

With this strong demand for emission credits building up rapidly, major European banks are becoming active in providing finance for prospective emission reduction projects. At the end of 2003, the European Investment Bank created a dedicated financing facility of \in 500 million. Likewise, Germany's KfW set up a carbon fund in June 2004, and other leading European banks are considering similar initiatives.

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The use of the Kyoto mechanisms within the EU will be supplemental to domestic action to limit or reduce emissions, as agreed by UNFCCC parties at Marrakesh in 2001. Member States will address this question specifically in their national allocation plans for 2008–12.

Linking the EU ETS with trading schemes in partner countries

The ETS is open to linking with compatible greenhouse gas emission trading schemes in other countries that have ratified the Kyoto Protocol. It is foreseen that each side would agree to recognise allowances issued by the other, thereby expanding the market for trading.



The EU is discussing Norway's possible participation in the ETS and preliminary discussions on cooperation have taken place with a number of other countries. The EU is also encouraged by moves to create an emissions trading scheme for CO_2 among a significant number of US states.

Shaping the future debate by sharing experience with partners

During the design of this innovative scheme, EU officials have exchanged information with many experts about existing trading schemes for other pollutants, particularly in the US. Now that the EU scheme has started, systematic 'learning by doing' will be crucial for its successful further development. Independent monitoring and evaluation is accompanying its implementation. These processes will yield invaluable information which the EU will want to share with all interested parties and stakeholders. Copies of this publication are available, free of charge, from:

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