

Workshop 6 - Policies and partnerships to address excess reactive nitrogen in the environment

4th International Nitrogen Conference

Costa do Sauipe, Brazil

2 October 2007

Time: 10.30 to 17.30

Location: room Porto Seguro – Convention Center

Focus

Representatives from government, the scientific community, business and industry, and relevant regional and international institutions are invited to take part in this interactive session to identify research, technological and capacity building needs required to develop and apply policies aimed at reducing the impacts of excess reactive nitrogen in the environment, and particularly in coastal waters and marine ecosystems. The meeting will be chaired by representatives from INI and the Ministry of the Environment, Government of the Netherlands.

Objectives

The specific objectives of this policy session are to:

- Develop a common understanding amongst the participants of the available knowledge and assessment programmes related to nitrogen and the environment.
- Share experience in the design and implementation of policy instruments aimed at reducing the impacts of excess reactive nitrogen in coastal zones and marine ecosystems.
- Based on this, develop recommendations in the following areas:
 1. Improving cost benefit analysis of the nitrogen issue.
 2. Developing effective policy instruments (and related technologies and capacity building activities) to address excess nitrogen in coastal zones and marine ecosystems.
 3. Actions needed at the regional and global level to help reduce the impacts of excess nitrogen in coastal zones and marine ecosystems.

Background information for the meeting (available at the following links)

1. Nitrogen 2007 Conference website –
<http://www.nitrogen2007.com>
2. Non-technical review on reactive nitrogen in the environment, UNEP/WHRC (2007)
http://www.gpa.unep.org/documents/non-technical_review_on_reactive_english.pdf
3. Nanjing Declaration on Nitrogen Management
4. State of the Marine Environment, UNEP/GPA Coordination Office (2006)
5. UNESCO- SCOPE briefing on Human Alteration of the Nitrogen Cycle
6. IFA on Fertilizer Best Management Practices

Agenda

10.30 – 11.30

Setting the scene

- Current knowledge and initiatives regarding reactive nitrogen in the environment
 - Review of global assessment initiatives related to reactive nitrogen and discussion on localities or regions where action is most required on excess reactive nitrogen.

- Balancing the need to rectify nitrogen deficiencies with the need to avoid the environmental impacts from excess

11.30-13.30

Discussion groups: three parallel sessions will be held and each group is invited to develop a one-pager list of recommendations.

- *Group One: Improving cost benefit analysis of the nitrogen issues:*
 - What are the gaps in risk assessment and cost/benefit estimates? (e.g., effects of excess nitrogen on human health, biodiversity). How could these gaps be addressed?
 - Where have such cost benefit analyses taken place? How effective were they?
- *Group Two: What policy instruments (and related technologies and capacity building activities) have been effective in addressing excess nitrogen in coastal zones and marine ecosystem? What lessons can be drawn from this that could be replicated elsewhere?*
 - What policies (and market based instruments) have been implemented at local, national, regional and global levels? What lessons can be learned from these?
 - What are the most cost effective nitrogen policies for emissions from agriculture, energy production and industry, as well as for point and non-point water pollution.
 - What are the most urgent capacity building needs and important knowledge gaps?
 - Are human health risks understood and included in policy making discussions?
 - What are the most important legal, institutional or financial barriers to developing more effective policies to curb excess nitrogen release to the environment?
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- *Group Three: What actions are needed at the regional and global level to help facilitate action to address excess nitrogen in coastal zones and marine ecosystems?*
 - Priorities for international information exchange or collaboration on policy design, technology cooperation and capacity building for sustainable management of nitrogen.
 - Recommendations for GEF-4 strategy on International Waters, the GPA and Regional Seas' programmes on nutrients in coastal zones etc.
 - Recommendations on how to transfer and adapt assessment, monitoring and policy experience from one country/region to another

13.30-14.30

Lunch

14.30- 15.30

Discussion groups continue

15.30-16.00

Report back from discussion groups to plenary

16.00-17.30

Conclusions and next steps

- Focusing on collaborative actions that could be taken at national, regional or international levels to address nitrogen excess, particularly in coastal zones.

- Develop "*Bahia Partnership*" document defining next steps