

Call for inputs – The technical update of the Guidance Documents of the CCS

Today the CCS Directive and the Guidance Documents establish a clear legal framework for the environmentally safe geological storage of CO₂ from the projects related to fossil emission reductions. It can also offer a good base for negative emissions technologies removing CO₂ from the atmosphere, such as Bioenergy Carbon Capture and Storage (BECCS). As BECCS and other negative emissions technologies may be included in the scope of EU ETS in the coming years (EU Commission's report and possible legislative proposal & impact assessment by July 2026), it is necessary to establish their role in the CCS Directive and its Guidance Documents accordingly. Considering the wide understanding of the urgent need to deploy these technologies at scale, now would be the time to adjust policies, legal frameworks, and methodologies to support and speed up the development. An essential barrier for BECCS in the current ETS framework is the lack of incentives for capturing and storing biogenic CO₂. It is essential to send the right signal for the industry now and fix the incentives already well before 2030. There are already some significant BECCS projects in the pipeline in Europe and these projects should be enabled with legislation and regulation and supported with effective incentives. We need to gain practical experience from these promising technologies now to ensure technological progress in the learning curve.

In the Guidance document 1. (G1) the Life Cycle Framework for CO₂ Storage Projects should be amended by adding and/or revising certain stages to enable the inclusion of negative emissions technologies projects into the framework. As the framework describes the main phases and regulatory milestones of the CO₂ storage projects, it is necessary to draw attention to the difference between the fossil CO₂ projects, which reduce emissions, and biogenic CO₂ projects, which remove CO₂ from the atmosphere. For example, in the current framework, in the phase 6, under the competent authority's (CA) regulatory activities, the part "surrender allowances, as needed" in case of CO₂ leakage, should be addressed to fossil CO₂ projects only, unless the negative emissions projects are rewarded with allowances.

As mentioned in the guidance document 2. (G2) and the guidance document 4. (G4) the CCS directive's requirement to detect leakage and the provisions under the EU ETS to quantify, report and surrender allowances need to be amended related to BECCS and other negative emissions technologies. There must be a clear difference between physical leakage of fossil and biogenic CO₂ from geological storage sites. Currently there is only incentive to capture fossil CO₂ and none for capturing biogenic CO₂. This loophole needs

to be addressed and fixed. There should be a higher incentive for the solutions that permanently remove CO₂ from the atmosphere than for the projects that store the carbon without a net decrease of CO₂.

In the document G2, the method for quantifying potential CO₂ emissions from a storage project in the Monitoring and Reporting Guidelines (MRG) under the EU ETS should also provide guidance on accounting for negative emissions projects in case the terms and conditions for the projects differ.

The Guidance documents need to be amended to cover the transportation of CO₂ by other means than pipelines. Transportation of CO₂ by ship, rail or truck is crucial for CCS deployment in Europe by enabling all the actors from all countries to participate. As many of the prospective negative emissions projects in Europe involve the development of industrial CCUS hubs with shared CO₂ transport and storage infrastructure, the guidance documents should also address the responsibilities related to cross-border transportation. The EU needs to ensure that capacity for transport and storage of CO₂ does not become a bottleneck for deployment of the negative emissions technologies that are vital to reach EU's climate goals.

Our role in CCS: Foster the development of BECCS and biochar. Advise our members of the development both in policy related to CCS and in projects in the field.