



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
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CLIMA.C.2 – Low Carbon Solutions (II): Research & Low Carbon Technology Deployment

# **Expert Group on the Geological Storage of Carbon Dioxide 25.11.2024**

## **Report**

On 25 November 2024, the European Commission (EC) services organised the third meeting of the Expert Group on the Geological Storage of Carbon Dioxide. The meeting brought together the representatives from Member States (MS) and European Economic Area (EEA) countries. The meeting took place in a hybrid format, in Brussels and online. The meeting was structured as follows:

- Introduction
- Regulation 2024/1735 “Net-Zero Industry Act” (NZIA) implementation
- Draft NZIA Delegated Regulation
- MS update on CCS exploration permits and CCS storage permits
- Expert Group 2025 working programme

### **Meeting participants**

- Member States Representatives
- Commission services
- EFTA Surveillance Authority secretariat

### **Introduction**

The meeting started with a high-level introduction by the EC on the Innovation Fund portfolio, with a focus on Industrial Carbon Management (ICM) projects. The Commission also outlined how the Innovation Fund contributes to the 50 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> injection capacity target set by the NZIA regulation. In addition, the Commission explained how the STEP Seal delivered by the Innovation Fund can be leveraged by projects to get fast-tracked when applying for funding

from other EU financing instruments (e.g. ERDF, Cohesion Fund, Recovery & Resilience Facility, etc.). Finally, the Commission reminded the MS on their obligation by the end of 2024 to:

- 1) Ensure transparency of geological data (Art. 21(1) (a) and (b))
- 2) Publish the first annual progress reports on CO<sub>2</sub> capture, transport and storage projects (Art. 21(2) (a)-(f) and (3)).

The key take-aways from the Q&A with the MS are as follows:

- MS have the responsibility to publish the annual progress reports, and for the first iteration they are free to choose the digital report format (Excel, PDF, etc.).
- There is no obligation to publish the report in English, but the Commission encourages MS to do so.
- The Commission aims to create a template for the annual reports to facilitate annual updates and comparability, the Commission will start working on said template in early 2025 in consultation with Member States. Once the template has been finalised, MS should use that template for their annual reports.
- In case MS do not yet have rules in place to require relevant entities to make their geological data publicly available, they must put appropriate rules in place by the end of 2024 that require relevant entities to make geological data publicly available, in accordance with Art. 21(1) (b) of Regulation 2024/1735.
- On compliance with Article 21(1) (b) of NZIA: licence holders can either publish their data themselves without going through the government or send their data to the government which then publishes it (or both). Either way, licence holders are not allowed to keep their data undisclosed. The preferred scenario would be single points of contact for potential users of the data at the MS level.
- Regarding Article 21 (1) (a) of NZIA on the “transparency of geological data”, several topics were discussed, including the lack of legislation to make confidential geological data publicly available; pending decisions on where CO<sub>2</sub> storage capacity could take place on the territory. The Commission acknowledged the challenges and stated that it is willing to discuss them with MS on the basis of their notifications in a collaborative manner to find solutions.

## **NZIA delegated act**

In this section, the Commission first updated the Member States on how relevant entities are identified, in the following cases: a production authorisation is transferred between entities, an entity has ceased to exist, an entity was acquired by another entity.

The Commission then outlined approaches to determine which entities will be exempted based on their overall oil and gas production in the EU between 2020 and 2023. The Commission stated that choosing the right threshold is a trade-off between fairness and reducing the burden on small producers.

### **MS update on CCS exploration permits and CCS storage permits**

The Commission outlined its current understanding of the expected number of CCS storage and exploration permits per MS. The Commission noted that MS are not obligated to notify CCS exploration permits, but that having this information is valuable for the Commission because it indicates the potential number of CCS storage permits per MS. In total, three MS had notified the Commission of new expected exploration/storage permits (FR, DK, SE). Three MS (SE, NL, DK) provided updates on CCS exploration/storage permits.

### **Expert Group 2025 work programme**

The Commission outlined its suggested 2025 work programme for the CCS Expert Group and stated that it planned 4 meetings in 2025:

- 19.02.2025
- 18.06.2025
- 2 further meeting dates in the second half of 2025 to be defined.

The following topics were suggested by MS:

- One MS (FR) suggested “public acceptance” as a topic to discuss in upcoming meetings. Two other MS (SE, IS) agreed.
- One MS (BE) suggested to organise a session on CO<sub>2</sub> transport, during which MS would share their experience. Two other MS (DK, IS) agreed.
- One MS (CZ) suggested “financial security and financial mechanisms” as a topic to discuss in upcoming meetings. Two other MS agreed (IS, SE).

