

Regional Conference on the assessment of the phase-out of leaded gasoline in Sub Saharan Africa

Methodology Note

1. Background.

In June 2001, a regional conference was held in Dakar, Senegal, to officially start a regional campaign to eliminate lead from gasoline in sub-Saharan Africa. The major output of the conference (attended by delegates from 28 countries) was the so-called “Dakar Declaration” which set a date for the complete phase-out of leaded gasoline in SSA by end 2005.

The success of the Dakar conference and the commitment from all the major stakeholders was mainly due to the comprehensive partnership of public and private actors: African Authorities, NGOs research institutions, the oil industry through IPIECA, Donors, AFRICACLEAN, WHO, USEPA, UNEP, the World Bank who coordinates the Clean Air Initiative in SSA (CAI-SSA) under which the process of lead phase-out was launched in June 2001.

In September 2002, at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), Governments and their Partners agreed that the phase-out of leaded gasoline is a matter of the highest priority. This was included in the WSSD Plan of Implementation. At the WSSD, a global partnership for Clean Fuels and Vehicles (PCFV, coordinated by UNEP) was set up to support the global phase-out of leaded gasoline, with a focus on sub-Saharan Africa.

The Dakar conference drafted sub-regional Action Plans, which were further elaborated and translated into national actions in five sub-regional workshops :

- Dakar in March 2002 for West Africa;
- Cotonou in April 2002 for Nigeria and neighboring countries;
- Nairobi in June 2002 for East Africa;
- Cape Town in October 2003 for Southern Africa;

The fifth sub-regional workshop (West and Central Africa) is scheduled to take place in Cameroon on March 16-17, 2004.

During the second Steering Committee Meeting of the CAI-SSA held in March 2003, there was an overall agreement among the key partners to organize a regional conference to assess the progress made since the June 2001 conference on the elimination of lead from gasoline in SSA (the so-called “Dakar +2 “ conference).

The conference will take place from 5 to 7 May 2004 at UNEP Headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, jointly with the World Bank. The technical session of the conference will be on May 5 and 6, to be followed by a Ministerial Session on May 7.

This short note describes the conference’s main objectives and the expected outputs.

2. Conference's Objectives

The main objectives of the conference are to (a) take stock of the progress made in each sub-region in the process of lead phase-out; (b) identify key issues and potential constraints and recommend the remaining measures to be taken to reach the December 2005 deadline and ; (c) debate the overall issues of urban air pollution.

The outcomes of the Technical session will be presented to the Ministerial Session. The Ministerial Session is expected to take decisions on the next steps of regulatory and institutional measures based on the recommendations of the Technical Session.

Such overall objectives will be pursued through the following specific steps;

- Determine, country by country, the level of implementation in the lead phase-out;
- In those countries where only minimal progress has been realized, identify the remaining steps required in the various domains (technical, political, regulatory and financial) to achieve the 2005 objective;
- Identify the existing bottlenecks and constraints to phase-out leaded gasoline, the potential solutions to overcome those constraints and propose a set of options;
- Determine if substitutes or additives were used to replace lead in gasoline, the costs of substitutes as well as the potential alternative options considered;
- Determine the remaining technical adaptations to be made by the main refineries to eliminate lead from gasoline;
- Identify the Research Octane specifications (RON) in the key product supplier centers as well as the potential for harmonization at the sub-regional level;
- Propose recommendations for continuing the effort of improving fuels quality;
- Assess the impacts, if any, of tax incentives, if and when used in some SSA countries, to stimulate the elimination of lead from gasoline;
- Determine, especially in the countries that have phase-out leaded gasoline, or have plans to phase-out leaded gasoline, the presence of vehicles equipped with catalytic converters, and options to introduce catalytic converter equipped vehicles;
- Debate questions related to clean fuel and vehicles and the overall issue of urban air pollution.

3. Outputs

They are:

- Refinements to (or updates of) Sub-regional Action Plans with agreement on a set of measures, identification of key actors responsible for implementation and milestones to be reached;
- Identification of actions to be taken in SSA countries to ensure the full implementation of the Dakar Declaration;
- Creation of a Task Force to support the implementation of actions, through coordinating the follow up, monitoring the progress made and involving the civil society and other partners.