

# Setting Ambient Air Quality Standards

## *The Approach in Europe and the US*

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# Setting Ambient Air Quality Standards

- A key first step in achieving clean air
  - What do we measure progress against?
- Many similarities in the EU and US processes
- And some important differences...

# The Basic Approaches Are Similar

US

Integrated Science Assessment  
EPA ORD/CASAC  
Extensive Public Comment

Policy Assessment  
EPA OAR/CASAC  
Extensive Public Comment

Proposed Standards  
EPA Administrator  
Extensive Public Comment

Public Hearings and Decision  
EPA Administrator  
Extended Public Comment

*Assessment of the  
Science*

*Analysis of Policy  
Options*

*Proposal of the  
Standards*

*Public Review and  
Decisions*

EU

World Air Quality Guidelines  
WHO/Guidelines Dev. Group  
Limited Public Comment

Policy/Scenario Analysis  
DG Environment  
Extensive Public Comment

Proposal for  
Parliament/Council Review  
European Commission  
Extensive Public Comment

Public Hearings and Co-  
Decision  
Council and Parliament must  
agree

# There are many similarities...

- Assessing the most current science on exposure and health
- Policy and Risk Analyses
- Public communication and input from diverse stakeholders throughout the policy analysis process

# But some important differences...

- The more public review of the science in the US EPA/CASAC process vs. the less public WHO review
  - But some would argue the WHO review can more independently reach conclusions on the science
- **The consideration of cost:**
  - Both produce estimates of costs and benefits, but the US Clean Air Act does not allow consideration of cost in setting the standards
- **Who makes the decision:**
  - In the US the EPA Administrator, following public review procedures, makes the decision
  - In the EU, the European Commission proposes, but then the European Parliament and a qualified majority of the European Council (the prime ministers of each of the Member States) must agree

## And one further important difference...

- The US Clean Air Act requires review of the science and the standards every five years
- The EU Air Quality Directive has no similar requirement
- In reality, the US process has rarely met that timing
  - But it has meant that lawsuits can dictate a schedule
  - And the newest science can be considered somewhat more frequently....

## In the end...

- Both processes have resulted in setting of standards
- And in each case, the implementation of those standards has led to cleaner air...

*Thank you!*



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