

E-Track - A European Tracking System for Electricity

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Sub-project Switzerland

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1st national consultation workshop

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Organised by:

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Participants:

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Agenda

13:30 - 13:50	Introduction
13:50 - 14:30	I) Tracking: Need for tracking and basic options
14:30 - 15:00	II) E-Track: Objectives of the project, tasks and schedule
15:00 - 15:20	Break
15:20 - 16:00	III) Tracking in practice: legal requirements in Switzerland
16:00 -16:40	IV) Tracking in practice: RECS, ECS, Naturemade eco-label
16:40 - 17:10	V) Perspectives for a European tracking system Diskussion: Synthese der Ansprüche und Anforderungen
17:10 -17:30	Summary and outlook

The workshop had the aim

- to present the E-Track project to different stakeholders in Switzerland in order to invite them for comments,
- to identify links with ongoing activities in the fields of disclosure and tracking in Switzerland and
- to initiate a discussion on the requirements a tracking scheme should fulfil and on major design questions.

Summary of the results

1) General questions and comments related to the E-Track project

Workshop participants wondered whether the E-Track project deals with issues that are already addressed in national projects. Some did not immediately see a need for another project on tracking. They expressed the need to make clear what the additional value of the results of the E-Track project will be and how national projects may practically interact with E-Track.

There was a particular interest in how far the European Commission will consider the results of the E-Track project. In other words: Is it to be expected that project outcomes become part of European legislation thus again influencing national tracking schemes?

Participants also asked in which way the participation process will be organised: Has the group to achieve consensus? Are stakeholders expected to make statements or to take decisions that are binding in the end? Does the participation process lead to additional costs for the stakeholders?

2) Design components of a tracking scheme

contract vs. certificate based tracking

There were concerns that it will be difficult to set up a comprehensive contract based tracking scheme. Although additional attributes could be included into bilateral contracts, an integration

of attributes into spot markets and power exchanges was not regarded to be feasible. The majority of the participants were in favour of certificate based solution.

However, certificate based tracking was said to entail the risk that non experts may mix it up with quota based systems for the support of RES-E. Having been asked whether the general tracking concept will affect credibility in one or another way, consumer organisations stated that private consumers may always be sceptical with regard to e.g. disclosure and, in the end, may only trust eco-labels, which are backed up by NGOs.

mandatory vs. voluntary tracking

Discussion on this issue was strongly influenced by today's experiences and practice. Certificate trading on a voluntary basis was only expected in the case of RES-E although one participant, referring to the climate debate, said he would not a priori exclude certificates for nuclear power. There was a consensus that an encompassing certificate based tracking scheme for all energy sources can only be established on the basis of a mandatory regulation.

single vs. parallel tracking systems

Many participants emphasised the advantages of a single tracking system and said to be in favour of a tracking monopoly. Government should enforce the integration of different tracking systems into a single one. In case parallel systems should be accepted (as it is in Switzerland right now) stakeholders asked for cross compatibility of these systems in order to transfer data from one system into another. A

centralised vs. decentralised structure

Stakeholders in Switzerland made a strong point in favour of a central registry, preferably on the European level. All certificate based transactions should be covered by this system. Such a solution would be able to provide the same (working) conditions for all market participants. Furthermore, verification could be carried out more easily.

3) General picture of a tracking system

The discussion in the Swiss workshop was dominated by the picture that a certificate based tracking system, which is accepted by the national government and which fulfils the requirements of the European GO-directive(s) is exactly what is needed. The European system for CO₂-emission trading was mentioned as a favourable solution. Participants of utility companies said that they would like to their own account with which they could operate internationally.

There was only little concern that such a system would not be able to explicitly track the non-renewable, non-CHP part of the electricity.

Despite the preference for a single system on the European level, workshop participants expressed concerns whether it is realistic to implement a common solution – especially if it should be intended to integrate all energy sources.

4) General requirements

In the workshop general requirements which could be imposed on a tracking system were discussed. These include compatibility with existing schemes, feasibility / simplicity, costs, reliability and accuracy. It was mentioned that some of these requirements may be in conflict with one another and that priorities have to be agreed upon. In the workshop, compatibility and reliability (e.g. avoiding double counting) received the most attention. Costs were also an issue. A systematic review of priorities, however, was not carried out.

5) Further requirements from a Swiss perspective

A European tracking system should be able to account for national particularities.

It was said that a tracking system should be able to distinguish between environmentally sound (certified) hydropower and “normal” hydropower – a view that was not agreed upon by all participants.

A tracking system should indicate whether a power plant has received financial support, e.g. from a governmental support scheme.

Environmental parameters, such as CO₂-emissions per kWh, should be included into a tracking scheme. In a similar vein, it should be possible to integrate the information whether the respective electricity has been eco-labelled.