

Minutes from the EU Regulation & Policy Forum

27th January 2026, 14:00 - 16.30 (CET)

Hybrid meeting: Microsoft Teams/ CCSA Office, Rue De Congrès 35 Bruxelles

Stefano Miriello opened the Regulation & Policy Forum and welcomed all members and CCSA staff in attendance. He also reminded participants that the meeting was being recorded and that all materials would be shared afterwards.

Thierry presented key findings from a Deloitte study, which consolidates insights from market studies conducted in Europe. The study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of CCS market development and regulatory frameworks.

- The findings will be bundled into a single, integrated study.
- A dedicated webinar will be organised to present the full results of the study to a wider audience.

CO₂ Transport Working Group

Albero Sánchez gave an update on the activities of the CO₂ Transport Working Group since last year, highlighting a period of strong engagement and output.

Key activities included:

- Organisation of workshops and breakfast events.
- Active work on policy files, including position papers and responses to public consultations.

The consultation on CO₂ Transportation infrastructure & markets reinforced the need for a supportive, flexible, and market-enabling regulatory framework, particularly at this early stage of CCS deployment.

Main conclusions:

- Regulation should remain pragmatic and proportionate, avoiding overregulation while the market is still emerging.
- A cluster-based network development approach is preferred, allowing projects close to Final Investment Decision (FID) to proceed without waiting for a full EU-wide network.
- Equal treatment of transport modes (pipeline, shipping, trucking) is essential to maintain a level playing field.

- Standards should facilitate market growth, focusing only on essential safety, integrity, and corrosion requirements.
- Permitting remains a critical barrier, especially for cross-border infrastructure, requiring coordinated EU-level solutions.
- Premature tariff regulation should be avoided, as it may discourage early investment and innovation.

Way Forward:

A forward-looking pathway was presented, including:

- Alignment with the upcoming DG ENER study on CO₂ transport and network development.
- A proposed stakeholder engagement plan, featuring targeted outreach and collaboration.
- Planned further engagement activities, including:
 - Webinars to present study findings and policy options
 - Meetings with MEPs and EU policymakers
 - Continued dialogue with industry, regulators, and Member States

Caterina Molinari – SNAM

Caterina provided highlights on the Ravenna CCS project, developed by ENI and SNAM, with offshore storage.

Key points:

- CO₂ transport plays a central role in the Ravenna project.
- Emissions originate from both domestic and EU sources.
- A multimodal transport approach is required, as some emitters are located far from pipeline connections.
- The system is designed to receive CO₂ via pipelines, ships, and trucks.
- SNAM has completed onshore network planning.

Additional considerations:

- Assessment is ongoing regarding whether to repurpose existing infrastructure or build new pipelines.
- Regulatory clarity, clear political commitment, and coherent cross-border policies at EU level are essential.

- A positive narrative towards local communities is critical to improving the social licence to operate (SLO).
- Legislative and regulatory paralysis at government level was flagged as a concern.
- There is a need to:
 - Empower regulatory authorities.
 - Define technical rules for onshore transport.
 - Reach FIDs as quickly as possible.
- Innovation Fund (IF) funding is currently difficult to access and is seen as a last-resort option at this stage.

External speaker – Lucas Maurer

Lucas presented recent developments in CO₂ transport policy in Belgium, with a focus on Flanders.

Key developments:

- There is a need to establish a clear set of rules for emitters.
- Strong emphasis on collaboration with neighbouring countries (Netherlands, France, and potentially the UK).
- The objective is to transport CO₂ cost-efficiently to locations with available storage.

Policy and legislative framework:

- CCS is included in the Flemish National Energy and Climate Plan (NECP), with a target of 5 Mt CO₂ captured by 2030.
- Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) have been signed with several countries, including Denmark, Norway, and the Netherlands.
- Transport legislation work started in 2022, focusing on transport regulation.
- CO₂ specifications are particularly important in Belgium due to pipeline applications:
 - Operators are required to collaborate with other actors.
 - Alignment of Belgian CO₂ specifications with EU standards is essential.
- Establishment of a Low Carbon Network Operator (LCNO) in the Antwerp area.
- Wallonia is developing a similar legislative framework (expected in 2024) aimed at reducing CO₂ transport costs.

Market design principles:

- Support for uniform market rules for cross-border transport.
- National frameworks should be principle-based but flexible enough to reflect local circumstances.
- Advocacy for network development plans and financial de-risking tools.

The discussion addressed the issue of CO₂ transport tariff regulation and the implementation of the Belgian framework. It was noted that tariff regulation has not been a key focus in Flanders to date, while Wallonia has already published a tariff methodology. Under this approach, emitters pay the network operator for access based on proportionate cost allocation. Participants also discussed the status of the Belgian implementation process, including the appointment of the Low Carbon Network Operator (LCNO), which is progressing and expected to be formally adopted by the Flemish Government in the near term. Continued engagement with other Member States was emphasised, with particular reference to the importance of cooperation with the United Kingdom, especially in the context of potential future ETS linking.

Low Carbon Products Working Group

Inês Bonnes Sequeira introduced herself and presented the structure and priorities of the Low Products Working Group, including the Industrial Accelerator Act main concerns and next steps (CCSA Letter on IAA, followed by engagement with the Cabinet of Stéphane Séjourné (DG GROW), and the development of CCSA Low Carbon Products Report Series.

External Affairs & Comms Working Group

Ariadna Lungulescu and Francesco D'Apollito introduced themselves and presented the activities, planning, structure and priorities of the Comms & External Affairs Working Group, together with the engagement of CCSA in international venues like COP30 and the CCUS Forum.

CDR & Carbon Markets Working Group

Marino Varricchio introduced himself and presented the structure and priorities of the CDR & Carbon Markets Working Group, including the integration of CDR into compliance mechanisms and the design of optimal funding architecture for CDR deployment.

Fabien Ramos, Policy Lead on CDR at DG CLIMA, recently detailed the EU's latest policy and regulatory advancements in CDR. The upcoming Delegated Act on CRCF methodologies emphasizes biomass sustainability and strict permanence requirements

for biochar, ensuring only the most stable fractions qualify as removals. These acts are nearing final adoption, with all preparations set for completion by February 3.

DG CLIMA is also evaluating to draft CRCF methodologies for novel CDR technologies, including a workshop on mineral carbonation scheduled for February 9. The next Carbon Removals Expert Group meeting will prioritize carbon farming and storage in long-lasting wood-based products. Additionally, the directorate is exploring funding mechanisms such as the Public Purchasing Programme for permanent CDR and the Buyers Club. Something conceptually similar will also be envisioned for Carbon Farming. Key upcoming events include CRCF Days in May, designed to connect buyers and suppliers across all CRCF categories. In July, as part of the EU ETS revision, a report will assess the integration of CDR into the EU compliance framework and the treatment of non-permanent CCU. Notably, the EU and UK are, in principle, aligned on CDR methodologies.

CO₂ Storage Working Group

A summary of the activities undertaken within the Working Group was shared with members. Moreover, other initiatives, such as the EU Atlas and the London Register, were presented, and their usefulness was highlighted for members of the group.

Possible actions for the upcoming Working Group meeting were outlined; however, these will be addressed in more detail during the meeting itself.

Before concluding, a number of cross-cutting points were highlighted, including the *Humber Capture Project Market Survey* and the upcoming CCSA Annual Conferences, for which dates have already been confirmed in both the EU and the UK.

The next RegPol meeting is expected to take place around May–June, and a further communication will be shared with members including all relevant meeting materials.