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What's on in Citeair?

CITEAIR "think tank"

Focus on CITEAIR products:

Common Air Quality Index (CAQI)

Common Operational Website (COW)

Workshop in Brussels
March 31, 2006

Join us!

The cities participating in the CITEAIR project:

Leicester (UK),
Paris (FR),
Prague (CZ)
Rome (I)
Rotterdam (NL),
Bratislava (SK)
Brussels (BE)
Coventry (UK),
The Hague (NL),
Munich (DE),

Transfer Region:

Emilia-Romagna
Region(I)

What's on in CITEAIR?

Air quality and its impact on health has been the main drive behind implementing the Air Quality Directives.

The current World Health Organisation air quality guidelines also suggest values, stating that these do not represent a safe level of «no adverse effects». Health Impact Assessment work has focused on children, who are perceived as being at high risk.

The CITEAIR project, co-funded through the INTERREG IIIC programme, is developing efficient means to collect, present and compare air quality across a multitude of European Cities.

After one year and half of productive work among partners and an exchange of opinions with stakeholders including the European Environment Agency, we are collecting the first results.

During the CITEAIR Workshop on 31st March 2006 in Brussels, CITEAIR will be proud to announce the release of the first two CITEAIR's products, the version 1.0 of the of CITEAIR's Common Operational Website (**COW**) where the engine for Common Air Quality Index (**CAQI**) is implemented.

The project is thus proposing this European Air Quality Index and, with the COW, is demonstrating its practical applicability of this indicator using real-life air quality data from European cities.

The official launch during the Brussels workshop is done **to encourage cities to subscribe and send their data for reporting to CITEAIR**. The response will enhance the quality of the final COW, the CAQI and the associated guidebooks on AQ Reporting & Environmental Management, thus permitting an enhancement of air quality across Europe.

*Nick Hodges, Leicester City Council
Lead Partner of project CITEAIR*



CITEAIR "think tank":

Andrej Kobe, DG ENV has forwarded the following statement about CITEAIR's goals:

"The Commission has recently proposed a new Air Quality Directive, which is merging and streamlining the existing framework and daughter directives and the Exchange of Information while introducing new PM2.5 environmental standards. Accompanying implementing provisions on data availability and reporting, in line with the Communities environmental Shared Information System and INSPIRE concepts, are currently being prepared.

Sharing CITEAIR and EIONET objectives of efficient data exchange and clear, comprehensive and accessible public information on air quality, DG ENV is striving to ensure that suitable common solutions are adopted from the municipal to the EU level. Management of air pollution must always be tailored to the local situation, however a number of tools, good practices and solutions can be effectively transferred. It is a common goal of CITEAIR and DG ENV to support cities and regions in exploiting these options".

Focus on CITEAIR products: the Common Air Quality Index CAQI.

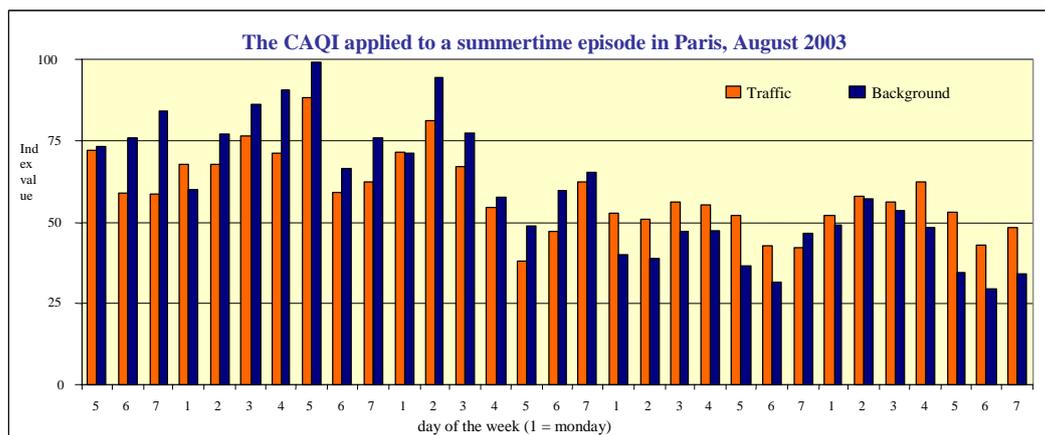
The CAQI is developed as a city/country independent air quality index facilitating the comparison of real time air quality in different European cities.

The CAQI resembles most existing indices: there is a calculation grid and the worst pollutant determines the index. An important feature of the CAQI is that it differentiates between traffic and city background conditions. The CAQI can be applied on an hourly and a daily basis. In addition to the short term index, an index for comparing year averages is being developed.

The CITEAIR Air Quality Index (CAQI) has 5 levels, using a scale from 0 (very low) to > 100 (very high) and the matching colours range from light green to dark red. It is based on 3 pollutants of major concern in Europe: PM10, NO2, O3. 2 Additional pollutants (CO and SO2) can be taken account where data is also available.

CAQI sample application

Except for a few days at the end of the month the background index was dominated by ozone. The traffic index was mainly determined by nitrogen dioxide with a few days of PM10. The poor dispersion conditions, combined with a large amount of imported ozone, are evident from the fact that the background index is similar or even higher than the traffic index, whereas normally (e.g. good dispersion conditions) there would be a gap of 15 to 25 index points between traffic and background. The weekend ozone effect is also visible:



Focus on CITEAIR products: the Common Operational Website.

Public information on the environment is of increasing importance. The public should be able to assess to what extent they are affected by air quality. This is an obligation under the EU Framework Directive on ambient air quality and under the Aarhus Convention that was ratified by the EU in 2005.

The Common Operational Website (COW), www.airqualitynow.org provides a platform to compare air quality in different cities in real time. The website does not aim to replace local websites but to complement them in providing a common place and a common way of presenting air quality.

To make the website attractive it is designed as a dynamic platform offering hourly or daily updated air quality concentration updates for those cities having a real time monitoring infrastructure.

Already +10 Cities and Regions declared their willing to link their real-time and historical environmental data to this COW.

Through this approach environmental data will be easily comparable across different sites in Europe.

However, to make city participation as broad and easy as possible, cities can also join www.airqualitynow.org in the section where year average air quality is being compared, by simply giving a yearly update of their air quality in a form on the website.

The Workshop in Brussels

On 31st March 2006 the CITEAIR Workshop will present the now finalized Common Operational Website (COW) and the practical implementation of the Common Air Quality Index (CAQI). The workshop will allow a wider discussion on its further use and development as a central policy support tool for citizen information and air quality actions. The COW is designed in a flexible manner to accommodate air quality data from a multitude of cities and regions. CITEAIR therefore invites relevant bodies to join the COW and have their data published.

The developments of the CITEAIR project are co-financed by INTERREG IIIC programme and supported by the Directorate-General for the Environment, by the European Environment Agency and by the European Topic Centre for Air Quality and Climate Change who will underpin the relevance of CITEAIR to policy making in Europe through their presentations:



- The Future of the INTERREG IIIC Programme.
Michel Lamblin, Director INTERREG IIIC West, Lille
- European Policy Perspectives: Development on new Air Quality legislation and CITEAIR.
Andrej Kobe, DG ENV, European Commission, Brussels
- Reporting on Air Quality across Europe and CITEAIR.
Tim Haigh, EEA, Copenhagen
- Air Quality indices in Europe.
Frank de Leeuw, Topic Centre Air Quality and Climate Change

The full programme, the registration form and further information on the project are available at the CITEAIR website <http://citeair.rec.org>

Join us!

The active participation to COW and CAQI is possible in any moment for active cities. Few steps and your data will be integral part of the European air quality assessment. Join the workshop filling in the registration form and a dedicated session will give all the clarification you need.

For more information, please, visit <http://citeair.rec.org>