

5.2.1 National air quality objectives

In April 1999 the Swedish Parliament adopted environmental quality objectives relating to fifteen areas, describing what quality and state of the environment and natural and cultural resources of Sweden are ecologically sustainable in the long term. The overall goal is to hand over a sustainable society to the next generation the timetable is set at 2020 (2050 for the climate objective).

For each general objective, specific targets were set out which were approved by the Parliament in November 2001 (2001/02:130). All sectors are obliged to work according to the objectives. Central objectives for air quality are the objectives *Reduce the Climate impact*, *Clean air*, *Natural acidification only*, *A non-toxic environment*, *Zero eutrophication* and *A good built environment*.

To reach the objectives, the Swedish EPA is formulating a strategy for appropriate measures to obtain an efficient use of energy and transports. The national objectives are transformed to regional objectives all over the country.

Several kinds of steps have been taken to reduce emissions of air pollutants in Sweden, such as:

- expansion of district heating in urban areas.
- introduction of fees on emissions of nitrogen oxides for energy production in combustion plants (4.5 €per kg NO_x expressed as NO₂).
- stricter requirements on emissions from industrial activities and heat or/and power plants.
- more stringent requirements on sulphur content in heating oils, diesel oil and petrol (since 1970s) and introduction of tax on sulphur 1991.
- differentiated harbour- and fairway fees, and tightened demands on emission and discharges from shipping (i.e. sulphur content of oils for ships).
- differentiated taxes and environmental classification of vehicle fuels, diesel and petrol (1990s).
- stricter requirements on vehicle emissions (light duty vehicles, catalytic converters 1989).
- environment zones for heavy duty vehicles (> 3.5 tons) and buses in urban areas. Vehicles older than eight years not allowed if not equipped with accepted exhaust emission control systems.
- environmental approbation system for new fireplaces and furnaces used for heating with firewood or other solid fuels.