ATEST Second Workshop

Brussels 31st January 2011

Discussion Minutes

After the presentations section of the workshop, a discussion was held on two major topics, in two groups. The following is a synthesis of the main points that came up in the discussion.

Topic 1. How does the proposed methodology and tools' characterisation fit with the SET-Plan needs?

ATEsT should be able to adapt the specification over time to account for changes in

- Markets
- Demand due to consumers changes
- Competitiveness of industry

Policy questions always interface with different levels

- Timing and Time-horizon
- Interference with other Policy issues
- (Macro)economic issues

ATEsT should address such questions and social aspects in order to not lose sights of the complex interaction between the energy sector and events in the rest of society/economy. Examples:

- SET-Plan evolves over time and may need to address other kinds of policy aspects
- Human resources as potential bottlenecks towards a low carbon society .
- Handle new technology concepts entering beyond 2020 when addressing 2020 goals.
- The evolution of the future demand need to be better understood in the concept of SET-plan, (a shift from industrial economy toward service economy can lower the need for additional electricity capacity).

ATEst should ensure that not just the optimal pathway is considered in addressing policy questions, but also at the best way to get there accounting for (irrational) consumer behavior, unexpected events, different scenario's (what if things run differently than first planned?) In real life, things never happen as indicated by model runs.

The supply of materials and potential material bottlenecks for the energy technologies could be included more explicitly in the list (although this is considered as part of the LC Analysis). The learning effect is crucial from the SET-Plan point of view, so the inclusion of these specifications is important.

With a view on the 20-20-20 targets, the renewable energy part might need to be analysed in more detail. The storage technologies and the resource analysis of RES could be included in more detail. These points are referred to in the existing specifications, but some might be hidden in a broader specification.

An attempt could be made to include non-technological barriers (e.g. market operation) apart from the technology acceptance, and behavioral aspects. Include tools/models on behavior, e.g. consumer research, societal embedding of innovations.

Regarding the tool selection methodology:

A penalty function could be included in the combination creation approach, to help limit the number of alternatives. The model accessibility (or the cost of accessibility) should be added as an extra dimension in the selection process. Also in the combination creation one could include the cost of interfacing of model combinations (in the case of hard linking the models) or the cost of adaptability, or improvement of models. Data complexity for a model could be raised as another dimension. Getting sufficient data to run a model might be too difficult in some cases. The question of how many models could be included in a combination is rather difficult to address. Soft linking can be very time consuming and all models cannot be linked! Linking models that partly overlap, might lead to convergence problems and in this case the combinations should include only a small number of models (maybe up to 4). In the case of a sequential application of models that clearly do not interact it might be possible to have more then 4 models. It would be interesting to include the coupling of quantitative models with qualitative methods. This should be an iterative process, using models to quantify the effects and qualitative approaches to increase the understanding of each alternative.

A third part ownership, "non-ownership", of the models is an issue and need to be approached. Non-ownership can be associated to high cost, low/non transparency and not in control of the assumptions. On other hand, complex model need in-house personal, which can be cost intensive as well and it is expansive to keep a model updated

Soft linking issues are a potential threat and can lead to inconsistence assumptions; the definition of model parameters like geographic arrangement, technologies included, etc. may be different.

Regarding the individual model evaluations this should be done at least by one model user as well as the model developer. For the future use of the Toolbox there is a need for:

- Periodic validation of the toolbox with policy makers and industrial stakeholders to see whether the toolbox is still up to date
- Leave the possibility to add models and specifications later on

Topic 2: Does the proposed form of the ATEsT toolbox fit with the expectations of an information service? What are the expectations from the outcome of the ATEsT project?

The ATEsT methodology should be an open methodology approach so that whenever a new tool appears or whenever a tool is improved, its rating could be updated and included in the toolbox. A software based approach (maybe a web platform) could be something useful to build. Other types of tools could be included in the set of tools examined e.g. trade off analysis.

The target groups of the toolbox are policy makers on the public sector level, technology developing industries, investors.

Overall the idea of an open access type of tool that has a mechanism of refreshing by updating the models information regularly would be very useful.

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