

**Chair's Summary of the  
ninth informal meeting between representatives of the governing bodies of the  
ECE Multilateral Environmental Agreements and the Committee of Environmental Policy**

held on 28 January 2019 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva

**1. Opening**

The meeting was chaired by Ms. Anna Engleryd, Chair of the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution, who temporarily replaced the Chair of the Protocol on Water and Health. She invited other Chairs to take over the role as Chair of Chairs for the next meeting.

**2. Information on the UNECE secretariat's inter-sectoral approach to supporting countries in achieving their commitments, including SDGs.**

The Director of the UNECE Environment Division briefed participants about the secretariat's intersectoral approach to supporting countries in achieving their commitments, including the SDGs. This approach ensured to streamline the organization towards the SDGs, take stock of ongoing intersectoral work, with a view to breaking down silos, and to creating nexus areas around the core work areas of UNECE. The approach will now be put into action through a matrix structure, in which nexus teams work across divisional lines for greater synergies. In response to this information, participants noticed that SDG 16 on peace and justice was not included in the list of priority SDGs for UNECE and considered it important to include it, which they agreed to also raise at the CEP meeting.

**3. Discussion on the role of CEP (as a body and its member States) and UNECE senior management in actively facilitating ratification and implementation of MEAs, especially in the EECCA region.**

It was recognized that there have been a lot of capacity building activities, specifically in Central Asia, but that the progress in ratification and implementation has been slow. Participants agreed that the CEP could support the MEAs in promoting ratification and implementation of the MEAs as a package and to raise the political profile of the MEAs at the higher political level, also by focusing on synergies between MEAs. Participants considered the idea of highlighting the role of the MEAs as one of the themes at the next EfE conference and agreed to bring this proposal to the attention of the CEP.

**4. Financial arrangements and human resources available for MEAs**

Participants raised the issue of sustainable and predictable financing for the MEAs. The Industrial Accidents Convention, for example, had worked with a small group to engage Parties to finance the work under the Convention and had recently adopted a decision on strengthening implementation of its sustainable financing mechanism at COP 10. It had furthermore shown the countries which had contributed financially, or in-kind, over the past 6 years, drawing attention to the fact that these had been only about half, and that the Convention largely depended on several major donor countries. It clearly highlighted the challenges with respect to funding predictability and sustainability. Other Conventions also recognized that there was a need to enlarge the donor base, but that fundraising efforts for project-related contributions itself were very resource-intensive. On the other hand, the experience of the Water Convention has shown that the global opening has created an openness by Parties to tackle financing as they recognize the need for additional XB and RB resources.

To enhance predictability for workplan implementation, contributions early in the year were particularly appreciated. The participants also addressed a number of serious problems with the enterprise management system UMOJA in relation to acceptance and reporting of financial contributions and expressed their concerns that this may impact the fundraising efforts.

**5. Mid-term review of the Batumi Decisions - Information on the progress under the Batumi Action for Cleaner Air**

As a response to the mid-term review survey of the Batumi Action for Cleaner Air, countries and organizations reported progress made on 84 (or 77.7 per cent) of the 108 submitted actions. Most of the actions have already

been implemented. In addition to the report drawn up for the mid-term review, stakeholders have also regularly reported on the progress in implementing BACA actions at the sessions of the Working Group on Strategies and Review, at the sessions of the Executive Body to the Air Convention and in the framework of the Batumi Talk Shows and CEP sessions. The BACA has also been adapted for use at the global level and has inspired actions from countries outside the UNECE region.

## **6. Round table of Chairs to highlight recent developments under MEAs**

The Industrial Accidents Convention highlighted recent development from COP 10, including the adoption of a new long-term strategy. The Industrial Accidents Convention also reported that Parties could not agree on an amendment, including to open the Convention and to strengthen provisions on public information and participation.

The Espoo Convention and the Protocol on SEA reported on a number of pilot projects in different sectors under the capacity building programme, and several guidance documents, including with the Industrial Accidents Convention. It was also highlighted that the compliance mechanism under the Convention had been challenged as there was no consensus at the last COP on some of the compliance cases, which had to be voted on, for the first time in the history of the Convention.

The Water Convention reported on the recent opening and the first ratifications from countries from outside the UNECE region.

The PRTR Protocol highlighted the Global Roundtable on PRTRs in 2018, a remarkable partnership event organised jointly by UNECE and OECD in cooperation with UNEP and UNITAR, and the ongoing work on amendments to the Protocol initiated by the Working Group of the Parties.

The Protocol on Water and Health reported on the preparations for the 5th Meeting of the Parties, the implementation of the current programme of work, including the organization of several subregional workshops.

The Air Convention highlighted the adoption of the new long-term strategy, which includes increased cooperation with other regions and countries without opening up the convention and further work on ammonia, methane, and black carbon, among others; and the establishment of a global forum to increase cooperation.

## **7. Conclusions and possible topics for future discussion.**

The Chair of the meeting suggested to discuss cooperation with the EU as a topic for the next Chairs' meeting.

## List of participants

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### 10th Informal Meeting of Representatives of Governing Bodies of MEAs and CEP

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Monday, January 28, 2019

Participants: 23

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**Mr. Yannick PAVAGEAU**

Deputy Head of Water Quality Office - Vice-Chair of the Bureau of the Protocol on Water and Health  
SD for Prevention related to Environment and food  
General Directorate of Health

Ministry of Solidarities and Health, 14 avenue Duquesne  
F-75350 Paris 07 SP  
France

**Phone:** +33 1 40 56 74 43  
**Email:** yannick.pavageau@sante.gouv.fr

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**Mrs. Torill F TANDBERG**

Specialist Director and Chair of the COP and Bureau for the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents  
Norwegian Directorate for Civil Protection

P.O Box 2014  
N-3103 Tønsberg  
Norway

**Phone:** +4733412500 **Mobile:** +4795983476  
**Email:** torill.tandberg@dsb.no

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**Ms. Elisabete QUINTAS DA SILVA**

Adviser, Office for International Relations; Chair, Committee on Environmental Policy  
Ministry of Environment, Land Use Planning and Regional Development

Av. 5 de outubro, 153  
1050-053 Lisbon

**Phone:** +351 218 814 090  
**Email:** Elisabete.Quintas@adcoesao.pt

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**Mrs. Anna ENGLERYD**

Chairperson of the Executive Body to the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution  
Senior Policy Advisor  
Swedish Environmental Protection Agency

Valhallavägen 195  
SE-10648 Stockholm  
Sweden

**Phone:** +46 10 698 10 60 **Mobile:** +46 768 86 43 89  
**Email:** anna.engleryd@swedishepa.se

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**Ms. Tina SKÅRMAN**

Chairperson- MOP to the Protocol on Pollutants Release and Transfer Registers  
Senior Adviser  
IVL Swedish Environmental Research Institute

Box 530 21  
SE-400 14 Göteborg  
Sweden

**Phone:** +46-10-788 67 70 (direct)  
**Email:** tina.skarman@ivl.se  
**Website:** www.ivl.se

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**Ms. Kolar Planinšič VESNA**

Secretary, Head of Division  
Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning,  
Republic of Slovenia

Ljubljana

**Phone:** +386 1478 7329 **Mobile:** +386 51 325 852  
**Email:** vesna.kolar-planinsic@gov.si

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**UNECE Secretariat****United Nations Economic Commission for Europe**

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**Mr. Marco KEINER**

Director  
Environment Division  
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Palais des Nations  
1211 Geneva 10  
Switzerland

**Phone:** +41 22 917 2370 **Mobile:** +41 79 27 93612  
**Fax:** +41 22 917 0041  
**Email:** marco.keiner@un.org

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**Mr. Zaal LOMTADZE**

Chief  
Environment for Europe and Sustainable Development Section  
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Palais des Nations  
8-14, Avenue de la Paix  
1211 Geneva 10  
Switzerland

**Phone:** +41 22 917 2388  
**Email:** zaal.lomtadze@un.org  
**Website:** www.unece.org

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**Ella BEHLYAROVA**

Secretary to the Aarhus Convention  
Environment Division  
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Palais des Nations  
CH 1211 Geneva

**Phone:** +41 22 917 2376  
**Fax:** +41 22 917 0107  
**Email:** ella.behlyarova@unece.org

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**Ms. Tea AULAVUO**

Secretary to the Espoo Convention and its Protocol on SEA  
Environment Division  
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Palais des Nations  
8-14, Avenue de la Paix  
1211 Geneva 10  
Switzerland

**Phone:** +41 22 917 1723  
**Fax:** +41 22 917 0621  
**Email:** tea.aulavuo@un.org

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**Ms. Franziska HIRSCH**

Secretary to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of  
Industrial Accidents  
Transboundary Cooperation Section, Environment Division  
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Palais des Nations  
Avenue de la Paix 8-14  
1211 Geneva 10  
Switzerland

**Phone:** +41 22 917 24 80  
**Email:** franziska.hirsch@un.org

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**Ms. Francesca BERNARDINI**

Secretary to the Water Convention  
Transboundary Cooperation Section, Environment Division  
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Palais des Nations  
8-14, Avenue de la Paix  
1211 Geneva 10  
Switzerland

**Phone:** +41 22 917 1032  
**Email:** francesca.bernardini@un.org  
**Website:** <http://www.unece.org/env/water.html>

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**Ms. Albena KARADJOVA**

Environmental Affairs Officer  
Transboundary Cooperation Section, Environment Division  
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Palais des Nations,  
8-14 Avenue de la Paix  
1211 Geneva 10  
Switzerland

**Phone:** +41 22 917 2345  
**Email:** albena.karadjova@un.org

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**Ms. Alina NOVIKOVA**

Environmental Affairs Officer,  
Transboundary Cooperation Section, Environment Division  
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Palais des Nations  
8-14, Avenue de la Paix  
1211 Geneva 10  
Switzerland

**Phone:** +41 22 917 2630  
**Email:** alina.novikova@un.org

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**Ms. Sonja KOEPEL**

Environmental Affairs Officer, Water Convention  
Transboundary Cooperation Section, Environment Division  
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Palais des Nations  
8-14, Avenue de la Paix  
1211 Geneva 10  
Switzerland

**Phone:** +41 22 917 1218  
**Email:** sonja.koepfel@un.org

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**Ms. Nataliya NIKIFOROVA**

Environmental Affairs Officer, Water Convention  
Transboundary Cooperation Section, Environment Division  
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Palais des Nations  
8-14, Avenue de la Paix  
1211 Geneva 10  
Switzerland

**Phone:** +41 22 917 19 27  
**Email:** nataliya.nikiforova@un.org

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**Ms. Carolin SANZ NORIEGA**

Associate Environmental Affairs Officer, Convention on  
Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution  
Transboundary Cooperation Section, Environment Division  
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

Palais des Nations  
8-14 avenue de la Paix  
1211 Geneva  
Switzerland

**Phone:** 0041229173922 **Mobile:** 0041763583965  
**Email:** carolin.sanznoriega@un.org

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