

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Eighty-eighth meeting
Geneva, 16 December 2016

Item 6

Informal Document No. **2016/64**

Regional Forum on Sustainable Development

**Draft Decision of the Economic Commission for Europe on the Establishment of the
Regional Forum on Sustainable Development**

The Economic Commission for Europe,

Welcoming General Assembly resolution 70/1, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, in which member States adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, and reaffirmed their commitment to working tirelessly for the full implementation of this Agenda by 2030,

Recalling that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, inter alia, recognizes the importance of building on existing follow-up and review mechanisms at the regional level and allowing adequate policy space, encourages all Member States to identify the most suitable regional forum in which to engage, as well as United Nations regional commissions to continue supporting Member States in this regard, and establishes guiding principles for follow-up and review processes at all levels, taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development, respecting policy space and priorities, while remaining consistent with international rules and commitments, and recognizing that the outcome from national-level processes will be the foundation for reviews at the regional and global levels,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 67/290, which, inter alia, acknowledges the importance of the regional dimension of sustainable development, and invites the United Nations regional commissions to contribute to the work of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, including through annual regional meetings, with the involvement of other relevant regional entities, major groups and other relevant stakeholders, as appropriate,

Recalling furthermore General Assembly resolution 70/299, which encourages member States to identify the most suitable regional or sub-regional forums and formats for the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda, and welcomes the steps taken in this regard,

Taking into account the Ministerial Declaration of the 2016 High-level Political Forum (E/HLPF/2016/3/Add.2), which recognizes the important role the regional and subregional forums can have in supporting the implementation of the

2030 Agenda and welcomes the identification, development and convening of appropriate regional and subregional forums on sustainable development,

1. *Decides* to establish the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for the ECE region, serving as a regional mechanism to follow-up and review the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and to convene it annually in the years 2018 and 2019, in close cooperation with the entities of the regional UN system,

2. *Decides also* that the Regional Forum will focus on practical value added, taking into account the work of existing regional bodies and mechanisms, including peer review mechanisms, while avoiding additional reporting burdens for member States, and contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by:
 - (a) creating a space for ECE member States for peer learning and the exchange of policy experiences and good practices in SDG implementation

 - (b) providing a regional and subregional overview of progress and challenges in implementation

 - (c) enhancing regional and subregional cooperation and addressing transboundary issues

 - (d) providing a platform for the participation and contributions of all relevant stakeholders, including international and regional organisations, civil society, academia and the private sector, following the relevant provisions of the 2030 Agenda and the Economic and Social Council.

3. *Requests* the secretariat to develop the agenda of each Regional Forum in close consultation with member States, and to align it with the respective themes and programme of work of the High-level Political Forum, with a focus on those aspects that are particularly relevant to the ECE region, and taking into account lessons learnt from previous Regional Forums.

4. *Decides* to submit the outcome of the Regional Forum, in the form of a summary produced by its Chair, to the High-level Political Forum, as part of the regional contributions to the global follow-up and review process of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

5. *Furthermore decides* to review this decision at the 68th session of the Commission with a view to keeping the Regional Forum aligned with the follow-up and review process at the global level.

REGIONAL FORUM

ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR THE UNECE REGION

Tuesday, 25 April 2017 | Geneva | Palais des Nations, Room XVII

Preliminary Programme

10:00 – 10:45	OPENING
10:45 – 13:00	POLICY SEGMENT THE SECOND YEAR OF THE SDGs IN THE REGION – KNOWING WHERE WE STAND AND MOVING ON TO PROSPERITY AND WELL-BEING FOR ALL The Policy Segment will be organized as an interactive and cross-sectoral panel discussion in the plenary. Within the overall context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the broader theme of the 2017 High-level Political Forum (HLPF), it will focus on a set of key themes: prosperity, health and well-being, and gender (hence, particularly SDG 3 on health and well-being, SDG 5 on gender equality and women's empowerment, and SDG 9 on infrastructure, industrialization and innovation). Through the lens of prosperity, health and well-being, and gender, other SDGs that will be reviewed in-depth at the 2017 HLPF will also be covered, in particular poverty and social protection (SDG 1), nutrition and agriculture (SDG 2), and oceans (SDG 14). The Policy Segment aims at a cross-sectoral exchange and discussion among key policy makers and non-governmental actors (United Nations system, other regional and international organizations, civil society, private sector, academia) with an integrated perspective on the SDG agenda. An informal document containing a synthesis of substantive background materials will be made available to guide the discussions.
13:00 – 15:00	LUNCH BREAK
15:00 – 17:00	PEER LEARNING SEGMENT - PARALLEL REGIONAL ROUND TABLES - The Peer Learning Segment will promote voluntary and more in-depth peer learning and practical exchange of experiences and best practices in SDG implementation. Participants will break out in three parallel Regional Round Tables. Informal concept notes will be made available for all three Regional Round Tables.

**REGIONAL ROUND TABLE I (Room XVII):
*NATIONALIZATION AND LOCALIZATION OF SDGs***

Round Table I will focus on the ongoing process of adapting the global SDGs to national and local circumstances. Reviewing and adjusting national strategies, plans and instruments is a major first step taken by governments in the region to start SDG implementation. The Round Table will discuss challenges, exchange different approaches, and collect preliminary lessons from devising national and local SDG strategies and programmes, benefitting from a wealth of country experiences, including from the countries from the region that participated or will participate in the National Voluntary Reviews at the HLPF.

**REGIONAL ROUND TABLE II (Room XXI):
*SUBREGIONAL COOPERATION FOR SDG IMPLEMENTATION***

The subregional level is important in a multi-layered system of SDG implementation and follow-up. Neighbouring countries working together can help address issues of common concern, including those of transboundary nature. The subregional level connects the local and national levels on the one hand and the regional and global levels on the other hand. With regard to the key themes for the Regional Forum, this applies in particular to cross-border infrastructure and trade. The Round Table will share experiences and discuss how cooperation within the different UNECE subregions can help advance the SDGs. Round Table II will encourage participation by governments, subregional organizations and bodies, and non-governmental actors engaged in subregional cooperation.

**REGIONAL ROUND TABLE III (Room XXII):
*DATA AND MONITORING***

Improving the data situation and building statistical capacities for SDG monitoring remains a significant challenge for all countries in the region and beyond. Statisticians are working at the global and regional levels, including in the Conference of European Statisticians, to develop methodologically sound SDG indicators. Round Table III will provide an opportunity for dialogue between policy-makers and statisticians on the needs, feasibility and limitations of SDG data.

17:00 – 18:00

REPORTING BACK AND CLOSING

Further Information:

www.unece.org/rfsd2017

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