

The “Environment for Europe” mid-term review of the Astana Conference main outcomes



Survey for reporting on promoting the “Environment for Europe” process and the outcomes of its ministerial conferences*

I. Introduction

1. At its eighteenth session in April 2012 the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP) invited the secretariat to organize consultations (in the form of a survey) with UNECE member States to collect information on how countries have been promoting objectives and priorities of the “Environment for Europe” (EfE) process and strengthening implementation of outcomes of the Astana Ministerial Conference, including through national policies and relevant partnerships.
2. The secretariat will prepare a summary report on the basis of responses received to the survey. The report will support the discussion during the EfE mid-term review of the Astana Conference main outcomes which is being organized during the nineteenth session of CEP (Geneva, 22–25 October 2013).
3. The survey, contained in section V of the current document, was developed by the secretariat in consultation with the CEP Bureau. In addition, an overview of main achievements of the EfE process is provided in section II. Section III focusses on outcomes of Astana Ministerial Conference, and section IV includes background information on the mid-term review of relevance to the survey. For convenience, the Reform Plan of the EfE process is provided in the annex to this document.

II. Overview of the “Environment for Europe” process: main achievements

4. Since its launch in 1991 the EfE process supports countries efforts to advance in environmental governance. The EfE process is a unique partnership of member States within the UNECE region, organizations of the United Nations System represented in the region, other intergovernmental organizations and bodies, Regional Environmental Centres, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and other major groups. UNECE, which has been closely associated with the EfE process since its inception, serves as its secretariat.

* This document has not been formally edited.

5. The process and its ministerial conferences provide an effective high-level platform for stakeholders to discuss, decide and join efforts in addressing environmental priorities across the 56 countries of the UNECE region, and is a regional pillar of sustainable development.
6. At the same time, the process focuses on supporting the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia and of South-Eastern Europe in their efforts to raise environmental standards and comply with international commitments.
7. The EfE process provided the framework for the development of governance policies and initiatives, legal instruments, policies and practical actions and tools that promote and improve environmental governance and strengthen sustainable development at the regional level, as well as contribute to enhancing the global sustainability. The main achievements of the EfE process include:
 - (a) Four assessments on the state of the environment in the pan-European region (Dobris, Aarhus, Kyiv and Belgrade assessments) and an assessment of environmental assessments (Astana).
 - (b) Setting up institutional mechanisms for cooperation (establishing the Environmental Action Programme Task Force, the Project Preparation Committee and the Regional Environmental Centres).
 - (c) Acting as a driving force for developing multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and other environmental policy instruments, and promoting their implementation.¹
 - (d) Launching the UNECE Environmental Performance Review Programme for member countries that are non-OECD members.
 - (e) Promoting cross-sectoral activities and policy integration (energy efficiency, education for sustainable development (ESD) and greening the economy).
 - (f) Enhancing cooperation between Governments and civil society organizations.
8. Following a decision by Ministers in Belgrade in 2007, CEP reformed the EfE process in 2009 to ensure that it remains relevant and valuable, and to strengthen its effectiveness.

III. Main features of and lessons learned from the Astana Ministerial Conference

9. The seventh EfE Ministerial Conference (Astana, 2011) was the first EfE Conference organized in accordance with the Reform Plan of the EfE process. The Astana Ministerial Conference gathered more than 1,500 participants from Governments, the international community, civil society, business and the media throughout the UNECE region to discuss two main themes: sustainable management of water and water-related

¹ The UNECE Programme on Environmental Performance Reviews (EPRs); the UNECE Programme on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment; the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (PEBLDS); the Aarhus Convention; the Protocols on Heavy Metals and Persistent Organic Pollutants to the Air Pollution Convention; the Pan-European Strategy to Phase-out Leaded Petrol; the UNECE Strategy for ESD; the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment to the Espoo Convention; the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers to the Aarhus Convention; the Protocol on Civil Liability to the Industrial Accidents and Water Conventions; the Environment Strategy for Eastern European, Caucasian and Central Asian countries; the Carpathian Convention; and a series of guidelines and recommendations to Governments.

ecosystems; and greening the economy: mainstreaming the environment into economic development.

10. The event was organized in an interactive format, including nine high-level multi-stakeholder round tables. To support multi-stakeholder discussions during the Conference and to facilitate decision-making, substantive documents on each of the two main themes were prepared by UNECE jointly with EfE partners. For the first time, the EfE Ministerial Conference was a paper-smart event.

11. The EfE partners organized 43 side events on issues related to the two main themes of the Conference. The Conference gathered business and industry representatives, who also participated in a Green Innovations, Technologies and Ecoservices Fair, organized on the margins of the Conference. Representatives of media attended the Conference, preceded by a capacity-building workshop for journalists.

12. The Conference culminated in the adoption of the Astana Ministerial Declaration — a concise and comprehensive document — in which ministers confirmed their commitment to improving environmental protection and promoting sustainable development in the UNECE region through the EfE process, as well as decided on a number of follow up and further actions under the two themes of the Conference.

13. At its eighteenth session in April 2012, CEP assessed the effectiveness of the Astana Ministerial Conference. Delegations highly appreciated the organization and the outcomes of the Conference, structured in a new format according to the EfE Reform Plan. The success of the Conference was attributed to its two main themes, which were of importance for the entire region, its interactive format and its good outcomes, as well as its efficient preparatory process².

14. Meeting participants observed that the Astana Conference had demonstrated once again that the EfE process provided a unique high-level platform for addressing environmental concerns across the region and should be continued. Delegations expressed the wish for the future EfE conferences to be prepared in the same manner, including an even higher interactivity during the conference.

15. At the same time, some delegations observed that the biggest challenge for future conferences was to provide new structures or frameworks to address emerging themes, such as green economy, given the ongoing economic crisis that affected all countries in the UNECE region.

16. Future conferences should also be better streamlined, in particular in terms of side events. Concerning identification of themes for the next conferences, delegates stressed the need to find the right balance between established and emerging themes, including enhancing the work related to green economy and the mainstreaming of environmental concerns into the economic development.

IV. The “Environment for Europe” mid-term review of the Astana Conference main outcomes

17. In accordance with the EfE Reform Plan and following a decision by the Astana Ministerial Conference, CEP is convening a mid-term review in 2013 to assess the progress in implementation of the Conference’s main outcomes. The mid-term review would provide

² The preparatory process for the Astana Ministerial Conference commenced in 2009 and included four meetings of CEP (October 2009, November 2010, May and September 2011), two meetings of CEP Extended Bureau (May 2009 and March 2010), and one joint meeting of the Bureaux of CEP and of the Water Convention (January 2010).

renewed impetus to the process and its findings would be taken into account in the preparatory process for the next conference.

18. The EfE Reform Plan stipulates that particular efforts should be made by all relevant responsible actors to implement the outcomes of the EfE Ministerial Conferences. Member States should regularly consider how to promote objectives and priorities of the EfE process and strengthen implementation of the outcomes, including through national policies and relevant partnerships.

19. Furthermore, the Reform Plan stipulates that active participation by and input of all interested UNECE countries, and in particular of interested countries from subregions with specific needs in improving their environmental situation is crucial for the success of the activities under the EfE process. Also, countries taking the lead for one or more issues were encouraged to do so in ways that would contribute significantly to the EfE process’ objectives and priorities.

20. The Astana Conference main outcomes include: (a) ratifying and implementing the relevant multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs); (b) implementing the Astana Water Action; (c) promoting a green economy in the region and the Green Bridge Partnership Programme; (d) conducting a third cycle of environmental performance reviews (EPRs); (e) establishing a regular process of environmental assessment and developing a Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS); and (f) continuing the work of the Environmental Action Programme Task Force (EAP Task Force) and strengthening the work of the Regional Environmental Centres (see ECE/ASTANA.CONF/2011/2/Add.1).³

V. Survey

21. The purpose of the survey is to collect information (in accordance with the request by CEP) from the UNECE member States about the promotion of the EfE objectives and priorities in general, as well as strengthening implementation of the outcomes of the Astana Ministerial Conference in particular, including through national policies and relevant partnerships.

22. Following to the EfE Reform Plan, which stipulates in paragraph 16 that “member States should regularly consider how to promote objectives and priorities of the EfE process”, the survey aims at assessing the progress made by countries in implementing the EfE objectives and priorities as set out in the 2009 EfE Reform Plan (paragraphs 6 and 7). The EfE priorities adopted in 2009 cover most of activities carried out at present by the UNECE Environment subprogramme, as well as a number of activities carried out by the EfE partners. These activities are included in sections 2 and 3 of the survey.

23. In addition, following up on paragraph 16 of the EfE Reform Plan stipulating that “member States should strengthen the implementation of the outcomes of the EfE Conferences”, the survey aims at assessing the progress in implementation of the main outcome activities of the 2011 Astana EfE Ministerial Conference (refer to paragraph 20 of the present document). These activities are included in section 4 of the survey.

24. Furthermore, the survey seeks to identify country views on environmental priorities and themes that could be addressed at the next ministerial conference, as well as on possible efficient interactive modes for conducting discussions at ministerial level. These issues are included in sections 5 and 6 of the survey.

³ The Astana Ministerial Declaration and other Conference documents are available on the ECE website (<http://www.unece.org/env/efe/astana/welcome.html>).

25. It is recognized that countries may engage in a particular issue, treaty or process without the direct attribution of that engagement to the EfE process. Therefore it is recommended that the responses to the survey questions also explain the extent to which the EfE process has influenced the attention and priority given to an issue, process or treaty. If the response to a question is “not applicable”, “disagree” or “not foreseen”, but the particular issue is nonetheless important for the country, it could be explained that the issue is addressed primarily through means other than the EfE process or UNECE activities.

26. The target group of the survey comprises the representatives of national Governments of the UNECE region.

27. The structure of the survey has been developed to be user-friendly, mostly using a “tick box” approach, which is complemented by an explanatory section to allow respondents to elaborate on their choice. Such an approach is expected to facilitate the process of filling in the survey.

28. On the basis of responses received the UNECE secretariat will prepare an analysis for consideration by the nineteenth session of CEP. The analysis along with the responses received from countries will be posted on the CEP website.

29. UNECE member States are invited to complete the survey below and submit it to the secretariat (efe@unece.org) **by Friday, 28 June 2013**, at the latest.

1. Contact information

Please indicate the name, title, organization and country, as well as the contact data of the person who filled in the survey

First name:	...
Last name:	...
Title:	Department of Sustainable Development
Organization:	Ministry of the Environment
Country:	Republic of Poland
Address:	52/54 Wawelska str.; 00-922 Warsaw; Poland
Telephone:	+ 48 22 57 92 255
E-mail:	department.zrownowazonego.rozwoju@mos.gov.pl
Website:	www. mos.gov.pl
Date:	June 2013

2. Progress in promoting the objectives of the “Environment for Europe” process

In the table below, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements and provide an explanation, as appropriate. The boxes can be ticked by double-clicking on the box and choosing “checked” under the “default value” from the popping up window. N/A means not applicable. If you choose N/A, nevertheless please elaborate on your choice.

The EfE process continues to serve as a mechanism to:

(a) Improve the environment throughout the region, contributing to sustainable development which may in turn contribute to poverty eradication, to improving quality of life, and to a safer world

strongly agree / somewhat agree / somewhat disagree / strongly disagree / N/A

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

The EfE process played an important role in the area of environmental improvement in countries of the UNECE. The process is recognized as a unique Pan-European forum for tackling the environmental challenges and promoting broad horizontal environmental cooperation, as a pillar of sustainable development in the region. The EfE process is a voluntary platform of countries, international organisations, financial institutions, private sector and civil society for pan-European discussions on sustainable development policy that provides political guidance for improved environmental protection. The process made further progress on several features regarding water and green economy but also took decisive steps towards the establishment of a regular process of environmental assessment and the development of the Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) across the region. SEIS is a flagship project of the Eastern Partnership, the regional component of the European Neighbourhood policy, with the top level support.

Inadequate support for domestic actions, mainly due to reliable, stable and adequate financial resources.

During the 7th Ministerial Conference (Astana, September, 2011) Poland held the Presidency of the European Union. Poland coordinated the EU and its Member States position and was responsible for organizing meetings with the civil society representatives. As a response to the call from the UNECE Secretariat to support the preparatory process for the Conference, Poland decided to contribute 25.000 USD to the EfE Trust Fund to support participation of representatives from countries with economies in transition.

(b) Enhance the implementation of strengthened national environmental policies

strongly agree / somewhat agree / somewhat disagree / strongly disagree / N/A

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

The Seventh Ministerial Conference was the first one to be organized on the basis of the agreed reform of the EfE process from 2009. The main reason of the reform of the EfE process was to ensure that the process remains relevant and valuable, and to strengthen its effectiveness as a mechanism for improving environmental quality and the lives of people across the region. As was mentioned during a few last meetings, particularly for the EECCA region, the EfE process, including the ministerial level of the EfE conferences, had the added value due to the progress achieved thanks to the projects implemented and actions on the environment at national level. Environmental Performance Review Programme, and the set-up of pan-European assessment reports on the state of the environment, is the one of good task for strengthened national environmental policies. Also the Regional Environmental Centers (RECs) network can play an important role in the achievement of the overall EfE process objectives and priorities, which could be implemented into national environmental policies. Limited impact on enhancing national implementation of policies due to lack of financial support.

(c) Support convergence of environmental policies and approaches, while recognizing the benefits from a

diversity of approaches to achieve common goals, and the prioritisation of environmental objectives

strongly agree / somewhat agree / somewhat disagree / strongly disagree / N/A

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

Under the EfE process a number of significant and important decisions were undertaken. Among which the most important are as follow: establishment of the Environmental Action Programme for Central and Eastern Europe Task Force (EAP TF) and the Project Preparation Committee (PPC), the creation of new Regional Environmental Centers (RECs) for countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia, the introduction of the Environmental Performance Review Programme, and the set-up of pan-European assessment reports on the state of the environment, as well as creation od SEIS.

(d) Encourage the participation of civil society

strongly agree / somewhat agree / somewhat disagree / strongly disagree / N/A

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

The EfE process effectively enhances cooperation between the governments from ECE region with all stakeholders, including civil society. EfE process and its ministerial level conferences give an unique opportunity for creating a platform with representatives of governments and all stakeholders to discuss the common ideas and decide on common actions in the area of sustainable development and particularly on environment. Poland, as the EU member state country, has always supported the strong participation of all stakeholders in the process. This is one of the main added values of the EfE, showing a good example of implementation of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration, which states the importance of broad stakeholders’ involvement in managing and protecting the environment, sharing of information and lessons learned, as well as capacity-building. The UNECE region decided to implement Principle 10 by adopting the Aarhus Convention *on access to information, public participation and access to justice in environmental matters*, which can be seen as the most advanced and inspirational model for other regions, or even at the global level, on the matter of public participation in environmental issues. Poland supports fruitful and open dialogue with partners, which has proved to be a very useful way for establishing efficient cooperation patterns, as well as in improving sustainable development policies.

(e) Promote broad horizontal environmental cooperation

strongly agree / somewhat agree / somewhat disagree / strongly disagree / N/A

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

Taking into account environmental challenges and promoting broad horizontal environmental cooperation, environmental pillar of sustainable development in the UNECE region has not yet been fully achieved. Old legacies and old structures are still a big problem. Environmental policies must be driven by strong public awareness and involvement. It requires further political efforts, stronger engagement of all stakeholders and an enhanced focus on implementation of the outcomes of the EfE Ministerial Conferences by relevant responsible actors in the period between the Conferences.

In a horizontal environmental cooperation it is important to adopt and implement all legal instruments, particularly regional conventions and protocols. The MEAs, developed under the EfE process, have shaped in crucial areas the legal frameworks of many countries in the UNECE region. Policy tools and legal instruments developed in the framework of the EfE process have greatly contributed to the preparation of appropriate national legislation and have complemented and promoted environmental governance by strengthening national environmental institutions and policy instruments. Adaptation and implementation of all MEAs under EfE process can strengthen the regional efforts towards sustainable development. Horizontal environmental cooperation should provide to improve the environment in the UNECE region. One of the important issue is to establish a regular process of environmental assessment and to develop SEIS across the region. The Second Assessment of Transboundary Rivers, Lakes and Groundwaters in the UNECE region provided the most up-to-date and comprehensive assessment of pressing issues related to managing transboundary waters and helped to guide further action. It is important that such region-wide assessment process continues under the UNECE Water Convention to benchmark progress in the use and protection of shared waters.

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3. Progress in promoting the political priorities of the “Environment for Europe” process

In the table below, please, provide a brief summary of how your country is progressing in promoting the EfE political priorities, based on commitments already made under the EfE process, including through national policies and relevant partnerships. Please tick the box that best corresponds to the current situation or level of implementation in your country. Provide an explanation, as appropriate. N/A means not applicable. If you choose N/A, nevertheless please elaborate on your choice.

The progress (in your country) on EfE political priorities may include:

(a) Improvement of environmental governance, including strengthening environmental institutions and implementation of policy instruments (by your country)

– improvement of environmental governance:

not started / initiated / in progress / accomplished / N/A

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

Poland created a comprehensive system of strategic documents for improvement of the governance system, including sustainable development. The main documents are long-term and mid-term development strategies and 9 thematic strategies. 1. Long-term Development Strategy 2030 (*coordinated by The Chancellery of The Prime Minister*), 2. Mid-term Development Strategy 2020 (*coordinated by Ministry of Regional Development*) 3. and nine integrated strategies (2020):

1. Innovation and Efficiency of Economy Strategy (*coordination - Ministry of Economy*)
2. Human Capital Development Strategy (*coordination – The Chancellery of The Prime Minister*)
3. Transport Development Strategy (*coordination – Ministry of Infrastructure*)
4. Energy Safety and Environment (*coordination – Ministry of Economy and Ministry of Environment*) - the policy instrument targeted at sustainable and low emission growth. It builds on the Environmental Policy of 1991 and tries to combine environmental strategy with energy policy as these two fields very often overlap and their smart combination should bring important synergies.
5. Efficient State (*coordination – Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration*)
6. Society Capital Development Strategy (*coordination – Ministry of Culture and National Heritage*)
7. Regional Development Strategy (*coordination – Ministry of Regional Development*)
8. National Security Strategy (*coordination – Ministry of National Defence*)
9. Sustainable Development of Rural Areas and Agriculture Strategy (*co-ordination – Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development*)

This gives us a clear picture concerning environmental governance.

– strengthening environmental institutions:

not started / initiated / in progress / accomplished / N/A

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

According to the Polish Environmental Law, all administrative regions are due to elaborate and adopt environmental programs or plans that are coherent with national environmental policy. There are three administrative levels (voivodeships, powiats, gminas) The voivodeships are subdivided into powiats (often referred to in English as counties), and these are further divided into gminas (also known as communes). Major cities normally have the status of both gmina and powiat. Poland currently has 16 voivodeships, 379 powiats (including 65 cities with powiat status), and 2,478 gminas.

– implementation of policy instruments:

<input type="checkbox"/> not started / <input type="checkbox"/> initiated / <input type="checkbox"/> in progress / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> accomplished / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Please elaborate (up to 250 words): Poland implemented policy documents of the European Union in the area of sustainable development. Document promoting the concept of sustainability in Poland, based on UE strategy Europe 2020, is the <i>National Reform Programme (NRP)</i> , which presents the response of the country to the challenges to be faced in the upcoming years. The NRP has been structured to promote three main priorities: <i>Smart growth</i> - developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation; <i>Sustainable growth</i> - promoting a more resource efficient, greener and more competitive economy and <i>Inclusive growth</i> - fostering a high-employment economy ensuring economic, social and territorial cohesion. In general, sustainable development principles have been incorporated in a comprehensive, horizontal way in all strategic documents, policies and programmes. We believe that achievement of those objectives will be the key to the implementation of the social vision of market economy for the 21 st century.	
<p>(b) Streamlining the implementation by your Government of commitments made to existing UNECE legally-binding and legally non-binding instruments</p> Overall assessment: <input type="checkbox"/> not started / <input type="checkbox"/> initiated / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in progress / <input type="checkbox"/> accomplished / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Please elaborate (up to 250 words): Efficient implementation of all commitments written in existing UNECE legally-binding and legally non-binding instruments- conventions, protocols, declarations etc.	
Air Pollution Convention and its Protocols	– Status (<i>more than one box can be ticked</i>) <input type="checkbox"/> signed / <input type="checkbox"/> ratified/acceded/approved / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in the process of ratification/accession/approval / <input type="checkbox"/> not foreseen / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Please elaborate (up to 250 words): PL ratified Convention and one of its Protocols, namely Protocol on Long-term Financing of the Cooperative Programme for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-range Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe – Protocol EMEP – Implementation <input type="checkbox"/> not started / <input type="checkbox"/> initiated / <input type="checkbox"/> in progress / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> well-implemented / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Please elaborate (up to 250 words): Within the scope as mentioned above. – Formal reporting (national implementation reports) <input type="checkbox"/> never submitted / <input type="checkbox"/> submitting occasionally / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> submitting regularly / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Please elaborate (up to 250 words): Within the scope as mentioned above.
Water Convention	– Status (<i>more than one box can be ticked</i>)

	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> signed / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ratified/acceded/approved / <input type="checkbox"/> in the process of ratification/accession/approval / <input type="checkbox"/> not foreseen / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>...</p> <p>– Implementation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> not started / <input type="checkbox"/> initiated / <input type="checkbox"/> in progress / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> well-implemented / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>...</p>
<p>Protocol on Water and Health</p>	<p>– Status (<i>more than one box can be ticked</i>)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> signed / <input type="checkbox"/> ratified/acceded/approved / <input type="checkbox"/> in the process of ratification/accession/approval / <input type="checkbox"/> not foreseen / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>...</p> <p>– Implementation</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not started / <input type="checkbox"/> initiated / <input type="checkbox"/> in progress / <input type="checkbox"/> well-implemented / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>...</p> <p>– Formal reporting (national implementation reports)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> never submitted / <input type="checkbox"/> submitting occasionally / <input type="checkbox"/> submitting regularly / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>...</p>
<p>Industrial Accidents Convention</p>	<p>– Status (<i>more than one box can be ticked</i>)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> signed / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ratified/acceded/approved / <input type="checkbox"/> in the process of ratification/accession/approval / <input type="checkbox"/> not foreseen / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>Poland signed the Convention on 18 March 1992 and ratified it on 8 September 2003. The document was published in the Official Journal in 2004 (No. 129, item 1352).</p> <p>Implementation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> not started / <input type="checkbox"/> initiated / <input type="checkbox"/> in progress / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> well-implemented / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>All the provisions have been implemented.</p> <p>– Formal reporting (national implementation reports)</p>

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	<p><input type="checkbox"/> never submitted / <input type="checkbox"/> submitting occasionally / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> submitting regularly / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>Reports are submitted every two years.</p>
<p>Protocol on Civil Liability</p>	<p>– Status (<i>more than one box can be ticked</i>)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> signed / <input type="checkbox"/> ratified/acceded/approved / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in the process of ratification/accession/approval / <input type="checkbox"/> not foreseen / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>...</p> <p>– Implementation</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not started / <input type="checkbox"/> initiated / <input type="checkbox"/> in progress / <input type="checkbox"/> well-implemented / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>...</p>
<p>Espoo Convention</p>	<p>– Status (<i>more than one box can be ticked</i>)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> signed / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ratified/acceded/approved / <input type="checkbox"/> in the process of ratification/accession/approval / <input type="checkbox"/> not foreseen / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>Poland ratified the Espoo Convention on 12 June 1997. Since that time it was successfully implemented into national law and used in practice many times.</p> <p>– Implementation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> not started / <input type="checkbox"/> initiated / <input type="checkbox"/> in progress / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> well-implemented / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>Polish national law is in full compliance with provisions of the Espoo Convention. What is more, Poland is a Party of two bilateral agreements, Polish-German as well as Polish-Lithuanian, on specific issues related to the implementation of the Espoo Convention between these countries. Moreover, at this time we are preparing further bilateral agreements with Germany, Slovakia and Belarus devoted to the implementation of the Espoo Convention and SEA Protocol.</p> <p>Moreover, both amendments to the Espoo Convention were ratified by Poland (1st amendment on 20 July 2004 and 2nd amendment on 11 January 2012).</p> <p>– Formal reporting (national implementation reports)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> never submitted / <input type="checkbox"/> submitting occasionally / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> submitting regularly / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>National reporting on implementation takes place every three years. Poland submits its reports to the Secretary of the Espoo Convention very regularly. The last report for the period</p>

	<p>of 2010-2012 was submitted on 25 April 2013 and is available at: http://www.unece.org/environmental-policy/treaties/environmental-impact-assessment/areas-of-work/enveiaimplementationreview-implementation/review-of-implementation-2013.html</p>
<p>Protocol on SEA</p>	<p align="center">– Status (<i>more than one box can be ticked</i>)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> signed / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ratified/acceded/approved / <input type="checkbox"/> in the process of ratification/accession/approval / <input type="checkbox"/> not foreseen / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>Poland ratified the SEA Protocol on 21 June 2011 and its provisions are fully reflected in the national law.</p> <p align="center">– Implementation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> not started / <input type="checkbox"/> initiated / <input type="checkbox"/> in progress / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> well-implemented / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>Polish national law is in full compliance with the SEA Protocol. For the time being we are preparing two bilateral agreements on SEA with Germany and Slovakia.</p> <p align="center">– Formal reporting (national implementation reports)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> never submitted / <input type="checkbox"/> submitting occasionally / <input type="checkbox"/> submitting regularly / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>Due to the fact that the SEA Protocol entered into force in 2010 the first national reporting on implementation takes place in 2013. Polish national report is under preparation and will be submitted to the Secretariat at the latest by 28 of June 2013 (as it was agreed on the 2nd Working Group on EIA/SEA 27-30 May 2013).</p>
<p>Aarhus Convention</p>	<p align="center">– Status (<i>more than one box can be ticked</i>)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> signed / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ratified/acceded/approved / <input type="checkbox"/> in the process of ratification/accession/approval / <input type="checkbox"/> not foreseen / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>Poland signed the Convention on 25 June 1998 and ratified it on 15 February 2002. The GMO Amendment was ratified by the Act from 23 October 2008.</p> <p align="center">– Implementation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> not started / <input type="checkbox"/> initiated / <input type="checkbox"/> in progress / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> well-implemented / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>At the first place it need to be mentioned that PL as a Member State of the European Union is bound by the provisions of the EU directive on access to environmental information and directive on environmental impact assessment – basic tool of public participation in decision making in environmental matters. The basic legal act regulating the issues of access to environmental information and the environmental impact assessment in PL law is the Act of 3 October 2008 of facilitating the access to information about the environment and its</p>

	<p>protection, public participation in environmental protection and the environmental impact assessments. Convention is also implemented by number of other, more general acts. Just to mention the Code of Administrative Procedure or Law of Environmental Protection which are in particular establishing rules for individuals who are seeking for access to justice in administrative cases and defining the role of environmental organisations in administrative cases.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Formal reporting (national implementation reports) <p><input type="checkbox"/> never submitted / <input type="checkbox"/> submitting occasionally / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> submitting regularly / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>Poland is preparing national implementation reports regularly since the first reporting cycle. The latest report was prepared in 2011 and it is available on the UNECE website: http://www.unece.org/env/pp/reports_implementation_2011.html</p> <p>The next report is going to be prepared in 2013.</p>
<p>Protocol on PRTRs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Status (<i>more than one box can be ticked</i>) <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> signed / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ratified/acceded/approved / <input type="checkbox"/> in the process of ratification/accession/approval / <input type="checkbox"/> not foreseen / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p><i>Protocol was signed on 21st May 2003 and ratified on 19th September 2012.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation <p><input type="checkbox"/> not started / <input type="checkbox"/> initiated / <input type="checkbox"/> in progress / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> well-implemented / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Formal reporting (national implementation reports) <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> never submitted / <input type="checkbox"/> submitting occasionally / <input type="checkbox"/> submitting regularly / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>The first implementation report will be sent this year (2013).</p>
<p>Strategy for ESD</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Status (<i>more than one box can be ticked</i>) <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> adopted / <input type="checkbox"/> actively participating / <input type="checkbox"/> not engaged / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation <p><input type="checkbox"/> not started / <input type="checkbox"/> initiated / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in progress / <input type="checkbox"/> well-implemented / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>Polish system of general education offers possibility of education for sustainable development in accordance with the Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development elaborated by the UN. This is confirmed by the presence of environmental issues, additionally integrated with</p>

	<p>economic and social issues, in numerous subjects at each level of education. In third level of education, the current regulation on standards for each field and level of study include matters related to ESD, such as: promotion of sustainable development- biology, chemistry, geography, human rights - administration, law, social policy or intercultural dialogue- management, journalism, social communication. ESD is a part of the in-service teachers training for non-formal and informal education. Within non-formal and informal sector of education there is a network of institutions, associations, NGOs and training centers - targeted towards teachers, students and educators involved in ESD, frequently in cooperation with Ministry of National Education and Ministry of Environment. Despite the fact that more and more teachers reach for available materials on ESD, there is still great percentage of teachers who do not have awareness or technical capacity to benefit from on-line content. Internet portals on ESD offer teachers a wide variety of teaching materials such as educational resources, publications, e-learning courses, already prepared lesson scenarios, tests, interactive maps and thematic games. Funds for ESD are available from various sources including National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (in respect of global education) or Ministry of the Environment, usually in form of calls.</p> <p align="center">– Formal reporting (national implementation reports)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> never submitted / <input type="checkbox"/> submitting occasionally / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> submitting regularly / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>Poland participated in preparation of the voluntary progress report for the Belgrade Ministerial Conference in 2007 as well as the first formal report at the end of Phase II of the Strategy in 2010.</p>
<p>THE PEP</p>	<p align="center">– Status (<i>more than one box can be ticked</i>)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> adopted / <input type="checkbox"/> actively participating / <input type="checkbox"/> not engaged / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>...</p> <p align="center">– Implementation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> not started / <input type="checkbox"/> initiated / <input type="checkbox"/> in progress / <input type="checkbox"/> well-implemented / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>...</p> <p align="center">– Reporting (responding to THE PEP survey on progress in the attainment of the Amsterdam Goals)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> never submitted / <input type="checkbox"/> submitting occasionally / <input type="checkbox"/> submitting regularly / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>...</p>
<p>(c) Enhancing efforts in environmental monitoring</p> <p>Overall assessment in your country:</p>	

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<input type="checkbox"/> not started / <input type="checkbox"/> initiated / <input type="checkbox"/> in progress / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> well-implemented / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i> Due to the European Union obligations.	
Production of indicator-based state-of-the-environment reports	<input type="checkbox"/> never produced / <input type="checkbox"/> in progress / <input type="checkbox"/> producing occasionally / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> producing regularly / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i> ...
Enterprise environmental monitoring and reporting	<input type="checkbox"/> not started / <input type="checkbox"/> initiated / <input type="checkbox"/> in progress / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> well-implemented / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i> ...
<p>(d) Ensuring implementation of the UNECE Environmental Performance Review (EPR) Programme</p> Overall assessment of your country’s role: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not active / <input type="checkbox"/> active as donor / <input type="checkbox"/> active as reviewed country / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i> Poland not actively participates in the UNECE Environment Performance Review Programme.	
Participation in the EPR process as a reviewed country in the future	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not interested / <input type="checkbox"/> initiated / <input type="checkbox"/> in progress / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i> ...
Participation in the EPR process as a donor country (in-kind and/or providing financial support)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not interested / <input type="checkbox"/> initiated / <input type="checkbox"/> on-going / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i> ...
Implementation of EPR recommendations by the reviewed country	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not started / <input type="checkbox"/> initiated / <input type="checkbox"/> in progress / <input type="checkbox"/> accomplished / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i> ...
<p>(e) Raising public awareness on environmental issues</p> Overall assessment in your country: <input type="checkbox"/> not started / <input type="checkbox"/> initiated / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in progress / <input type="checkbox"/> well-implemented / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i> This area is regulated by the Act of 3 October 2008 on the provision of information about the environment and its protection, public participation in environmental protection and environmental impact assessments (Journal of Laws	

of 2008 No. 199, item. 1227, as amended).	
Ensuring public access to environmental information	<input type="checkbox"/> not started / <input type="checkbox"/> initiated / <input type="checkbox"/> in progress / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> well-implemented / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i> Above mentioned provision gives the right to access environmental information.
Ensuring public participation in environmental-decision making	<input type="checkbox"/> not started / <input type="checkbox"/> initiated / <input type="checkbox"/> in progress / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> well-implemented / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i> Polish national law takes into account public participation issues. It should be noted that one of the compulsory elements of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) procedure, under which the EIA report shall be required is providing the opportunity for public participation in the proceedings. According to current acts of law within a specified period, any interested party can read the EIA report and submit its comments and proposals before a decision for the project is granted. This procedure is carried out when issuing the decision on the environmental conditions for the projects that may have a significant impact on the environment.
Ensuring public access to environmental justice	<input type="checkbox"/> not started / <input type="checkbox"/> initiated / <input type="checkbox"/> in progress / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> well-implemented / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i> The access to justice in environment is regulated in above mentioned provision.
<p>(f) Promoting linkages between environmental policy, economic and social well-being and competitiveness</p> <p>Overall assessment in your country:</p> <input type="checkbox"/> not started / <input type="checkbox"/> initiated / <input type="checkbox"/> in progress / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> well-implemented / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i> Poland participated in plenty of events concerning implementation of sustainable development ant its three dimensions: economic, social and environment. Poland is the member of the UN Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals.	
Mainstreaming the environment into economic development	<input type="checkbox"/> not started / <input type="checkbox"/> initiated / <input type="checkbox"/> in progress / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> well-implemented / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A <i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i> The concept of green economy - by promoting greater efficiency in the use of natural resources and energy, new technologies for clean energy and cleaner production, while at the same time improving human well-being, providing green decent jobs, reducing inequalities and tackling poverty and preserving the natural capital upon which we all depend - is a good example of the mainstreaming the environment into economic development. This approach integrates economic, social and environmental thinking and concepts in a highly needed way. It promotes innovation to break path dependency and it focuses on valuing, efficiently managing and investing in natural capital as a potential source of economic growth. Better management and more efficient use of natural resources such as water, forests, soil will help underpin the livelihoods of millions of people, and contribute to eradicate poverty. Green economy policies can support the agricultural sector and contribute to food security. Furthermore, the use of renewable energy and increased energy efficiency will contribute to

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	reducing climate change and other environmental impacts.
Implementing environmental policies through economic/market instruments (e.g. phasing out subsidies, introducing environmental taxation, payment for ecosystems services, etc.)	<p><input type="checkbox"/> not started / <input type="checkbox"/> initiated / <input type="checkbox"/> in progress / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> well-implemented / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>Market-based instruments should play a key role in implementing the green economy principles within national strategies. In specific areas like fostering innovation or jobs creation, they should be complemented by non-market instruments, as appropriate. Pricing environmental externalities and removing environmentally harmful subsidies should be gradually introduced in order to ensure smooth transition to green economy. The identification of best practices at the national level would play an important role in selection of the most efficient and effective fiscal tools, tailored to specific circumstances and national capacities. Poland developed the specific mechanisms and instruments, which were successfully applied to mobilise financial resources needed for structural investments in the environment sector. The full recognition of value of the natural resources through adequate pricing of pollution and natural resources use will be of key importance. Full implementation of the “polluter pays” principle is a key in mobilising financial resources and providing stimulus for investments.</p> <p>In Poland, this principle was successfully introduced through the implementation of the system of environmental fees, charges and fines while revenues were directed to the system of specific, dedicated environmental funds, namely National Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management operating at the central administration level and a number of other similar funds at different administration levels.</p>
Implementing environmental policies through regulatory/normative instruments (e.g. norms, standards, bans, etc.)	<p><input type="checkbox"/> not started / <input type="checkbox"/> initiated / <input type="checkbox"/> in progress / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> well-implemented / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>Implementation of norms, standards and indicators of the sustainable development can be the main step towards achievement of sustainable development. The gross domestic product (GDP) is mostly a measure of production and does not reflect issues such as environmental sustainability, the use of natural and human capital, resource efficiency and social inclusion. There is a need to use, and where necessary develop indicators that complement GDP and contribute to a more accurate picture of the inter-linkages between the environmental, economic and social aspects of wealth and well-being.</p>
Implementing environmental policies through information based/voluntary instruments (e.g. labelling, etc.)	<p><input type="checkbox"/> not started / <input type="checkbox"/> initiated / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in progress / <input type="checkbox"/> well-implemented / <input type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>Implementation of national environmental legislations and supported for international commitments could bring together business, government and citizens. This could lead to partnerships (PPPs) and voluntary agreements. These can facilitate leading businesses in greening their activities and mainstream sustainable production-and consumption methods. Previous agreements at the beginning of EfE process are a good starting point for commitment to partnerships.</p>

4. Progress in strengthening the implementation of outcomes of the Astana Efe Ministerial Conference

In the table below, please, provide a brief summary of how your country is progressing in implementing the commitments made at the Astana Conference. Please tick the box that best corresponds to the current situation or level of implementation in your country. Provide an explanation, as appropriate. N/A means not applicable. If you choose N/A, nevertheless please elaborate on your choice.

The main outcomes of the Astana Conference include:

<p>(a) Ratifying and implementing the relevant multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) (by your country)</p> <p><i>Please provide additional information, as relevant, that was not provided under section 3(b) (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>N/A...</p>
<p>(b) Implementing the Astana Water Action (by your country)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> not started / <input type="checkbox"/> initiated / <input type="checkbox"/> in progress / <input type="checkbox"/> well-implemented/ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not foreseen</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p>
<p>(c) Promoting a green economy (by your country)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> not started / <input type="checkbox"/> initiated / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in progress / <input type="checkbox"/> well-implemented/ <input type="checkbox"/> not foreseen</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>Poland implements green economy in different manners, including through investment and innovation; through more efficient use of natural and financial resources; and by preventing damage to the environment and human health. Important policy document promoting the concept of sustainability in Poland is the <i>National Reform Programme (NRP)</i>, which presents the response of the country to the challenges to be faced in the upcoming years identified in the Europe 2020 Strategy. The Programme has been structured to promote three main priorities: <i>Smart growth</i> - developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation; <i>Sustainable growth</i> - promoting a more resource efficient, greener and more competitive economy and <i>Inclusive growth</i> - fostering a high-employment economy ensuring economic, social and territorial cohesion. As a result of national development policy reform, nine integrated development strategies have been elaborated, which replaced a great number of sector specific strategies elaborated and adopted over the last 20 years. They have similar overarching objectives, aiming at creating effective management system of the development of Poland, improving efficiency of budget spending, and increasing transparency of the strategic programming.</p> <p>Poland has got reach experience in creating innovative funding mechanisms and implementing green projects. There is a number of tools that we have found useful over time and we would like to share our knowledge connected with their design, fine-tuning and implementation. Poland established a number of dedicated programmes to stimulate domestic green technologies. The best example is GreenEvo – the green technology accelerator project. One of its goals is to promote development and transfer of innovative, but affordable to developing countries, environmental technologies.</p> <p>The second one is GEKON – Ecological Concepts Generator aims at granting financial support for R&D and companies consortia searching for and bringing to the market innovative environmentally friendly technologies. The programme covers such areas as energy efficiency and storage, conservation and rationalization of water utilization and renewable energy sources. Cost-effective implementation of national strategies, new and innovative financial mechanisms as well as new green technologies and innovations may faster our economic growth and environment protection. The policy for efficient use of natural resources aims mainly at separating GDP growth and quality of life</p>

increase from the degradation of the environment. and depleting natural resources. Currently, in Poland the consumption of natural resources amounts to 16 tonnes per capita annually. Polish economy is still far more energy- and resource-intensive and greenhouse gas emission intensive in comparison to other OECD countries. However, provided that we continue our path of growth, we will be soon able to catch up with countries enjoying the continuous decrease of their economies’ impact on the environment. Over the last 20 years Poland doubled of its GDP and managed to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 30%. The resource-efficiency factor in the last decade increased by 15%. Poland is ready to continue to take active part in developing future framework for green economy as a part of the post-Rio+20 process, including elaboration and implementation of Sustainable Development Goals. The actions on climate change is an important element of such framework. We do believe that Warsaw Climate Change Summit COP19 this year will provide a substantial input to preparation and conclusion of new, global and legally binding agreement on climate change in 2015.

Promoting the Green Bridge Partnership Programme *(by your country)*

not started / initiated / in progress / well-implemented/ not foreseen

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

...

(d) Ensuring implementation of the third cycle of environmental performance reviews (EPRs) *(by your country)*

not foreseen / active as donor / active as reviewed country / N/A

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

...

(e) Establishing a regular process of environmental assessment (RPEA), including developing a Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) *(by your country)*

not started / initiated in progress / SEIS developed / RPEA established

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

...

(f) Participation in the continued work of the Environmental Action Programme Task Force (EAP Task Force), including on the sustainable management of water and water-related ecosystems, and on greening the economy: mainstreaming the environment into economic development *(by your country)*

not foreseen / active as donor / active as beneficiary / N/A

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

...

Participation in strengthening the contribution of Regional Environmental Centres (RECs) in both promoting green economy and better environmental governance at the local, national, subregional and regional levels *(by your country)*

not foreseen / active as donor active as beneficiary / N/A

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

Example of good cooperation: Poland as a Presidency in Visegrad Group (July 2012- June 2013) organized for V4+ countries with participation of regional offices of REC and UNEP seminar on sharing best practices in green economy. During the seminar it was underlined that many environmental challenges could be transformed into economic opportunities, not only reversing negative environmental trends, but also promoting growth, competitiveness, jobs and poverty eradication. It was also stressed that a green economy offers opportunities for countries at all stages of economic development. Economic growth can be promoted in numerous ways, including investments and innovations, more efficient use of natural, human and financial resources and by preventing damage to the environment and human health.

Eco-innovations are central in ensuring a more eco-efficient use of resources and promoting a major change in production and consumption patterns. Eco-innovations can also be non-technological. New business models, management schemes, work practices and forms of city planning may be as important as technological innovation. Green economy is an important tool for sustainable development and it should be implemented at all levels. During the Warsaw seminar partners had possibility to exchange experiences from international, regional and national levels.

At the regional level, REC plays an important role in achieving green economy objectives by promoting resources efficiency, eco-innovation, capacity building and know-how among Central and Eastern Europe countries through implementation of a number of projects. REC presented four projects endeavouring to boost green economy in Central and Eastern Europe, namely: GREECO, Regions for Sustainable Change, Improving access to green financing – CEE and Ukraine and Potential for stimulating sustainable growth in the water industry sector in the EU and the marine sector e.

5. Thematic priorities of the “Environment for Europe” process for the Eighth Ministerial Conference

In the table below, please indicate thematic priorities that might be addressed at the Eighth Efe Ministerial Conference, including a brief justification note for each proposed priorities. Please also indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the proposed several themes, as well as organising a high-level segment on MEAs and the proposed theme. Please kindly note that the idea to organize a high-level segment on MEAs emerged from the discussion at the informal meeting of representatives of governing bodies of MEAs and CEP (Geneva, 27 February 2013).

First thematic priority (an “established” theme of importance to the entire region, e.g. the Astana Conference addressed the “established” theme sustainable management of water and water related ecosystems)

Please propose a theme: ...

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

...

Second thematic priority (an “emerging” theme of importance to the entire region, e.g. the Astana Conference addresses the “emerging” theme greening the economy: mainstreaming the environment into economic development)

Please propose a theme: Sharing the best practices in green economy

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

In our view in a green economy many environmental challenges can be transformed into economic opportunities, not only reversing negative environmental trends, but also promoting future growth, competitiveness, jobs. Green economy offers opportunities for countries at all stages of economic development. In particular, sustainable use of resources, such as water, energy, land and infrastructure development, forests as well as materials constitute the foundations of any economy – and in particular of a green economy. The livelihoods of many people across the world depend on them, in particular in developing countries, where the lack of access to quality resources and the need for expertise on how to manage them sustainably, are important underlying causes of poverty. In this light, areas such as water, energy, sustainable land use and infrastructure development, forests, and many others could become the green

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<p>economy's key growth markets, underpinning future economic development, the creation of jobs and the eradication of poverty, in particular in developing countries.</p>	
<p>Enhancing the work on greening the economy and the mainstreaming of environmental concerns into the economic development</p>	<p>A possible “emerging” theme for the Eighth Ministerial Conference to follow up on the Astana EfE and Rio+20 Conferences commitments</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> strongly agree / <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat agree / <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat disagree / <input type="checkbox"/> strongly disagree</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>These issues are extremely important from the post-Rio+20 perspective, particularly in the context of transition to a green economy by promoting sustainable energy access, resource efficient productivity and creating new and decent jobs. All these issues were reflected in the Conference outcome document “<i>The Future We Want</i>”.</p>
<p>Promoting a sustainable consumption and production</p>	<p>A possible “emerging” theme for the Eighth Ministerial Conference to follow up on the Rio+20 Conferences commitments</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> strongly agree / <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat agree / <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat disagree / <input type="checkbox"/> strongly disagree</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>In particular, focusing on promotion of sustainable consumption patterns. Implementation of 10-Year Framework Programme for SCP is one of the most important issues as well. Many countries participate in the UNEP “Platform Cleaninghouse”, which gives opportunity to create international network for exchange of views, lessons learned and best practices.</p>
<p>“Greening” International Financial Institutions (IFIs) policies</p>	<p>A possible “emerging” theme for the Eighth Ministerial Conference to follow up on the Rio+20 Conferences commitments</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> strongly agree / <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat agree / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> somewhat disagree / <input type="checkbox"/> strongly disagree</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>UN ECE is not fully relevant forum to discuss greening of international financial institutions, as they are rather global coverage. However, to enable transition towards an inclusive green economy, we must start putting into place the right market conditions, including inter alia the use of fiscal incentives. We must enhance access to public, private and public-private finance and explore innovative means to increase investments. And we must significantly improve private sector engagement, as well as the involvement of all relevant stakeholders, also in mobilizing financial resources needed for transformation to green economy. The role of international financial institutions to recognize and support “green” agenda is important.</p>
<p>Resilience and Change</p>	<p>A possible “emerging” theme for the Eighth Ministerial Conference to encompass the need for disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, emergency preparedness and contingency planning to be ready for both environmental and demographic change in the coming years, i.e., the expected increase in extreme weather events due to global warming, but also to the foreseen changes in demographics (aging populations and south-north</p>

	<p>migration), in particular in urban areas)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> strongly agree / <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat agree / <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat disagree / <input type="checkbox"/> strongly disagree</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p><i>Adaptation to climate change should be identified as one of the top priorities.</i></p>
<p>Organizing a high-level segment on assessing the progress in establishing a regular process of environmental assessment and developing the SEIS across the region</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> strongly agree / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> somewhat agree / <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat disagree / <input type="checkbox"/> strongly disagree</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>Developing assessment as well as assessment of assessment and SEIS are the most effective mechanisms of the EfE process. It could be one of the topic during the high-level segment during ministerial EFE conference</p>	
<p>Organizing a high-level segment on UNECE MEAs</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> strongly agree / <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat agree / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> somewhat disagree / <input type="checkbox"/> strongly disagree</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>Only in the context of presenting the concrete achievements of the MEAs implementation- as a part of the regional environmental assessment or other important agenda issue to be dealt with on political level with a view to clear output.</p>	
<p>Role of public participation in effective implementation of MEAs</p>	<p>A possible theme for a possible high-level segment on UNECE MEAs (of relevance to all UNECE MEAs)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> strongly agree / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> somewhat agree / <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat disagree / <input type="checkbox"/> strongly disagree</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>With the interactive presentation of the public achievements in the implementation of MEAs and ideas for further works.</p>
<p>Need to develop new structures or frameworks to address emerging themes, such as green economy, giving the on-going crisis that affected all countries in the UNECE region</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> strongly agree / <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat agree / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> somewhat disagree / <input type="checkbox"/> strongly disagree</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>In the framework of interactive discussion -. sharing the best practices in the area of green economy among the countries. To be precise, we do expect rather transformation of old structures into new ones instead of creating totally new in addition to the existing ones.</p>	
<p>Greening the economies</p>	<p>Elaboration of subregional roadmaps (e.g. EU, SEE, Central Asia, Caucasus, Eastern Europe)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> strongly agree / <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat agree / <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat disagree / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> strongly disagree</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>The green economy roadmaps should be country driven. There is a limited value added in creating a subregional roadmaps due to significant differences between countries, both due to</p>

	<p>natural conditions and level of development.</p> <p>Elaboration/harmonization of regional eco-standards for products and production processes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> strongly agree / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> somewhat agree / <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat disagree / <input type="checkbox"/> strongly disagree</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>In the context of implementation of 10 YFP on SCP.</p> <p>Other (please suggest demand-driven frameworks/structures)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> strongly agree / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> somewhat agree / <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat disagree / <input type="checkbox"/> strongly disagree</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>The results of implementation the 10 YFP on SCP – on the base of UNEP “Platform Cleaninghouse”.</p>
<p>Strengthening implementation of ESD</p>	<p>Mainstreaming ESD into technical and vocational training to meet future labour market demand</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> strongly agree / <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat agree / <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat disagree / <input type="checkbox"/> strongly disagree</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>...</p> <p>Mainstreaming ESD into teachers/educators’ training</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> strongly agree / <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat agree / <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat disagree / <input type="checkbox"/> strongly disagree</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>One of the key challenges faced by in-service training is the need to move beyond the engagement of a number of committed teachers to a more universalist approach, where all teachers are provided with in-service, related to curriculum reform, focused on education for sustainable development.</p> <p>Implementing an ESD school plan in every school (i.e. addressing campus management, curricula and community interaction)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> strongly agree / <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat agree / <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat disagree / <input type="checkbox"/> strongly disagree</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>The approach "school as a whole" is partially required by core curriculum, which obliges to realize field work, experiences and experiments. However, the majority of schools admitted that in their institutions such approach is not applied, because, as they notice, schools waste a lot of electric energy and heat on regular basis.</p> <p>There are several examples of good approach which should be multiplied (Schools for Sustainable Development is one of them. It has been implemented in Poland since 2001. Starting in 2007, SSD has become part of the international Eco-Schools Program. Schools can obtain a certificate awarded for model management of the school environment) .</p>
<p>Strengthening environmental considerations in other social and economic sectors</p>	<p>Sustainable urban development (e.g. bringing together the relevant activities under THE PEP, Environment and Health process, and green building)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> strongly agree / <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat agree / <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat disagree / <input type="checkbox"/> strongly disagree</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p>

	Strengthening three dimensions of sustainable development – environment, economic and social is needed . All sectors should reflect action-oriented activities in these three dimensions.
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6. Format of the Eighth EfE Ministerial Conference

In the table below, please, indicate/propose an interactive format for the next Conference. Provide an explanation, as appropriate.

<p>Interactive format for the Conference (for a more productive ministerial participation)</p> <p><i>Please propose an interactive format(s) to stimulate the work of the Conference:</i></p> <p>...</p> <p><i>Please elaborate (up to 250 words):</i></p> <p>...</p>	
Parallel thematic round-tables	<input type="checkbox"/> strongly agree / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> somewhat agree / <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat disagree / <input type="checkbox"/> strongly disagree <i>Please elaborate:</i> Each RT should have a Rapporteur for the plenary session. RTs may have all the same topic (like it was during the Rio+20 Conference) or be devoted to different questions. The great advantage of this form of debates is that it can bring positive and constructive outcome, enriching the overall Conference outcome.
Interactive discussions e.g. similar to “BBC Question Time”	<input type="checkbox"/> strongly agree / <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> somewhat agree / <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat disagree / <input type="checkbox"/> strongly disagree <i>Please elaborate:</i> It may turn into an interesting alternative / supplement of classical RTs (e.g. with the private sector as audience), but due care should be given to organizational particulars of such a format.
[please propose an interactive format]	<input type="checkbox"/> strongly agree / <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat agree / <input type="checkbox"/> somewhat disagree / <input type="checkbox"/> strongly disagree <i>Please elaborate:</i> ...

7. Any other issues you consider important

<p><i>[please include any issues relevant to the scope of this survey that you may wish to address ...]</i></p> <p><i>Please elaborate:</i></p> <p>...</p>
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Annex

Reform of the “Environment for Europe” process: Reform Plan

Excerpt from the report of the Committee on Environmental Policy on its special session (Geneva, 27–29 January 2009)

I. Background

1. The Sixth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” (Belgrade, 10–12 October 2007) recognized the important value of the “Environment for Europe” (EfE) process as a unique pan-European forum for tackling environmental challenges and promoting broad horizontal environmental cooperation, and as a pillar of sustainable development in the UNECE region. The EfE process was considered to be an important framework for bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the region. The added value of the EfE process was recognized in its close links with other regional and subregional initiatives and processes, which help to integrate environmental and sectoral policies.
2. The ministers in Belgrade agreed that the EfE process, initiated in 1991, needed to be reformed. They committed themselves to continuing a focused and needs-based EfE process concentrated on results-based, action-oriented activities that improve the environment and advance sustainable development in the region and to actively seeking partnerships with civil society, including the private sector. The purpose of the reform was to strengthen its effectiveness and to ensure that it remained appropriate for, and fully aligned with, the growing needs of the UNECE region and the evolving political and economic landscape, as well as the environmental priorities of the region.
3. The Belgrade Ministerial Declaration stated that the reform should focus on, although may not be limited to, the following aspects:
 - (a) The format, focus and priorities of the process and Ministerial Conferences;
 - (b) Evaluating the performance and impact of the process;
 - (c) Attracting the broader interest and more active engagement of all stakeholders, in particular the private sector;
 - (d) Expanding the use of partnerships as vehicles for improving implementation;
 - (e) Leveraging external contributions of expertise, manpower and resources;
 - (f) Assessing ways and means to promote more effectively the UNECE region-wide dimension of environmental cooperation;
 - (g) The full cost of the process and the effective allocation of available resources;
 - (g) Future secretariat arrangements.
4. In order to address the above issues in depth and with due consideration, the ministers invited the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP) to develop, in consultation with EfE partners a plan for EfE reform so that it could be endorsed at the political level by UNECE in spring 2009.
5. The ministers further decided that the next EfE Ministerial Conference would be organized on the basis of the agreed reform.

II. Objectives and priorities of the “Environment for Europe” process

6. The EfE process should continue to serve as a mechanism to:
 - (a) Improve the environment throughout the region, contributing to sustainable development which may in turn contribute to poverty eradication, to improving quality of life, and to a safer world;
 - (b) Enhance the implementation of strengthened national environmental policies;
 - (c) Support convergence of environmental policies and approaches, while recognizing the benefits from a diversity of approaches to achieve common goals, and the prioritisation of environmental objectives;
 - (d) Encourage the participation of civil society;
 - (e) Promote broad horizontal environmental cooperation.
7. The political priorities should be based on commitments already taken under the EfE process. These priorities may include:
 - (a) Improvement of environmental governance, including strengthening environmental institutions and implementation of policy instruments;
 - (b) Streamlining the implementation by Governments of commitments they have made to existing UNECE legally binding and legally non-binding instruments;
 - (c) Enhancing efforts in environmental monitoring;
 - (d) Ensuring implementation of the Environmental Performance Review programme;
 - (e) Raising public awareness of environmental issues;
 - (f) Promoting linkages between environmental policy, economic and social well-being and competitiveness.
8. Furthermore, thematic priorities of the EfE process would be identified in line with current needs, national circumstances and in respect to future emerging issues.
9. In the future, the EfE process will be based on general principles and agreements on the operational modalities, as described below.

III. General principles

10. The ministers in Belgrade agreed that the EfE process should:
 - (a) Keep its UNECE region-wide dimension and be open for all interested countries of the region;
 - (b) Engage all stakeholders, including the private sector, to strengthen the work in partnership;
 - (c) Maintain close links with other regional and subregional initiatives, and focus on specific needs that are not entirely addressed by other cooperative frameworks, instruments or processes in the region and its subregions;
 - (d) Concentrate on results-based, action-oriented activities;
 - (e) Be kept open to issues on which the process can provide added value;
 - (f) Use delivery as a major criterion of its effectiveness. CEP should regularly consider and assess progress achieved under the process.

11. To complement the above principles, a consensus emerged from CEP in relation to the EfE process and the Conference:

- (a) On the one hand, the EfE process-related principles are as follows:
 - (i) Broader engagement from the Governments to achieve long-term policy integration of environmental considerations into other sectors;
 - (ii) Stronger focus on implementation of the outcomes of the EfE Ministerial Conferences by relevant responsible actors in the period between Conferences;
 - (iii) Encouragement of and support to subregional activities including stronger involvement of relevant subregional structures in the implementation process, including RECs;
 - (iv) Enhanced cooperation between the regional and subregional partners in the region;
 - (v) Identification of ways to strengthen linkages between the activities under the EfE process and those of relevant international processes.
 - (vi) Enhancement of relevant Governments’ implementation and compliance with their commitments under multilateral environmental agreements;
 - (vii) Utilization of the Environmental Performance Reviews as an important instrument for protection of the environment and promotion of sustainable development.
- (b) On the other hand, the Conference-related principles are:
 - (i) The ministerial level of the Conferences should be maintained;
 - (ii) Specific mechanisms for attracting high-level participation, including those from the private sector, should be developed;
 - (iii) A limited number of themes, not more than two, to be identified in advance and addressed by each Conference;
 - (iv) Within the identified themes there should be a focus on specific needs of the subregions, in order to contribute to better cooperation and more substantive and action-oriented outcomes of the Conference;
 - (v) An effective communication strategy, including broad mass-media coverage, as appropriate, should be further developed, comprising, inter alia, special events for journalists, circulation of electronic newsletters and maintaining a dedicated website;
 - (vi) The outcome documents, in all forms, should be focused and action-oriented;
 - (vii) Carbon neutrality of the Conferences based on the voluntary contributions available.

IV. The “Environment for Europe” Conference

Preparatory process

12. Materializing the above-mentioned principles calls for streamlining and improving the preparatory process for the Conferences. In this spirit, the following measures should be taken:

(a) Not later than 18 months before the Conference the CEP at its regular session will decide on not more than two themes and discuss the outline of the agenda of the Conference. When deciding on the themes preliminary findings of available assessments and statistical reports on environment should be taken into consideration. A decision on the agenda of the Conference should be taken at the regular meeting of the CEP approximately 12 months prior to the Conference and further preparatory work would commence. Documents on substantial themes of the Conference should be released 6 weeks before the Conference;

(b) CEP would act as the convening body for the preparatory process. To maintain the open nature of the preparatory process and the engagement of all stakeholders, representatives of major groups will be invited to participate in meetings of the CEP in preparation of the Conference, as appropriate, in accordance with the existing UN rules and procedures. Furthermore, CEP would consider and approve the official documents for submission to the Conference. Special sessions of the CEP could be scheduled, if needed, in the year prior to the Conference;

(c) Particular efforts would be made to involve private-sector representatives in the preparatory process and the Conference;

(d) To reduce the amount of documents produced for the Conference, only one official document per selected theme would be prepared by the UNECE or another EfE partner, in close cooperation with other EfE partners. The official substantive documentation would thus comprise the pan-European assessment and theme-specific reports;

(e) Interested UNECE member States, EfE partners and other stakeholders could produce other documents featuring their activities and initiatives related to the EfE process, which would be circulated as information documents;

(f) The preparatory process would be serviced by the UNECE secretariat;

(g) For the preparatory process of the Conference and the Conference itself, the necessary extrabudgetary financial resources would have to continue to be provided to UNECE to supplement the United Nations core budget resources;

(h) The host country should assume relevant financial commitments.

Format

13. The periodicity, duration and the organization of discussions at the Conference should be as follows:

(a) The Conferences should be held every four to five years, with each Conference lasting two-and-a-half to three days maximum;

(b) Based on the previous experience, the Conference should start with a short opening event. The host country would be given an opportunity to organize events highlighting its special features in addition to the official Conference agenda;

(c) The discussions at the Conference should be arranged in an interactive manner and combine various types of sessions, e.g. plenary sessions, roundtables and moderated panel discussions, with a limited number of main speakers from different stakeholders (e.g. UNECE member States, EfE partners and major groups). When possible, interactive sessions, such as roundtables, could be run in parallel;

(d) The Conference could be structured around the following main clusters (all of them focusing on the agreed priorities):

(i) Plenary sessions for the presentation and discussion of the priority topics;

- (ii) Sessions on ongoing cooperation and partnerships in the UNECE region and its subregions with different stakeholders, including the private sector;
 - (iii) A session of environmental NGOs and ministers in the roundtable format as an integral part of the conference;
 - (iv) A session of private sector representatives and ministers in the roundtable format as an integral part of the conference;
 - (v) Sessions dedicated to announcing new partnerships and initiatives by stakeholders;
 - (vi) A brief concluding session with the presentation (and adoption, if appropriate) of the main outcomes of the Conference;
- (e) To address issues relevant to the agenda of the Conference in more detail, side-events should be organized by interested UNECE member States, EfE partners and relevant stakeholders;
- (f) To attract the attention of the private sector, opportunities should be provided for the organization of promotional events such as poster exhibitions, trade fairs, roundtables and environmental award initiatives.

Outcomes

14. Conference outcomes might include:
- (a) A chairperson’s summary;
 - (b) Statements, initiatives, agreements, pledges by interested ministers and stakeholders on specific subjects and/or for specific subregions;
 - (c) An agreed outcome of two pages on follow up and further actions strictly limited, in terms of scope, to the themes of the Conference;
 - (d) Policy tools, including strategies, action plans with time frames, guidelines, recommendations, best practices and lessons learned that are presented to the Conference by interested countries of the UNECE region and/or organizations taking the lead for these issues, and that were not negotiated within the preparatory process for the Conference;
 - (e) Assessment reports used in preparation of or presented to the Conference that are important for the implementation of the Conference’s outcomes.

V. Implementation

15. Particular efforts should be made by all relevant responsible actors to implement the outcomes of the EfE Ministerial Conferences.
16. Member States should regularly consider how to promote objectives and priorities of the EfE process and strengthen implementation of the outcomes of the EfE Conferences, including through national policies and relevant partnerships.
17. A mid-term review to be convened by the CEP to assess progress of the implementation of the outcomes of the EfE Conferences and provide renewed impetus to the process. The review should be based on existing information. The findings of the review should be taken into account in the preparatory process of the next conference.
18. Active participation by and input of all interested countries of the UNECE, and in particular of interested countries from subregions with specific needs in improving their environmental situation is crucial for the success of the activities under the EfE process.

19. The RECs network should continue to play a role in the preparatory process for the Conference and should be encouraged to play a greater role in the achievement of the overall EfE process’ objectives and priorities.
 20. Other EfE partners should continue to be actively involved in the preparatory process and implementation of the EfE process.
 21. Countries and/or organizations taking the lead for one or more issues are encouraged to do so in ways that would contribute significantly to the EfE process’ objectives and priorities.
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