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**Swedish Presidency
of the European Union**

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Committee on Environmental Policy
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**Sub-themes for the 7th Ministerial Conference "Environment for
Europe" 2011 - EU views**

Sweden, on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, welcomes the agreement on two themes for the 7th Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" 2011 that was achieved at the last session of the Committee on Environmental Policy of the UN ECE in October 2009. In our view the Conference agenda should cover issues that are related to the agreed themes and are at the same time politically relevant for all countries of the UN ECE region. The sub-themes should attract attention of all EfE partners and promote implementation of objectives and priorities of the EfE process as defined by the agreed EfE reform plan. According to the reform plan, focus should be set on specific needs that are not entirely addressed by other cooperative frameworks, instruments and processes in the region and its sub-regions. Furthermore, the sub-themes should also address specific needs of the sub-regions that will result in action-oriented outcomes of the Ministerial Conference.

The selection of the sub-themes is closely interlinked to the planning and the format of the Conference. Some of the sub-themes justify in-depth plenary discussions while others could be dealt with in smaller sessions of different formats. The below mentioned sub-themes should therefore be considered as a preliminary "gross" list that should be further developed and refined once the outlines of the Conference have become clearer.

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Sustainable management of water and water-related ecosystems

- Integrated Water Resources Management and River Basin Management, including water supply and environmental security
- Water, sanitation and health - especially how the region can achieve the water related MDGs
- Economics of sustainable water use, including ecosystem services and tariffs for water
- Land-use management and water efficiency
- Impact of, and adaptation to, climate change related to water, including desertification and the effects on ecosystems
- Trans-boundary water management
- Capacity-building including monitoring and assessment
- Public involvement and stakeholder cooperation in water management
- Best practices and good examples of cooperation in the protection and sustainable use of water resources

In addition, regional sub-themes within this area can be identified on the basis of the preliminary results of the second assessment report of trans-boundary rivers, lakes and ground waters prepared by the UN ECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Trans-boundary Watercourses and International Lakes and the reports submitted to the Conference (e.g. Report on measures to achieve economies of scale in the provision of water supply and sanitation) by the OECD/EAP Task Force Secretariat and other EfE partners.

Greening the economy: mainstreaming the environment into economic development

- Environmental governance including mainstreaming of environment into sector policies
- Eco-efficient economy and the links to economic development, including effective use of environmental public expenditure management
- Regional aspects on sustainable production and consumption patterns
- Progress in policy reforms to support regional energy efficiency and renewable energy investments
- The role of the private sector, including joint projects and innovation policy
- The role of public participation in decision-making processes
- Development of economic and other policy instruments
- Eco-efficiency education and raising of public awareness

- Critical issues in the implementation of the UN ECE multilateral environmental agreements and other multilateral agreements with relevance to the environment in the region (ratification, implementation and enforcement)
- Practical guidelines for further improvements in environmental monitoring and assessment (e.g. establishment of a Shared Environmental Information System and its use in the EECCA and SEE countries)

In addition, regional sub-themes could deal with further improvements of environmental governance as pre-requisites for a shift towards a green, eco-efficient and low-carbon economy.

Progress and challenges identified in environmental policies within the second round of the UN ECE Environmental Performance Reviews, as well as perspectives for the third cycle of EPRs, should also be taken into account when further developing the agenda of the Conference.

Yours sincerely,

Jon Kahn