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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

**COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY**

(Seventh session, 25-28 September 2000)  
(Item 11 (c) (iv) of the provisional agenda)

**INTEGRATING ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS INTO SECTORAL  
POLICIES**

Proposal by the Committee's Bureau

1. The consultation on integrating environmental considerations with sectoral policies took place in Chisinau on 25 February 2000. It was convened at the initiative and invitation of Mr. Arcadie Capcelea, Minister of Environment and Territorial Development of the Republic of Moldova and Co-Chairman of the Task Force for the Environmental Action Programme for Central and Eastern Europe. (EAP). The Chairman of the ECE Committee on Environmental Policy and representatives from Estonia, Poland, the Republic of Moldova, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) attended.
2. The consultation followed the decision taken by the Committee, at its sixth session, on integrating environmental considerations into sectoral policies (ECE/CEP/69, para. 30). It enabled interested country experts and representatives of the EAP Task Force and the ECE secretariat to discuss in depth secretariat paper CEP/1999/3 and to exchange views on: (a) the type of final document to be prepared as a result of the ECE policy integration programme, (b) the subjects to be addressed in the document and its target audience, (c) the method of work, and (d) the resource requirements. The results were expected to facilitate the preparations for the brainstorming meeting that the Committee had decided to organize in spring 2000.

3. The consultation voiced the need for the Kiev Ministerial Conference in 2002 to send a strong political message on policy integration to all ECE member countries. It should represent a combination of general and specific (substantive and process-oriented) policy recommendations. The document should be targeted primarily at national environmental administrations and should assist those involved in developing national policies, plans and programmes, and in cooperating with the main economic sectors. At the same time, it should encourage strong social pressure on economic sectors to integrate environmental considerations into their policies. To better achieve this purpose, both the form and the language of the document should be attractive and innovative.

4. It was emphasized that the document should be of particular use to countries in transition to a market economy by addressing the reform process, including the application of economic instruments, taxation, privatization, trade and enterprise development, EU accession and local reform. In this regard, lessons learnt from national environmental performance reviews conducted in countries with economies in transition might prove useful.

5. The participants concluded that the main integration issues of importance to all ECE countries were:

- (a) Strategic environmental assessment;
- (b) Sectoral environmental reporting;
- (c) Price mechanisms, economic reform and business involvement;
- (d) Specific tools and mechanisms integrating environmental considerations into transport, energy, agriculture, and possibly, military activities;
- (e) Public support/participation.

6. Given the Committee's view that "integrating environmental concerns into sectoral policies would play a major role in the Kiev Conference", the consultation's participants considered that policy integration might become an over-arching topic for the Kiev Conference as a whole. If that were the case, the five above-mentioned issues might constitute a core agenda for the 2002 Ministerial Conference. Substantive contributions on these issues could include, in particular:

- (a) A possible instrument on strategic environmental assessment;
- (b) A "Dobris+7" report by the European Environment Agency (EEA) focusing on environmental performance by the main economic sectors;
- (c) Reports by ECE, the EAP Task Force, the Project Preparation Committee (PPC) and the business community on the environmental performance review (EPR) programme, economic instruments, environmental financing and investments, clean production and voluntary agreements;
- (d) A possible instrument on transport, health and environment; a follow-up to the energy-related provisions of the Aarhus Ministerial Declaration, and the outcome of a prospective high level meeting on agriculture and biodiversity to be convened by the Council of the Pan-European Biodiversity Strategy in autumn 2001;
- (e) A progress report on the implementation of the Aarhus Convention.

7. The Committee's Bureau supports the results of the "Chisinau initiative". It expects that the Ad Hoc Working Group of Senior Officials "Environment for Europe", at its first session in September 2000, will agree to start relevant preparatory work along elements (a) to (e) above and that the final ministerial declaration of the Kiev Conference (accompanied, possibly, by documents on strategic environmental assessment and on transport, health and environment) will constitute a high-level policy message (a "charter") of ECE member countries on integration.

8. The Bureau considers it reasonable to prepare a self-standing paper on policy integration for the Kiev Conference, possibly in the form of guidelines on integrating environmental considerations into sectoral policies. These guidelines could be put into their final shape in early 2002, when the form and substance of other conference documents become clearer. This would ensure consistency and complementarity between the various conference documents while preserving the important stand-alone status of the guidelines themselves.

9. The Bureau proposes, therefore, that the Committee, at its upcoming session in September 2000, should entrust the enlarged Bureau with the proposed work on policy integration. As a first step, a background paper would be prepared on the state of the art, gaps, bottlenecks and opportunities for policy integration, for the consideration of the Committee at its session in 2001. The enlarged Bureau would attempt to involve all major players, including the European Commission, UNEP, OECD, the EAP Task Force and the Council of Europe, in its work or to coordinate its activities with them.