
EXECUTIVE BODY FOR THE CONVENTION ON
LONG-RANGE TRANSBOUNDARY AIR POLLUTION
Bureau to the Executive Body

NOTE OF THE BUREAU MEETING
Tuesday, 17 March 2015, Salle XI, Palais des Nations
16:00 – 19:00

Attendance: The following Bureau members attended: Mr. R. Ballaman, Mr. P. Grennfelt, and Ms. L. Rouil attended the meeting. Mr. W. Harnett and Ms. V. Galatone participated by teleconference. Mr. A. Zuber attended as an observer on behalf of the EU. Mr. M. Keiner, Mr. S. Ludwiczak, Ms. A. Karadjova, Mr. K. Olendrzynski, Mr. A. Mamadzhanov, Ms. A. Novikova, Ms. K. Wenzel, and Ms. C. Sanz Noriega from the ECE secretariat attended. The meeting was chaired by Ms. A. Engleryd, Chair of the Executive Body.

1. Implementation of the 2014-2015 workplan for the implementation of the Convention

(a) Note on cost estimates of all extrabudgetary items and proposals for possible addition of communication items to the Convention workplan (item 5.3 of the workplan)

The secretariat informed the Bureau that after a number of reminders, still no contributions had been received for the note on communication neither from the Bureau members nor from the Coordinating Group on the promotion of actions towards implementation of the Convention in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (Coordinating group). Bureau members voiced concern that it was difficult to estimate cost for communication items. The secretariat informed the Bureau that it would initiate another call for inputs, which should result in an informal document for the next session of the Executive Body in December 2015.

Action: The secretariat to initiate another call for inputs to prepare a note on cost estimates for the session of the Executive Body in December 2015.

(b) Report summarizing the information gathering exercise, outlining areas in which an interest in collaboration has been expressed (item 5.4.2 of the workplan)

The secretariat informed the Bureau that to support the outreach exercise, it had sent out a survey to all centres and task forces under the Convention to gather information on specific areas for current and planned collaboration as well as on the appropriate framework of such collaboration (e.g. partnership agreements). This bottom-up approach was welcomed by the Chairs of the EB, the WGE and EMEP SB. The Chair of the EMEP Steering Body stressed that cooperation was already ongoing on the working level, but that the information gathering exercise was

valuable to review what more could be done. In particular, she highlighted that the EMEP Extended Bureau discussed cooperation with the Stockholm Convention and the EU Aerosols, Clouds, and Trace gases Research InfraStructure (ACTRIS) network as well as with the Copernicus Atmosphere Monitoring Service.

Action: The secretariat to analyse the information provided in the information gathering exercise.

In relation to the previous discussions about options for interaction with the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC), the Bureau decided to encourage UNECE to join the Coalition as a non-state partner.

Action: The secretariat to take the necessary steps for UNECE to join the Coalition.

The European Union raised the issue of Montenegro's accession to the Gothenburg Protocol. In relation to the Gothenburg Protocol, he also pointed out the number of applications for adjustment procedures that were received. In particular, he stressed that volatile organic compounds (VOCs) from soils was becoming an issue for several Parties. In relation to Luxembourg's late submission of the notification for the adjustment procedure, the Bureau approved to consider Luxembourg's application in this year's review. It was agreed that the financial contribution that Luxembourg had offered would support the 2015 review process, but not the review of the Luxembourg's application per se.

2. Results of the joint meeting of the Extended Bureaux of the EMEP Steering Body and the Working Group on Effects

The Chairs of the EMEP Steering Body (SB) and the Working Group on Effects briefed the Bureau about the discussions at the joint meeting. The Chair of the EMEP Steering Body highlighted the discussions on emissions reporting and possible ways to optimize the process. She also mentioned issues related to emission inventories as well as to the question of whether condensables should be treated by the modelling or the monitoring community. The idea of having a CEIP representative to attend the Implementation Committee as an observer was also discussed.

The Chair of the WGE briefed the Bureau on the kick-off workshop for the Assessment report that took place in Oslo in January 2015. At the meeting, a timeline was set, according to which the text of the Assessment report was to be presented at the joint EMEP SB and WGE meeting in September 2015. In addition, he noted that the financial situation for the Assessment report was improving, thanks to the contributions by the Nordic Council of Ministers, Switzerland, Germany and other Parties. He also informed the Bureau about the status of the two trends reports being prepared by WGE and EMEP communities, respectively.

3. Preparation of the 2016-2017 workplan for the implementation of the Convention

The secretariat reminded the Bureau about the timeline for the preparation of the 2016-2017 workplan. A draft workplan will be submitted in June as an official document for discussion at the joint EMEP SB and WGE meeting in September. After that, it will be submitted to WGSR for consideration and to the Executive Body for adoption in December 2015. The EMEP SB Chair emphasized that discussions at the EMEP SB meeting had called for a pragmatic and ambitious workplan that would also define how the different items would be financed.

4. UNECE activities aimed at promoting the implementation of the LRTAP Convention and its Protocols in EECCA countries and funding of future activities

The secretariat shared its short-term plans for activities, in particular the organisation of a roundtable on the results of the legislation analysis and a workshop on emission inventories development in Uzbekistan, as well as the organisation of workshops in Armenia and Kazakhstan. It noted the first submission of emission inventories and of the Informative Inventory Report by Azerbaijan, as a result of the recently organized workshop. This made the Party eligible for a Stage 3 review in 2015.

In relation to the capacity building activities, the observer from the European Union informed the Bureau that there were currently two contribution agreements with UNECE in place, one of which would expire earlier than the other, which would pose a problem to the whole project. He explained that the EU, together with the secretariat, was working on its solution; at the same time, he encouraged other Parties to provide their contributions in order to support these activities.

The secretariat informed the Bureau about a delay in the start of the project funded by the Russian Federation in view of a request received from the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation in January 2015 to amend one of the project components. The secretariat communicated its concerns to the Permanent Mission at a meeting in January related to the proposed change and was still expecting a response on that.

The Bureau welcomed the contribution from and the active involvement of the Russian federation and hoped all concerns could soon be resolved. The Bureau stressed the importance of:

- compatibility of methodologies and procedures demonstrated during workshops and trainings with those used under Convention to develop emission inventories, irrespective of the source of funding for the capacity building activities;.
- capacity building activities being needs-driven and carried out in accordance with priorities expressed by recipient countries; and
- capacity building activities being aimed at building the national capacity rather than at implementing the work for the countries.

The secretariat informed the Bureau that the resources to cover travel expenses of delegates from Eastern, South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia to attend regular meetings in Geneva would be fully exhausted by the end of 2015. To allow for further support, new contributions by Parties were indispensable.

Action: The secretariat to send out letters to Parties encouraging them to provide contributions to support the travel of participants from Eastern, South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

Paper on “Servicing the MEA Secretariats”

The Director of the UNECE Environment Division, Mr. M. Keiner, expressed his gratitude for the work under the Convention and stressed its importance. He then presented a draft paper on “Servicing the MEA Secretariats”, which was introduced at the previous session of the EB and Bureau meeting, suggesting a future financing mechanism based on recommended contributions based on the UN scale of assessment. He particularly emphasized the review of core and non-core activities in the secretariat and highlighted that the Air Convention is unique in that scientific support is a core activity and in having a mandatory funding mechanism for that, the EMEP Protocol. Mr. Keiner clarified that regular budget resources are not sufficient to cover core activities and that additional extrabudgetary funding is needed. The Bureau suggested that it would be crucial to define and agree on these core activities, of which facilitation and servicing of meetings should be the first priority. The paper is considered to be a living document and would go through a number of iterations. Bureau members were invited to provide comments on it.

5. Updates from UNECE

(a) The 8th Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference (Batumi, Georgia, 8-10 June 2016)

The secretariat emphasized the opportunities that the 8th Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference provided for promoting the Convention. Several options were outlined in a note by the secretariat circulated to the Bureau, including the shaping of the ministerial discussions through thematic questions and a background paper, the presentation of the Convention Assessment report, a possible initiative on Action for Cleaner Air, as well as other communications and outreach opportunities. In addition, the secretariat circulated possible input to a draft outline for the background paper and invited the Bureau to provide written comments on it by 10 April 2015. The Bureau considered that the assessment report was a flagship product of the Convention and requested the secretariat to investigate a possible slot in the main programme of the conference in addition to a possible side-event for its presentation. The Bureau expressed support for the possible initiative for cleaner air. It was suggested that such initiative could also be used for political commitment from EECCA countries that Ministers could sign up to. It was agreed that it was important to consult with EECCA countries on their needs in this regard. The Bureau noted that it would be beneficial to team up with WHO, UNEP and OECD on a possible

initiative and to invite the Executive Secretary of UNECE to champion such an initiative. The Swiss Bureau member, the Chair, and the observer from the European Union agreed to work on a proposal for a possible initiative. The secretariat clarified that the deadlines for the draft extended outlines of the background paper and a possible initiative would be 1 June (for consideration by the CEP Bureau) and end of July as final deadline for full texts of the documents (for consideration by the 21st session of the CEP in October 2015).

Action: The secretariat to circulate the Astana Water Action to Bureau and to consult with the CEP secretariat on a slot for the assessment report in the main programme. The Bureau to provide comments on the draft outline of the background paper in writing by 2 April 2015. The Swiss Bureau member, the Chair and the observer from the EU to prepare an extended outline for an initiative and submit to the secretariat by 1 June 2015.

(b) The first interagency meeting between UNEP, WHO and UNECE on cooperation on air quality issues (Geneva, 11 February 2015)

The secretariat informed the Bureau that at the initiative of the UNECE Executive Secretary, WHO, UNEP and UNECE met to discuss strengthening interagency cooperation on air quality issues. The meeting counted with high-level representation by the organizations and led to discussions of a number of opportunities for possible joint action. In particular, possible side-events at COP-21 as well as at the EfE conference were discussed. In relation to a possible side-event at COP-21, it was emphasized that support by a Party, such as France or the US, was needed. The Chair of the EMEP Steering Body informed that she would consult with her Government on possibilities to support such an initiative. The European Union also mentioned that the EU was investigating the importance of co-benefits between air pollution and climate change in relation to COP-21. The interagency process and its continuation were welcomed by the Bureau.

(c) Updates on other activities aimed at the promotion of the Convention

The secretariat informed the Bureau about other initiatives to promote the Convention, such as the continuous updating of the website, increased communications activities, such as a number of press releases and articles, contributions to high-level briefings as well as contributions to various events.

6. Other business

The secretariat briefed the Bureau on some of the applicable UN rules and procedures for the organization of meetings and the preparation of official documents. It stressed that all official documents for meetings should be submitted for translation 10 weeks in advance of the start of the meeting (12 weeks for provisional agendas), noting however that due to budget cuts for conference services, documents that were submitted on time run the risk of not being translated on time. It informed that booking of rooms can be made one year in advance for meetings with interpretation

and 6 months in advance for meetings without interpretation. It clarified that the booking of meetings was dependent not only on the availability of conference rooms, but also on quotas on interpretation. It proposed to invite the Division of Conference Management at the United Nations Office in Geneva to provide further information at the next session of the Executive Body. The Bureau decided to take up the presentation at one of the subsequent EB sessions. The Chair offered to produce a short informal document on organizational and administrative issues related to the organization of meetings of the EB and have it translated into Russian. The secretariat informed about the possible dates for holding the thirty-fifth of the Executive Body in the Palais des Nations in Geneva in spring/early summer 2016. The five full days from 9 to 13 May initially requested were not available.

The Bureau expressed concern over the unavailability of the days necessary for its meetings, and agreed that the thirty-fifth session will be held in Geneva from 2 to 4 May, in view of the timing of the Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference in Batumi. The Bureau requested the secretariat to inquire about a 4th day for the EB session and the costs to hold the Executive Body session outside the Palais des Nations.

The secretariat informed that the deadline for submission of all official pre-session documents for the thirty-fifth session of the Executive Body will be 8 February 2016. The meeting of the EMEP and WGE Extended Bureaux which would finalize the official document containing the summary of the assessment report would have to be held in late January 2016.

Action: The secretariat to inquire about a 4th day for the EB session in 2016 and to investigate the costs of holding the session outside the Palais des Nations.

The secretariat informed the Bureau that the Arctic Council had been contacted by the secretariat in relation to black carbon inventories that had been submitted to CLRTAP for the first time this year. The secretariat informed that 24 submissions had been received, including 19 submissions that presented completed time series. The Arctic Council and the US which is taking over its chairmanship have confirmed their continued interest in the black carbon issues. The secretariat suggested continuing the cooperation with the Arctic Council on black carbon and to present potential for cooperation with UNECE/CLRTAP. UNECE, as an official observer to the Arctic Council, would participate in the next Arctic Council Ministerial meeting on 24 and 25 April in Canada.

7. Date, time and place of next meeting

In accordance with the list of meetings and documents adopted at the 33rd EB session, the next meeting is expected to be held on 14 September 2015, back to back with the Joint Meeting of the EMEP Steering Body and the Working Group on Effects.