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COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

REPORT ON THE TENTH SESSION
Addendum

PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2003-2005

SUBPROGRAMME 01 - ENVIRONMENT

At its eighth session, the Committee on Environmental Policy requested the secretariat to take stock of the achievements and to analyse the challenges and emerging orientations of environmental policy in the region, taking into account the outcome of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa, and of the 2003 “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference in Kiev. The Committee welcomed the paper on future UNECE strategic directions for the environment at its tenth session, and adopted the strategic goals therein. The document will help the Committee to structure and adapt its programme of work for the next five to ten years.

PROGRAMME ACTIVITY 1

**“ENVIRONMENT FOR EUROPE” PROCESS/
ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMME FOR EUROPE**

The “Environment for Europe” process has promoted environmental cooperation among major partners in the region since 1991, through a series of conferences involving ECE member countries in Europe, North America, the Caucasus and Central Asia. The process has also encouraged public participation and initiated important policy decisions and actions to improve the environment in the UNECE region.

The fifth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe”, held in Kiev on 21-23 May 2003, strongly supported the continuation of the process as outlined in the Ministerial Declaration.

1.1. FOLLOW-UP TO THE KIEV “ENVIRONMENT FOR EUROPE” MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

The Declaration (ECE/CEP/94/Rev.1) adopted at the fifth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” underlined the importance of the “Environment for Europe” process as a tool to promote environmental protection and sustainable development in the region, thus contributing to peace and security.

Work accomplished:

The Committee participated in the substantive and practical preparation of the Kiev Ministerial Conference, in particular as regards the following items discussed and documents adopted at the Conference:

- (a) Environmental policy in transition: Lessons learned from ten years of environmental reviews;
- (b) Guidelines for Strengthening Compliance with and Implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements in the UNECE Region;
- (c) Guidelines on Energy and Environment;
- (d) Statement on education for sustainable development;
- (e) Future of the “Environment for Europe” process;
- (f) Guidelines on the development of state-of-the-environment reports and recommendations on strengthening environmental monitoring and information systems in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia;
- (g) Development of subregional strategies (e.g. on environment, water and security in Central Asia).

Work to be undertaken:

In line with the request of the Ministers in Kiev, and taking into account the outcome of the discussions held, the Committee, in consultation with the other principal subsidiary bodies (PSBs) and in cooperation with the other relevant organizations and institutions, will monitor the outcome of the Kiev Declaration and reflect the relevant commitments of the Kiev Declaration in its work programme. To ease its task the Committee requested the secretariat to review the table on the follow-up to the Kiev Conference (CEP/2003/20). The table builds on the Kiev Declaration and refers to the main contents of its corresponding paragraphs. It describes follow-up action, identifying actors for undertaking the activity and the methods of work. It is envisaged that the monitoring will induce a mid-term assessment discussion by the Committee in 2005, back to back with the first meeting of the Preparatory Group for the next “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference.

1.2. CONTRIBUTION OF THE COMMITTEE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PILLAR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, gave special emphasis to regional implementation, assigning an important role to the United Nations regional commissions and other regional and subregional institutions. The Commission on Sustainable Development endorsed this approach at its eleventh session, held in April 2003, and invited the regional commissions to consider organizing meetings on the implementation of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, focusing on given thematic clusters. Human settlements, water and sanitation were decided to be the substantive focus of the first implementation cycle covering 2004-05. The decisions on the specific content and format of these meetings were left at the discretion of the regional commissions themselves.

The UNECE region, with its economic potential and impact on the environment, has an important responsibility to follow up the World Summit's results both worldwide and regionally, and in particular to improve the global and regional environment. The UNECE Regional Implementation Forum on Sustainable Development is scheduled to take place from 15 to 16 January 2004, following a decision taken by the Commission at its ad hoc informal session in September 2003.

Work to be undertaken:

(a) The Regional Implementation Forum will be organized with the participation of representatives of UNECE member countries, relevant international organizations, civil society, business and local authorities. Background documents will be prepared for each item. They will provide factual information and illustrate experiences in the three substantive issues on the agenda (water, sanitation and human settlements). The process does not involve negotiation of documents. Instead, it is foreseen that panel discussions will be held on each of the substantive issues. Afterwards the chairs of the discussions will prepare a chair's summary. A consolidated summary will be presented in New York at the twelfth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development by the Chair of the Forum.

(b) The Committee's Bureau will meet on 14 January 2004 back to back with the Regional Implementation Forum on Sustainable Development to discuss how the Committee could in the future assist Environment Ministers in assessing progress in the implementation of environmental commitments in the region stemming from Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. The outcome of the Bureau's meeting will be presented to the Committee at its next session, and the Committee may discuss and further decide on how it could play a key role in strengthening the environmental pillar of sustainable development.

1.3. ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY FOR EASTERN EUROPE, THE CAUCASUS AND CENTRAL ASIA (EECCA)

The Ministers in Kiev adopted the Environment Strategy for Countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) - Strategic framework - intended to contribute to improving environmental conditions and to implementing the World Summit's Plan of Implementation in the subregion, by strengthening the efforts of the EECCA countries in

environmental protection and by facilitating partnership and cooperation between these countries and other countries of the UNECE region, including all stakeholders.

Ministers in Kiev invited the Task Force for the Implementation of the Environmental Action Programme for Central and Eastern Europe (EAP Task Force) to lead efforts to facilitate and support the achievement of the objectives of the Strategy in cooperation with other relevant international bodies and Regional Environmental Centres (RECs). The Strategy should be implemented in close cooperation with the secretariats of regional environmental agreements and the environmental performance review (EPR) programme. The EAP Task Force, in cooperation with relevant international bodies, and on the basis of information provided by the EECCA countries, was requested to keep the Committee on Environmental Policy informed on progress in achieving the objectives of the Strategy.

Work accomplished:

On 30 June 2003, the UNECE secretariat convened a meeting with international organizations to discuss their cooperation in supporting the implementation of the EECCA Strategy. The Meeting decided that the EAP Task Force secretariat at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) would draft terms of reference defining the role of the international organizations, on the basis of the annex to the EECCA Strategy (ECE/CEP/105/Rev.1). On 30 September a coordination meeting on activities to support the implementation of elements of the EECCA Strategy related to the Aarhus Convention's themes was convened by the Aarhus Convention's secretariat in Geneva. On 6-7 October 2003 a joint meeting of the EAP Task Force and the Project Preparation Committee (PPC) was held to discuss the role of the EAP Task Force to facilitate the achievement of the EECCA Strategy's objectives.

Work to be undertaken:

The Committee will consider redirecting relevant items of its work programme towards the implementation of the EECCA Strategy. In particular the environmental performance review programme should be used to provide support in monitoring EECCA countries' efforts to achieve their objectives as well as the activities of the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring on strengthening environmental information and observation capacity in the EECCA countries and take stock of activities in the framework of existing policy tools such as the UNECE conventions and protocols. The EAP Task Force will report to the Committee on progress in the implementation of the Strategy and on the outcome of the meeting of EECCA ministers and partners in October 2004 back to back with the joint meeting of the EAP Task Force and PPC. The UNECE conventions' secretariats will also report on their activities related to the EECCA Strategy.

1.4. ENVIRONMENT, WATER AND SECURITY PARTNERSHIP IN CENTRAL ASIA

Central Asian countries launched the initiative on Environment, Water and Security: Invitation to Partnership at the Kiev Conference. The Ministers in Kiev recommended starting preparations for a partnership agreement on transboundary water problems, environment and security in Central Asia, as part of the follow-up to the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and as a contribution to the EU Water Initiative and other water initiatives in the region.

Work to be undertaken:

The Committee will be informed about the steps taken by the Central Asian countries to develop the partnership agreement as an example of a type II partnership agreement as defined at the World Summit on Sustainable Development and to develop activities contributing to reaching the objectives outlined in the initiative: strengthening cooperation to protect water-basin ecosystems, using water rationally and improving governance to ensure this subregion's sustainable development and its security. Donor countries and international organizations were requested to support the Central Asian countries to fund activities to reach these objectives. The Committee will provide a forum for exchanging information and discussing progress.

1.5. COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

The Ministers in Kiev stressed the need to develop a communication strategy to raise awareness of the "Environment for Europe" process among a wider audience of stakeholders and the general public and invited UNECE through the Committee on Environmental Policy to develop such a strategy in consultation with other PSBs and in cooperation with other relevant organizations and institutions.

Work to be undertaken:

The Committee will develop a communication strategy to raise awareness of the environmental problems in the UNECE region and to make the contribution of the "Environment for Europe" process to setting the policy framework for environment-related initiatives more visible. In particular the communication strategy should strive to: (i) raise the profile of the process; (ii) make more effective use of its achievements to inform the general public and the stakeholders; (iii) encourage stakeholders to join an interactive communication activity and use all relevant information channels.

Specific action will be taken for improving communication to provide information and to explore the interactive potential with stakeholders. The secretariat will post relevant documents on the web site so that information is easy to access and will update media contact points. A consultant will be appointed to prepare a full draft of the strategy with the assistance of a reference group consisting of substantive experts and communication professionals nominated by member States. This draft will be presented at the eleventh session of the Committee for discussion. A second draft will be presented to the Bureau at its meetings in 2005 and subsequently to the Committee in October 2005 for adoption. Further actions and a related timetable are reflected in the discussion paper CEP/2003/23.

PROGRAMME ACTIVITY 2

ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE AND MONITORING

2.1. ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

The environmental performance reviews (EPRs) of selected UNECE countries have been part of the Committee on Environmental Policy's work programme since 1996. Albania, Armenia, Croatia, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, the Republic of

Moldova, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro (reviewed as Yugoslavia), Slovenia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine and Uzbekistan have already been reviewed. The review of Azerbaijan was presented at the Committee's tenth session. Similar reviews have also been carried out, in cooperation with OECD, in Belarus, Bulgaria, Poland and the Russian Federation. Second reviews have been undertaken in Bulgaria and Estonia.

The Ministers at the fifth "Environment for Europe" Conference reaffirmed their support for the EPR programme and acknowledged its role as an important instrument for countries with economies in transition. They adopted the document "Environmental policies in transition: Lessons learned from ten years of UNECE environmental performance reviews" (ECE/CEP/99) containing recommendations for the future of the review process. The Conference agreed that the programme should continue to assist individual countries to assess progress, to promote policy dialogue through peer reviews, to help stimulate greater accountability and to offer the Governments concerned tailor-made recommendations on how to reduce the overall pollution burden. It was recommended furthermore that the first round of reviews should be completed and the second round proceed. Reviewed countries could, on a voluntary basis, provide an interim report to the Committee on Environmental Policy on the implementation of the first review's recommendations within three years of the conclusion of that review.

Work accomplished:

Upon the recommendation of the EPR Expert Group and in consultation with the Bureau, the Committee, at its eighth session in 2001, revised the way in which it conducts the peer reviews. Under its new mandate, the Expert Group met in October 2002 to discuss its work programme and to carry out an expert review of Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Serbia and Montenegro. The peer reviews of these three countries took place at the ninth session of the Committee on Environmental Policy in November 2002. In February 2003 the EPR Expert Group met for the expert review of Georgia. The peer review took place at the Committee's special session in February 2003. A review mission in Azerbaijan was undertaken in June 2003, on the basis of which the peer review of Azerbaijan took place at the tenth session of the Committee in October 2003.

The ten-year review of the EPR programme (ECE/CEP/99) was prepared for adoption at the Kiev Conference.

Work to be undertaken:

The EPR programme will continue on the basis of the recommendations adopted by the Committee and endorsed at the Kiev Conference (CEP/2003/21). The first round of reviews should be completed and the second round proceed. All countries that are member States of UNECE but not members of OECD are eligible for first and second reviews. The second reviews should take into account the particular needs of countries as decided in Kiev, emphasize implementation and financing, and give greater emphasis to the integration of the environment with other sectors. In reviewing implementation the second reviews should also analyse the means through which progress has been accomplished, in order to have better insight into environmental management issues. The second reviews should also be used as tools for the implementation of the EECCA Environment Strategy.

The EPR Expert Group will continue to offer advice and support to the preparations for, and conduct of, the EPRs. It will also carry out a detailed expert review of each EPR prior to the Committee's peer review and report on it to the Committee. It will moreover assist the secretariat in preparing a paper that identifies significant policy issues for discussion within the Committee and interaction with the reviewed countries.

The countries that the Committee will review next are Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Tajikistan. With the conclusion of these two reviews, the only country that has not had a first review is Turkmenistan. Should Turkmenistan request such a review, priority should be given to that. The Committee agreed to the request of Belarus for a second review as well as the request of Serbia and Montenegro for a follow-up review of progress in legal, institutional and policy matters.

2.2. ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING

The UNECE Ad Hoc Working Group on Environmental Monitoring contributed to the Third Assessment report, the Recommendations on strengthening national environmental monitoring and information systems in EECCA (ECE/CEP/109) and the Guidelines for the preparation of governmental reports on the state and protection of the environment (ECE/CEP/113), adopted at the Kiev Conference.

The Ministers in Kiev expressed their support for the Ad Hoc Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and its activities, particularly on strengthening the environmental information and observation capacity in the 12 countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. They requested that the cooperation framework provided by the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring should be further developed.

The European Environment Agency (EEA) was called on to prepare the fourth assessment report for the next "Environment for Europe" Ministerial Conference building on new partnerships, especially with UNECE and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Work to be undertaken:

The Committee adopted the terms of reference of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment. The Working Group will serve as an instrument for UNECE member States to make recommendations, to propose action plans and to improve the coordination of international activities within the region. The activities of the Working Group should emphasize strengthening environmental information and observation capacity, particularly in the 12 countries of EECCA. This will make it possible to continue to integrate EECCA countries into major international networks, in particular those that are developed by EEA focusing on areas that were emphasized by Ministers in Kiev and the Environment Strategy for EECCA. The monitoring work should make use of the wealth of experience collected under the UNECE environmental conventions.

It is envisaged that the Working Group will use the relevant results of this work and cooperate with other international networks and forums, and will give priority to the specific areas listed in the annex to document CEP/AC.10/2003/4. An EEA/UNECE workshop on the results and conclusions of the follow-up to the Tacis project will be held on 13-14 November

2003 to discuss inter alia with EECCA countries their priorities for future cooperation for a possible follow-up project to strengthen their capacity in environmental monitoring and assessment, assessment reports and in other fields and topics of environmental monitoring and reporting other than those covered by the current Tacis project. The Working Group will report to the Committee at its eleventh session on the progress in implementing its activities.

PROGRAMME ACTIVITY 3

REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONVENTIONS AND PROTOCOLS

Since the 1970s, the following five regional environmental conventions have been negotiated and adopted within the framework of UNECE:

- (i) The Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution and its eight protocols;
- (ii) The Espoo Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context;
- (iii) The Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes and its Protocol on Water and Health;
- (iv) The Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents;
- (v) The Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters.

All five conventions have entered into force and their governing bodies carry responsibility for further work.

At the Kiev Ministerial Conference, three new protocols to the UNECE conventions were adopted:

- (i) The Protocol on Civil Liability and Compensation for Damage Caused by the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents on Transboundary Waters to the Conventions on Industrial Accidents and on Water;
- (ii) The Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment to the Espoo Convention;
- (iii) The Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers to the Aarhus Convention.

3.1. FOLLOW-UP AND SUPPORT TO THE REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONVENTIONS AND PROTOCOLS

The Committee noted that each agreement enjoyed its own independent status, and decided to provide its support, as appropriate, to make the implementation of the regional environmental conventions and protocols more effective. The Committee offers a catalysing forum in which all government representatives, including the governing bodies of regional conventions, can share their experience in promoting and assessing the implementation of regional environmental instruments, and identify means of improving compliance with them.

Work accomplished:

An informal meeting between the Bureaux of the Committee on Environmental Policy and of the governing bodies of the UNECE environmental conventions took place on 3 July 2003, at the invitation of the Chairman of the Committee on Environmental Policy. It followed up to the first informal meeting of 2 July 2002 to continue sharing experiences and finding synergies and areas of cooperation to promote and assess the implementation of the conventions in the region. The informal discussions focused on the outcome of the Kiev Conference, the draft future UNECE strategic directions for the environment and the Guidelines on Compliance, and their implementation.

Work to be undertaken:

In accordance with the decision of the Bureaux of the Committee and the governing bodies of the conventions, informal discussions will be pursued on a yearly basis with a view to sharing experiences and ideas on concrete issues that are common to the conventions. The meetings will be organized back to back with other relevant meetings and to the extent possible on a fixed date. The next informal meeting, tentatively scheduled for the second week of June 2004, will focus further on implementation, possibly with the participation of the chairpersons of the implementation committees.

PROGRAMME ACTIVITY 4

INTEGRATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND SECTORAL POLICIES

Integrating environmental concerns into the activities of other sectors, whether economic or social, is one of the key challenges for the effective implementation of environmentally sound and sustainable development principles. During the ten years since the Rio Conference, actions and programmes in the UNECE region have moved towards that goal, but significant efforts are still needed to reach sustainable development goals through a wide range of policy, legal, institutional and financial measures and incentives. The Plan of Implementation of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development reiterated the need to promote the integration of the three components of sustainable development in a balanced way. The Kiev Declaration underlined the importance of the shift towards sustainable production and consumption patterns, and called for the promotion of environmental policy integration with sectoral policies, including education for sustainable development.

The Committee on Environmental Policy has established cross-sectoral linkages, activities and cooperation with other UNECE committees (e.g. human settlements, transport, and sustainable energy) and between it and the conventions' governing bodies, as well as with other international organizations, such as the World Health Organization (WHO). UNECE environmental cross-sectoral programmes should be further encouraged to ensure effective support for national and regional initiatives to accelerate the shift towards sustainable consumption and production to promote social and economic development.

4.1. EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

During the preparations for the Kiev Conference, member countries and non-governmental organizations showed interest in improving education for sustainable development. The Committee, at the initiative of the delegations of Sweden and the Russian Federation, established an ad hoc drafting group to carry out preparatory work for submission to the Ministers in Kiev.

At the Kiev Conference, the UNECE Environment Ministers recognized the fundamental role of education for environmental protection and sustainable development, and endorsed the Statement on Education for Sustainable Development (ECE/CEP/102/Rev.1). They invited all countries to integrate sustainable development into education systems at all levels in order to promote education as a key agent for change.

The Ministers decided that it was important and timely to develop and finalize a UNECE strategy for education for sustainable development, and invited UNECE to work with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Council of Europe on a regional strategy for education for sustainable development.

Work to be undertaken:

The Committee agreed that the regional strategy on education for sustainable development should address environmental protection, social development and economic development. It therefore requires close cooperation on a regional level among different international actors: UNESCO, the Council of Europe, WHO, OECD, UNEP, NGOs, RECs and others with expertise in education and environment.

The development of a UNECE strategy on education for sustainable development should support the implementation of the Environment Strategy for the Countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, as appropriate. An open-ended task force will be set up and a first, two-day meeting will be organized in February 2004, to decide on its work plan and procedures. It should also provide comments on the first draft of the strategy drawn up by the secretariat.

The task force may wish to set up a small drafting group to help draw up the strategy. Its members should have extensive experience in education policies and in sustainable development. The drafting group is expected to meet three times: in February, March and April 2004. The task force may wish to consider if it wishes to provide an input to a possible regional segment during the International Conference on Education in September 2004. The Committee will discuss progress achieved in the preparation of the strategy at its eleventh session and decide on further steps as contained in a note to be prepared by the secretariat for that session.

4.2. ENERGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

The Kiev Conference welcomed the elements of the Plan of Implementation adopted at the World Summit concerning sustainable energy and stressed the need to diversify the energy supply by developing advanced, cleaner, more efficient, affordable and cost-effective energy technologies.

The UNECE Environment Ministers at Kiev endorsed the Guidelines on Reforming Energy Pricing and Subsidies (ECE/CEP/103) prepared jointly by the UNECE Committees on

Environmental Policy and on Sustainable Energy as a means of promoting action to progressively reduce and, where possible, remove energy price subsidies which counteract the efficient use of energy and/or have harmful effects on the environment. As a follow-up, both Committees were invited to examine the role of economic instruments in promoting the use of renewable energy taking into account the work of OECD and other international organizations.

Work to be undertaken:

As a follow-up to decisions at the Kiev Ministerial Conference calling for further efforts to improve energy efficiency and promote renewable energy sources as a means of meeting environmental objectives, the Committee on Sustainable Energy is expected to establish a working group on renewable energies, and propose terms of reference and a work programme at its session in November 2003. The Committee on Environmental Policy decided to continue to look into all environmental aspects of energy. However, while it decided not be directly involved as such in a working group on renewable energy, countries could nominate environmental experts to participate in its work and to receive information on the follow-up to this activity.

4.3. TRANSPORT, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

The Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP) was established at the second High-level Meeting on Transport, Environment and Health (Geneva, 5 July 2002) to consolidate and focus the relevant UNECE and WHO Regional Office for Europe's activities on three key priority areas: (i) the integration of environmental and health aspects into transport policy; (ii) demand-side management and modal shift; and (iii) urban transport. Activities in these key areas are coordinated and implemented by the Steering Committee for THE PEP, composed of UNECE and WHO/Europe member State representatives from the transport, environment and health sectors, in close cooperation with relevant international and non-governmental organizations. Special attention is paid to the needs of the newly independent States (NIS) and South-East European countries as well as to ecologically particularly sensitive areas of the region.

The Steering Committee for THE PEP held its first session on 10-11 April 2003 in Geneva. The session was preceded by informal consultations with representatives of the East European, Central Asian and Caucasian countries to discuss their specific concerns, expectations and envisaged contributions to the implementation of THE PEP work plan. The Steering Committee discussed and endorsed four main activities as part of its programme of work for 2003-2005. These activities involve:

- (a) A web-based clearing house on transport, health and environment;
- (b) Sustainable and healthy urban transport and planning;
- (c) Transport-related health impacts, costs and benefits, focusing in particular on children; and
- (d) Indicators to monitor the integration of environmental and health aspects into transport policies.

It also adopted its rules of procedure and elected members for its Bureau from the three sectors.

The progress in the implementation of the above activities will be reported to the Steering Committee at its second session, which is preliminarily scheduled to take place on 29-30 March 2004.

Work to be undertaken:

The Committee on Environmental Policy as well the other relevant UNECE PSBs and WHO/Europe bodies will be informed of the activities undertaken under THE PEP.

The Committee will encourage active and coordinated efforts from the transport, environment and health sectors for the implementation of THE PEP. It will, in particular, consider providing input to the preparation of and follow-up to the Workshop on sustainable and healthy urban transport and planning which will be held in Cyprus on 16-19 November 2003. Influencing demand and consumer choices towards more sustainable means of transport will be among the main focuses of the workshop.

4.4. ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH

The European Environment and Health Committee (EEHC) was established as a result of the 1994 Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health in Helsinki.

The third Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health took place in London from 16 to 18 June 1999. This Conference aimed to set the agenda for environment and health in Europe for the start of the 21st century and to agree on concrete commitments to specific actions to implement the National Environment and Health Action Plans (NEHAPs). EEHC, which was also the steering committee of the London Conference, prepared the substantive proposals for the Conference. One major item was the adoption of the Protocol on Water and Health to the UNECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes. The Conference also adopted the Charter on Transport, Environment and Health, and a ministerial declaration. At the London Conference, Ministers entrusted EEHC to follow up their decisions and to serve as steering committee for the preparations of the Budapest Conference.

Work accomplished:

The European Environment and Health Committee (EEHC) met in Istanbul (Turkey) in 2001, in Sofia in 2002, in Copenhagen in June 2003 and in Prague in October 2003. In addition two intergovernmental meetings were held (Italy, 2002, and Sweden, 2003). These meetings discussed possible priority issues to be put on the agenda of the Ministerial Conference on Health and Environment (Budapest, 2004) and decided that the overall theme of the Conference would be "the Future of our Children". Furthermore, some major policy goals for the Conference were set, such as the conference declaration, summarizing the commitments by member States to addressing specific environment and health issues across Europe, and the children's environment and health action plan for Europe (CEHAPE) as framework within which member States can develop their national plans and policies on health and the environment.

Close contacts were established between EEHC and the Working Group of Senior Officials "Environment for Europe".

Work to be undertaken:

Further intergovernmental meetings are scheduled to take place on 27 - 28 November 2003 in Evora (Portugal) and another on 3 - 4 March 2004 (venue to be decided), to further discuss the preliminary agenda, the draft CEHAPE and the draft ministerial declaration in preparation of the Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health.

The Committee on Environmental Policy will continue to contribute to the European Environment and Health Committee through its elected representatives from the following countries: Czech Republic, Italy, Republic of Moldova and Sweden.