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**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY****REPORT ON THE TENTH SESSION
20-22 October 2003**Summary

The Committee hosted an informal round-table discussion on “the environment in a changing region”. Delegations shared their views and assessed the implications of the EU enlargement for the environment and highlighted the challenges for the future environmental work of UNECE. Panellists and delegations stressed that the environmental law and policy activities of EU and UNECE should continue to positively influence each other. They also fully acknowledged the key role of UNECE in promoting the multilateral environmental dialogue in the region.

The Committee was informed of the preparations for the Regional Implementation Forum on Sustainable Development to be held in Geneva, on 15-16 January 2004. It was considered important for the UNECE region to provide a positive example to the other regions especially concerning the implementation of the Plan of Implementation and linking regional commitments. The Committee welcomed the document on future UNECE strategic directions for the environment and adopted its strategic goals.

The Committee reviewed the environmental performance (EPR) of Azerbaijan and adopted the recommendations to this country. It considered the outcome of the Kiev Ministerial Conference (21-23 May 2003) and how it should best reflect the relevant commitments of the Kiev Ministerial Declaration in its work programme. As part of the mandated follow-up work to the Kiev Conference, the Committee also discussed the future of the EPR process and agreed on the EPR work programme. Furthermore, it discussed environmental monitoring, adopting the updated terms of reference of the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment, and agreed to work on education for sustainable development, the implementation of the Environment Strategy for Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA), as well as the development of a communication strategy.

The Committee welcomed the progress achieved under the UNECE multilateral environmental agreements and noted the challenges still ahead for improving their ratification and implementation.

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Introduction

1. The tenth session of the Committee on Environmental Policy took place in Geneva from 20 to 22 October 2003. Mr. Hugo von Meijenfeldt (Netherlands) chaired the session.
2. The session was attended by delegates from 42 UNECE member countries: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America.
3. The session was attended by representatives of the European Commission and the European Environment Agency (EEA).
4. Representatives of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Health Organization's Regional Office for Europe (WHO/EURO), the Council of Europe and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) also took part.
5. The following non-governmental organizations and regional environmental centres were also represented: Copernicus Campus, European ECOFORUM, Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC) and Regional Environmental Center for Central Asia (CAREC).

I. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

6. The Committee adopted the agenda for its tenth session as contained in document ECE/CEP/115.
7. The Committee adopted the report on its special session, which had taken place in Geneva from 19 to 21 February 2003, as contained in document ECE/CEP/91.

II. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE FIFTY-EIGHTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION OF CONCERN TO THE COMMITTEE

8. The Committee was informed about the decisions taken by the Commission, including at its ad hoc informal session, held on 2 September 2003, relating to the regional follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development and in particular to the holding of UNECE regional implementation meeting.

III. INFORMAL ROUND-TABLE DISCUSSION ON "THE ENVIRONMENT IN A CHANGING REGION"

9. In response to the political and economic changes in Europe and in particular with regard to the enlargement of the European Union, the Committee hosted an informal round-table discussion on "the environment in a changing region." Panellists

and delegates were invited to share their views on the changes in the region and to assess their environmental implications.

10. The panellists included: Ms. Andjelka Mihajlov (Serbia and Montenegro), Minister of Natural Protection Resources and Environment; Mr. Zaal Lomtadze (Georgia), Deputy Minister of Environment and Natural Resource Protection; Mr. Beat Nobs (Switzerland), Head of the International Affairs Division, Agency for the Environment, Forests, and Landscapes; Mr. Rolf Annerberg (European Commission), Head of the Commission's Cabinet, DG Environment; and Ms. Victoria Elias (European ECO-Forum), Chairperson of the Co-ordination Board.

11. All the panellists acknowledged that Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) together with South East Europe face the most acute environmental challenges. They also felt that UNECE had a particularly important role to play in these subregions. Ms. Mihajlov saw the UNECE activities as a cohesion-building factor and a motor to promote further integration in the "Euro-Atlantic region". Mr. Lomtadze noted that the "Environment for Europe" process was already making a difference to the countries in the region, and was convinced that the documents adopted at the Kiev Ministerial Conference in May would further guide the development of the environmental policy of the region for the decades to come. He referred in particular to the EECCA Environment Strategy as a valuable tool in helping to marshal the efforts of all the international actors in the process. Mr. Lomtadze also stressed the importance of the permanent structure that UNECE provided for EECCA, struggling with a constantly changing political architecture.

12. According to Mr. Nobs, UNECE should not lose sight of the link between regional issues and global issues. It should, furthermore, serve as a forum for the regional implementation of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and provide good examples to the other regions.

13. Mr. Annerberg emphasized that it was important and timely for both EU and UNECE to focus increasingly on the implementation of current legislation. He stressed the role that UNECE had in promoting the implementation of its conventions, and in providing a forum for sharing good practices as well as in promoting sectoral integration, with a particular focus on South East Europe and EECCA. For Ms. Elias, who spoke on behalf of some 200 member groups of the European ECO-Forum, it was important that the multilateral cooperation in the region should pursue within the framework of UNECE in an open and transparent manner and focus on mechanisms for the implementation of the legally binding instruments, good environmental governance and the development of public participation, in line with the principles of the Aarhus Convention. She also deemed it essential for UNECE to promote the Aarhus Convention worldwide.

14. The panellists and the Committee's delegates emphasized the usefulness of the UNECE activities, such as the environmental performance reviews, as well as cross-sectoral work, for instance on transport, environment and health, environment and education, and environment and energy. UNECE was considered an important framework for cooperation and the exchange of information and good practice in the environment. Transparency and the involvement of all the stakeholders in the cooperation were deemed essential. It was important, in particular, to further

strengthen cooperation with the European Commission and other relevant institutions and organizations, as well as to increase the involvement of the regional environmental centres (RECs), civil society as well as the private sector. The continuous need for promoting ethical values and good governance was also highlighted.

15. Following the panel discussions and a general discussion, the Chairman of the Committee summarized the key points:

(a) The enlargement of the European Union was seen as providing positive dynamic elements to the work on the environment;

(b) The environmental law and policy activities of EU and UNECE should continue to positively influence each other. The cooperation between the two organizations could be further enhanced;

(c) UNECE would continue to promote the multilateral environmental dialogue;

(d) UNECE should focus on activities with clear added value. Among the priorities were: follow-up to the work mandated by the Kiev Conference, monitoring and assessment, development of multilateral environmental agreements, stronger implementation, capacity-building, integration of environmental concerns into the sectoral activities (e.g. education for sustainable development, water and security, health and environment related issues), EPRs, EECCA Environment Strategy;

(e) UNECE had a key role in the regional implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development's Plan of Implementation and in linking the regional commitments;

(f) The activities should be carried out in a transparent manner, in cooperation with the relevant intergovernmental organizations, RECs and NGOs and with increased involvement of the private sector.

IV. REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

16. The UNECE secretariat informed the Committee that the Commission had decided to organize the first Regional Implementation Forum on Sustainable Development in Geneva, on 15-16 January 2004, to provide substantive inputs to the Commission on Sustainable Development at its twelfth session (16-30 April 2004). The secretariat also provided information on the background documents under preparation to assess implementation in the three substantive issues to be discussed at the Forum, namely water, sanitation and human settlements. The Commission had also decided that the meeting would not aim to come up with a negotiated document. The meeting itself would be organized around three panel discussions, one for each issue, sharing national experiences and good practices. The Chair of the meeting would prepare a summary of the Forum to be presented to the Commission on Sustainable Development at its twelfth session.

17. The Committee stressed the importance of approaching the issue of water from the perspective of integrated water resources management, with particular reference to the decision taken at the Johannesburg Summit on Sustainable Development that integrated water resources management and water efficiency plans should be developed by 2005. This should also be seen as a way towards reaching the target of halving, by the year 2015, the proportion of people who are unable to reach or to afford safe drinking water, as set out both in the Millennium Declaration and in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

18. All three issues of water, sanitation and human settlements should be viewed as interdependent and should also address relevant cross-cutting elements related to the priorities, including education for sustainable development, sustainable consumption and production patterns, gender and poverty. Besides considering the regional perspective, a subregional focus was important as well, and to that end all relevant organizations should be invited to participate.

19. The assessments of implementation should examine both achievements and obstacles in the national experience.

20. The Regional Implementation Forum should also address partnership arrangements in the region related to the sustainable development of water, human settlements and sanitation. In this regard, the delegation of Italy announced that it was organizing an international forum on partnerships for sustainable development in Rome on 4-6 March 2004.

21. Overall, the regional assessment should be country-driven and open to all relevant partners and stakeholders, and should send an important message to the Commission on Sustainable Development, and to the other regions.

V. PRESENTATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW (EPR) OF AZERBAIJAN AND ADOPTION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

22. The item was introduced by the secretariat, which thanked the delegation of Azerbaijan for its support during the EPR mission and its commitment to improving environmental management in Azerbaijan. The EPR preparatory mission to Azerbaijan had taken place in early March 2003 and the mission itself from 9 to 20 June. The draft report contained 12 chapters, each focused on a specific issue of importance to environmental management in Azerbaijan. The secretariat informed the Committee that the EPR Expert Group had met on 16 and 17 October to discuss the report with Azerbaijani experts. The report, as amended, was submitted to the Committee for its consideration and adoption.

23. Mr. Adriaan Oudemann and Mr. Jurg Schneider, who had been chosen as Rapporteurs by the Expert Group from among its members, reported on the substance of the expert review.

24. The representative of Azerbaijan informed the Committee that Azerbaijan, despite facing many problems, had made much progress since independence and

especially following the creation of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources in 2000. Azerbaijan was giving particular attention to establishing its legal and normative base for the environment, to integrated plans and programmes, to intersectoral coordination and to good regional and international cooperation. He pointed out that Azerbaijan had recently set up its first three national parks, established a fish farm and improved forest management. He indicated, however, that there were still many significant issues to be dealt with and that this was why the Government had attached so much importance to the environmental performance review. He thanked the secretariat and the Committee for undertaking this review, and said that Azerbaijan would make great strides as a result.

25. Subsequent to its peer review of Azerbaijan, the Committee adopted the environmental performance review and its recommendations, as amended by the Expert Group at its meeting on 16 and 17 October 2003.

VI. OUTCOME OF THE KIEV MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

26. The Committee exchanged views on the outcome of the Kiev Ministerial Conference (21-23 May 2003), focusing in particular on the decisions concerning the future of the "Environment for Europe" process and the role of the Committee in monitoring the implementation of the Kiev Ministerial Declaration. The Committee also considered how it should best reflect the relevant commitments of the Kiev Declaration in its work programme.

A. Environmental monitoring

27. The Chair of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Environmental Monitoring, Mr. Yuri Tsatsurov, gave the Committee an update on its activities and reported on the outcome of its fourth session (Geneva, 4-5 September 2003).

28. The Working Group had provided substantive inputs to the Kiev Conference, by contributing to the preparation by the European Environment Agency of the Kiev Assessment report and by developing recommendations on strengthening national environmental monitoring and information systems in the EECCA countries (ECE/CEP/109). It had also prepared guidelines on the development of state-of-the-environment reports (ECE/CEP/113). It had launched a series of capacity-building activities in EECCA thanks to the financial support provided by the Government of Denmark and the European Commission within its €1.5 million Tacis project on strengthening environmental observation and information capacity.

29. In line with the decisions of the Kiev Ministerial Conference, the Working Group submitted updated terms of reference for adoption by the Committee. The Committee was also given an outline of the activities that were proposed to be undertaken in 2004-2005, provided that sufficient funding was made available. These activities focused notably on facilitating the achievement of the objectives on environmental monitoring and information management of the EECCA Environment Strategy adopted in Kiev.

30. Following the discussion, the Committee:
- (a) Acknowledged the importance of further strengthening the environmental monitoring and assessment capacities in EECCA;
 - (b) Supported the continuation of the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Environmental Monitoring;
 - (c) Invited delegations and the European Commission to consider the possibilities for providing financial support to enable the Working Group to operate;
 - (d) Amended and adopted the updated terms of reference of the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment as annexed to the present report (annex I).

B. Future of the environmental performance review process

31. The secretariat recalled that at the fifth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe”, Ministers had reaffirmed their support for the EPR programme of UNECE and decided 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. The secretariat referred to document CEP/2003/21, on the future of the environmental performance review process, and noted that it brought to the attention of the Committee three issues: the focus of the second EPRs; the schedule for environmental performance reviews in the near future; and the possibility of inviting countries to give an interim report to the Committee within three years of their first environmental performance review. The secretariat also reported to the Committee on the conclusions of the Environmental Performance Expert Group, which had considered the first two of these issues at its meeting on 16 and 17 October in Geneva.

32. The Committee agreed with the Expert Group that the second reviews should be standardized to the extent possible, taking into account the particular needs of countries, and, as decided at the Kiev Ministerial Conference, they should emphasize, in particular, implementation, integration and financing. In reviewing implementation, the second reviews should also analyse the means through which progress had been accomplished, in order to have a better insight into environmental management issues.

33. The second EPRs should be used as one of the tools for the implementation of the EECCA Environment Strategy and should take into account progress towards the targets and goals set at the Kiev Conference, the Regional Preparatory Meeting for the World Summit, the Plan of Implementation adopted at the World Summit, and the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, as they related to environmental management at the national level. Emphasis should be given to the socio-economic interface among issues within the country.

34. Regarding the EPR work programme, it was noted that the first review of Bosnia and Herzegovina would take place from 3 to 14 November 2003 and the

preparatory mission for the first review of Tajikistan, in late October. The first review of Tajikistan would likely take place in late March or early April 2004. With the conclusion of these two reviews, the only country that would not have had a first review would be Turkmenistan. It was agreed that priority should be given to undertaking the first review of Turkmenistan, should Turkmenistan so request.

35. With regard to second reviews, 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. It was also agreed that the secretariat would write to each of the other countries eligible for a second review to elicit its interest in a second review. Based on the responses, the secretariat would then prepare a schedule of second reviews for consideration by the Committee. For second reviews of EU accession countries, the secretariat would consult closely with the European Commission to make maximum use of existing information and analysis.

36. Some of the member States shared their experience in the implementation of their first environmental performance reviews. The representative of Armenia noted that his country was analysing all the information in its EPR and developing an implementation plan. The representative of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia informed the Committee that its EPR had been translated into Macedonian and transmitted to the Government, which had approved all the recommendations. The Government had also requested that an annual report on the implementation of the EPR should be submitted to it. The representative of Albania pointed out that, on the basis of the EPR, the Government had approved nine new laws and five decisions, and that it was taking concerted action in the areas of pollution reduction, cleaning up "hot spots," improving the environmental inspectorates and strengthening regional cooperation. The EPR had been approved in 2002 by the Government, which had requested a report on its implementation by 2005.

37. With regard to follow-up reports by the reviewed countries, the Committee decided that:

(a) Countries would be requested to present interim implementation reports at its annual sessions within three years of the conclusion of their first EPR reviews, taking into account that, until the reporting schedule was updated, some countries might report more than three years after their first review but prior to their second review;

(b) The secretariat would write to eligible countries to determine their interest in providing interim reports to the Committee, and it would provide a structure for this purpose;

(c) Follow-up reviews should be presented both in writing and orally, possibly in round-table discussions.

38. The Committee stressed its strong overall support to the EPR programme and called upon all member States to provide sufficient financing for its operation.

C. Energy and the environment

39. The secretariat informed the Committee about the follow-up to the Kiev Conference, recalling that Ministers in Kiev had endorsed the Guidelines on Reforming Energy Pricing and Subsidies (ECE/CEP/103) prepared jointly by the Committees on Environmental Policy and on Sustainable Energy, and had invited both Committees to examine the role of economic instruments in promoting the use of renewable energy, taking into account the work of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and other international organizations.

40. The Committee took note of the proposed terms of reference and work programme for a working group on renewable energies that the Committee on Sustainable Energy was preparing to establish at its session in November 2003.

41. Following discussions, the Committee decided that reference to the Kiev Ministerial Declaration in the secretariat paper on renewable energies was to be completed with the text of paragraphs 47-49 under the section "Energy for sustainable development". The Committee would also continue to look into all environmental aspects of energy. The Committee as such should not be directly involved in a possible working group on renewable energy. However, member countries could nominate environmental experts to participate in the work of the group and the Committee wished to receive information on the follow-up to this activity.

D. Education for sustainable development

42. The delegation of Sweden gave the Committee an update on the development of a UNECE strategy for education for sustainable development, following the mandate received from the Ministers in Kiev. It also introduced a document on a framework for the post-Kiev work on education for sustainable development (CEP/2003/22). The secretariat stressed the financial constraints of providing the necessary secretariat support for this activity and allowing the countries in transition to participate in the drafting of the strategy. The delegations of Sweden and the United Kingdom informed the Committee of their intentions to support this initiative financially.

43. Following discussion, the Committee:

- (a) Welcomed the initiative and confirmed its importance for the region;
- (b) Confirmed the need for a strong involvement of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in the process;
- (c) Agreed on the establishment of a task force for drafting the strategy:
 - (i) The task force would be ad hoc and open-ended;
 - (ii) It was left to the countries to decide on their representatives in the task force;
 - (iii) The terms of reference of the task force should comply with United Nations practice and be drafted taking into account all the comments made;

- (iv) The task force would report to the Committee on its activities at its next session and submit for the Committee's consideration a draft of the strategy;

(d) Decided that the first meeting of the open-ended task force would be held on 19-20 February 2004 and decide on its terms of reference and its work programme. Several delegations expressed their interest in participating in the ad hoc task force.

44. The delegation of Sweden informed the Committee that it would organize and host a global congress on education for sustainable development in April 2004. The delegation of Spain provided information on a seminar on communication, education and public awareness in environmental management scheduled for June 2004.

E. Environment Strategy for Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia

45. The Committee was informed about two informal consultations that UNECE had organized in June and October 2003 respectively to discuss (i) cooperation with other international organizations in supporting the implementation of the EECCA Environment Strategy, and (ii) activities to support the implementation of elements of the Strategy related to the Aarhus Convention. The Committee was also informed about the outcome of the first joint meeting of the EAP Task Force and the Project Preparation Committee (PPC) (Paris, 6-7 October 2003) by a representative of the European Commission, Ms. Soledad Blanco, Co-Chair of the Task Force. The main objective of the meeting had been to agree on a programme of work for the coordination of the achievement of the overall objectives of the EECCA Environment Strategy, in accordance with the mandate from the Kiev Ministerial Conference. It was emphasized that the role of the EAP Task Force was to facilitate and support the efforts of the various partners to help EECCA countries achieve the Strategy's objectives. The meeting had also considered that the UNECE environmental performance review programme provided valuable support in monitoring the EECCA countries' efforts to implement the Strategy.

46. The joint meeting had also discussed the preparation for the Kiev+1 follow-up meeting of the EECCA ministers and their partners, which should take place in the week of 18 October 2004 and be held back to back with the next joint meeting of the EAP Task Force and PPC. Georgia, Kazakhstan and the Republic of Moldova had offered to host the meeting.

47. The summary of the meeting was available on the Internet at <http://www.oecd.org/env/eap>.

48. The representative of the WHO Regional Office for Europe informed the Committee that at the fourth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health the specific environment and health concerns of the EECCA countries would be addressed, offering an opportunity for creating synergies with the EECCA Environment Strategy.

49. The Committee took note of the information and agreed to consider redirecting the relevant items of its work programme towards the implementation of the Strategy and welcomed the efforts of the UNECE conventions' governing bodies to strengthen their activities to support the Strategy's implementation.

**F. Environment, water and security partnership
in Central Asia**

50. The UNECE regional adviser and a representative of CAREC informed the Committee of the development of the Central Asian Initiative on Water, Environment and Security and the follow-up to the recommendation of the Ministers in Kiev to start preparing a partnership agreement on water, environment and security. The Central Asian countries would develop a "type II" partnership agreement, as defined at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to reach the objectives of 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 invited to support the Central Asian countries to fund activities to reach these objectives. The Committee was expected to provide a forum for exchanging information and to discuss the progress in implementing the Initiative.

51. While it was important to continue to develop the idea of a partnership agreement and find political support for it, it was also vital to undertake practical activities focused on capacity-building. In this regard, the opportunities for supporting the practical application of the partnership by strengthening the implementation of UNECE environmental conventions were highlighted. It was also noted that it would be necessary to establish a management structure for the Initiative to make strategic decisions as well as a secretariat to service it.

52. The Committee agreed on the steps that needed to be taken to develop the Initiative in cooperation with other organizations and to link it to the EECCA Environment Strategy, the UNECE Water Convention and the World Summit's Plan of Implementation.

G. Other items

1. Communication strategy

53. The secretariat informed the Committee of possible actions and tools to develop a communication strategy for the "Environment for Europe" process, following the mandate received from the Ministers at Kiev to raise awareness of the process among a wider audience of stakeholders and the general public.

54. The Committee welcomed the proposal by the secretariat on how to proceed. It stressed the necessity to take full account of the communication strategies already existing or under way (e.g. under the UNECE conventions) as well as to cooperate with all partners when drafting the strategy, in order to maximize the synergies and to optimize the use of resources. It also highlighted the importance of defining the target audience of the strategy, and adapting the content accordingly.

55. The Committee agreed to undertake specific actions as included in document CEP/2003/23, and requested the secretariat to report to it at its next session in 2004 on progress and to present a first draft of the strategy for discussion.

2. Sustainable consumption patterns

56. Several organizations, including OECD, EU, UNEP and UNECE informed the Committee on their activities related to sustainable consumption and production. The relevant work carried out at the local level was also referred to. The Committee welcomed the various initiatives.

57. The Committee estimated that possibilities for reflecting sustainable consumption and production further within its programme of work could be explored within the discussions on its future strategic directions, taking also into account the Kiev Ministerial Declaration and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

VII. UNECE MULTILATERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS

58. The Chairman informed the Committee of the outcome of the informal consultations between the representatives of the Bureaux of the Committee and of the governing bodies of the UNECE environmental conventions, held on 3 July 2003. The Committee considered the joint meetings of the Bureaux a useful forum for exchanging information. It also took note of the positive reaction by the bureaux of the conventions as regards the Guidelines for Strengthening Compliance with and Implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) in the ECE Region (ECE/CEP/107).

59. In line with the agreement by the Bureaux at the above informal meeting, the secretaries to the UNECE environmental conventions provided the Committee with information focusing on the achievements and challenges encountered in the work under the conventions and their protocols as well as on the activities foreseen subsequent to the adoption and signature of the Protocols on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Civil Liability, and Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs). The main emphasis was put on encouraging UNECE governments to improve the rate of ratifications of the conventions and their protocols as well as on building the capacity of the governments, at all levels, to improve implementation. The information was made available in writing to the delegations.

VIII. FUTURE UNECE STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

60. The secretariat introduced the document on "Future UNECE strategic directions for the environment" (CEP/2003/25). The Committee decided that the future strategic directions should be discussed together with the Committee's programme of work taking also into account the outcome of the Kiev Ministerial Conference.

61. The outcome of the Committee's discussions is reflected in chapter X, adoption of the 2003-2006 programme of work.

IX. INTERSECTORAL ACTIVITIES

A. Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP)

62. The secretariat informed the Committee of the outcome of the first session of THE PEP Steering Committee, which had been convened jointly by UNECE and the WHO Regional Office for Europe on 10-11 April 2003, as well as of the preparations for the meeting of its Bureau on 31 November 2003. The Committee was also given a brief account on the activities currently being implemented under the Programme, related in particular to:

(a) The development of an Internet-based clearing house on transport, environment and health, in English and in Russian, and to some extent also in French, to ensure the effective coverage of relevant scientific, methodological and policy aspects and the wide dissemination of information and good practices, and to maximize synergies with existing initiatives;

(b) The organization of a workshop on sustainable and healthy urban transport and planning in Nicosia (Cyprus) from 16 to 18 November 2003, to discuss good practices and lessons learned on the integration of environmental and health considerations into urban transport and land-use planning through case studies with the expected participation of representatives of the transport, health, environment and land-use planning sectors, both from central and local governments, and of relevant organizations, city networks, the academic community and the private sector from all the subregions. Delegations were encouraged to disseminate the invitation to the workshop among interested stakeholders;

(c) A series of workshops being organized by Austria, France, Malta, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland on transport-related health impacts and their costs and benefits with a particular focus on children as a contribution to THE PEP. The policy recommendations to be produced would also provide a contribution to the Budapest Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health.

63. The progress achieved in these activities would be assessed by THE PEP Steering Committee at its second session on 29-30 March 2004. Further information on THE PEP was available at <http://www.unece.org/the-pep>.

64. The Committee took note of the information provided and welcomed the work under THE PEP, acknowledging the importance of the cross-sectoral issues in transport, environment and health.

B. Environment and Health: Preparations for the 2004 Budapest Ministerial Conference

65. Ms. Helena Cizkova, Vice-Chair of the European Environment and Health Committee (EEHC), informed the Committee of the preparatory process for the next Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health in Budapest on 23-25 June 2004,

and in particular on the drafting of the ministerial declaration and the children's environment and health action plan for Europe (CEHAPE).

66. Delegations were invited to coordinate the appropriate environmental input to the preparatory process for the Ministerial Conference with their counterparts in the health sector. Further information on the Budapest Conference was available on <http://www.euro.who.int/eprise/main/WHO/Progs/bud>.

X. ADOPTION OF THE 2003-2006 PROGRAMME OF WORK

67. The Committee discussed the directions of its future work and corresponding activities based on the document "Future UNECE strategic directions for the environment" (CEP/2003/25) its draft programme of work (CEP/2003/115/Add.1) and the outcome of the Kiev Ministerial Conference.

68. The Committee:

(a) Welcomed the document on future UNECE strategic directions for the environment, and adopted its strategic goals;

(b) Requested the programme of work, the document on strategic directions and the Kiev Declaration to be made more interdependent;

(c) Requested that its discussions should be taken into account in each of the programme elements contained in the programme of work and that emphasis should be put on concrete actions that it could undertake;

(d) Requested the secretariat to quote the main contents from the Ministerial Declaration in the table on the follow-up to the Kiev Conference (CEP/2003/20) and, when identifying actor(s) responsible for a particular activity, to take into account work carried out by all other international organizations and NGOs involved in particular follow-up actions;

(e) Requested the secretariat to make the changes in the document on strategic directions, Kiev follow-up and work programme accordingly, and to consult with the Bureau before their finalization.

XI. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO COUNTRIES WITH ECONOMIES IN TRANSITION AND COUNTRIES' CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE UNECE TRUST FUNDS

69. The Committee took note of the updated criteria for financial support to eligible delegations from countries in transition to attend meetings (see annex II). The Committee was also informed about the current status of the trust funds. It was emphasized that further financial support was crucial for the implementation of the programme of work, especially as regards the new programme elements mandated by the Ministers in Kiev and to enable the participation of countries in transition. Some countries expressed their readiness to consider providing financial contributions to the trust funds.

XII. SPECIAL SESSION OF THE WORKING GROUP OF SENIOR OFFICIALS "ENVIRONMENT FOR EUROPE"

70. The secretariat informed the Committee that the special session of the Working Group of Senior Officials was to be held back to back with the Committee's session (22 October, afternoon) with a view to deciding on the host country and the date of the sixth Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe".

XIII. ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR THE ELEVENTH SESSION

71. The Committee elected the following members of the Bureau: Chairman: Mr. Z. Lomtadze (Georgia); Vice-chairpersons: Ms. N. Panariti (Albania), Ms. H. Cizkova (Czech Republic), Mr. B.A. Szelinski (Germany), Mr. S. Tveretinov (Russian Federation), Mr. J. Kahn (Sweden), Mr. J. Schneider (Switzerland), Ms. L. Poulton (United States of America).

72. The Committee expressed its gratitude to the outgoing Bureau members, Mr. von Meijenfeldt and Mr. Dimovski, for their valuable contributions to the work of the Bureau.

XIV. CLOSING OF THE TENTH SESSION

73. The conclusions of the Committee's tenth session were summarized by the secretariat in consultation with the Chairman and distributed to the delegations at the end of the meeting. The Committee entrusted the secretariat with finalizing the report in consultation with the Bureau.

74. The Committee decided that its eleventh session would be held on 13-15 October 2004.

Annex I

**TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE WORKING GROUP
ON ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT**

approved by the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy
at its tenth session on 21 October 2003

1. Pursuant to the decision of the Fifth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” (Kiev, 2003), the Committee on Environmental Policy renames the Ad Hoc Working Group on Environmental Monitoring as the **Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment**. The Working Group should serve as an instrument for UNECE member States to provide recommendations, to propose action plans and to improve coordination of international initiatives within the region in the areas of harmonized and cost-effective environmental monitoring, assessment and reporting, with a view to supporting decision-making processes and contributing to streamlining international reporting in the UNECE region.
2. The Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment will promote the coordination of efforts in the above areas, and in particular towards preparations for the Ministerial Conferences “Environment for Europe”. It should contribute:
 - (a) To the development of assessment reports on the state of the environment by the European Environment Agency (EEA);
 - (b) To an appraisal of monitoring and assessment requirements within the framework of the “Environment for Europe” process as well as national and international monitoring and assessment requirements, including obligations under the relevant multilateral environmental agreements.
3. The Working Group should use relevant results of the work of and cooperate with other international networks and forums, such as EEA, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Global Biodiversity Information Forum and the regional environmental centres, and give priority to the following specific areas :
 - (a) Strengthening environmental information and observation capacity, including monitoring networks, in countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, serving as facilitator to achieve the environmental monitoring and information management objectives of the Environment Strategy for these countries;
 - (b) Improvement of data collection, transfer and use;
 - (c) Enhancement of international comparability of environmental information;

(d) Promotion of the use of indicator-based mechanisms for periodic environmental assessments and evaluation of the effectiveness of environmental policies and decision-making;

(e) Improvement of coordination and optimization of environmental assessments, including strategic environmental assessments and outlooks, and reporting;

(f) Outlining compatible standards and formats for environmental monitoring, assessment and reporting;

(g) Cooperation on a harmonized environmental database on sources of data and data sets, institutes, reports and other information products using modern information technologies, as well as linking of relevant web sites.

In addition, the scope for application of satellite and other remote-sensing technologies to complement ground-based environmental monitoring systems and networks should be considered.

4. Pursuant to a decision by the Ministers in Kiev, donors will be invited to provide support for the Working Group's activities and the preparation of assessment reports on the state of the environment by EEA.

5. The Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment will be open to all UNECE member States and include EEA. Participation of international organizations and NGOs active in the UNECE region should be guided by normal UNECE procedures.

6. The work of the Working Group should be conducted within a spirit of such full and open access to environmental data as is compatible with the legislation of the participating member States, and in cooperation with major groups including environmental NGOs and the private sector.

7. The UNECE secretariat will provide secretariat assistance and conference facilities to the Working Group at the United Nations Office at Geneva, in accordance with UNECE rules and practices.

8. The Committee on Environmental Policy will review the present terms of reference after the Sixth Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe".

Annex II**CRITERIA FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

Country	GDP per capita (\$)	Eligibility note: threshold set for financial support for 2003-2004 = US\$ 2500; countries with GDP per capita below \$1700 are eligible for financial support (travel expenses and DSA 1/); countries with GDP per capita between \$1700 and \$2500 are eligible for financial support (DSA only)				
Russian Federation	2394	Eligible for financial support (DSA only)				
Romania	2044					
Bulgaria	1976					
The FYR of Macedonia	1804					
Kazakhstan	1647	Eligible for financial support (travel and DSA)				
Serbia and Montenegro	1622					
Belarus	1441					
Albania	1360					
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1199					
Turkmenistan	1120					
Georgia	782					
Azerbaijan	745					
Armenia	623					
Ukraine	489					
Republic of Moldova	448					
Uzbekistan	380					
Kyrgyzstan	321					
Tajikistan	188					
COUNTRIES ELIGIBLE	18					
COUNTRIES ELIGIBLE FOR DSA ONLY	4					
COUNTRIES ELIGIBLE FOR TRAVEL EXPENSES + DSA	14					
1/ DSA - daily subsistence allowance.						