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**EXECUTIVE BODY FOR THE CONVENTION ON
LONG-RANGE TRANSBOUNDARY AIR POLLUTION**

Seventeenth session, Gothenburg (Sweden)
(29 November - 3 December 1999)
Item 8 of the provisional agenda

PROGRESS IN SELECTED AREAS OF COOPERATION

Note by the secretariat

I. INTRODUCTION

1. This note has been prepared to assist the Executive Body in its review and assessment of progress made in the following areas of cooperation within the scope of the Convention:

(a) Cooperative programme for monitoring and evaluation of the long-range transmission of air pollutants in Europe (EMEP);

(b) Effects of major air pollutants on human health and the environment;

(c) Technologies for emission control.

Documents prepared under the auspices or at the request of the Executive Body for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution for GENERAL circulation should be considered provisional unless APPROVED by the Executive Body.

2. Progress in cooperation should be evaluated in relation to the work-plan for the implementation of the Convention, as adopted by the Executive Body at its sixteenth session (ECE/EB.AIR/59, annex III). A number of Parties have significantly contributed to the work by organizing workshops and seminars, leading task forces, hosting coordinating centres and designating experts to assist the secretariat in the preparation of draft documents for submission to relevant bodies or meetings.

II. COOPERATIVE PROGRAMME FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE LONG-RANGE TRANSMISSION OF AIR POLLUTANTS IN EUROPE (EMEP)

(To be issued later as document EB.AIR/1999/6/Add.1)

III. EFFECTS OF MAJOR AIR POLLUTANTS ON HUMAN HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT

3. The Working Group on Effects held its eighteenth session in Geneva from 25 to 27 August 1999 (EB.AIR/WG.1/1999/2).

4. The Working Group considered, approved and decided to submit to the Executive Body, summarized conclusions and recommendations of the external review of the effect-oriented activities (EB.AIR/WG.1/1999/3, chap. III). It noted that the reviewer had recognized the successful implementation of the programmes and their high scientific quality, but had also identified the acute need for improving the dissemination of important findings of the effect-oriented activities to policy makers and to the general public.

5. The Working Group reviewed the activities of the International Cooperative Programmes (ICPs) and the Task Forces on mapping and on the health aspects of air pollution, as presented in the 1999 joint report (EB.AIR/WG.1/1999/4). It noted the important results achieved in implementing the Convention and, in particular, their contribution to the preparation of the new multi-effect, multi-pollutant protocol. The Working Group stressed again the importance of the work carried out by National Focal Centres (NFCs), the support provided by lead countries and coordinating centres and the need for adequate financing of the effect-oriented activities at the national (national programmes and NFCs) and international level (Task Forces, ICPs and their coordinating centres).

6. The Working Group welcomed the progress achieved in implementing ICP on the Assessment and Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects on Forests, in particular in the evaluation, interpretation and presentation of its results. The Working Group took note of the summary report on monitoring forest condition in Europe (EB.AIR/WG.1/1999/5), and the summary report on the present state of knowledge on cause-effect relationships in forest condition

(EB.AIR/WG.1/1999/9). It noted the substantial contribution by the European Commission to the work of the programme.

7. The Working Group expressed its appreciation to ICP on the Assessment and Monitoring of Acidification of Rivers and Lakes for its scientific work tercalibration exercises. It took note of the progress report on the assessment and monitoring of surface waters (EB.AIR/WG.1/1999/6), the information on the ongoing development of the programme's database, the progress in preparing its twelve-year report, and the publication of the results for scientists and the public, including the preparation of its brochure.

8. The Working Group welcomed the use of the multi-pollutant approach in the new exposure programme by ICP on Effects of Air Pollution on Materials, including Historic and Cultural Monuments (EB.AIR/WG.1/1999/7). It noted the progress in using the programme's results for modelling and mapping areas with increased corrosion risk and stressed the importance of further developing mapping activities and the economic assessment of damage. It also noted the preparations for the Workshop on mapping air pollution effects on materials, including stock at risk (June 2000, Stockholm).

9. The Working Group appreciated the important work of ICP on Effects of Air Pollution and other Stresses on Crops and Non-wood Plants. It took note of the progress in level II ozone critical level modelling and mapping for crops and natural vegetation (EB.AIR/WG.1/1999/8) and the programme's 1999 annual progress report. It also welcomed the programme's scientific publications and its brochure. The Working Group agreed to propose to the Executive Body to change its name to: ICP on Effects of Air Pollution on Natural Vegetation and Crops; short name: ICP Vegetation (EB.AIR/WG.1/1999/2, para. 30 (e)).

10. The Working Group took note of the eighth annual report (1999) of ICP on Integrated Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects on Ecosystems and welcomed the strategy for assessing heavy metal stores and fluxes and the plans for modelling environmental effects on vegetation. It also noted the Programme Centre's participation in the project on Networking of Long-term Integrated Monitoring in Terrestrial Systems (NoLIMITS). It stressed the importance of dynamic modelling, while recognizing that its wider applications would require additional resources.

11. The Working Group noted the significant work done by the Task Force on Mapping and the Coordination Center for Effects (CCE) in supporting the current protocol negotiations, and welcomed the publication of the 1999 CCE Status Report. It stressed the importance of the work carried out by CCE not only within the Mapping Programme, but also in supporting relevant activities of other programmes. It therefore noted with disappointment the announcement

of the representative of the Netherlands that funding for this very important work of CCE was likely to be cut, and requested the Bureau to explore possibilities for securing continued funding. The Working Group noted the preparations for the Workshop on critical limits for heavy metals (Schwerin, Germany, October 1999) and the Conference on critical loads (Copenhagen, November 1999). The Working Group agreed to propose to the Executive Body to establish an ICP on mapping critical levels and loads with the programme task force led by Germany and scientific and technical support provided by the Coordination Center for Effects (CCE) in Bilthoven, Netherlands (EB.AIR/WG.1/1999/2, para. 43 (d)).

12. The Working Group noted the important results of the Task Force on the Health Aspects of Air Pollution and expressed its appreciation to the European Centre for Environment and Health of the World Health Organization (WHO/ECEH), EMEP and national experts for their important contributions. It reiterated its invitation to all interested countries to nominate experts and actively participate in the work of the Task Force. The Working Group agreed with the proposals for future Task Force activities. It recommended that reporting of the significance of the health effects of heavy metals should be a short-term priority, but preparatory work on the health effects of POPs should be also started.

13. The Working Group amended and approved the summary of the substantive report on trends in the impacts of long-range transboundary air pollution (EB.AIR/WG.1/1999/10). It also approved in principle the substantive report to be finalized for publication before the end of 1999. It noted that the report did not include the results of ongoing studies on trends in human health effects as the Task Force on the Health Aspects of Air Pollution was not in a position to participate in its preparation. The Working Group appreciated the work done by the programme centres, the Bureau and the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology (United Kingdom) in preparing the report.

14. The Working Group amended and approved the executive summary of the report on the preliminary assessment of the health risk from particulate matter from long-range transboundary air pollution (EB.AIR/WG.1/1999/11), noting the significant health risk associated with the long-range transport of fine particulates. It also approved in principle the draft of the technical report and invited WHO/ECEH to coordinate its finalization. The Working Group expressed its appreciation for the work done by the national experts, EMEP and WHO/ECEH in preparing the report and its executive summary.

15. The Working Group took note of the summary report (as amended) on the Workshop on critical levels for ozone - level II (Gerzensee, Switzerland, April 1999) (EB.AIR/WG.1/1999/12), which addressed the reassessment of level I critical levels and the options for level II approaches. It agreed that any

revision of the Mapping Manual should be considered only after more scientific work was completed and published.

16. The Working Group considered in detail a note on the future priorities and objectives of the effect-oriented activities (EB.AIR/WG.1/1999/3, chap. I, II, IV and V). It amended and approved it, and decided to submit it to the Executive Body. It invited all Task Forces to consider carefully the practical implementation of the proposed changes in the objectives and priorities of individual programmes at their next meeting, while preparing plans for future activities. The Working Group reiterated the importance of close collaboration among programmes and with other bodies inside and outside the Convention.

17. The Working Group considered and approved the note on the financing of the effect-oriented activities (EB.AIR/WG.1/1999/13) and decided to submit it to the Executive Body. It also agreed that the essential coordination costs of different elements of the effect-oriented activities in 2000 should be kept at the 1999 level, i.e. US\$ 1,488,000 (see document EB.AIR/WG.1/1997/14, table 2). The Working Group appreciated the essential support provided by lead countries, countries hosting coordinating centres, and countries funding the active participation of their national experts and National Focal Centres. It noted, however, that the voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund in 1998 amounted only to about 17% of the estimated essential coordination costs of the programmes; falling far short of what was needed to support work defined by the Executive Body as one of the three core activities under the Convention.

18. The Executive Body may wish, inter alia, to:

(a) Take note of the report of the eighteenth session of the Working Group on Effects (EB.AIR/WG.1/1999/2);

(b) Take note of the summarized conclusions and recommendations of the external review of the effect-oriented activities (EB.AIR/WG.1/1999/3, chap. III) and note that the reviewer recognized the successful implementation of the programmes and their high scientific quality;

(c) Take note of the important results of the International Cooperative Programmes, the Mapping Programme and the Task Force on the Health Aspects of Air Pollution in implementing the Convention (EB.AIR/WG.1/1999/4) and their contribution to the preparation of the new multi-effect, multi-pollutant protocol;

(d) Stress again the importance of the work carried out by the National Focal Centres and the programme coordinating centres and of the support provided by the lead countries;

(e) Agree to change the name of ICP Crops to ICP on Effects of Air Pollution on Natural Vegetation and Crops; short name: ICP Vegetation;

(f) Decide to establish an ICP on mapping critical levels and loads with the programme task force led by Germany and the scientific and technical support provided by the Coordination Center for Effects (CCE) in Bilthoven, Netherlands;

(g) Note the impressive results of the Task Force on the Health Aspects of Air Pollution, express appreciation to the European Centre for Environment and Health of WHO (WHO/ECEH) for its important coordinating role, agree that a study on the possible health effects of heavy metals should be a short-term priority but preparations for addressing the health effects of POPs should also be started, and reiterate the invitation to all interested countries to nominate experts and actively participate in the work of the Task Force;

(h) Take note of the summary report on trends in the impacts of long-range transboundary air pollution (EB.AIR/WG.1/1999/10) and endorse plans to finalize the substantive report before the end of 1999;

(i) Welcome the preparation of the report on the preliminary assessment of the health risk from particulate matter from long-range transboundary air pollution, take note of its executive summary (EB.AIR/WG.1/1999/11), and note the significant health risk associated with the long-range transport of fine particulates;

(j) Note the important results of the Workshop on critical levels for ozone - level II (EB.AIR/WG.1/1999/12);

(k) Approve the note on the future priorities and objectives of the effect-oriented activities (EB.AIR/WG.1/1999/3);

(l) Note document EB.AIR/WG.1/1999/13 on the financing of the effect-oriented activities, stress again the need for their adequate financing at the national and international level, welcome 1999 voluntary contributions already made by several Parties and invite other Parties to explore possibilities for contributing to the Trust Fund, using the indicative scale provided in document EB.AIR/WG.5/46, annex I.

IV. TECHNOLOGIES FOR EMISSION CONTROL

19. The seventh session of the Working Group on Abatement Techniques took place in Geneva from 1 to 2 July 1999 (EB.AIR/WG.6/1999/2).

20. The Working Group reviewed the final results of the Task Forces on the Assessment of Abatement Options/Techniques for Volatile Organic Compounds (EB.AIR/WG.6/1999/3 and background documents on best available techniques (BAT) and limit values (LVs)) and NO_x (EB.AIR/WG.6/1999/4 and background documents on BAT and LVs), both led by Germany. The Working Group thanked the Task Forces for their valuable input to the negotiations of the new protocol and welcomed the initiative of the lead country to publish the final versions of the background documents in CD-ROM form.

21. The Working Group also reviewed the input to the negotiations of the new protocol with respect to mandatory and recommended measures to control emissions of ammonia from agriculture and related future work in the light of the conclusions and recommendations of the Workshop on ammonia abatement from agriculture held in Bratislava (Slovakia) from 5 to 7 May 1999 (EB.AIR/WG.6/1999/6). The Working Group endorsed the Workshop's conclusions and recommendations and suggested continuing the work of the ammonia expert group led by the United Kingdom in order to prepare a framework code of good agricultural practice and to address uncertainties identified by the workshop, e.g. impact of control measures on concentration and deposition patterns.

22. The Working Group took note of the progress report of the Task Force on the Management of By-products Containing Heavy Metals or Persistent Organic Pollutants (EB.AIR/WG.6/1999/7) led by Austria and invited more Parties to participate in its activities, in particular countries with economies in transition.

23. The Working Group welcomed the initiatives to organize a workshop on techno-economic databases on production processes and related abatement options, in Angers (France) from 28 to 29 October 1999, and a workshop on control options/technologies to abate heavy metal and persistent organic pollutant emissions from stationary sources in Prague in May 2000. The Working Group thanked the Governments of France and the Czech Republic for organizing the events and approved their preliminary programmes.

24. The Working Group discussed future activities and decided to structure the future work-plan elements in four substantive blocks, i.e. exchange of technology; reducing ammonia emissions; control options and techniques for emissions from stationary sources and products; and management of by-products (EB.AIR/WG.6/1999/2, annex). The Working Group also requested the secretariat to explore the possibility of organizing the Seventh Seminar on Control Technology for Emissions from Stationary Sources in a country in transition, e.g. Poland.

25. The Executive Body may wish, inter alia, to:

(a) Take note of the report on the seventh session of the Working Group on Abatement Techniques (EB.AIR/WG.6/1999/2) ;

(b) Take note of the final results of the Task Forces on the Assessment of Abatement Options/Techniques for Volatile Organic Compounds (EB.AIR/WG.6/1999/3 and background documents on BAT and LVs) and NOx (EB.AIR/WG.6/1999/4 and background documents on BAT and LVs), both led by Germany, and welcome the initiative of Germany to publish the final versions of the background documents in CD-ROM form;

(c) Endorse the conclusions and recommendations of the Workshop on ammonia abatement from agriculture (EB.AIR/WG.6/1999/6) in relation to future ammonia-related work under the Convention and request the expert group on ammonia abatement, led by the United Kingdom, to prepare a framework code of good agricultural practice and address the uncertainties raised during the Workshop within its scope of competence;

(d) Take note of the progress made by the Task Force on the Management of By-products containing Heavy Metals or Persistent Organic Pollutants (EB.AIR/WG.6/1999/7) and invite more Parties to participate in its activities;

(e) Invite Parties to organize further workshops and seminars related to the future activities on abatement options/techniques, in consultation with the Bureau of the Working Group and the secretariat.