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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

UNECE Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development

Third meeting
Geneva, 6–7 March 2008

ANNOTATED PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE THIRD MEETING
to be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
from Thursday, 6 March 2008 at 10 a.m. until Friday, 7 March 2008 at 4.30 p.m.*

I. PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda
2. Education for Sustainable Development-related outcomes of the Sixth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe”
3. Progress by UNECE member States in the implementation of the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)
4. Report on the progress made by the UNECE Expert Group for Indicators for ESD

* New accreditation procedures have been introduced for all delegates attending meetings at the Palais des Nations. Delegates are therefore requested to complete the registration form, which is available from the UNECE website (<http://www.unece.org/env/esd/SC.Bureau.htm>), and to transmit it to the UNECE secretariat no later than two weeks before the meeting by e-mail (esd@unece.org). On their way to the meeting, delegates should obtain an identification badge at the Pass and Identification Unit of the United Nations Office at Geneva’s Security and Safety Section, located at the Pregny Gate, 14, Avenue de la Paix (see the map on the UNECE website: <http://www.unece.org/meetings/practical.htm>). In case of difficulty, please contact the secretariat by telephone at +41 22 917 1502.

5. How do teachers teach sustainable development? – a panel on competence in ESD in the education sector
6. Draft Work Plan of Implementation for Phase II of the UNECE Strategy for ESD (2008–2010)
7. Interlinkages and possible mutual benefits of the UNECE process and other ESD processes and activities
8. Calendar of meetings
9. Election of officers
10. Other business
11. Closure of the meeting

II. ANNOTATIONS TO THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Pursuant to the adoption of the UNECE Strategy for ESD and the framework for its implementation, the High-level meeting of Environment and Education Ministries (Vilnius, 17–18 March 2005) established a Steering Committee on ESD to decide on the Strategy's implementation and review its progress during the three phases of implementation of the Strategy (2005-2007; 2008–2010; and 2011–2015). The Steering Committee is the principal decision-making body for activities related to the Strategy in the UNECE region. It is composed of representatives of the environment and education sectors with a view to ensuring equal opportunity for participation and input from both sectors. Key stakeholders have been invited to participate as observers.

The Steering Committee has held two meetings thus far (13–14 December 2005 and 4–5 December 2006) which produced major outcomes such as the adoption of the Work Plan of Implementation for the Phase I of the Strategy and the decision to hold a joint high-level segment on ESD during the Sixth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” (Belgrade, 10–12 October 2007). Following the extension of the mandate of the UNECE Steering Committee on ESD at the Belgrade Ministerial Conference, the third meeting of the Steering Committee is expected to focus on the consideration and adoption the Work Plan of Implementation for Phase II of the Strategy, including its substantive content, time frame for implementation and financial implications.

Day I (6 March 2008)

Item 1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

(10 a.m. – 10.10 a.m.)

The Chairperson will open the meeting with introductory remarks and will invite the Committee to adopt the agenda of its third meeting as set out in the present document (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2008/1).

Item 2. ESD-related outcomes of the Sixth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe”
(10.10 a.m. – 10.20 a.m.)

The Chairperson will brief the Committee on the major outcomes of the Belgrade Ministerial Conference relevant to ESD, such as the Ministerial Declaration of the Conference (ECE/BELGRADE.CONF/2007/8, paras. 11 and 12), the Chair’s Summary (ECE/BELGRADE.CONF/2007/9, paras. 17–26), the Joint Statement on ESD by Ministers of Education and of the Environment (ECE/BELGRADE.CONF/2007/4/Add.1) and the Chair’s Summary of the Joint Session on ESD (ECE/BELGRADE.CONF/2007/4/Add.3).

Item 3. Progress by UNECE member States in the implementation of the UNECE Strategy for ESD

(10.20 a.m. – noon)

The Committee will be invited to hear reports by Governments on their activities regarding the implementation of the Strategy since the date of submission of the first national implementation reports (available on the UNECE website at: <http://www.unece.org/env/esd/Implement.Gov.htm>), focusing on the following issues:

- (a) Coordination at the international and national/State levels (designating national focal points, developing national¹ implementation plans, establishing consultative mechanisms and translating the Strategy into official and other relevant languages);
- (b) Participation in the pilot reporting exercise and submission of the national implementation reports for Phase I of the Strategy;
- (c) Developing tools and mechanisms at the national, subnational and local levels, with a view to strengthening the initial measures and developing competences, improving ESD teaching tools and materials and their content, and developing a more integrative conceptualization of ESD with a view to making the move from environmental education to true education for sustainable development.

Item 4. Report on the progress made by the UNECE Expert Group on Indicators for ESD

(noon–1 p.m. and 3 p.m. – 4 p.m.)

The Chairperson of the UNECE Expert Group on Indicators for ESD will be invited to report on the outcomes of the Expert Group’s fifth and sixth meetings, which took place in Vienna from 20 to 22 June 2007 and in Amsterdam from 12 to 14 December 2007, respectively (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2008/4).

¹ For countries with a federal structure, national plans will be based on subnational/State inputs.

Item 5. How do teachers teach sustainable development? – a panel on competence in ESD in the education sector

(4 p.m. – 6 p.m.)

A multi-stakeholder² panel will discuss the issue of competence in ESD in the education sector. The panel discussion will aim to address existing problems as well as share good practices in integrating ESD in initial teacher training and using the “whole-institution approach” for all levels of education. The panel will be followed by an interactive discussion from the floor. A document on competence in ESD in the education sector, prepared by a group of experts established by the Bureau with support from the secretariat, will facilitate the discussion (ECE/ CEP/AC.13/2008/6).

Day II (7 March 2008)

Item 6. Draft Work Plan of Implementation for Phase II of the UNECE Strategy for ESD (2008–2010)

(10 a.m. – 1 p.m.)

The Committee is invited to consider a draft Work Plan of Implementation for Phase II of the Strategy (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2008/5), with a view to adopting it. This document sets out a roadmap of activities to be undertaken during the three years of Phase II (2008–2010) to further the implementation of the Strategy, both at national and international levels. The draft was prepared by the secretariat on the basis of decisions by the Joint Session on ESD at the Belgrade Ministerial Conference, also taking into account the documents on “Needs for the implementation of the UNECE Strategy for ESD” (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2008/11) and “Learning from each other: achievements, challenges and the way forward. Report on progress in implementation of the UNECE Strategy for ESD” (ECE/BELGRADE.CONF/2007/INF/3 and Add.1). The first draft of this document was considered by the fifth meeting of the Bureau and was revised thereafter to reflect the Bureau’s comments. In considering the draft Work Plan of Implementation, the Committee will be invited to focus on:

I. Proposed activities related to:

- (a) Coordination at the international and national/State levels;
- (b) Capacity-building and sharing of experience, including
 - (i) aiming at developing competence in ESD;
 - (ii) through workshops and trainings;
 - (iii) through sharing good practices;
 - (iv) case studies;
 - (v) use of electronic tools;
 - (vi) awareness-raising;
- (c) Review of implementation.

² It is proposed that representatives of various stakeholders in the UNECE Strategy for ESD participate in the panel, such as one-two representatives of Governments (from Education and Environment Ministries), one representative of NGOs, two representatives of teachers from school/higher education (from the eastern and western parts of the UNECE region), as well as two representatives of pupils/students (from secondary and higher education levels).

II. Financial arrangements for the implementation of Phase II of the Strategy. The Ministers of Education and of Environment in their Joint Statement on ESD invited stakeholders as well as bilateral and multilateral donors to contribute to and support the implementation process. The Vilnius High-level Meeting agreed that a sound financial basis would be needed for an effective implementation of the Strategy. It would rely mainly on voluntary contributions from UNECE member States, international organizations, the private sector and the international financial institutions. Information on contributions, incurred expenses and estimated resource requirements is presented in the annex II of the draft Work Plan of Implementation. Delegations wishing to contribute (financial and in-kind support) to the implementation of the Strategy will be invited to inform the Steering Committee of their respective plans.

Item 7. Interlinkages and possible mutual benefits of the UNECE process and other ESD processes and activities

(3 p.m. – 3.45 p.m.)

Delegations, in particular stakeholders such as international and non-governmental organizations, regional environmental centres and research institutions, may wish to inform the Steering Committee of activities related to the implementation of the Strategy that are currently being carried out or planned at the national and international levels, with a view to promoting coordination and synergies, including with relevant international Sustainable Development processes.

Item 8. Calendar of meetings

(3.45 p.m. – 3.55 p.m.)

The Committee will be invited to consider the schedule of its next meeting and those of its Bureau. It is proposed that the Committee hold its fourth meeting as a two-day meeting in the beginning of March 2009.

Item 9. Election of officers

(3.55 p.m. – 4.10 p.m.)

In accordance with the Terms of Reference³ of the Steering Committee adopted by the Vilnius High-level Meeting, at each ordinary⁴ meeting of the Committee, a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson will be elected from among the representatives of the UNECE member States present at the meeting. Officers should represent different sectors (e.g. environment and education), and shall serve as the officers of the Steering Committee until their successors have been elected. The officers are eligible for re-election.

In accordance with the above, the Steering Committee may wish to elect a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson.

³ See the annex I of the Vilnius framework for the implementation of the UNECE Strategy for ESD (CEP/AC.13/2005/4/Rev.1).

⁴ The Steering Committee did not elect officers at its second meeting, with a view to ensuring continuity in the intensive preparatory work for the high-level segment at the Belgrade Ministerial Conference.

The Steering Committee may also elect its Bureau, to be composed of representatives of nine UNECE member States, including one from South-Eastern Europe; three from Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia; one from North America; and four from other UNECE member States. These would include the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee, to serve in their respective capacities in the Bureau. Key stakeholders may be invited to participate in the Bureau as observers. The Bureau is to be responsible for preparing the meetings and following-up on the decisions of the Steering Committee, and holds meetings as often as necessary, subject to the availability of funds. Countries will be invited to express their interest in submitting to the secretariat candidatures for the Bureau by 11 February 2008.

Item 10. Other business

(4.10 p.m. – 4.20 p.m.)

The Committee will be invited to discuss any other business that might be brought to its attention. Delegations wishing to propose items will be invited to inform the secretariat as soon as possible.

Item 11. Closure of the meeting

(4.20 p.m. – 4.30 p.m.)

Before closing the meeting, the Chairperson will summarize the decisions by the Steering Committee and the key issues raised during the meeting.
