

Decision 2009/5

Establishment of an ad hoc expert group on black carbon

The Executive Body,

Recognizing that black carbon and organic carbon are important components of particulate matter (PM), and that exposure to fine particles leads to tens of thousands of premature deaths and serious health effects in the UNECE region annually,

Aware that black carbon and organic carbon also have a significant climate forcing impact leading to increased warming, particularly in areas covered by snow and ice, such as the Arctic,

Considering that there are several technical and scientific bodies under the Convention already carrying out work on PM but with limited products to date specifically on black carbon and its climate interactions,

Recognizing that improved coordination of black and organic carbon-related activities under the Convention and with activities outside the Convention could help improve public health in the UNECE region while also achieving climate co-benefits,

Aware that at the direction of the Executive Body, the WGSR is negotiating revisions to the Gothenburg Protocol to reduce PM emissions to improve public health, taking into account the recommendation of the Expert Group on Particulate Matter,

1. *Establishes* an ad hoc expert group on black carbon under the leadership of the United States of America and Norway, with the mandate of completing its work and providing a report for consideration by the Executive Body at its twenty-eighth session in December 2010. The report should identify options for potential revisions to the Gothenburg Protocol that would enable the Parties to mitigate black carbon as a component of PM for health purposes while also achieving climate co-benefits;
2. *Requests* other subsidiary bodies and programme centres under the Convention that are working on particulate matter and black carbon to participate actively in the work of the Expert Group;
3. *Urges* Parties to the Convention to nominate experts for the Expert Group and to inform the secretariat of their names by 15 January 2010;
4. *Furthermore decides* that the functions of the Expert Group will be to:
 - (a) *Articulate* the rationale for addressing near-term climate change impacts of air pollution along with impacts on human health and ecosystems under the Convention;
 - (b) *Consider* current work on black and organic carbon by Parties under the Convention and by external bodies (including the Arctic Council/AMAP, UNEP, and IPCC), and identify areas for immediate coordination as well as priority issues for fostering complementary work and

collaboration on the issue of black and organic carbon;

(c) *Assess*, with input from the Task Force on Emissions Inventories and Projections, current black and organic carbon emissions information available for Parties to the Convention, particularly for key sectors such as transportation, stationary sources, biomass burning, and non-industrial combustion (e.g. residential biofuel for heating and cooking);

(d) *Cooperate closely* with the Task Force on Integrated Assessment Modeling to incorporate their work, insights and expertise in the planning and implementation of the work to respond to this decision, and to share the work of the ad hoc expert group with the Task Force;

(e) *Coordinate* with appropriate technical bodies under the Convention (e.g. Expert Group on Techno-Economic Issues) to estimate the extent to which black and organic carbon emissions can be reduced by implementation of existing legislation and by implementation of the specific PM control measures already under discussion for potential inclusion in a revised annex VII (Particulate Matter) to the Gothenburg Protocol;

(f) *Identify* priority black carbon-emission reduction opportunities in the UNECE region and the associated costs, implementation feasibility, and potential health, ecosystem, and near-term climate benefits of these measures;

(g) *Identify* the scientific and technical requirements (such as methods for emissions quantification, ambient monitoring, and estimating global warming potential), as well as non-technical measures, needed for implementing options to reduce black carbon and evaluate progress over time. This work should be done in collaboration with experts from subsidiary bodies under the Convention, including the Task Force on Hemispheric Transport of Air Pollution, the Task Force on Integrated Assessment Modelling, the Task Force on Emission Inventories and Projections, and the Task Force on Measurement and Modelling, as well as the programmes and centres of the Working Group on Effects.
