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Preparations for the Seventh “Environment for Europe”

Ministerial Conference: communication strategy

Draft communication plan for the Seventh “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference*

Note by the secretariat in consultation with the Chair and the host country

Summary

Pursuant to a decision by Ministers at the Sixth “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference (Belgrade, 2007), the Seventh “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference will be held from 21 to 23 September 2011 in Astana, Kazakhstan.

The Reform Plan¹ of the “Environment for Europe” (EfE) process calls for the development of an effective communication strategy for the Conference, including broad mass media coverage, as appropriate, comprising, inter alia, special events for journalists, circulation of electronic newsletters and maintenance of a dedicated website. Following these provisions, the secretariat, in consultation with the Chair and the host country, prepared the present document for the Astana Ministerial Conference.

The draft is being submitted to the Committee on Environmental Policy for consideration and approval.

* The present document was submitted late due to the need to consult with partners.

¹ The Reform Plan of the “Environment for Europe” process was developed by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Committee on Environmental Policy during 2008 and adopted on 29 January 2009 (ECE/CEP/S/152 and Corr.1, annex I); the Plan was subsequently endorsed by UNECE at its sixty-third session (Geneva, 30 March–1 April 2009).

I. Background

1. The Seventh EfE Ministerial Conference is scheduled to take place in Astana in September 2011. The Committee on Environmental Policy — the convening body for the preparatory process — decided on the following two main themes for the Astana Ministerial Conference: “Sustainable management of water and water-related ecosystems”; and “Greening the economy: mainstreaming the environment into economic development”.
2. Following a decision by the Sixth EfE Ministerial Conference, the EfE process was reformed with a view to ensuring that it remains relevant and valuable and to strengthen its effectiveness as a mechanism for improving environmental quality and the lives of people across the region. Henceforth, EfE ministerial conferences are being prepared in accordance with the Reform Plan.
3. The Reform Plan envisages, as part of the Conference-related principles, a wide range of communication activities, including the organization of special events for journalists, circulation of electronic newsletters and the maintenance of a dedicated website.
4. While the present communication plan provides a short-term framework for the preparation of the Conference, a communication strategy for the EfE process might be elaborated in time for the mid-term review of the process after the Astana Ministerial Conference, with a view to supporting a long-term communication policy under the process.
5. Detailed information and documents relevant to the EfE process are available on the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) website (<http://www.unece.org/env/efe/welcome.html>).

II. Objectives and key messages

6. The EfE process is a political framework for cooperation in environmental governance and protection in the pan-European region. It builds upon a unique partnership of member States within the UNECE region, organizations of the United Nations system represented in the region, other intergovernmental organizations, regional environment centres, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and other major groups.
7. The milestones of the process — EfE Ministerial Conferences, taking place every three to four years — provide a high-level platform for stakeholders to discuss, decide on and join in efforts addressing environmental priorities across the 56 countries of the UNECE region. At the same time, the process focuses on helping countries of South-Eastern and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia to raise their environmental standards towards a common regional standard.
8. The present communication plan aims at broadly promoting the Astana Ministerial Conference as a major international environmental event addressing priority environmental concerns in the region. In addition to promoting the Conference, the activities will also attempt to raise the visibility of the EfE process by highlighting its main successes.
9. The communication plan will focus on the two main themes identified for the Conference and will include a range of activities with a view to facilitating the understanding of these issues for the media and the general public.
10. The two official substantive documents to be developed for the Conference could serve as a source of information for developing related communication materials. Reports to be submitted to the Conference, including Europe’s Environment Assessment of

Assessments report, the Second Assessment of Transboundary Waters in the UNECE Region and the background document on greening the economy, could serve as additional, more technical, information sources.

11. The communication plan provides a framework for all communication activities to be carried out in connection with the organization of the Conference and, thus, targets a broad audience. The representatives of the mass media — a key player in promoting the Conference — are being considered as a priority target group. Special activities, e.g., a workshop/training for journalists, similar to the one conducted before the Belgrade Ministerial Conference, will be organized, depending on the availability of funds. A special effort should be made to actively involve the media across the Central Asian subregion.

III. Proposed communication activities

12. The table below presents a list of proposed activities together with goals, target groups, partners responsible for implementation, tools, timeline and financial implications. The Committee is invited to consider the proposed activities, which would be further revised in view of the outcome of the discussion.

13. To enhance the visual identity of the Conference and of the EfE process, a range of materials could be produced (e.g., notebook, pen, bag, shirt, badge, brochures, CD-covers, flags, entrance signs, hall/rooms signs, roll-ups, pop-ups, totems and billboards). The logo of the EfE process and a slogan developed for the promotion of the Astana Ministerial Conference will be used on these materials, as appropriate. The two slogans proposed are “Save water, grow green! Managing water and greening the economy for a sustainable future” and “Our vision 2020: blue water, green economy”.

Proposed communication activities

Responsible partner	Activity	Target group	Goal	Tool	Time frame/ deadline	Estimated resource requirements (US\$)		
						Total cost (source)	Resources available (source)	Balance required
During the preparatory process								
UNECE	Articles in <i>UNECE Weekly</i>	Country Missions in Geneva, journalists, other stakeholders	Presenting main outcomes of the Committee's meetings	Electronic newsletter	October 2009; March 2010; November 2010; May 2011	1 000 (UNECE)	1 000	0
UNECE in consultation with the host country	Production of electronic newsletters	All stakeholders	Informing on the preparatory activities and enhancing synergies among all partners	Electronic newsletter	November 2010; April 2011; September 2011	1 500 (UNECE)	1 500	0
UNECE in consultation with the host country	Production of a leaflet that gives an overall picture of the Conference	General public and all stakeholders	Disseminating general information about the Conference and the EfE process	Leaflet	March/April 2011	2 000 (UNECE)	2 000	0
UNECE	Production of a poster	All participants	To enhance the overall image of the Conference	Poster	August/September 2011	500 (UNECE)	500	0
UNECE	Production of a bookmark	All participants	To enhance the overall image of the Conference	Bookmark	August/September 2011	700 (UNECE)	700	0
UNECE in cooperation with EfE partners	Production of an information kit (with a focus on the substance of the Conference)	Media	Giving journalists better knowledge of substantive issues to be covered by the Conference	Information kit, comprising of a number of fact-sheets covering the themes of the Conference	August/September 2011	3 500 (UNECE)	3 500	0

<i>Responsible partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Target group</i>	<i>Goal</i>	<i>Tool</i>	<i>Time frame/ deadline</i>	<i>Estimated resource requirements (US\$)</i>		
						<i>Total cost (source)</i>	<i>Resources available (source)</i>	<i>Balance required</i>
UNECE in consultation with host country	Operation of the UNECE website for the EfE process and the Conference	All stakeholders	Serving as an important source of information about the Conference and the EfE process	Website	Continuous for the EfE process and October 2009 onwards for the Astana Ministerial Conference	Internal resources (UNECE)	Internal resources	0
UNECE	Issue of press release	Journalists, other stakeholders	To announce the convening of the Conference and highlight the key issues	Press release	September 2011	Internal resources (UNECE)	Internal resources	0
Host country in consultation with UNECE	Operation of the host country website for the Conference	All stakeholders	Serving as an important source of information for the organizational matters of the Conference	Website in English and Russian, and if possible in French	Website to be established in November 2010 and to be updated continually	(host country)	(host country)	0
Host country in consultation with UNECE	Production of a video clip promoting the Conference	General public	Enhancing the overall image of the Conference	Video clip	August/ September 2011	(host country)	(host country)	0

<i>Responsible partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Target group</i>	<i>Goal</i>	<i>Tool</i>	<i>Time frame/ deadline</i>	<i>Estimated resource requirements (US\$)</i>		
						<i>Total cost (source)</i>	<i>Resources available (source)</i>	<i>Balance required</i>
Host country in consultation with UNECE	Production of materials to enhance the visual identity of the Conference and the EfE process	All stakeholders	Enhancing the visual identity of the Conference and the EfE process	A variety of materials (e.g., notebook, pen, bag, shirt, badge, brochures, flags, entrance signs, hall/rooms signs, roll-ups, pop-ups, totems and billboards)	August/ September 2011	(host country)	(host country)	0
At the Astana Ministerial Conference								
UNECE	Workshop/training of journalists	Journalists	To raise awareness	Half-day workshop in Astana; attendance and reporting at the Conference	20 or 21 (a.m.) September 2011	60 000 (UNECE)	0	60 000
UNECE, host country	Issue of daily reports/highlights of the Conference (in English and Russian)	Journalists, participants	To highlight the key issues and outcomes of the Conference	Daily reports/ highlights (the International Institute for Sustainable Development could be contracted for this activity)	During the Conference	20 000 (UNECE)	0	20 000
Host country, UNECE	Conducting daily press briefings	Journalists	To highlight the key issues and outcomes of the Conference and to enhance the interactions with the media	Press briefing	During the Conference	space and organization to be provided by host country	(host country)	0

<i>Responsible partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Target group</i>	<i>Goal</i>	<i>Tool</i>	<i>Time frame/ deadline</i>	<i>Estimated resource requirements (US\$)</i>		
						<i>Total cost (source)</i>	<i>Resources available (source)</i>	<i>Balance required</i>
Host country, UNECE	Conducting of a press conference at the end of the Conference	Journalists	To highlight the outcomes of the Conference	Press conference	23 September 2011	Space and organization to be provided by host country	(host country)	0
Host country and EfE partners	Exhibitions	All participants	To showcase the work	Exhibition stands	At the Conference	Space and organization to be provided by host country	(host country)	0
Host country and UNECE with support from all stakeholders	Making the Conference climate neutral to the greatest extent	All participants	To minimize the impact on the environment related to the organization of the Conference	By compensating the emission of carbon dioxide, and other greenhouse gases produced by the Conference, through supporting identified renewable energy projects	During the Conference	To be determined (to be calculated depending on the number of participants (Belgrade Ministerial Conference amounted to some \$11,000)	0	To be determined