

Decision 2011/14

Action Plan for the Implementation of the Long-term Strategy for the Convention

The Executive Body,

Recognizing the importance of implementing the Long-term Strategy for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution,

Noting that the Strategy will be implemented through actions and decisions of the Executive Body,

Aware of the need to work to ensure the Convention is undertaking its activities in an efficient, and to the extent possible, streamlined fashion,

Recalling its decision 2010/18,

Taking note of informal document No. 9, on an action plan for the Long-term Strategy for the Convention, submitted to the twenty-ninth session of the Executive Body,

1. *Decides* to create a time-limited ad hoc group of experts to undertake tasks identified for it in the Action Plan for the Long-term Strategy for the Convention;
2. *Further decides* that the ad hoc group of experts will be made up of all members of the Bureau of the Executive Body, or their alternates, and include appropriate regional representation, plus four to six additional members. Parties may provide additional nominations to the Chair of the Executive Body by 13 January 2012. The Chair and additional members will be appointed by the Bureau of the Executive Body on the basis of appropriate expertise by 31 January 2012;
3. *Requests* the ad hoc group of experts to finalize and submit a report in time for the Executive Body session in December 2012;
4. *Further requests* that actions identified for other bodies of the Convention in the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Long-term Strategy for the Convention be undertaken as part of their regular workplans, in accordance with timelines specified for those actions in the Action Plan, where such timelines are specified;
5. *Identifies* the need for all Convention bodies to consider the entire Long-term Strategy when undertaking their work;
6. *Hereby adopts* the Action Plan as contained in the annex to this decision.

Annex

Action Plan for the Implementation of the Long-term Strategy for the Convention

I. Improve ratification and compliance

1. *Achieve increased ratification of the Protocol on Heavy Metals, the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants (Protocol on POPs) and the Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone (Gothenburg Protocol) to the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution by countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe to improve air quality and provide other environmental benefits also in these regions:*

(a) Complete current revisions of, or amendments to, the Protocols to provide appropriate flexibility to facilitate increased ratifications in the countries noted above. *Action:* Executive Body for the Convention;

(b) Review and update the 2004 needs assessment of United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) member States that have not ratified the Convention and its Protocols to evaluate further actions required to increase ratifications. *Action:* Ad hoc group of experts in consultation with the Coordinating Group on promotion of actions towards implementation of the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (Coordinating Group for Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia).

2. *Improve the compliance mechanism.* Identify and evaluate systemic and other barriers to achieving compliance and identify options for improvements. *Action:* Implementation Committee, for approval by the Executive Body in 2013.

II. Prioritize work and increase efficiency of operation of the Convention

3. *Give priority to the core strengths and expertise of the Convention, namely, dealing with the atmospheric pollutants affecting human health, acidification, eutrophication, cultural heritage and other environmental effects which lead to adverse impacts on environmental service with a focus on particulate matter (PM), tropospheric ozone, eutrophying pollution and, where still needed, on acidifying pollution, and possibly other pollutants.* As part of the Executive Body's work planning, review the activities under the Convention's subsidiary bodies, task forces and International Cooperative Programmes, and ensure that their work is focused on prioritized issues. This review will be informed by the workplan items submitted to the Executive Body by the Steering Body to the Cooperative Programme for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-range Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe (EMEP), the Working Group on Effects and the Working Group on Strategies and Review and will ensure appropriate scrutiny of the workplan before its approval. *Action:* Executive Body.

4. *In addressing issues related to its core air quality expertise, regularly review the priorities for work and action in the light of new priorities and progress already achieved and wider policy developments on the regional and global scale. Assess the current structure, and the number and frequency of meetings of the Convention's subsidiary bodies, groups and task forces, with a view to realigning the use of time and resources in the Parties and the secretariat, consistent with the overall priorities of the Convention:*

(a) Conduct an evaluation of the Convention subsidiary bodies, task forces and other groups to review their mandates and activities, streamline and rationalize operations, increase transparency, reduce the length and number of official documents, and critically assess the number and frequency of meetings. The evaluation will look at increasing the operational efficiency of subsidiary body meetings, as well as more effective use of Executive Body resources. *Action:* ad hoc group of experts in consultation with Expert Group and Task Force lead countries;

(b) As stipulated by the relevant Protocols, conduct sufficiency and effectiveness reviews, including the need for amendments to update the Protocols, on a periodic basis. *Action:* Executive Body Bureau and Bureaux of the Subsidiary Bodies, Working Group on Strategies and Review (see also para. 5 (a) below);

(c) Review the need for possible further revisions, amendment or updates of the Protocol on POPs and the Protocol on Heavy Metals in light of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (Stockholm Convention) and the pending United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) global agreement on mercury. Included will be an evaluation to address gaps or overlaps

between the Protocols and the global instruments, and to ensure added value in taking regional action. *Action:* ad hoc group of experts.

5. *Strengthen and maintain the science and policy linkages with the aim of evaluating and assessing the effectiveness of the Convention's policies and Protocols:*

(a) Further develop effect indicators and cost-benefit assessments (qualitative and quantitative). *Action:* Working Group on Effects, Task Force on Integrated Assessment Modelling, Network of Experts on Benefits and Economic Issues;

(b) Encourage the widest possible participation of the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe in the science programme for the Convention, as already specified in the Action Plan for Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia, with a view to obtaining reliable emission data and to developing monitoring and modelling networks throughout the region. *Action:* Working Group on Effects and EMEP Bureaux, Coordinating Group for Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia;

(c) Intensify scientific cooperation beyond the ECE region. *Action:* all Working Groups.

III. Future direction of Protocols

6. *Regularly assess the Gothenburg Protocol in terms of its correspondence with the updated scientific effects assessment and the degree to which it has achieved its long-term effects-oriented goals:*

(a) The regular assessment should take into consideration new scientific developments to assess the degree to which the Protocol has achieved its long-term effects-oriented goals. *Action:* EMEP, Task Force on Hemispheric Transport of Air Pollution, Working Group on Effects, Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen;

(b) The regular assessment should also include an evaluation of the effectiveness of new measures approved in the revised Protocol, including on particulate matter, and seek to identify sources of pollutants that have not yet been addressed in the Protocol's control measures. It should take into consideration new emerging technologies and non-technical measures to further reduce gaps in meeting the long-term effects-oriented goals. It could also seek to identify sources whose cumulative emissions are small and for which control measures may no longer be required. *Action:* Task Force on Integrated Assessment Modelling with input from the Expert Group on Techno-Economic Issues and the Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen.

7. *Explore options to better complement the measures and actions taken at the global level and secure the added value of the Protocol on POPs. Policy work directed at a new or revised Protocol on POPs will therefore scale down by shifting its focus to unintentionally released POPs and to areas and substances where the implementation of stricter measures in the ECE region is still recommended. In addition, there will be renewed efforts to strengthen linkages with the Stockholm Convention. If new substances arise where action is needed, the first priority should be to nominate them in the Stockholm Convention, but incorporation into the Protocol on POPs would be an option:*

(a) As directed by the Executive Body, aim to complete potential amendments to the Protocol on POPs by 2013. *Action:* Working Group on Strategies and Review;

(b) Develop and implement a work plan revising best available technique (BAT) guidance for unintentionally released POPs with consideration for the barriers to ratification for countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central

Asia and South-Eastern Europe, taking into account BAT reviews in other forums, including the Stockholm Convention. *Action:* Working Group on Strategies and Review;

(c) Periodically report on developments under the Stockholm Convention, in particular, the work on new substances, BAT and best environmental practices, capacity-building, and information exchange. *Action:* secretariat;

(d) Develop timelines and objectives for scaling down and/or redirecting the policy-related work under the Protocol on POPs, taking into account those substances also under consideration in parallel under the Stockholm Convention. *Action:* Working Group on Strategies and Review.

8. *Complete the amendments and revisions to the Protocol on Heavy Metals and subsequently give priority to increasing the number of countries ratifying and implementing the revised Protocol.* As directed by the Executive Body, aim to complete the amendments to the Protocol on Heavy Metals by 2012, with a focus on increasing the number of countries ratifying and implementing the amended Protocol. *Action:* Working Group on Strategies and Review.

9. *Make efforts to seek a solution to the issue of multiple protocols, which address the same pollutant(s) with different targets and different requirements, and which create a series of overburdensome obligations for Parties, remaining all simultaneously in force.* Encourage all Parties to earlier Protocols to join the revised Gothenburg, POPs, and Heavy Metals Protocols; set priorities for work in a way that ensures that Parties' efforts are geared towards full implementation and compliance with these revised Protocols. *Action:* Executive Body, ad hoc group of legal experts.

IV. Links with climate change and delivery of co-benefits

10. *Characterize linkages between air pollution and climate change, identify co-benefits of addressing air pollution and climate change simultaneously and strengthen scientific cooperation on these issues:*

(a) Assess the feasibility of incorporating short-lived climate forcers (SLCFs) into instruments such as the revised Gothenburg Protocol. Initial efforts should focus on measures targeting black carbon as a component of particulate matter and on the development of guidelines for black carbon inventories. Later efforts could potentially assess measures targeting methane and carbon monoxide as precursors of ozone, taking into account the work of the Task Force on Hemispheric Transport of Air Pollution pursuant to Decision 2010/1. *Action:* EMEP, Task Force on Emission Inventories and Projections, Task Force on Integrated Assessment Modelling, Working Group on Strategies and Review, Task Force on Hemispheric Transport of Air Pollution;

(b) Continue scientific cooperation between UNEP, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the Arctic Council and the technical centres under the Convention. *Action:* EMEP, Task Force on Hemispheric Transport of Air Pollution;

(c) Strengthen linkages with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, IMO, the Arctic Council and UNEP in order to establish longer-term cooperation on a more strategic level. *Action:* Executive Body Bureau;

(d) Regularly assess whether scientific developments or new control technologies or measures present new opportunities to target air pollutants that are also SLCFs. *Action:* EMEP, Task Force on Hemispheric Transport of Air Pollution, Expert Group on Techno-Economic Issues;

(e) Further assess and analyse climate change impacts on POPs and mercury transport and fate, taking into account the ongoing work on these links

under the Stockholm Convention and under the Arctic Council, as well as the work of the Convention. *Action:* EMEP, Task Force on Hemispheric Transport of Air Pollution.

11. *Identify co-benefits in combating air pollution and other environmental issues, like biodiversity loss and reactive nitrogen in the environment:*

(a) Continue to improve knowledge on such links and co-benefits and communicate and implement them into policy-advising instruments such as integrated assessment models. *Action:* Working Group on Effects, Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen, EMEP; Task Force on Integrated Assessment Modelling;

(b) Strengthen linkages with the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, as well as with international instruments relevant to the nitrogen cascade (e.g., under UNEP) in order to establish longer-term cooperation on a more strategic level and link the ecosystem effects work in the Convention to the broader perspective of ecosystem management. *Action:* Executive Body Bureau assisted by Working Group on Effects, Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen.

V. Outreach, communication and resources

12. *Enhance strategic scientific and policy outreach activities and cooperation with other regions and the global community on intercontinental air pollution issues, including a communication strategy and system that highlights the work and benefits of the Convention:*

(a) Explore ways to further foster cooperation between regional agreements and networks around the world, including on SLCFs and to link regional and global action at scientific as well as strategic/policy levels. *Action:* ad hoc group of experts.

(b) Revise and update the draft Communication Strategy from 2003 (London) to help increase the visibility of the Convention, in particular to raise political awareness of air pollution issues in the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe. For example, this could include developing and implementing a plan to translate promotional and guidance documents into Russian for the countries of the subregion. The strategy should also highlight work under the Convention on air pollution and climate change co-benefits. *Action:* ad hoc group of experts in consultation with the Coordinating Group for Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

13. *Make efforts to ensure more active involvement of a greater number of Parties in the work of the Executive Body and the subsidiary bodies, including in the work of their bureaux, as well as in the technical and scientific groups:*

(a) Explore ways to increase participation of delegations of countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe in the bureaux. *Action:* Executive Body and subsidiary body bureaux, in consultation with the Coordinating Group for Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia;

(b) Explore options for establishing a robust mechanism for supporting core activities not covered by the EMEP budget. *Action:* Executive Body Bureau.

14. *Mindful of the secretariat's limited resources and the need for sufficient and stable funding, ensure that the functions assigned to the secretariat in accordance with article 11 of the Convention reflect the Convention's priorities, as described in the Convention's Long-term Strategy. Action:* ad hoc group of experts.