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**Environmental Performance Review Programme: third cycle
of reviews**

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**Environmental Performance Reviews: Environmental Performance
Review Programme: third cycle of reviews****Environmental Performance Review Programme:
Third cycle of reviews****Note by the secretariat***Summary*

The second cycle of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Environmental Performance Review (EPR) Programme is close to completion. This paper puts forward the proposal for the third cycle of EPRs, as requested by the Committee on Environmental Policy at its special session, held from 27 to 29 January 2009. At its current session, the Committee is requested to discuss this paper and to provide input to the secretariat on the structure of the third cycle. It is foreseen that the report, once consolidated, will feed into the discussions at the Seventh “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference, to be held in Astana in 2011.

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I. Introduction

1. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Environmental Performance Review (EPR) Programme was developed on the basis of the EPR Programme carried out by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), launched in 1991. The second “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference (1993, Lucerne, Switzerland) decided to extend the EPR Programme to countries of South-Eastern and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia with economies in transition that were members of UNECE, and mandated UNECE to carry out that programme. Since 1996 and over the following years, the EPR Programme has become one of the flagship programmes of UNECE.

2. Reviews are carried by the UNECE secretariat, by experts from UNECE countries, by other international organizations, such as the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), OECD and others (i.e., the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), the World Bank and the World Health Organization (WHO)), as well as by international consultants.

3. The purpose of this document is to review and analyse what has been learned through the EPR Programme in its first and second cycle and, based on that analysis, to define and recommend the future scope and direction of the Programme.

4. To this end, this paper will:

- (a) Highlight what the EPR Programme has achieved;
- (b) Describe the most significant obstacles and problems encountered;
- (c) Identify key areas that require further attention; and
- (d) Draw lessons and make recommendations for the structure of the third cycle.

II. Current status

A. Role of the Environmental Performance Reviews

5. The EPR Programme evaluates environmental performance relative to the national goals and the international obligations of the reviewed country. For all topics analysed, it assesses policies and mechanisms for pollution abatement and prevention, economic instruments to improve environment-friendly behaviours and integration of the environment in selected economic sectors. Environment and economy, two of the three pillars of sustainable development, are systematically analysed. The third pillar, social issues, is also to a certain extent covered in EPRs when looking at poverty reduction, impacts on health, tariff systems for services (e.g., water supply, waste management, public energy supply) and environmental education and awareness-raising. Tailor-made recommendations on how to improve the management of the environment and to promote sustainable development are drawn with a view to reducing the overall pollution burden in the reviewed countries.

6. Through the sharing of information on policies and experiences, the EPR Programme promotes a continuous dialogue among UNECE member States on the efficiency of environmental policies and the cost-effectiveness of environmental measures. The EPR Programme also stimulates greater involvement of the public in debates and actions on environmental issues and policies.

7. All eligible UNECE countries have been reviewed by the EPR Programme (annex I). They have seen it as a key tool for identifying their environmental problems, improving their environmental governance, sharing experience, monitoring progress, assessing their involvement in regional and global processes and identifying the next steps for further progress. By volunteering to participate in the EPR Programme, these countries have shown their commitment to move ahead. They see the EPR as a tool that:

- (a) Allows groundwork for defining further actions at the national level;
- (b) Improves environmental convergence throughout a region; and
- (c) Stimulates cooperation between countries and identifies needed areas of further cooperation.

B. Report structure and coverage during the first and second cycles

8. The standard structure of first cycle reports was divided into three parts (see annex II): (I) Framework for environmental policy and management; (II) Management of pollution and of natural resources; and (III) Economic and sectoral integration. The first and second parts were common to all reviews. The third covered economic sectors of activities, such as agriculture, energy and transport, which were chosen by the country under review. "Health and Environment" was a regular component in all first reviews and always elaborated in cooperation with WHO.

9. The first two parts are also common to every second cycle report. When deciding on the content of second cycle reviews, based on the findings of the first cycle reviews, the Committee on Environmental Policy recognized the urgent need for countries in transition to improve their environmental governance, their environmental policies and legislation and to implement environmental decisions. The Committee also felt that economic instruments should be developed to stimulate environment-friendly behaviour in economic activities having a negative impact on the environment. As with the first cycle, the second cycle report is divided in three parts: (I) Policymaking, planning and implementation; (II) Mobilizing financial resources for environmental protection; and (III) Integrating environmental concerns into economic sectors and promoting sustainable development (see annex II). The third part shows the ability of the EPR Programme to specifically adjust and focus on the particular problems of any country under review. Some of the typical topics covered under this part are biodiversity, energy, forestry, land management, protected areas, waste management and water. Following the Fifth "Environment for Europe" Ministerial Conference (2003, Kyiv), a set of environmental indicators were developed in order to establish a platform for measuring progress in environmental performance and the effect of measures implemented. The set of indicators is based on several internationally recognized sets of indicators — such as the United Nations Millennium Goal indicators, OECD environmental indicators and European Environment Agency (EEA) indicators.

10. It is also to be noted that, since its inception, and according to the wish of the Committee, the UNECE EPR Programme has developed in parallel to the OECD EPR Programme and has been kept comparable to it as much as the various situations allowed. Specific adjustments were made, however, in the content and conduct of the reviews to take account of the specific constraints encountered in countries in transition (for instance lack of environmental data and statistics, missing links between various administrative bodies and institutions, etc). To make progress in filling key gaps in performance, UNECE has created special assistance programmes for its member countries in transition. The UNECE Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment, in particular, is instrumental in guiding countries in the establishment and improvement of their national environmental monitoring systems and environmental statistics. The result of this work is

now providing solid ground for the third cycle of UNECE EPR reviews, with access to reliable data. Today, the situation is much more favourable for UNECE EPRs to develop a third cycle in line with the third cycle of the OECD EPRs, even if some specific adjustments will still be needed.

C. Development of the Programme since its inception

11. During the first EPR cycle, from 1996 to 2004, UNECE reviewed 19 UNECE member countries (see annex I). As a preliminary, Bulgaria, Poland and the Russian Federation, also in transition at that time, were assessed by OECD in cooperation with the UNECE as a learning exercise for the UNECE in view of the development of its own programme. Only one member country was not reviewed.

12. At the beginning of the EPR Programme, little was known about the environmental situation or environmental management in these countries, and environmental data were almost inexistent and largely unreliable. The first cycle aimed at establishing a baseline from which to measure progress. Its main objective was to give an account of the current situation regarding pollution control and abatement and how countries were using and protecting their natural resources. The reviews analysed the prevailing national environmental situations and looked into the environmental legislation, policy instruments, institutional arrangements and other mechanisms designed to promote environmental protection.

13. In 1991, 22 countries in the UNECE region were considered countries in transition to a market economy. Since that time, a few countries have joined the European Union (EU), such as Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and Slovenia. In general, after their joining the EU, countries were no longer considered candidate countries for the EPR, as they were fully engaged in fulfilling EU environmental requirements. Consequently, up to May 2011, 16 countries have been reviewed or are being reviewed a second time (see annex I) and 2 still have to be reviewed (Albania and Armenia). Although experience shows that most of the countries that are in the EU accession process feel the need to be reviewed by the EPR Programme, some may not, further compounding the problem.

14. This situation creates a grey zone that consists of new or potential EU member countries that are not OECD members. These countries remain in an “orphan” status, as they are not normally eligible for review by the OECD EPR Programme, while at the same time it remains unclear whether they fall under the purview of the UNECE EPR Programme. This creates a gap in the coverage of environmental governance within the UNECE region. To fill this gap, it would seem appropriate to consider this situation and ways to address it in the context of the discussion on the third cycle of the EPR Programme.

D. Guidance from the Committee on Environmental Policy and the “Environment for Europe” process

15. Since its inception, the EPR Programme has been under the close guidance of both the “Environment for Europe” (EfE) process and the Committee on Environmental Policy. Following the completion of the first cycle, at the Fifth EfE Ministerial Conference, the environmental ministers reaffirmed their support for the EPR Programme. They endorsed broad directions for the second cycle and agreed on the way that the second cycle of the EPR reviews would operate. Specifically, they determined that the second EPR would:

(a) Measure progress made in implementation, including implementation of the recommendations from the first review, using a relevant set of indicators;

(b) Focus more on implementation, giving attention to performance in implementation of the national policy targets, national legislation, internationally recognized good practices and international commitments, such as conventions and regional strategies;

(c) Remain flexible and focus on the priorities of the countries, including, in particular, new concerns that have arisen;

(d) Examine issues of financing, including, for example, the generation and allocation of public domestic financing for the environment; the position of environmental funds; the use of economic instruments; funds derived from the private sector; donor support; and foreign direct investment; as well as an assessment of the cost-effectiveness of environmental policy measures;

(e) Give emphasis to the integration of the environment with other sectors at all decision-making levels and to its socio-economic implications.

16. As a result, the EPR Programme puts greater focus on environmental management capability and on economic measures taken, while examining the environmental impact of the reviewed country's sectoral economic activities.

17. At the Sixth EfE Ministerial Conference (2007, Belgrade), the report "From intentions to actions: overcoming bottlenecks: Critical issues in implementation of environmental policies highlighted by the UNECE Environmental Performance Review Programme" (ECE/BELGRADE.CONF/2007/13 and Corr.1 and Add.1) underlined the main obstacles faced by reviewed countries in implementing EPR recommendations, given their national needs and priorities. The report took stock of the findings of the EPR reviews and presented recommendations with a view to drawing the attention of ministers to the difficulties faced by their countries in improving environmental governance.

18. The ministers recognized that the implementation of the EPR recommendations required political support for resolving persistent environmental problems by:

(a) Strengthening environmental institutions and governance;

(b) Fostering integration of environmental policy into other sectors, as well as into general development plans and poverty reduction strategies;

(c) Where appropriate, allocating sufficient financial and human resources for these actions; and

(d) Moving towards effective implementation.

19. It is expected that the upcoming Seventh EfE Ministerial Conference (2011, Astana), will pay attention to the EPR Programme and to the proposal of the Committee regarding the development of the third cycle. As this Conference will focus on two major topics which are currently of critical importance — namely, water management and greening the economy — it is likely that it will influence the directions given to the third EPR cycle coverage.

III. Prospects and suggested content for the third cycle

20. A majority of the reviewed countries have made significant progress between the first and second cycles in developing policies and strategies for protecting their environment, building environmental framework laws or codes, harmonizing their secondary legislation and developing the use of economic instruments. They have also undertaken institutional reforms and often have been engaged in promoting environmental policy integration through the development of sustainable development strategies. They

have increasingly participated in international forums and undertaken other actions aimed at reaching environmental objectives of regional and international interests, in particular through multilateral environmental agreements (MEA). Furthermore, they have improved their systems of environmental monitoring and statistical data, thus providing better grounds to measure progress and define further actions. This progress is reflected in the respective first and second EPR country reports.

21. However, in spite of improvements made over the past decades by all countries reviewed, significant challenges are still ahead:

(a) The economic context is not favourable enough to maintain environmental issues on the top of the political agenda and financing is insufficient to reach the national targets set; and

(b) New global/regional concerns with domestic causes and implications have also emerged, such as climate change and the loss of biodiversity, thus strengthening the importance of the interaction between international cooperation and domestic responses. The shortage of freshwater resources in some parts of the UNECE region is already a crucial regional problem that is rapidly deteriorating into a global one.

22. As responses to these new global/regional concerns, new concepts and approaches, such as that of the green economy, have been developed. The international community is gradually realizing that measures that have been taken to achieve sustainable development are no longer sufficient to face these new challenges. While the focus of sustainable development has been on integrating environmental and social concerns into economic sectors, the “greening” concept proposes a restructuring of the economy. The concept promotes a model of production and consumption that recognizes environmental protection and resource conservation as drivers for structural changes in national economies and therefore as a determinant of national and international economic development that provides new green job opportunities.

23. Reflecting these observations, and in order to better ensure the EPR’s relevance and responsiveness to these trends and challenges, it is proposed that the structure of the third cycle report comprise an introduction and three main parts, listed below. Although the exact configuration and content of each part will depend on the specific conditions on the ground in each reviewed country, Parts I and II are conceived as the backbone of the review and can be expected to be more or less constant for all countries, whereas Part III allows greater freedom in the choice of the actual sectors and issues to be reviewed. The components are:

- (a) Introduction: Environmental overview;
- (b) Part I: Environmental governance and financing in a green economy context;
- (c) Part II: Domestic-international interface;
- (d) Part III: Interaction of environment with selected sectors/issues.

A. Introduction: Environmental overview

24. Experience from the first two EPR cycles has shown that a comprehensive overview of the environmental situation in the country under review is necessary in order to better appreciate the context in which environmental and sectoral policies are formulated and implemented. Thus, the introductory “Environmental overview” will look at the

environmental situation of natural resources by media¹ and pollution pressures. Topics such as air, water, land (including soils), biodiversity, mineral resources and waste could be included. Analysis in this chapter will benefit from the fact that many countries have built their environmental monitoring infrastructure and statistical systems. The introductory chapter is intended as a background chapter, and therefore will not have recommendations.

25. The alternative option would be to cover the environmental situation in each of the sectoral chapters; however, this would distract from the sectoral chapters' core topic, which is management and policy issues, while at the same time forcing the EPR to present a much more eclectic and dispersed view of the environmental situation in the country. Furthermore, establishing an overview creates a consistent and comparable format that is common for all countries under review.

B. Part I: Environmental governance and financing in a green economy context

26. Most of the major obstacles to improving the environmental situation in the reviewed countries that were described in the "Critical issues" paper presented at the Sixth Ministerial Conference are still relevant and necessitate further efforts. The problem areas include: poor environmental governance (for example, lack of political will to tackle environmental issues; large discrepancies between targets set by strategies and programmes on the one hand and their implementation on the other; low level, weak mandate and limited capacities of the environmental authorities; and insufficient cooperation between administrative levels, governmental institutions and the regional or local authorities); misuse or underutilization of economic instruments and insufficiency of expenditures to back up environmental priorities; inefficient monitoring to ensure better decision-making, measure progress and set appropriate targets; and inadequate integration of environmental concerns into various sectors.

27. The analysis above suggests that environmental governance and financing related issues are key themes for the countries that fall under the purview of the EPR Programme. Thus,, Part I, "Environmental governance and financing" will look into the governance structures, processes, instruments and their financing that are put in place to make the protection of the environment as efficient and as integrated into the economic activities of the country as possible.

28. At the same time, while the design of the third cycle reviews aims towards addressing past challenges and obstacles, it also leaves room for embracing new consequential trends and dynamics. One such trend is related to broader green economy initiatives undertaken by the reviewed countries.

29. In more general terms, integrating the green economy agenda into the third cycle of the EPR Programme promises to add considerable added value to its work, first, due to its relevance and importance for the countries under review and, second, due to the potential to enhance international cooperation with the community of donors and investors. The green economy agenda has gained prominence in recent years and is likely to increasingly do so in the future, adding more expertise and know-how along the way. In that sense, the EPR Programme has a potentially important role to play in implementing, or perhaps even shaping, those components of the green economy agenda that relate to the countries under review by the EPR Programme.

¹ Media: specific environments, i.e., air, water, or soil, which are the subject of regulatory concern and activities.

30. It should be emphasized, however, that the coverage of environmental governance and financing from a green economy perspective should remain optional, depending on the circumstances in the country under review. The advantage of this approach is that if a country's performance in this area is not advanced, then Part I will revert to its more traditional template. If, on the other hand, countries under review have made progress that warrants extensive coverage of green economy initiatives, then the EPR will be ready to review and assist them in their efforts.

Part I: Chapters

31. A chapter on environmental policies, legislation and programmes, taking stock of their development since the first or the second cycle and checking whether they are complete and complementary and not redundant and inconsistent, will put particular emphasis on implementation and enforcement. Interactions between the local and national levels and the participation of diverse stakeholders in decision-making and in actions to protect the environment will be of particular concern for this chapter.

32. The same chapter, looked at from a green economy perspective, could examine relevant policy and legal aspects of the green economy initiatives in the reviewed countries, for example, relevant strategies and programmes or primary and secondary legislation. As a policy domain, green economy programmes will require the same type of substantive, policy, legal and institutional analysis in areas where the EPR Programme has built considerable expertise during its first and second cycles.

33. In spite of recognized efforts to develop environmental policies, strategies and legislation, one of the striking lessons of the first two cycles of EPRs is a general lack of integration of environmental concerns in various sectors of the economy. The second cycle experience showed that countries often relied heavily on one of the two types of instruments, and that a healthy policy mix of command and control and incentive-based tools was rarely applied. To this end, a chapter will be dedicated to the analysis of the mix of regulatory and incentive-based instruments aimed at achieving such integration. This particular angle towards instruments should remain flexible in its actual application in the countries reviewed.

34. The same chapter on instruments could examine the role of economic and fiscal policies in promoting greener modes of consumption and production. With regard to fiscal policy, the focus would be placed on the role and impact of taxes on the production and consumption side. Traditionally the role of taxes in fiscal policy is twofold: (a) funding Government programmes, and (b) influencing individuals' behaviour. The chapter would focus on the expansion, or not, of environment-related taxes that are aimed at bringing about structural changes. The analysis would be complemented by an examination of the role taxes play in relation to environmental policy and greening the economy. Of particular interest would be the mix and types of taxes Governments can set, be they proportional, progressive or regressive, and their potential effects on changing behaviours. Also of particular relevance would be tax incentives and disincentives given to green modes of production, resource utilization and consumption and their competitors.

35. A chapter will be dedicated to the coverage of the generation and sharing of accurate environmental information. It will assess progress on environmental monitoring, assessment and reporting. The chapter will also evaluate improvements in the availability of environmental information to the public and other non-governmental stakeholders, and advances in environmental education at all educational levels.

36. A fourth chapter on environmental expenditure and investment will focus on the expenditure side, and in particular on environmental public spending and public investment, inter alia, on green projects. Increasing environment-related measures and subsidies and

decreasing or removing environmentally harmful subsidies would be a key area of analysis. An assessment of costs for the implementation of the countries' programmes or strategies on greening their economies would be of high value.

37. Complementary to the above, the effects of green economy public policies in terms of actual investments by the non-public sector, either domestically or internationally generated, should be taken into consideration. Data on these are generally available, as they are generally registered in the countries national accounts. Subject to data availability, the above analysis could also cover the cost of inaction.

C. Part II: Domestic-international interface

38. International cooperation and inter-State interlinkages are today more important than ever in the formulation and implementation of domestic policies. At the same time, global challenges, such as that of climate change, will increasingly impose a burden for domestic adaptation and protection to the countries under review by the EPR Programme. To reflect the expected rise of the importance of interlinkages and interdependencies at a regional and global level in the years to come, Part II is dedicated to the analysis of the domestic-international interface.

Part II: Chapters

39. International cooperation will be the focus of an entire chapter. More and more, interlinkages between countries for developing consistent actions to protect the environment, create strong obligations at the national level. These obligations need to be integrated into the corpus of national policies and legislation. According to the "Critical issues" report, the enforcement of MEAs and the participation of countries in projects under MEAs still need to be improved. In its third cycle, the EPR Programme will focus attention on the most prominent international priorities and assess how the countries are involved in and benefit from the different instruments.

40. A separate chapter on climate change will also complement the coverage of the domestic-international interface. Climate change adaptation is a policy area that will increase in political salience in the years during which the third EPR cycle will be conducted. As a policy area, it will require substantive, policy and legal analysis, with a particular focus on measures of adaptation and mitigation, and on the participation of the countries in international mechanisms.

D. Part III: Interaction of environment with selected sectors/issues

41. Part III will cover environmental integration in priority sectors depending on the needs of the country under review. It will concentrate on the linkages between the economy and the environment by analysing the economic structure and policies of the reviewed country towards environmental protection.

42. In the case of sectors with considerable potential for greening the economy — such as agriculture, including fishery and forestry, energy, industry and transport — the analysis could be extended to discuss how the policies in the specific sectors are/could be directed towards greening the reviewed country's economy.

43. Similarly, there are some issues of topical concern which are considered by the international community as key priorities for countries to address now. They are strongly linked to economic activities, such as adapting the energy sector for climate change and

agriculture practices to prevent biodiversity loss. These issues also have their place as components of Part III in the third cycle.

Part III: Indicative chapters

44. With their opening to a market economy, UNECE countries in transition are reaching the consumption patterns of Western Europe. Increased consumption leads to increased waste generation. Waste management, which was a regular component in the first reviews, was not generally reviewed in the second cycle. Owing to the poor state of waste management infrastructure at the time of the first cycle and the increasing pressure on this sector, a review of the current situation would be justified. As the waste management issues are still problematic in Western Europe, revisiting and addressing these issues would be of added value in the third EPR cycle, if selected by the country under review.

45. The environment influences human health in many ways through exposure to physical, chemical and biological risk factors and through related changes in human behaviour in response to those factors. Economic sectors such as agriculture and transport have profound impacts on health. For instance, in agriculture, fertilizers and pesticides may boost crop yields, and transport is a major source of air pollution and noise. Covering health and environment is a way of evaluating health impacts of policies, plans and projects in diverse economic sectors using quantitative, qualitative and participatory techniques and may also contribute to the WHO Health and Environment Process. This issue, which was a component of the first cycle, could also be of relevance for the third EPR cycle, if selected by the country under review.

IV. Other products

46. Due to the long time span (seven to nine years) between reviews of the same country, in establishing the UNECE EPR Programme it was envisaged to add a system of mid-term reviews to the original OECD model. In its 2003 recommendations for the second EPR cycle, and following the recommendation of the declaration of the Fifth Efe Ministerial Conference, the Committee on Environmental Policy invited reviewed countries to submit interim reports on the implementation of first cycle EPR recommendations (CEP/2003/21). Since then, only a few interim reports or follow-ups on implementation of the recommendations of the first EPR have been submitted to the secretariat. The use of these interim reports has been limited, mostly as background materials when deciding on a next review. Interim reports have failed to achieve their original objective of creating an opportunity for the Committee and the country concerned to discuss the recommendations developed by the EPR team.

47. Some reviewed countries could be in need, in the meantime, of some assistance regarding the implementation of the EPR recommendations in certain domains covered by the review. Should this happen, it would be useful if the secretariat could set up a mission, at the request of the interested country, to make a review of a specific sector and to punctually assist the country. The mission should be of a short duration and undertaken under the guidance and with the participation of the secretariat, assisted by a small team of experts. Such an interim review would take place at the request of a country addressed to the Committee. Due to the specific sector(s) reviewed, the peer review would be concise and could be carried out either under the Committee or under the EPR Expert Group. Organizing and carrying out such mini missions would mean new tasks for the EPR team and would necessitate additional resources, as well as strengthening the core team with additional staff capacity.

48. Dissemination of the progress made by countries in their environment management is a key element of the whole EPR process. It is particularly important for the general public, non-governmental organizations, international organizations and development agencies to be aware of the review and of its findings, which reflect an external neutral opinion of peer countries in that context. This may provide additional pressure on governmental bodies to implement EPR recommendations, as well as a tool to highlight progress and increase the reviewed country's visibility on the international scene.

49. Once an EPR publication is released, the EPR team will ensure that Committee on Environmental Policy delegates receive an e-mail announcing the release of the publication, including a web link to access the document. Moreover, a synopsis of the review is prepared by the secretariat. The synopsis, as started for the second EPR of Uzbekistan, comprises a compilation of the executive summary, the conclusions and recommendations of the different chapters and the implementation of the recommendations made in the previous review, providing a comprehensive picture of the EPR publication of the reviewed country. Synopses are sent to Committee delegations and reviewed countries, and made available on the UNECE website. These products would not require additional resources for the EPR team.

50. EPRs are available in English, and some in Russian. In order to make the information easily accessible, countries under review are encouraged to translate the EPR publication into their national language(s), while efforts are also being undertaken to facilitate them in this process. Electronic versions of all reports are made available on the UNECE website and on a CD-Rom, available upon request.

51. To promote each review and enhance its impact on the various national governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in the countries under review, national environmental authorities are encouraged to strengthen political visibility by organizing launch events in cooperation with the secretariat, international organizations' country offices and civil society. Based on past experience, the format may differ from country to country, but could include, inter alia, press conferences; workshops for Government officials and for civil servants of the national environmental authorities, non-governmental organization representatives and the public; presentations at parliamentary commissions and committees; and seminars for international organizations and donors; or a combination of all of these.

V. Resources

52. Since its inception, the EPR Programme has been mainly externally funded. The limited human resources of the secretariat dedicated to the EPR Programme have been the limiting factor in the pace of the reviews, resulting in cycles of about eight-year's duration each. Taking into consideration the tasks that the EPR team will face in handling the third cycle and the new expertise fields covered, the EPR will need for the level of financing by member countries to be maintained at least at the same level. It will also request the Committee to grant more funding if the pace of the reviews is to be accelerated or if mid-term missions are requested (para. 47), to allow for extrabudgetary post(s) to be created.

53. The value of the EPR Programme is based on the permanent exchange of experience between UNECE member countries through its participatory mechanism. In particular, the composition of the UNECE Environmental Performance Reviews Expert Group and mission teams involving experts from other member countries serve as a platform for exchanging experience and practices. This successful method of work, of large added value compared with classical audits conducted by other international organizations, needs to be

pursued in the third cycle. So far, member countries have always responded positively to the secretariat's calls for national experts to be provided for the process, a valuable in-kind contribution which is necessary to the good functioning of the Programme.

VI. Issues for discussion

54. The Committee on Environmental Policy is invited to analyse the above proposal and to provide the secretariat with feedback and inputs to finalize it. The suggested third cycle content is summarized in the box below for comments by the Committee.

Suggested third cycle review report profile for UNECE Environmental Performance Reviews

Executive summary

Introduction: Environmental overview

Part I: Environmental governance and financing

Legal and policymaking framework, its implementation and enforcement

Instruments for integration of environmental concerns

Information, public participation and education

Environmental expenditure and investments for greening the economy

Part II: Domestic-international interface

Implementation of international agreements and commitments

Climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts

Part III: Interaction of environment with selected sectors/issues*

Biodiversity conservation and nature protection

Land management

Waste management

Health and Environment

* The choice of topics in Part III is indicative. The actual list will reflect each reviewed country's needs and circumstances.

Annex I

Eligible countries

<i>Countries</i>	<i>Publication year</i>	
	<i>First Reviews</i>	<i>Second Reviews</i>
Albania	2002	
Armenia	2000	
Azerbaijan	2003	2010
Belarus	OECD	2005
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2004	2010
Bulgaria	OECD	2000
Croatia	1999	
Estonia	1996	2001
Georgia	2003	2010
Kazakhstan	2000	2008
Kyrgyzstan	2000	2009
Latvia	1998	
Lithuania	1998	
Republic of Moldova	1998	2005
Montenegro	n.a.	2007
Romania	2001	
Serbia	n.a.	2007
Slovenia	1997	OECD
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	2002	2011
Uzbekistan	2001	2009
Ukraine	1999	2007
Tajikistan	2004	2011
Turkmenistan		2011
Yugoslavia	2002	n.a.

Source: <http://www.ECE.org/env/epr/publications.htm>.

Note: n.a. = not applicable.

Annex II

Typical structure of Environmental Performance Review report (first and second cycles)

(Roman numerals indicate main substantive parts of each report)

UNECE		OECD	
<i>First cycle</i>	<i>Second cycle</i>	<i>First cycle</i>	<i>Second cycle</i>
Introduction	Introduction	I. Conclusions and Recommendations The context	I. Conclusions and Recommendations
I. Framework for environmental policy and management Legal instruments and institutional arrangements for environmental protection Instruments for environmental protection Economic development and environmental management tools International cooperation	I. Policymaking, planning and implementation Legal and policymaking framework and sectoral integration mechanisms Compliance and enforcement mechanisms Information, public participation and education Implementation of international agreements and commitments	II. Pollution control and nature conservation Water Air Waste Nature	II. Environmental management Water management Air management Waste management Nature and biodiversity management
II. Management of pollution and of natural resources Water resources management Air pollution Waste management Biodiversity management Mineral resources	II. Mobilizing financial resources for environmental protection Economic instruments and environmental funds Expenditures for environmental protection III. Integrating environmental concerns into economic sectors and promoting sustainable development Priority sectors IV. Annexes Implementation of the first EPR recommendations Selected regional and global environmental agreements	III. Integration of policies Environmental and economic policies Sectoral integration: sector 1 Sectoral integration: eventual sector 2 IV. Cooperation with the international community International cooperation V. Annexes Selected environmental data	III. Sustainable development Environment-economy interface Environment-social interface Environment and sector x IV. International commitments International cooperation V. Annexes Selected environmental data
III. Economic and sectoral integration Priority sectors			

<i>UNECE</i>		<i>OECD</i>	
<i>First cycle</i>	<i>Second cycle</i>	<i>First cycle</i>	<i>Second cycle</i>
Human health and the environment	Selected economic and environmental indicators	Selected economic data and trends	Selected economic data
IV. Annexes	Major legislation related to environment and sustainable development	Selected multilateral agreements (worldwide)	Selected social data
Selected regional and global environmental agreements	Sources	Selected multilateral agreements (regional)	Selected multilateral agreements (worldwide)
Selected economic and environmental indicators		Chronology of selected environmental events	Selected multilateral agreements (regional)
Glossary			Physical context
Sources			Selected environmental websites
			Selected sources (in each chapter)

Source: OECD and UNECE.