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Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Environmental Policy

Eighteenth session

Geneva, 17–20 April 2012

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the eighteenth session

**To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 10 a.m. on
Tuesday, 17 April 2012***

I. Provisional agenda

1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda.
2. Election of officers.
3. Sustainable development in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region.
4. Follow-up to the Astana Ministerial Conference and preparation of the “Environment for Europe” mid-term review.
5. Environmental Performance Review Programme:
 - (a) First Environmental Performance Review of Turkmenistan;
 - (b) Second Environmental Performance Review of Albania;
 - (c) Second Environmental Performance Review of Romania;

* There are accreditation procedures for all delegates attending meetings at the Palais des Nations. Delegates are therefore requested to complete the registration form available from the web page for the Committee’s eighteenth session on the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) website (<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=13776>), and to transmit it to the ECE secretariat no later than two weeks before the meeting by e-mail (efe@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 map and other practical information available at: <http://www.unece.org/meetings/practical.htm>). In case of difficulty, please contact the secretariat by telephone at +41 22 917 2682.

- (d) Environmental Performance Review Programme: overview of activities.
- 6. Environmental monitoring, assessment and reporting.
- 7. Multilateral environmental agreements: strengthening of capacity for implementation and their application to support a green economy.
- 8. Cross-sectoral activities:
 - (a) Education for sustainable development;
 - (b) Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme;
 - (c) Environment and security;
 - (d) European Environment and Health Process;
 - (e) Green building.
- 9. Joint segment of the Committee on Environmental Policy and the Sustainable Energy Committee.
- 10. Programme of work:
 - (a) Review of programme performance in the biennium 2010–2011;
 - (b) Work for the bienniums 2012–2013 and 2014–2015;
 - (c) Resource requirements and criteria for financial support.
- 11. Calendar of meetings.
- 12. Other business.
- 13. Closure of the meeting.

II. Annotations to the provisional agenda

- 1. The Committee on Environmental Policy's activity is guided by the goals set out in the document on future strategic directions for the environment adopted in 2003 (CEP/2004/2) and by the workplan on the reform of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) adopted in 2005 (E/ECE/1434/Rev.1). In 2007, ECE adopted the revised terms of reference for the Committee (see E/ECE/1447/Add.1).
- 2. In addition, the reform plan of the "Environment for Europe" (EfE) process adopted by the Committee, and subsequently endorsed by ECE, mandated the Committee to act as the convening body for the preparatory processes for the EfE Ministerial Conferences (see ECE/CEP/S/152, annex I, and Corr.1).

1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

- 3. Following the opening of the meeting, the Committee will be invited to adopt the agenda as set out in the present document (ECE/CEP/2012/1). The provisional timetable is presented in information paper No. 1.¹

¹ Information and materials for this meeting are being made available on a dedicated web page on the ECE website (<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=13776>).

2. Election of officers

4. The Committee will be invited to elect a chair and other members of the Bureau.

3. Sustainable development in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region

5. The secretariat will inform the Committee about developments in preparing for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development to be held from 20 to 22 June 2012 in Rio de Janeiro (Rio+20 Conference). The Regional Preparatory Meeting (RPM) for the Rio+20 Conference took place in Geneva on 1 and 2 December 2011. The RPM attracted over 400 participants, including 160 from Major Groups, which engaged in discussions on: (a) an assessment of the implementation of the outcomes of the major summits on sustainable development as well as new and emerging challenges; (b) a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication; and (c) the institutional framework for sustainable development. The substantive outcomes of the meeting are presented in the co-Chairs summary of the meeting (E/ECE/RPM/2011/2/Add.1).²

6. The Committee may wish to take note of the information provided.

4. Follow-up to the Astana Ministerial Conference and preparation of the “Environment for Europe” mid-term review

7. The outcomes of the Seventh EfE Ministerial Conference (Astana, 21–23 September 2011) are contained in the following three documents: the Ministerial Declaration (ECE/ASTANA.CONF/2011/2/Add.1); the Chair’s Summary of the Conference (ECE/ASTANA.CONF/2011/2/Add.2); and a factual report of the Conference (ECE/ASTANA.CONF/2011/2).³

8. The main follow-up activities to the Astana Conference include: (a) the establishment of a regular process of environmental assessment; (b) conducting a third cycle of environmental performance reviews (EPRs); (c) implementing the Astana Water Action; (d) promoting a green economy in the region and the Green Bridge Partnership Programme; and (e) other activities, such as the work of Environmental Action Programme Task Force and of the Regional Environmental Centres.

9. The Committee may wish to assess the effectiveness of the last EfE Conference, which was organized in a new format according to the EfE Reform Plan. Relevant delegations and organizations may wish to brief the Committee on respective developments with regard to particular follow-up activities after the Astana Conference. It is proposed to address the activities related to the EPRs and the environmental assessment under agenda items 5 and 6, respectively.

10. The Reform Plan of the EfE process stipulates that a mid-term review should be convened by the Committee to assess progress in the implementation of the outcomes of the EfE Conferences and provide renewed impetus to the process. The review should be based

² Available from <http://www.unece.org/env/sustainabledevelopment/rpm2011/rpm2011.html>.

³ These and other Conference documents are available on the ECE website (<http://www.unece.org/env/efe/astana/welcome.html>).

on existing information. The findings of the review should be taken into account in the preparatory process of the next conference (ECE/CEP.S/152, annex I, para. 17).

11. The Committee will be invited to discuss the preparations for the mid-term review in 2013, including its scope, format and modalities. The secretariat has prepared a document to facilitate the discussion (ECE/CEP/2012/5).

5. Environmental Performance Review Programme

(a) First Environmental Performance Review of Turkmenistan

12. The Committee will conduct a peer review of the environmental performance of Turkmenistan. The Committee will be invited to conclude the peer review by adopting the recommendations contained in the draft report elaborated by the Expert Group on Environmental Performance at its meeting on 14 and 15 March 2012.

(b) Second Environmental Performance Review of Albania

13. The Committee will conduct a peer review of the environmental performance of Albania. The Committee will be invited to conclude the peer review by adopting the recommendations contained in the draft report elaborated by the Expert Group on Environmental Performance at its meeting held from 3 to 5 April 2012.

(c) Second Environmental Performance Review of Romania

14. The Committee will conduct a peer review of the environmental performance of Romania. The Committee will be invited to conclude the peer review by adopting the recommendations contained in the draft report elaborated by the Expert Group on Environmental Performance at its meeting held from 3 to 5 April 2012.

(d) Environmental Performance Review Programme: overview of activities

15. The Committee will be briefed on other recent and planned activities under the Environment Performance Review Programme, including those related to the third cycle of the Programme.

16. The Committee will be invited to consider the information provided.

6. Environmental monitoring, assessment and reporting

17. The Committee will be invited to consider the results of the third and fourth sessions of the Joint Intersectoral Task Force on Environmental Indicators (Geneva, July and October 2011, respectively; see ECE/CEP-CES/GE.1/2011/2 and ECE/CEP-CES/GE.1/2011/4), as well as of the twelfth session of the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment (Geneva, October 2011; ECE/CEP/AC.10/2011/2).

18. The Committee will be invited to comment on the progress made in the activities of the two bodies and consider the extension of the mandate of the Working Group (ECE/CEP/2012/6).

19. Furthermore, in accordance with a decision by Ministers in Astana, the Committee will be briefed on progress in establishing a regular process of environmental assessment and developing the Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) across the region in order to keep the pan-European environment under review. These should serve multiple policy processes, including multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), and include

capacity-building of countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe to monitor and assess their environment. The Ministers invited the European Environment Agency (EEA) and its partners to develop an outline for how these actions could be performed and to present it to the Committee on Environmental Policy.

20. The Committee may wish to consider the information provided and take decisions, as appropriate.

7. Multilateral environmental agreements: strengthening of capacity for implementation and their application to support a green economy

21. The Committee will be informed about the main outcomes of the two meetings between the representatives of the governing bodies of the ECE MEAs and the Committee Chair (Geneva, November 2011 and April 2012). The meeting participants exchanged information on priorities under the ECE MEAs and discussed possible areas of cooperation and synergies among them, as well as with the Committee, especially in the light of the current review of ECE activities.

22. Furthermore, the Committee will be briefed on progress made under each of the ECE MEAs, with a particular focus on strengthening the capacity for implementation and the application of MEAs to support a green economy.

23. The Committee may wish to consider the information provided.

8. Cross-sectoral activities

(a) Education for sustainable development

24. The Committee will be informed about the main outcomes of the sixth and seventh meetings of the ECE Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development (Geneva, April 2011 and March 2012, respectively; ECE/CEP/AC.13/2011/2 and ECE/CEP/AC.13/2012/2).⁴

25. The Committee may wish to take note of the information provided.

(b) Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme

26. The Committee will be informed about the main outcomes of the eighth and ninth sessions of the Steering Committee of the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP) (Geneva, December 2010 and November 2011; ECE/AC.21/SC/2010/9–EUDHP1003944/7.1/SC8/9 and ECE/AC.21/SC/2011/8–EUDHP1003944/7.1/SC9/8).⁵

27. The Committee may wish to take note of the information provided.

(c) Environment and security

28. The Committee will be briefed on the ongoing contributions of ECE to the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) (information paper No. 2).

⁴ Meeting documents and materials for the Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development meetings are available online from <http://www.unece.org/env/esd.html>.

⁵ The documents and materials for THE PEP Steering Committee meetings are available online at: <http://www.unece.org/thepep/en/welcome.html>.

29. The Committee may wish to consider the information provided.

(d) Environment and Health Process

30. The Committee will be informed about the relevant activities under the Environment and Health Process, including on the follow-up activities from the Fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health (Parma, Italy, March 2010),⁶ and in particular the main outcomes of the meetings of the European Environment and Health Ministerial Board held thus far.⁷

31. The Committee will be invited to consider the information provided.

(e) Green building

32. At its special session in May 2011, the Committee agreed to participate in a task force on green building to be composed of experts from the Timber Committee, the Housing and Land Management Committee, the Committee on Environmental Policy and the Committee on Sustainable Energy, together with partner organizations.

33. The secretariat will inform the Committee on developments in this respect.

9. Joint segment of the Committee on Environmental Policy and the Sustainable Energy Committee

34. Following a proposal by the Chair of the ECE Sustainable Energy Committee, the Committee on Environmental Policy and the Sustainable Energy Committee will hold a joint segment in the light of the upcoming Rio+20 Conference and its green economy theme. The two Committees will share information on their activities in areas of common interest and engage in a dialogue to identify possible synergies towards promoting a green economy in the region. The secretariat will prepare an information note to facilitate the discussion (information paper No. 3).

10. Programme of work

35. The Committee will be informed of the ongoing review of ECE activities, including the review of the Environment subprogramme to be carried out by the ECE Executive Committee shortly after the current session of the Committee on Environmental Policy.

36. The Committee might wish to invite its Chair to present to the ECE Executive Committee the Environment subprogramme, taking into account discussions held at the current session and at the joint meetings of MEAs and the Chair of the Environmental Policy Committee.

⁶ Documents of the Parma Conference are available on the World Health Organization website (<http://www.euro.who.int/en/home/conferences/fifth-ministerial-conference-on-environment-and-health>).

⁷ Information and documents related to the Board's work are available online from <http://www.euro.who.int/en/what-we-do/health-topics/environment-and-health/european-process-on-environment-and-health/governance/european-environment-and-health-ministerial-board-ehmb>.

(a) Review of programme performance in the biennium 2010–2011

37. The Committee on Environmental Policy will be invited to consider the review of performance of the Environment subprogramme in the biennium 2010–2011 (ECE/CEP/2012/4) for approval.

(b) Work for the bienniums 2012–2013 and 2014–2015

38. The Committee will be invited to consider the following elements for its work:

(a) Its programme of work for the biennium 2012–2013 for adoption (ECE/CEP/2012/3, chap. II and annex I);

(b) The plan for the biennial performance assessment of the Environment subprogramme (2012–2013) for approval (ECE/CEP/2012/3, annex II);

(c) The strategic framework for the biennium 2014–2015 for adoption (ECE/CEP/2012/3, annex III).

(c) Resource requirements and criteria for financial support

39. The Committee will be invited to consider, on the basis of information received in advance, the regular and extrabudgetary resources for activities relating to the Environment subprogramme. Donor countries will be invited to pledge further contributions to the trust funds. The Committee may consider updating criteria for financial assistance (information paper No. 4).

11. Calendar of meetings

40. The nineteenth annual session of the Committee is proposed to take place in Geneva next spring, e.g., from 23 to 26 April 2013. The Committee will be invited to agree on the date of its next meeting, also bearing in mind the mid-term review of the EfE process.

12. Other business

41. 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.

13. Closure of the meeting

42. The Chair, with the assistance of the secretariat, will sum up the Committee's conclusions and decisions and close the meeting. The report of the meeting and the list of participants will be finalized by the secretariat in consultation with the Bureau for circulation to the Committee after the meeting. These documents will be posted on the ECE website (<http://www.unece.org/env/cep/welcome.html>).