

CLRTAP:

## **Informal Meeting of ICP Lead / Host Country representatives**

Berlin, 2 October

### **Draft Minutes**

#### **Participants in and Reporting on the meeting**

TS and PG chaired the meeting and welcomed the participants, who represent

- the organisations in Lead / Host Countries of the ecosystem effects programmes (ICPs) under the Convention responsible for the financial support/contracts for the ICPs, and
- in some cases Task Force chairs and heads of programme centres.

This meeting was announced during WGSR 50th session (and the preceding WPIEI meeting for EU countries). Although the meeting is informal its results will be reported to the EB Bureau and the "ad hoc Group of Experts" (see below). Participants representing EU Member States will report at the EU coordination meeting on 9 October, with the aim to inform discussions during the EB session in December 2012.

#### **Background and Objective of the meeting**

The Long-Term Strategy of the Convention and an Action Plan implementing it were adopted by the EB in 2010 and 2011, respectively<sup>1</sup>. One of the items is to

*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.*

It has been tasked to an "ad hoc Expert Group" (a.k.a. "Extended EB Bureau") in consultation with Expert Group and Task Force lead countries.

The Ad Hoc Group of Experts is convinced of the needs of a well-designed and focused system for monitoring, modelling and evaluation of air pollution effects. The system we have today has been of crucial importance and has served the Convention's needs in an appropriate way.

The Group has however concluded that the system today is complex and that the future might need some structural and/or operational changes in order to streamline the work and make it more transparent and visible and increase the possibilities for wider use of the results both scientifically and in policy-oriented syntheses and assessments. The Group has therefore, in line with the recommendations in the Action Plan, recommended an evaluation of the ICP work.

The success of the effects-related work is to a large extent dependent on the support and engagement from a few countries taking responsibility for ICP centres (including CCE) and ICP chairs. Before taking any further steps with respect to changes in the organizational structure, it was considered appropriate to have a meeting between those countries that over the years have taken and still take a key responsibility for the effects work.

The **objective** of the meeting is to inform and discuss the support to the ICPs (a. Task Forces and b. Programme Centres) over the coming years in view of the recommendations in the LTS and the Action Plan. The following issues were main discussion items:

1. What are the reasons for countries taking their responsibilities?
2. How will the financial support look like over the coming years?
3. Are countries willing to support increased collaboration between certain ICPs if an evaluation recommends that?
4. Does the decision on possible merging of WGE and EMEP affect the countries' position?

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<sup>1</sup> see [http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/lrtap/conv/long-term\\_strategy.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/lrtap/conv/long-term_strategy.pdf) and [http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2011/eb/eb/Decision\\_2011\\_14.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2011/eb/eb/Decision_2011_14.pdf)

5. Should the envisaged review of ICPs be performed before or after an EB decision on whether to merge WGE and EMEP SB?

An additional discussion item was options for funding the effects work via 1) an obligatory funding mechanism in addition to the present EMEP funding mechanism and/or 2) a participation in the present EMEP budget (with resulting less funding for the Centres presently funded by the EMEP mechanism). The first option was considered desirable but not politically enforceable, the second was not favoured because the presently funded EMEP Centres would not be able to continue to operate as agreed by the EB.

#### **Main conclusions and recommendations from the meeting:**

- In general there was an agreement to continue to support the ICP work at similar levels as today; however, budgets are under stress in most countries. Therefore, funding at the current level should not be taken for granted in the future. Lead/Host Country funding seems safe at least for the next few years. One country provided prerequisites/caveats.
- The participants were positive to a further development of collaboration between ICPs and ICP centres. This collaboration should not be limited to structural organization; streamlining/optimization potential was identified on operational organization (e.g. reporting).
- Lead countries were interested in funding relevant work rather than a specific part of the Convention structure and therefore organisational change was not seen as a barrier to continued funding. Most lead countries made clear that financial support is provided through earmarked funding mechanisms, directly to local organizations. Organizational changes to the Convention could pose a risk for this manner of financing. Some lead countries emphasised the need to keep the work funded by national sources visible.
- Any decision on merging centres would need to be considered very carefully. As most countries supported activities through directly funding specific institutes, any decision on this would need to consider the consequences with respect to funding.
- Regarding the Task Forces, the participants could see the value of further integration of the work between ICPs, to take forward the vision of the LTS, reduce administrative burdens, increase the clarity of scientific messages and aid periodic integrated assessment reports. However, before doing so it is necessary to carefully consider how that may influence the participation of countries in monitoring and networks, and the organization of communication between scientists and practitioners/policy makers regarding certain issues (e.g. forest monitoring).
- A majority but not all countries were of the opinion that a possible decision of merging EMEP and WGE should not be taken until after an evaluation of the ICPs.
- A regular production of EMEP/WGE assessment reports as pointed out in the report from the Ad Hoc Group of Experts was welcomed as one means to promote two-way communication between science and policy. However, there is a need to find a suitable organization as well as financing mechanism for that.
- The meeting agreed that it should look for additional long term support for its work. It particularly pointed to the needs to give support for participation from the EECCA countries as well as support to outreach activities, e.g. the need for ICP input to the TFHTAP work.
- The meeting noted that much of the collected data are unique and of importance outside the CLRTAP convention. The same applies to harmonized methodologies for monitoring and modelling which constitute international standards. Examples include long-term monitoring methods and results in forests, inland waters and other ecosystem types, as well as physicochemical and biological modelling such as critical loads.
- The meeting concluded that EU countries in general are well represented in several of the ICPs (see attachment) and that the European Union/Commission may consider this in its ongoing work with the revision of its Thematic Strategy.

- The meeting noticed that several of the ICP activities are of importance for several EU policies and that results from the ICPs have been widely used to support these policies. Policies that were mentioned included the Habitat directive including Natura2000 areas, EU energy policies (potential for forest-based biomass) and adaptation strategies to climate change.
- The meeting finally agreed that a closer contact between the funding countries would be of benefit for the long term development of the effects-oriented activities.

Table 1: Participation of – or data contribution in the past/present by – EU Member (accession) States (February 2012). The Table will be extended to include all Parties.

	ICP- Forests	ICP- Waters	ICP- Materials	ICP- Vegetation	ICP- Integrated Monitoring	ICP- Modelling & Mapping	TF Health	JEG <sup>1</sup>
Austria								
Belgium								
Bulgaria								
Croatia <sup>2</sup>								
Cyprus								
Czech Rep.								
Denmark								
Estonia								
Finland								
France								
Germany								
Greece								
Hungary								
Ireland								
Italy								
Latvia								
Lithuania								
Luxembourg								
Malta								
Netherlands								
Poland								
Portugal								
Romania								
Slovakia								
Slovenia								
Spain								
Sweden								
United Kingdom								

<sup>1</sup>The Joint Expert Group on Dynamic Modelling (JEG) does not have a data-compilation task. Participation in yearly JEG meetings includes experts in dynamic modelling from many, not necessarily the same, EU Member States.

<sup>2</sup>Becoming effective as of July 2013; participation depending on financial resources, but these activities are established.

## List of Participants

ICP Forests	Sigrid Strich, Germany Martin Lorenz, Germany
ICP Waters	Eli Mari Aasen, Norway Berit Kvaeven, Norway Heleen de Wit, Norway
ICP Materials	Anna Engleryd, Sweden
ICP Integrated Monitoring	Anna Engleryd, Sweden Martin Forsius, Finland
Task Force on Mapping and Modelling	Fantine Lefevre, France
Coordination Centre for Effects	Roald Wolters, the Netherlands Jean-Paul Hettelingh, the Netherlands
ICP Vegetation	Sarah Honour, UK
EB Bureau and Ad Hoc Group of Experts	Till Spranger, Germany
Chair of WGE and Ad Hoc Group of Experts	Peringe Grennfelt, Sweden