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Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Environmental Policy

Twentieth session

Geneva, 28–31 October 2014

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the twentieth session

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, starting at 10 a.m. on
Tuesday, 28 October 2014*

I. Provisional agenda

1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda.
2. Election of officers.
3. Outcomes of the work of the Bureau of the Committee on Environmental Policy.
4. Sustainable development in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region.
5. Multilateral environmental agreements.
6. Environmental monitoring, assessment and reporting.
7. Cross-sectoral activities:
 - (a) Education for sustainable development;

* There are accreditation procedures for all delegates attending meetings at the Palais des Nations. Delegates are therefore requested to complete the online registration form available from the Internet (<https://www2.unece.org/uncdb/app/ext/meeting-registration?id=LMIUEW>) no later than two weeks before the meeting. 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 from the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe website at <http://www.unece.org/meetings/practical.htm>). In case of difficulty, please contact the secretariat by telephone at +41 22 917 2682.



- (b) Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme;
 - (c) Environment and security;
 - (d) European Environment and Health Process;
 - (e) Green building.
8. Environmental Performance Review Programme:
- (a) Third Environmental Performance Review of Montenegro;
 - (b) Third Environmental Performance Review of Serbia;
 - (c) Overview of activities.
9. Lessons learned from the Environment for Europe mid-term review of the Astana Conference main outcomes.
10. The Eighth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference:
- (a) Astana Water Action;
 - (b) Greening the economy;
 - (c) Developing the Shared Environmental Information System;
 - (d) Host country preparations;
 - (e) Selection of the themes for the Conference;
 - (f) Organizational issues;
 - (g) Resource requirements.
11. Programme of work of the Environment subprogramme:
- (a) Biennial performance plan of the Environment subprogramme in 2014–2015;
 - (b) Criteria for financial support for participation in meetings and events.
12. Rules of procedure.
13. Calendar of meetings.
14. Other business.
15. Closure of the meeting.

II. Annotations to the provisional agenda

1. The work of the Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP) is guided by the goals set out in the document on future strategic directions for the environment (CEP/2004/2) adopted in 2003, the workplan on the reform of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) (E/ECE/1434/Rev.1) adopted in 2005 and the review of the 2005 ECE reform (E/ECE/1464, annex III, decision A (65)) concluded in 2013. In 2007, ECE adopted the revised terms of reference for CEP (E/ECE/1447/Add.1) as a result of the reform process.

2. In addition, the reform plan of the Environment for Europe (EfE) process (ECE/CEP/S/152, annex I, and Corr.1) adopted by CEP in 2009, and subsequently endorsed by ECE, mandated CEP to act as the convening body for the preparatory processes for the EfE ministerial conferences.

1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

3. Following the opening of the meeting, CEP will be invited to adopt its agenda as set out in the present document (ECE/CEP/2014/1). The provisional organization of work is presented in information paper No. 1.¹

2. Election of officers

4. CEP will be invited to elect a chair and other members of the Bureau. A list of proposed candidates will be circulated by e-mail in advance of the meeting (information paper No. 2).

3. Outcomes of the work of the Bureau of the Committee on Environmental Policy

5. At its nineteenth session (Geneva, 22–25 October 2013), CEP elected its Bureau and mandated it to carry out a number of activities, including: (a) to prepare the twentieth session of CEP; (b) to advance the preparations for the Eighth EfE Ministerial Conference; (c) to contribute to the European Environment and Health process; (d) to update the CEP criteria for financial support for participation in meetings and events; and (e) to continue the work on developing rules of procedure for CEP. To fulfil the above mandates, the CEP Bureau worked via electronic consultations and met in Lisbon on 26 and 27 May 2014.

6. CEP will be invited to consider the outcomes of the work of the CEP Bureau as presented in document ECE/CEP/2014/3.

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

7. The secretariat will inform CEP about the main developments at the regional level regarding follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20 Conference) and the post-2015 development agenda. These include:

(a) The regional contribution to the second meeting of the High-level Political Forum (New York, 30 June–9 July 2014);

(b) Preparations for the sixty-sixth session of ECE (Geneva, 14–16 April 2015).

8. CEP may wish to consider, as appropriate, the information provided.

5. Multilateral environmental agreements

9. CEP will be informed about the main outcomes of the informal joint meeting between the representatives of the governing bodies of ECE multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and CEP (Geneva, 27 October 2014). The meeting participants continued the exchange of information on priorities under the ECE MEAs and the discussion on possible areas of cooperation and synergies among them, as well as with CEP.

¹ Information and materials for the meeting are being made available on a dedicated web page on the ECE website (<http://www.unece.org/env/cep/2014sessionoctober.html>).

10. Furthermore, CEP will be briefed on progress made under each of the ECE MEAs, with a particular focus on issues related to national implementation reporting, as well as the promotion of the benefits of ECE MEAs beyond the region and continuing progress in opening the MEAs to global accession. Following a request by CEP, the secretariat prepared a report on the opening of ECE MEAs and other ECE environmental instruments to accession by States beyond the region to facilitate the discussion (ECE/CEP/2014/6). Furthermore, as agreed by the CEP Bureau, and following the Bureau's guidance, the secretariat prepared a document presenting an overview of submissions by Parties of their national implementation reports since the first mandatory reporting round, as appropriate, under each MEA (ECE/CEP/2014/16).

11. CEP may wish to consider the information provided.

6. Environmental monitoring, assessment and reporting

12. CEP will be invited to consider the results of the fourteenth session of the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment (Geneva, 7–8 November 2013) (see ECE/CEP/AC.10/2013/4), as well as of the seventh and eighth sessions of the Joint Task Force on Environmental Indicators (Geneva, 5–7 November 2013 and 14–15 May 2014, respectively) (see ECE/CEP-CES/GE.1/2013/2 and ECE/CEP-CES/GE.1/2014/2, forthcoming, respectively).

13. CEP will be invited to comment on the progress made in the activities of the two bodies and to adopt the Guidelines for developing national strategies to use soil contamination monitoring as an environmental policy tool for countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, as well as interested South-Eastern European countries (ECE/CEP/2014/14) prepared by the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment. Furthermore, CEP will be invited to consider the extension of the mandates of the Working Group (ECE/CEP/2014/11) and of the Joint Task Force (ECE/CEP/2014/12).

7. Cross-sectoral activities

(a) Education for sustainable development

14. CEP will be informed about the main outcomes of the ninth meeting of the ECE Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development (Geneva, 3–4 April 2014) (see ECE/CEP/AC.13/2014/2).²

15. CEP may wish to consider, as appropriate, the information provided.

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

16. CEP will be informed about the main outcomes of the eleventh session of the Steering Committee of the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP) (Geneva, 27–29 November 2013) (see ECE/AC.21/SC/2013/6–EUDCE1206040/1.9/SC11/6) and of the Fourth High-level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment (Paris, 14–16 April 2014) (see ECE/AC.21/2014/2–EUDCE1408105/1.6/4HLM/2).³

17. CEP may wish to consider, as appropriate, the information provided.

² 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>.

³ The documents and materials for THE PEP meetings are available online from <http://www.unece.org/thepep/en/welcome.html>.

(c) Environment and security

18. CEP will be briefed on the ongoing contributions of ECE to the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) (information paper No. 3).

19. CEP may wish to consider the information provided.

(d) European Environment and Health process

20. Following the decision of CEP at its last session, a panel discussion on the European Environment and Health process will be organized with the participation of the Chairs of the European Environment and Health Ministerial Board (EHMB) or of their Alternates, and of the Chairs of the European Environment and Health Task Force. CEP will be informed about the relevant activities under the process, and in particular the main outcomes of the work of EHMB as well as of the Task Force.⁴ The discussion will identify issues of common interest with a view to joining efforts and strengthening synergies. Also, CEP will be informed of the main outcomes of a joint meeting of the CEP Bureau and the Alternates to EHMB, which took place in Lisbon on 27 May 2014.

21. Pursuant to a request by CEP at its last session, on 1 July 2014 the secretariat sent out official letters to the 53 ECE member States that are also members of the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe (WHO/Europe), inviting ministers of environment to inform the secretariat of their interest in serving on EHMB (2015–2016). The secretariat in consultation with the Bureau will consider all applications received and will inform CEP about the nominees in due time before its twentieth session.

22. CEP will be invited to consider and appoint four board members from the environment sector for 2015–2016. Also, CEP may wish to provide guidance to EHMB and the Task Force for further implementation of the European Environment and Health process.

(e) Green building

23. At its special session in May 2011, CEP agreed to participate in a task force on green building to be composed of experts from the Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry (formerly known as Timber Committee), the Housing and Land Management Committee, CEP and the Committee on Sustainable Energy, together with partner organizations. In October 2013 CEP was briefed on developments in the area of green building, including about the delay in the establishment of the task force due to the finalization of the review of the 2005 ECE reform.

24. At the same time, the work on green building, including in the context of greening the economy, progressed well. CEP will be informed about developments in this area.

8. Environmental Performance Review Programme**(a) Third Environmental Performance Review of Montenegro**

25. CEP will conduct a peer review of the environmental performance of Montenegro. CEP will be invited to conclude the review by adopting the recommendations agreed upon

⁴ 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>.

by the Expert Group on Environmental Performance Reviews (EPRs) at its meeting held from 30 September to 3 October 2014 in Geneva (information paper No. 4).

(b) Third Environmental Performance Review of Serbia

26. CEP will conduct a peer review of the environmental performance of Serbia. CEP will be invited to conclude the review by adopting the recommendations agreed upon by the Expert Group on EPRs at its meeting held from 30 September to 3 October 2014 in Geneva (information paper No. 5).

(c) Overview of activities

27. CEP will be briefed on other recent and planned activities under the EPR Programme.

28. CEP will be invited to consider the information provided, as well as to consider the extension of the mandates of the Expert Group on EPRs (ECE/CEP/2014/13).

9. Lessons learned from the Environment for Europe mid-term review of the Astana Conference main outcomes

29. CEP will be invited to consider lessons learned from the mid-term review of the main outcomes of the Seventh EfE Ministerial Conference (Astana, 21–23 September 2011), which was organized during its nineteenth session in October 2013. The discussion will help plan future mid-term reviews in terms of substance and organizational issues. Following the request by CEP, the CEP Bureau and the secretariat prepared a brief assessment of the mid-term review to facilitate the discussion (ECE/CEP/2014/10).

10. The Eighth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference

(a) Astana Water Action

30. At its last session, CEP asked that a progress report on the Astana Water Action (AWA) be prepared for its meeting in 2015 or 2016 (the report might also be considered at the next EfE Ministerial Conference, as appropriate) and requested the secretariat to disseminate AWA commitments and results either through a brochure or on the ECE website.

31. CEP will be invited to consider the web-based AWA, as well as the timing (2015 or 2016) for preparing a second progress report on AWA. The CEP Bureau recommended reporting on AWA at the CEP special session in February 2016 and subsequently at the next EfE Conference.

(b) Greening the economy

32. Ministers in Astana agreed to take the lead in the transition to a green economy, and to make a substantive contribution to the discussions at the Rio+20 Conference on green economy within the context of sustainable development and poverty alleviation. They invited ECE to contribute, together with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and relevant international organizations, to the development of the Rio+20 green economy outcomes.

33. The ministers also welcomed and supported, as appropriate, the Green Bridge Initiative and Partnership Programme, and encouraged its further development. Ministers invited interested Governments, international financial institutions, the private sector and

other stakeholders to join this Programme to promote an environmentally sustainable, equitable and prosperous future in both the pan-European and the Asia and the Pacific regions.

34. During the EfE mid-term review, CEP considered the progress in greening the economy in the region based on a panel discussion as well as on a comprehensive report prepared by ECE and UNEP, in consultation with partners. The report showed that many organizations were carrying out a wide range of activities to green the economies in the region. Kazakhstan and its partners were working on the further development of the Green Bridge Partnership Programme.

35. Following a decision by CEP, the secretariat prepared jointly with UNEP and other EfE partners an updated report on progress in and future prospects for greening the economy in the pan-European region, including priorities for greening the economy in the region and possible modalities and options to achieve it (ECE/CEP/2014/5). This report aims at facilitating discussion by CEP on this item.

36. CEP will be invited to consider the issue of greening the economy in the region, including further steps and actions necessary to advance it.

(c) Developing the Shared Environmental Information System

37. At the Astana Conference, ministers decided to establish a regular process of environmental assessment and to develop the Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) across the ECE region in order to keep the pan-European environment under review. These two developments should serve multiple policy processes, including MEAs, and include the building of capacity in countries in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia to monitor and assess their environment.

38. To support the development of SEIS, including to strengthen the work in this area of CEP at the political level and the work of the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment at the technical level, CEP decided to establish a coordination mechanism in the form of a Group of Friends of SEIS, and approved the terms of reference for such a group. Subsequently, the ECE Executive Committee formally approved the establishment of the Group of Friends of SEIS, its mandate, its terms of reference and financial requirements (see document ECE/EX/11).⁵

39. Pursuant to its mandate, Friends of SEIS met in Geneva on 12 May 2014 and worked on developing targets and performance indicators for developing SEIS.⁶ Also, the Group shared views on organizing and shaping the regular assessment process, taking into consideration the benefits of SEIS, and adopted a workplan for the Group for 2014–2015. A summary of the Group's work is presented in the report of the first meeting (ECE/CEP/2014/7).

40. CEP will be invited to consider for approval the targets and performance indicators for developing SEIS, and decide on modalities to review the progress (ECE/CEP/2014/8), as well as to provide guidance to the Group of Friends of SEIS for their work planned in 2015.

⁵ Available from <http://www.unece.org/commission/excom/welcome.html>.

⁶ Meeting documents for the Friends of SEIS are available online from <http://www.unece.org/env/cep/friendsofseis2014sessionmay.html>.

(d) Host country preparations

41. The representative of Georgia will be invited to inform CEP about the preparations to host the Eighth EfE Ministerial Conference in 2016.
42. CEP will be invited to consider the information provided, as appropriate, including on the venue and the date proposed for the Conference.

(e) Selection of the themes for the Conference

43. The EfE reform plan stipulates that not later than 18 month before the conference CEP at its regular session will decide on not more than two themes and discuss the outline of the agenda of the conference. When deciding on the themes, preliminary findings of available assessments and statistical reports on the environment should be taken into consideration. Also, the findings of the EfE mid-term review should be taken into account into the preparatory process for the next conference.
44. At the last CEP meeting delegations supported several possible topics for the Eighth EfE Ministerial Conference: MEAs; water; education for sustainable development; SEIS; sustainable consumption and production; transport, health and environment; and environment and health.
45. CEP will be invited to consider the common environmental priorities in the ECE region, with a view to deciding on not more than two themes for the Eighth Conference. To facilitate the discussion, the CEP Bureau, with support from the secretariat, prepared an updated proposal for a possible framework for the Conference, taking into account comments made by delegations at the last meeting as well as the recommendations by the CEP Bureau (ECE/CEP/2014/9).
46. The CEP Bureau recommended the following two themes as an overarching framework for the Conference: (a) greening the economy in the pan-European region in the context of the post-2015 development framework, including the Sustainable Development Goals; and (b) improving air quality for a better environment and human health.

(f) Organizational issues

47. CEP will be invited to consider for approval the document regarding organizational issues for the Eighth Ministerial Conference, prepared by the secretariat following the CEP Bureau's recommendation to guide the preparations for the Conference (ECE/CEP/2014/15).

(g) Resource requirements

48. The EfE reform plan stipulates that for the preparatory process of an EfE conference and the conference itself, the necessary extrabudgetary financial resources will have to continue to be provided to ECE to supplement the United Nations core budget resources. The plan also states that the host country should assume relevant financial commitments.
49. CEP will be invited to consider the resource requirements for the preparatory process and the Eighth Conference (information paper No. 6), as well as ways to ensure smooth and efficient Conference preparations. Interested countries and organizations may inform the meeting on envisaged contributions for the preparation of the Conference.

11. Programme of work of the Environment subprogramme

(a) Biennial performance plan of the Environment subprogramme in 2014–2015

50. As of June 2014, the cluster-based biennial performance assessment known as the biennial evaluation report became discretionary for the ECE subprogrammes, per a new ECE evaluation policy. In the light of this change, CEP is invited to consider whether it wishes to continue with the biennial performance assessment for the Environment subprogramme.

51. Should CEP decide to discontinue the biennial performance assessment, CEP will be invited to cancel the biennial evaluation plan of the Environment subprogramme for 2014–2015 (ECE/CEP/2013/4) approved by CEP at its session in 2013.

52. Should CEP decide to continue with the biennial performance assessment, CEP will be invited to approve the biennial performance plan of the Environment subprogramme for 2014–2015 (ECE/CEP/2014/4), which contains the following amendments to the document ECE/CEP/2013/4 previously approved in 2013:

(a) The new title of the document is “Biennial performance plan of the Environment subprogramme for 2014–2015”;

(b) It includes two additional indicators of achievement under the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention) cluster of activities. The indicators were proposed by Lithuania (on behalf of the EU member States) at the last session of CEP, with a view to measuring:

(i) The number of Parties that have ratified, approved or accepted the Espoo Convention;

(ii) The number of Parties that have ratified, approved or accepted the two amendments to the Espoo Convention.

(b) Criteria for financial support for participation in meetings and events

53. In accordance with the recommendations regarding criteria for financial support for participation in meetings and events approved by CEP at its last session (ECE/CEP/2013/20, paras. 20 and 21), the CEP Bureau with support from the secretariat considered updating the criteria for financial support. At the time of the CEP Bureau meeting in May 2014, gross domestic product (GDP) per capita for ECE countries with economies in transition was available for 2012.

54. The CEP Bureau recommended to keep the criteria adopted by CEP at its nineteenth session in October 2013 (which use GDP per capita for 2012), unless GDP per capita for 2013 will be released by mid-September 2014. If 2013 data should become available in due time before the twentieth session of CEP, then the criteria will be revised by the secretariat in mid-September.

55. CEP may consider keeping or updating, as appropriate, the criteria for financial support (information paper No. 7) on the basis of the Bureau’s recommendation.

12. Rules of procedure

56. Following the request by CEP, the CEP Bureau with support from the secretariat revised the draft rules of procedure of CEP (ECE/CEP/2014/L.1).

57. CEP will be invited to consider adopting the draft rules of procedure.

13. Calendar of meetings

58. In accordance with the approved calendar of meetings of CEP for 2014–2016, the twenty-first annual session of CEP is scheduled to take place in Geneva from 27 to 30 October 2015. The CEP Bureau considered the schedule of meetings and adjusted them as presented in the information paper No. 8. In 2015, the CEP Bureau will hold a one-day meeting on 26 May 2015 to prepare the session, as well as a short meeting on the afternoon on 26 October 2015, back to back to the twenty-first session of CEP.

59. CEP will be invited to agree on the dates of its next meeting, also bearing in mind the preparations for the next EfE Ministerial Conference.

14. Other business

60. CEP will be invited to discuss any other business that might be brought to its attention. Delegations wishing to propose items are invited to inform the secretariat as soon as possible.

15. Closure of the meeting

61. The Chair, with the assistance of the secretariat, will sum up the conclusions and decisions of CEP 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 CEP after the meeting. These documents will be posted on the ECE website.⁷

⁷ <http://www.unece.org/env/cep/2014sessionoctober.html>.