



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
18 August 2015

Original: English

Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Environmental Policy

Twenty-first session

Geneva, 27–30 October 2015

Item 5 (h) of the provisional agenda

The Eighth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference: communication plan for the Conference

Communication plan for the Eighth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference

Note by the secretariat in consultation with the host country

Summary

At its twentieth session (Geneva, 28–31 October 2014), the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP) mandated its Bureau, with support from the ECE secretariat and in cooperation with relevant stakeholders, to proceed with the preparation of the Eighth Environment for Europe (EfE) Ministerial Conference (Batumi, Georgia, 8–10 June 2016), including preparing for the twenty-first session of CEP documents that might be recommended by the Bureau (ECE/CEP/2014/2, paras. 84 (c) and 98 (gg) (xi) c).

In accordance with that mandate, the Bureau recommended the elaboration of a communication plan for the Batumi Ministerial Conference. The present document was prepared by the secretariat in consultation with the host country, as well as with the CEP Bureau, based on the provisions of the EfE Reform Plan.¹

CEP will be invited to consider the document for its prospective approval with a view to guiding the communication activities for the Batumi EfE Ministerial Conference.

¹ The Reform Plan of the EfE process was developed by CEP during 2008 and adopted on 29 January 2009 (see the report of CEP on its special session (ECE/CEP/S/152 and Corr.1, annex I) available from www.unece.org/index.php?id=4804). The plan was subsequently endorsed by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe at its sixty-third session (Geneva, 30 March–1 April 2009) (see E/2009/37–E/ECE/1448, chap. IV, para. 6).



Introduction

1. The Eighth Environment for Europe (EfE) Ministerial Conference is scheduled to take place in Batumi, Georgia, from 8 to 10 June 2016. The Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP) decided on the following two main themes for the Conference: “Greening the economy in the pan-European region”; and “Improving air quality for a better environment and human health”. In addition, a high-level meeting on education for sustainable development (ESD) will be organized during the Conference with a view to assessing progress during the first 10 years of the ECE Strategy for ESD, and to consider its future development. Progress achieved in establishing the Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) across the pan-European region will also be considered.

2. The Reform Plan of the EfE process envisages, as part of the Conference-related principles, a wide range of communication activities, including the organization of special events for journalists, the circulation of electronic newsletters and the maintenance of a dedicated website.

3. At its twentieth session (Geneva, 28–31 October 2014), CEP invited its Bureau, with support from the secretariat and in cooperation with relevant stakeholders, to proceed with the preparation of the Eighth EfE Ministerial Conference, encompassing also the preparation of documents recommended by the Bureau for consideration by CEP in that regard, such as the present communication plan.

4. The CEP Bureau met in June 2015 and considered a draft version of the present document, which was subsequently revised to reflect the Bureau’s comments. Also, the host country provided information on the planned communication activities for the Conference. Additional information on events planned around the Conference, including those aimed at greening the event, will be provided by the host country to CEP at the later stage.

5. Following its approval by CEP, this communication plan will guide activities by the secretariat together with the host country to promote the ministerial event. For an efficient and effective implementation of the Batumi communication plan, an active engagement by the EfE stakeholders is needed, including ECE member States as well as key EfE partners, such as the European ECO Forum, the European Commission, the European Environment Agency (EEA), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Regional Environmental Centres, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe.

I. Objectives and key messages

6. The EfE process is a political framework for cooperation on environmental governance and protection in the pan-European region. It builds upon a unique partnership of ECE member States, organizations of the United Nations system represented in the ECE region, other intergovernmental organizations, Regional Environment Centres, non-governmental organizations, the business sector and other representatives of civil society.

7. The milestones of the process — EfE Ministerial Conferences, taking place every four to five years — provide a high-level platform for stakeholders to discuss, decide on and join in efforts addressing environmental priorities across the 56 countries of the ECE region, and serve as a regional pillar of sustainable development. At the same time, the process focuses on helping countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia to improve their environmental standards.

8. The present communication plan aims at broadly promoting the Batumi EfE Ministerial Conference as a major international event addressing priority environmental concerns in the pan-European region. In addition to promoting the Conference, the communication activities (see annex) will also attempt to raise the visibility of the EfE process by highlighting its main successes. These successes include:

(a) Setting up institutional mechanisms for cooperation (establishing the Environmental Action Programme Task Force and the Regional Environmental Centres);

(b) Acting as a driving force for developing multilateral environmental agreements and other environmental policy instruments, and promoting their implementation both within the ECE region and beyond;

(c) Launching the ECE Environmental Performance Review Programme for ECE member countries that are not members of OECD;

(d) Promoting cross-sectoral activities and policy integration (energy efficiency, ESD and greening the economy);

(e) Enhancing cooperation between Governments and civil society organizations.

9. A range of communication activities set out in an annex hereto will focus on the two main themes identified for the Conference with a view to facilitating the understanding of these issues for the media and the general public.

10. The two thematic background documents developed for the Conference could serve as a source of information for preparing related communication materials. Information documents and reports to be submitted to the Conference and relevant documents from other international conferences could serve as additional, more technical information sources, as appropriate.

11. The communication activities to be carried out in connection with the organization of the Conference target a broad audience. The representatives of the mass media — a key player in promoting the Conference — are being considered as a priority target group. Special activities, e.g., a workshop for journalists, similar to the one conducted before the Astana EfE Ministerial Conference, will be organized, depending on the availability of funds. A special effort should be made to actively involve the media in the host country and throughout the Caucasian subregion.

II. Proposed communication activities

12. A table annexed hereto presents a list of proposed communication activities for the Batumi Conference, together with goals, target groups, partners responsible for implementation, tools, a timeline and financial implications for the host country and ECE. Many of these activities involve an extensive use of social media for awareness-raising, but also for attracting political support. CEP is invited to consider the proposed activities with a view to commenting them and recommending additional activities, as well as to considering supporting some of the activities either financially or through an in-kind contribution.

13. To brand the Conference, the host country will be providing entrance signs, hall/room signs, roll-ups, pop-ups, totems and billboards at the Conference venue. In addition, to enhance the visual identity of the Conference and of the EfE process, a range of materials could be produced (e.g., notebooks, pens, bags, shirts, brochures, flags), depending on the availability of funds. The logo of the EfE process and a slogan developed for the promotion of the Batumi Ministerial Conference will be used on these materials, as appropriate.

14. Additionally, and not included in the activities proposed in the annex, consideration might be given to including a high-impact publicity event at the beginning of the Conference in order to attract wider media attention to the Conference and its goals. For example, the Ministers of the Environment and of Education of Georgia, together with the Executive Secretary of the ECE, the Executive Director of UNEP, the WHO Regional Director for Europe and other high-level officials (e.g., from OECD, EEA and UNDP) could be flown into Batumi from the capital city of Tbilisi in an airship or dirigible, if practically feasible and if sponsors can be secured to assist with the cost.

15. Another idea includes having the Georgian Ministers of the Environment, Education and Health, together with the ECE Executive Secretary, the Executive Director of UNEP, the WHO Regional Director for Europe and other high-level officials assist local scientists with the sampling of air quality conditions in various locations in and around the city of Batumi and along the nearby coast in the days immediately preceding the Conference. In the event of the non-availability of an airship, sampling of air above Batumi at different levels by means of air balloons could be envisaged, subject to the availability of air balloons and funds from the host country.

16. Using electronic cars, if available in the host country, or announcing a day without cars in Georgia (or only in Batumi), while providing public transportation free-of-charge on that day and encouraging people to make use of it, could be a valuable promotional feature to emphasize the need to clean the air and green the economy, including the transport sector.

17. Also, a collection of short statements related to the Conference and its two themes provided by eminent people and/or the environment ambassadors of UNEP could be considered to promote the EfE process and the Batumi event. Furthermore, special activities to reach out to parliamentarians could be considered ahead of the Conference.

18. The host country is looking into the feasibility of the proposed activities as well as identifying other innovative approaches and actions with a view to enhancing the promotion of the Conference. CEP will be informed of such activities at a later stage.

19. Based on the positive experience with the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) reporting services, which produced daily and final highlights for the Belgrade and Astana EfE Ministerial Conferences, such reporting would be very useful for the Batumi Conference as well, provided that services can be provided at a reasonable cost and that resources will be made available for this communication activity.²

20. To broaden the scope of the promotion outreach, developing a dedicated page for the Batumi Conference on Facebook could be envisaged, as well as preparing pages for the EfE process and the Batumi Conference on Wikipedia, the latter preferably in English, French and Russian versions.

21. The official slogan for this Conference has yet to be proposed, but may include a short slogan such as, “Cleaner, Greener, Smarter!”, or longer slogans such as: “Clean air and a Greener Europe: Improving air quality and greening the economy for a healthy and sustainable future”; “Health, sustainability, and beyond: Greening the pan-European region in a post-2015 world”; “Clean the air, grow green, and learn together!”; or “For a better environment and human health!”. A CEP Bureau member also suggested that the host country consider organizing a competition among children in Batumi to develop a slogan.

² Mention in this document of the names of firms and commercial products does not imply the endorsement of the United Nations.

Annex

Proposed communication activities for the Batumi Ministerial Conference

Responsible partner	Activity	Target group	Goal	Tool	Time frame/ deadline	Estimated resource requirements (US\$)		
						Total cost (source)	Resources available (source)	Balance required
During the preparatory process								
ECE	Articles in <i>UNECE Weekly</i>	Country missions in Geneva, journalists, other stakeholders	Presenting the main outcomes of the Committee's meetings	Electronic newsletter	November 2015; February 2016; May 2016	1,000 (ECE)	1,000	—
ECE in consultation with the host country and in cooperation with EfE partners	Production of electronic newsletters	All stakeholders	To provide information on the preparatory activities and enhance synergies among all partners	Electronic newsletter	February 2016; May 2016	1,500 (ECE)	1,500	—
ECE in consultation with the host country	Production of a leaflet that gives an overall picture of the Conference	General public and all stakeholders	Disseminating general information about the Conference and the EfE process	Electronic leaflet and print (A4 folded)	February/March 2016	2,000 (ECE)	2,000	—
Host country in consultation with ECE	Production of visual identity for the Conference	All participants	To enhance the overall image of the Conference	Poster	February 2016	500 (ECE)	500	—

<i>Responsible partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Target group</i>	<i>Goal</i>	<i>Tool</i>	<i>Time frame/ deadline</i>	<i>Estimated resource requirements (US\$)</i>		
						<i>Total cost (source)</i>	<i>Resources available (source)</i>	<i>Balance required</i>
ECE in cooperation with EfE partners	Production of an information kit (with a focus on the substance of the Conference)	Media	Giving journalists better knowledge of substantive issues to be covered by the Conference	Information kit, comprised of a limited number of fact sheets covering the themes of the Conference	May 2016	3,500 (ECE)	3,500	—
ECE	Production of a video clip to promote the two themes of the Conference	All participants and general public	To promote in a visual way the two themes of the Conference	Video clip	May/June 2016	6,000 (ECE)	6,000	—
ECE in consultation with the host country and in cooperation with EfE partners	Operation of the ECE website for the Conference	All stakeholders	Serving as an important source of information about the Conference and the EfE process	Website	Continuous for the EfE process and November 2016 onwards for the Batumi Ministerial Conference	2,000 (ECE)	2,000	—
ECE	Issue of press release	Journalists, other stakeholders	To announce the convening of the Conference and highlight the key issues	Press release	February 2016 and June 2016	Internal resources (ECE)	Internal resources	—
Host country in consultation with ECE	Operation of the host country website for the conference	All stakeholders	Serving as an important source of information on organizational matters related to the Conference	Website in English and Russian, and if possible in French	Website to be established October 2015 and to be updated continually	(host country)	(host country)	—

<i>Responsible partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Target group</i>	<i>Goal</i>	<i>Tool</i>	<i>Time frame/ deadline</i>	<i>Estimated resource requirements (US\$)</i>		
						<i>Total cost (source)</i>	<i>Resources available (source)</i>	<i>Balance required</i>
ECE	Issue of tweets and general announcements on the ECE Twitter ^a and social media accounts	All stakeholders, general public	To announce and publicize the Conference and highlight the key issues	Twitter, Facebook, ^a other applicable social media platforms	Once every 6–8 weeks in the four months leading up to the Conference	500 (ECE)	500	—
During the preparatory process <i>(depending on host country resources)</i>								
Host country in consultation with ECE	Production of materials to brand the Conference	All participants		Entrance signs, hall/rooms signs, pop-ups, totems and billboards	Feb–May 2016	(host country)	(host country)	—
Host country in consultation with ECE	Production of a video clip promoting the Conference and the host country	General public	Enhancing the overall image of the Conference	Video clip	May/June 2016	(host country)	(host country)	—
Host country in consultation with ECE	Production of materials to enhance the visual identity of the Conference and EfE process	All participants and stakeholders	Enhancing the visual identity of the Conference and EfE process	A variety of materials (e.g., notebooks, pens, bags, shirts, badges, brochures, flags)	May/June 2016	(host country)	(host country)	—
Host country in consultation with ECE	Development of a mobile phone application (app) for iPhone ^a and Android ^a	Conference attendees, journalists, other stakeholders	To facilitate the accessibility and organization of the Conference, and to assist attendees in easily obtaining	Mobile phone app for iPhone and Android	May 2016, with the app being launched at least two weeks in advance of the Conference	(host country)	(host country)	—

<i>Responsible partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Target group</i>	<i>Goal</i>	<i>Tool</i>	<i>Time frame/ deadline</i>	<i>Estimated resource requirements (US\$)</i>		
						<i>Total cost (source)</i>	<i>Resources available (source)</i>	<i>Balance required</i>
			schedule and location information as well as relevant information about the city of Batumi					
At the Batumi Ministerial Conference								
Host country	Providing a local photographer to take pictures throughout the Conference and related events organized on the margins of the Conference	All participants	To enhance the media materials produced as well as post them on the website of the Conference	Photographs	June 2016	(host country)	(host country)	—
ECE and the host country in cooperation with the EfE partners	Workshop for journalists	Journalists	To raise awareness	Half-day workshop in Batumi; attendance and reporting at the Conference	7 June 2016	40,000 (ECE, provided funds are made available by interested EfE stakeholders to support the travel, accommodation and meals of journalists from eligible countries) ^b	—	40,000

<i>Responsible partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Target group</i>	<i>Goal</i>	<i>Tool</i>	<i>Time frame/ deadline</i>	<i>Estimated resource requirements (US\$)</i>		
						<i>Total cost (source)</i>	<i>Resources available (source)</i>	<i>Balance required</i>
ECE and the host country in cooperation with EfE partners	Issue daily reports/highlights (without pictures, which will be taken by a local photographer) of the Conference (in English only)	Journalists, participants	To highlight the key issues and outcomes of the Conference	Daily reports/ highlights (IISD could be contracted for this activity)	During the Conference	26,500 for preparing Conference highlights (ECE) 36,500 for daily reports and Conference highlights (ECE)	—	26,500 or 36,500
Host country and ECE in cooperation with EfE partners	Press conference at the end of the Conference	Journalists	To highlight the outcomes of the Conference	Press conference	10 June 2016	Space and organization to be provided by the host country	(host country)	—
Host country and EfE stakeholders in consultation with ECE	Exhibitions	All participants	To showcase work related to the Conference themes	Exhibition stands ^c	At the Conference	Space and organization to be provided by the host country	(host country)	—
Host country and ECE with support from all stakeholders	Making the Conference climate neutral to the greatest extent	All participants	To minimize the impact on the environment related to the organization of the Conference	By compensating for the emission of carbon dioxide (CO ₂) and other greenhouse gases produced by the Conference (e.g., by supporting recycling and renewable energy projects, offsetting CO ₂)	Before and during the conference	To be determined (to be calculated depending on the number of participants. Belgrade Ministerial Conference amounted to some \$11,000)	—	To be determined

<i>Responsible partner</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Target group</i>	<i>Goal</i>	<i>Tool</i>	<i>Time frame/ deadline</i>	<i>Estimated resource requirements (US\$)</i>		
						<i>Total cost (source)</i>	<i>Resources available (source)</i>	<i>Balance required</i>
				from flights to/from the Conference, using glass pitchers instead of plastic bottles for water, etc.)				
ECE	Issue of tweets and general announcements on the ECE Twitter and social media accounts	All participants, stakeholders and general public	To highlight the key issues and outcomes of the Conference and enhance the interaction with the general public, journalists, and non-attending stakeholders	Twitter, Facebook, other applicable social media platforms	Daily during the Conference	1,500 (ECE)	1,500	—
ECE	Issue of press release	Journalists, other stakeholders	To announce the main outcomes of the Conference	Press release	June 2016	Internal resources (ECE)	Internal resources	—

^a Mention in this document of the names of firms and commercial products does not imply the endorsement of the United Nations.

^b These funds are intended to support participation (travel, accommodation and meals) in the workshop and in the Conference of journalists from countries with economies in transition with a view to mediatize the Conference in their countries. At the same time, should no funds be available, organization of such a workshop for the Georgian journalists could be envisaged. Also, a Bureau member suggested exploring the possibility of inviting a journalist from a world-renowned environmental magazine (to be identified) to cover the Conference.

^c Depending on the availability of space. Stakeholders are encouraged to partner in organizing exhibitions. For example, two exhibitions could be envisaged, i.e., one per each of the two themes of the Conference, organized jointly by relevant stakeholders.