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Executive Body for the Convention on Long-range
Transboundary Air Pollution

Working Group on Strategies and Review

Fifty-fourth session

Geneva, 13 and 14 December 2016

Report of the Working Group on Strategies and Review on its fifty-fourth session

I. Introduction

1. The fifty-fourth session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review under the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution was held in Geneva, Switzerland. The meeting started on the afternoon of Tuesday, 13 December, and ran through Wednesday, 14 December 2016. It was held back to back with the thirty-sixth session of the Executive Body for the Convention (Geneva, 15-16 December 2016).

A. Attendance

2. The session was attended by representatives of the following Parties to the Convention: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, European Union, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America.

3. Also present at the meeting were representatives of the European Environmental Bureau, the European Federation of Clean Air and Environmental Protection Associations, the International Cryosphere Climate Initiative and the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis.

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B. Organizational matters

4. The meeting was chaired by Mr. William Harnett (United States).
5. The Working Group adopted the agenda for the session, as set out in document ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/115, with changes proposed by the Chair.¹ It agreed not to include an item on air pollution and sustainable development on the agenda, proposing instead that the issue be discussed in the framework of the thirty-sixth session of the Executive Body.

II. Adoption of the report of the fifty-third session

6. The Working Group adopted the report of its fifty-third session, as set out in document ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/114. It agreed to keep to the current procedure with regard to the adoption of its meeting reports.

III. Progress in the implementation of the 2016-2017 workplan

7. The Working Group took note of and welcomed the report by the Co-Chairs of the Task Force on Techno-economic Issues (ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/2016/1) on the progress made in the implementation of the 2016-2017 workplan. In particular, Parties welcomed the progress made in developing the Clearing House of Control Technologies, highlighting its importance as a platform for sharing information on emission abatement technologies.

8. The Working Group expressed its appreciation for the workshop to promote the understanding and implementation of best available techniques with a focus on countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia organized under the auspices of the Task Force on Techno-economic Issues (Berlin, 20-22 April 2016) (see ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/2016/3), and thanked the organizers and co-organizers of the workshop. The Workshop had met the needs and interests of the countries in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) region, in particular those in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Specifically, the workshop had led to an improved understanding of the different best available techniques concepts prevailing throughout the ECE region. The Working Group suggested the organization of similar workshops on a regular basis, conducive, among others, to supporting the implementation of relevant commitments under the Batumi Action for Cleaner Air initiative (ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/7) in the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

9. Furthermore, the Working Group expressed its appreciation for the work of the secretariat of the Task Force on Techno-economic Issues and the ad hoc drafting group established at the request of the Working Group on Strategies and Review at its fifty-third session (Geneva, 15-17 December 2015) to update the draft guidelines for the estimation and measurement of emissions of volatile organic compounds, including more explanations and examples, in response to the questions received from Belarus. It agreed with the draft presented for consideration at the present session (ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/2016/4) and decided to forward it to the Executive Body for adoption at its thirty-sixth session.

10. Moreover, the Working Group took note of and welcomed the report by the Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen (ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/2016/2) on the progress made in the

¹ All documentation for the meeting is available on the following web page for the session: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=40017#/>.

implementation of the 2016-2017 workplan. In its report, the Task Force highlighted the funding challenges it had encountered, which would force the Task Force secretariat to close by March 2017 in the absence of any additional funds. Based on a proposal by the Task Force, the Working Group decided to organize a one-day thematic segment on “air pollution and agriculture” as part of the next, fifty-fifth session of the Working Group (Geneva, 31 May-2 June 2017). It requested the Task Force to collect updated information on the national implementation of the requirement of the Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone (Gothenburg Protocol) to establish, publish and disseminate advisory codes of good agricultural practice to control ammonia emissions by Parties in advance of the thematic segment in 2017.

IV. Policy response to the 2016 scientific assessment

11. The Working Group held an informal session on the progress report and preliminary findings of the ad hoc policy review group of experts on the 2016 scientific assessment of the Convention² (2016 Scientific Assessment Report), and exchanged its expert views on key issues highlighted by the group for feedback. The exchange addressed four key themes:

- (a) Science and monitoring issues;
- (b) Addressing policy gaps;
- (c) Maximizing the impacts of the Protocols;
- (d) Improving outreach and communication.

12. The Working Group noted that that exchange represented an expert view as an input to the group’s further work. It requested participants in the informal session to share further expert views, should they require more reflection time, with the Chair of the ad hoc group of experts or the secretariat by e-mail by 10 January 2017. Representatives of the Parties would be able to exchange views on the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the ad hoc group of experts presented at the Working Group’s fifty-fifth session.

V. Information sharing by Parties on the implementation of the Convention

A. Good practices to strengthen the implementation of air pollution-related policies, strategies and measures

13. The Chair recalled that the Working Group had provided a forum for the last three years for reporting on policies and strategies for air pollution abatement, following the adoption of decision 2013/2 by the Executive Body at its thirty-second session (see ECE/EB.AIR/122/Add.1).

14. Representatives of Albania, Azerbaijan, Canada, Estonia, the European Union, Finland, Kyrgyzstan, Luxembourg, Portugal, the Russian Federation and Sweden shared information on their experiences, good practices and lessons learned with regard to the implementation of the Convention and its protocols. The Working Group took note of the

² See Rob Maas and Peringe Grennfelt, eds., *Towards Cleaner Air: Scientific Assessment Report 2016* (Oslo, 2016) and United States Environmental Protection Agency and Environment and Climate Change Canada, *Towards Cleaner Air: Scientific Assessment Report 2016 — North America* (2016, online report).

information provided by Parties and discussed a number of questions arising from the presentations.

15. In addition, although country representatives did not make presentations on the topic, completed templates with examples and good practices had been submitted in advance of the session by Denmark, France, Hungary, Poland, the Republic of Moldova and Switzerland.

16. Parties that had submitted their completed templates with examples and good practices of air pollution-related policies, strategies and measures, but which were unable to make a presentation owing to the limited time, were encouraged to present their experience at the Working Group's fifty-fifth session.

17. The Chair concluded that, in total, 37 Parties had shared experiences over the course of the Working Group's fifty-first, fifty-second, fifty-third and fifty-fourth sessions, including at a special session on transport and air pollution organized during the Working Group's fifty-second session. Two non-Parties, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, had also shared experiences in the period under review. Experiences had been shared either through a presentation at a Working Group session or through the submission of a template prepared and circulated by the secretariat ahead of the Working Group sessions.

VI. Election of officers

18. In accordance with rule 21 of the rules of procedure (ECE/EB.AIR/106/Add.1, decision 2010/19), the Working Group re-elected Mr. Paul Almodovar (United States) and Mr. Ivan Angelov (Bulgaria) at its Vice-Chairs, and elected Mr. Till Spranger (Germany) as its Vice-Chair for the period 2017-2018.

VII. Adoption of the conclusions and recommendations of the Working Group

19. On 14 December 2016, the Working Group on Strategies and Review adopted the conclusions and recommendations arising from its fifty-fourth session.
