



**Economic and Social  
Council**

Distr.  
GENERAL

ECE/CEP/155  
10 November 2009

Original: ENGLISH

---

**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

**COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY**

Sixteenth session  
Geneva, 20–23 October 2009

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY  
ON ITS SIXTEENTH SESSION**

CONTENTS

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1-9	3
A. Attendance .....	2-6	3
B. Organizational matters.....	7-9	3
II. OUTCOMES OF THE SIXTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE OF CONCERN TO THE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT POLICY .....	10-11	4
III. REVIEW OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK .....	12-35	4
A. Environmental Performance Reviews .....	12-19	4
B. Environmental indicators and monitoring .....	20-22	6
C. Implementation of multilateral environmental agreements: their contributions to the climate change agenda .....	23-29	6
D. Cross-sectoral activities .....	30-35	8
IV. PREPARATIONS FOR THE SEVENTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE “ENVIRONMENT FOR EUROPE” .....	36-45	10
A. Host country preparations for the Conference.....	36-38	10

CONTENTS (*continued*)

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
B. Preparations of the assessment reports for the Conference ...	39-41	11
C. Selection of the themes for the Conference .....	42-45	12
V. PROGRAMME OF WORK.....	46-49	13
A. Programme of work for 2010–2011.....	46	13
B. Reporting on programme performance.....	47-49	14
VI. CALENDAR OF MEETINGS .....	50	14
VII. SUMMARY OF DECISIONS BY THE COMMITTEE .....	51	14
VIII. CLOSURE OF THE SESSION.....	52-53	15

Annexes

I. Criteria for financial support.....	16
II. Schedule of preparatory meetings for the Seventh Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” .....	17

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The sixteenth session of the Committee on Environmental Policy was held from 20 to 23 October 2009 in Geneva.

### A. Attendance

2. The meeting was attended by delegations from 39 member States of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE): Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine, United States of America and Uzbekistan.

3. Representatives of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States) and of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) attended, as did representatives from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

4. Representatives of the European Commission and the European Environment Agency (EEA) attended the meeting.

5. Representatives from the following Regional Environmental Centres (RECs) participated: REC for Central and Eastern Europe (REC-CEE), REC for Central Asia (CAREC), REC for the Republic of Moldova (REC-Moldova) and REC for the Russian Federation (REC-Russia).

6. Representatives of environmental civil society associations (European ECO-Forum, European Environmental Bureau and the Volgograd-Ecopress Information Centre (Russian Federation)) and of the private sector (Kazakhstan Business Council for Sustainable Development) also participated.

### B. Organizational matters

7. The meeting opened with a welcome address by the Executive Secretary of UNECE. He emphasized the Committee's important role as the governing body for the environmental sub-programme of UNECE and stressed the new role of the Committee stipulated by the Reform Plan of the "Environment for Europe" (EfE) process, i.e. that of the convening body for the preparatory process of the next EfE Ministerial Conference. The importance of the cooperation of all partners was highlighted as a prerequisite to reach the process' original goal of raising environmental standards everywhere, and thus contributing to the region's sustainable development. The Committee was assured of the commitment of UNECE to providing strong support to the EfE process, by servicing the preparatory process and by contributing its expertise and experience with environmental issues in the region.

8. The Committee adopted the agenda as contained in document ECE/CEP/154.

9. The Committee elected the following members of its Bureau: Mr. Zaal Lomtadze (Georgia) as Chairperson, and as Vice-Chairpersons: Mr. Massimo Cozzone (Italy), Mr. Bulat Yessekin (Kazakhstan), Mr. Sinisa Stankovic (Montenegro), Mr. Adriaan Oudeman (Netherlands), Ms. Elisabete Quintas Da Silva (Portugal), Ms. Martine Rohn-Brossard (Switzerland), Mr. Taras Trotsky (Ukraine) and Mr. John Michael Matuszak (United States of America).

## **II. OUTCOMES OF THE SIXTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE OF CONCERN TO THE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY**

10. The Secretary to the Committee on Environmental Policy presented the relevant outcomes of the sixty-third session of the Economic Commission for Europe. She informed the Committee of the endorsement by the Commission of the Reform Plan for the EfE process and of the decision to hold the Fourth Regional Implementation Meeting on Sustainable Development (RIM-4) on 1 and 2 of December 2009 to prepare the regional contribution to the eighteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-18) in May 2010. The Commission also considered UNECE activities related to climate change mitigation and adaptation, inter alia, translating global objectives and commitments into regional results.

11. The Committee took note of the information provided and agreed to support the organization of RIM-4 by facilitating the nomination of speakers and country delegations to the meeting. The Committee suggested including in the RIM-4, as part of the session on cross-cutting issues, a session for reviewing progress made with implementing CSD-17 outcomes. The secretariat would reflect this modification in the document on the organization of work for RIM-4. The Committee also reiterated that preparations for the next EfE Ministerial Conference would take place according to the endorsed Reform Plan.

## **III. REVIEW OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK**

### **A. Environmental Performance Reviews**

#### **1. Environmental Performance Review of Uzbekistan**

12. The rapporteur designated by the ad hoc Expert Group on Environmental Performance Reviews (EPR Expert Group) informed the Committee about the results of work on the review of Uzbekistan conducted by the EPR Expert Group at its meeting on 19 October 2009. The rapporteur pointed out that progress had been made in Uzbekistan with respect to ratifying and implementing environmental conventions and protocols as well as developing environmental legislation and policy. A representative of Uzbekistan presented the current situation in the country, with a focus on measures undertaken and main current environmental priorities, as well as the progress achieved since the first EPR in 2001.

13. In the ensuing discussion, delegates posed questions to the representatives of Uzbekistan, made comments and provided some practical guidance on how to better implement the recommendations of the EPRs. The Committee concluded the peer review by adopting the recommendations in the second EPR of Uzbekistan.

14. The secretariat reported on other activities under the EPR Expert Group. The second review of Azerbaijan had started and the fact-finding mission to Azerbaijan would be carried out from 16 to 18 November 2009. The expert mission was foreseen for spring 2010. The launch event of the EPR of Kyrgyzstan was planned for the beginning of November. Discussions were ongoing with the representative of the Ministry of Environment of Turkmenistan regarding a possible EPR in 2010. A new product was being developed – the EPR synopsis – which aimed to provide a concise and user-friendly extract of the EPR executive summary, conclusions and recommendations, as well as an overview of progress made with implementing the recommendations from the previous EPR. The synopsis would be pilot-tested with the EPRs for Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan.

15. The secretariat noted that the EPR programme would need further support in 2010 due to the high costs of the reviews conducted and those expected for the upcoming reviews in Caucasus and Central Asia.

16. The secretariat informed the Committee about the road map agreed by the regional commissions for transferring know-how on EPRs from UNECE to the other regional commissions. Two countries, Lebanon and Morocco, had expressed their interest in conducting an EPR. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Economic and Social Commission of Western Asia (ESCWA) would organize a seminar in Lebanon in January 2010 to starting the process of transferring EPR know-how. In this context, the secretariat would invite a representative from the ECA and from the ESCWA secretariats to participate in one of the next EPR missions so they could acquaint themselves with the EPR process. The UNECE secretariat had participated in the Joint Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab Region (JCEDAR) in Cairo in November 2008, to present the EPR programme at the invitation of ESCWA.

17. The Committee took note of the information provided and reiterated the importance of the EPR Programme in supporting beneficiary countries' efforts to improve their environmental management. Countries were invited to inform the secretariat of their interest in carrying out a second EPR, as well as to submit to the secretariat candidatures of experts for participation in the EPR Expert Group by 15 December 2009. The Committee decided to mandate its Extended Bureau meeting in March 2010 to carry out a peer review on Georgia, and subsequently to adopt its recommendations.

## **2. Climate change and its impact in countries under the Environmental Performance Review programme**

18. The secretariat presented the background document prepared to facilitate the discussion on the impact of climate change on the countries under the EPR programme. Its particular focus was on the Central Asian subregion and Uzbekistan – the first country to feature a specific chapter on climate change in its EPR (ECE/CEP/2009/6).

19. The Committee acknowledged the importance of addressing climate change issues in the work of the EPR programme, as well as the valuable role of the UNECE multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) in supporting countries' efforts related to climate change mitigation and adaptation. The Committee also considered the issue of transboundary cooperation on adaptation to climate change as well as the inclusion of climate change in future

EPRs. Delegates agreed that climate change issues should be reflected in the EPRs in a separate chapter, but also in an integrated way in other relevant chapters.

## **B. Environmental indicators and monitoring**

20. The intersectoral Joint Task Force on Environmental Indicators had been established to work towards harmonization of environmental indicators production, especially in countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus, Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe. Its first meeting had been held from 31 August to 2 September 2009 in Geneva. The Vice-Chairperson of the Joint Task Force informed the Committee about the main results of the meeting (ECE/CEP/2009/9). The Committee took note of the information provided and welcomed the meeting's successful outcomes.

21. The Secretary to the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment informed the Committee about the main outcomes of the Working Group's tenth session (Geneva, 3–4 September 2009; ECE/CEP/AC.10/2009/2). With regard to the proposal for the Astana state-of-the-environment assessment, the Working Group stressed the need to involve countries in the preparatory process in order to ensure the provision of valid, relevant and legitimate data. Given the Working Group's important role in preparing the last two pan-European assessments, the Working Group requested EEA to explicitly define the Working Group's role in the revised proposal that EEA intended to submit to the Committee. In this regard, proposals had been made to incorporate the Working Group's Bureau into the Steering Group for the Astana Assessment of Assessments (AoA) Report, and for the Working Group members to play the role of national focal points in the process.

22. The Committee welcomed the Working Group's work and in particular its initiative to review progress made by EPR-assessed countries in implementing the recommendations on environmental monitoring and information management. The Committee suggested that such an initiative should also be considered by the governing bodies of the UNECE environmental conventions as well as by other programmes in relevant spheres of competence. The Committee strongly supported the Working Group's active involvement in the preparation of the Astana AoA Report. With respect to the Guidelines for developing national strategies to use air quality monitoring as an environmental policy tool (ECE/CEP/2009/10) prepared by the Working Group, the Committee decided to consider their adoption at its Extended Bureau meeting in March 2010.

## **C. Implementation of multilateral environmental agreements: their contributions to the climate change agenda**

23. The Committee heard presentations on progress in implementing the UNECE environmental conventions and protocols, with a focus on their contributions to the climate change agenda.

24. After a successful 30 years of work, the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution was now developing a long-term strategy (2010–2020) that would integrate specific issues related to climate change, including addressing the impact of black carbon and tropospheric ozone at the regional level. The issue of how much air pollution policies were capable of contributing to a rapid impact on climate change was also being considered, with a

view to deciding on future required actions under the Convention. One issue of crucial importance was the adequate implementation and compliance with the Convention and its protocols. The secretariat was assisting Parties with building their capacities to be in compliance with the Convention. Activities were also being undertaken to help interested non-Parties in their preparations for accession to the Convention and its protocols. Pursuant the decisions 2008/4 and 2008/5 of the Convention's Executive Body, the Committee was informed that Spain had been in non-compliance with the Protocols on Nitrogen Oxides<sup>1</sup> and Volatile Organic Compounds<sup>2</sup> for the past 14 years, and that it did not expect to achieve compliance before 2020. The Executive Body had urged Spain to consider what measures it could undertake to make progress towards compliance.

25. A major focus of the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents was its Assistance Programme, launched in late 2004. It helped countries with economies in transition implement the Convention through a two-phased approach. The first (preparatory) phase helped countries achieve the capacities needed to lay the groundwork for the Convention's implementation. With a positive evaluation from the fact-finding team on the first phase, countries were accepted to the second (implementation) phase, in which they were provided with needs-driven assistance in the form of specific training, pilot-projects and exercises. Most countries benefiting from the Assistance Programme were now in the second phase and making systematic progress towards better prevention of industrial accidents, both in terms of reducing their frequency and mitigating their impact on the environment. At the same time, the Western European Parties were working continuously to maintain a high level of industrial safety. This allowed for avoiding major accidental discharges of hazardous substances into the water and air, which could harm human life and environment as well as add to climate change.

26. The Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes represented one of the essential legal frameworks for cooperation on transboundary aspects of climate change and on the development of adaptation strategies. Cooperation between riparian countries in adapting to climate change was a prerequisite for preventing and reducing the possible negative impacts of unilateral adaptation measures and decisions. It would also enable more effective and efficient adaptation through a broader knowledge base, a larger planning space (i.e. taking measures in the basin where they have optimal effect) and the possibility of sharing costs and benefits. To support countries' efforts in addressing the issue of climate change adaptation, a Guidance on Water and Adaptation to Climate Change had been developed under the Convention and its Protocol on Water and Health for the adoption by the Meeting of the Parties in November 2009. The Guidance targeted decision makers and water managers by providing a general road map towards the adoption of water management that took climate change into account. Furthermore, a Guidance on Water Supply and Sanitation in Extreme Weather Events was under development for adoption by the Meeting of the Parties of the Protocol on Water and Health in October 2010.

27. The Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in a Transboundary Context had discussed the issue of environmental assessment and climate change at its last Meeting of the

---

<sup>1</sup> 1988 Sofia Protocol concerning the Control of Emissions of Nitrogen Oxides or their Transboundary Fluxes.

<sup>2</sup> 1991 Geneva Protocol concerning the Control of Emissions of Volatile Organic Compounds or their Transboundary Fluxes.

Parties in May 2008 and had concluded that strategic environmental assessment (SEA) was an appropriate mechanism to deal with climate change impacts. SEA, for instance, could help ensure that development of plans and programmes took full account of climate issues in a clear, transparent and systematic process. A subregional workshop for the Baltic Sea area had discussed the issue of “Climate change in EIA and SEA”, and a regional seminar on the same theme was planned for 2010. A focus of work under the Convention over the past year had been building capacity to implement the Convention through subregional workshops, pilot projects, advisory missions and reviews of legislation, particularly in less experienced Parties. This work had been backed up by an increasingly active Implementation Committee that reviewed compliance. Several capacity-building workshops on SEA had been held for States of Eastern Europe and the Caucasus intending to become Parties to the Convention's Protocol on SEA.

28. The Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) had undertaken a variety of initiatives during the past year in response to the challenges of climate change. Among these were: (a) the staging of high-profile events to increase awareness of these challenges and the opportunities presented by the Convention; (b) analytical work aimed at strengthening implementation of climate-related agreements; (c) the application of ICT (information and communication technology) to lessen the environmental footprint of UNECE activities; and (d) promoting the principles of the Convention in climate governance and public decision-making. With the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), the secretariat had developed and pilot-tested a methodology for preparing a national profile to assess national capacities to implement the Convention. It was currently exploring how to further elaborate an assessment methodology to assist countries with fulfilling their commitments to implementing article 6 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in particular those related to public access to information and public participation in decision-making. Furthermore, a UNECE project on “Facilitating Electronic Public Participation and Mitigating Climate Change: Feasibility Study of Teleconferencing and Webcasting in Selected Aarhus Convention Meetings” would conduct the initial test of interactive electronic participation in meetings, to reduce the meetings’ environmental footprint.

29. The Committee took note of the information provided. The Kiev Guidelines for Strengthening Compliance with and Implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements in the UNECE Region were recalled, with particular emphasis on the need to strengthen capacity-building activities for non-Parties. The aim was to help the latter establish the prerequisites for implementing the MEAs before ratifying them.

#### **D. Cross-sectoral activities**

30. The Committee was informed about recent developments under a number of ongoing cross-sectoral activities undertaken under the leadership of UNECE, or in partnership with other organizations.

## 1. Education for sustainable development

31. Current work under the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) focused on the implementation and assessment of results. Many countries had established the necessary policy requirements and implementation mechanisms and were working on developing national and local capacity-building initiatives for educators, teacher trainers and policymakers. A number of countries were working to introduce ESD into curricula and were focusing on the development of competences required for the education sector to embrace ESD. To address the challenging issue of adequate competences, the UNECE Steering Committee on ESD had established an Expert Group on Competences in ESD to develop, over two years, a set of recommendations for policymakers and a range of core competences in ESD for educators. To facilitate the sharing of experience, a new collection of good practices in addressing sustainable consumption, production and transportation through ESD was being carried out. These good practices would also serve as an input into the upcoming RIM-4. More detailed information on the outcomes of the Steering Committee's last meeting was available in the meeting report (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2009/2). Activities for the coming year would focus on developing competences in ESD and national reviews of progress vis-à-vis implementation of the Strategy's second phase. One issue of concern was programme financing from voluntary contributions only. Without additional funds being provided in the coming weeks, it would not be possible to service the programme as was required to accomplish the agreed activities for the Strategy's phase II.

32. The Committee took note of the information provided. Delegations strongly supported the continuation of the work on ESD and requested the secretariat to send fund-raising letters to the members of the Committee.

## 2. Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme

33. The Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP) was focusing its activities on assisting member States with implementing the Amsterdam Declaration, which had been adopted by the Third High-level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment in January. The Declaration had a particular focus on sustainable urban transport solutions in the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia and of South-Eastern Europe. The Third High-level Meeting had agreed new priority goals for the THE PEP, namely: (a) sustainable economic development through investment in environment and health friendly transport, (b) sustainable mobility and the promotion of a more efficient transport system; (c) reduced emissions of transport-related greenhouse gases, air pollutants and noise; and (d) promotion of policies and actions conducive to healthy and safe modes of transport. Three implementation mechanisms were supporting achievement of the Amsterdam Declaration's goals: (a) THE PEP *estaffete* (relay race), designed to disseminate best practices in sustainable urban transport across the region; (b) national transport, health and environment action plans (NTHEAPs); and (c) THE PEP Partnership, whose goal was to build capacity and assist member States with developing these plans. The Third High-level Meeting had also adopted a new workplan for THE PEP (2009–2014). THE PEP Steering Committee would work on putting into practice the Amsterdam commitments. To enhance visibility of THE PEP, the Steering Committee would develop a communication strategy. The Committee took note of the information provided.

### **3. Environment and Security Initiative**

34. The Environment and Security (ENVSEC) Initiative had completed assessments of environmental and security risks for the subregions of Central Asia, Eastern Europe, the Southern Caucasus and the Eastern Caspian. Specific work programmes to reduce tensions and find solutions for the identified problems had been developed and implemented. UNECE activities within ENVSEC would continue to focus on supporting implementation of its MEAs. In 2009, UNECE had served as Chair of ENVSEC, pursuing a set of objectives that had included: (a) establishing a new management structure for ENVSEC and renewing the Memorandum of Understanding between the partners; (b) reviewing vision and strategy of ENVSEC; (c) enhancing the Initiative's visibility; (d) developing ENVSEC work on climate change adaptation; and (e) improving fund-raising. A more detailed overview of UNECE-ENVSEC activities was provided in the information paper 3. The Committee took note of the information provided.

### **4. Environment and Health process**

35. The current key activity within the Environment and Health process was the preparation of its Fifth Ministerial Conference (Parma, Italy, 10–12 March 2010). The Conference would review the progress in implementing the Children's Environment and Health Action Plan for Europe (CEHAPE) as well as the respective national plans. The Conference was expected to set the European agenda with regard to emerging environmental health challenges for the coming years. In particular, it would discuss and suggest policy measures necessary to tackle the effects of climate change on environment and health, and would address social and economic inequities. The draft Ministerial Declaration would be finalized at a meeting in Bonn, Germany, in January 2010. Youth would be actively involved in preparations for and during the Conference. Back-to-back to the Conference, there would be a day-long event dedicated to the 10-year anniversary of the signature of the Protocol on Water and Health. At its last meeting, the European Environment and Health Committee (EEHC) had stressed the need for continuous engagement of the environmental sector in the Environment and Health process and the work of EEHC, which served as an important bridge linking the two sectors. The Committee took note of the information provided.

## **IV. PREPARATIONS FOR THE SEVENTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE “ENVIRONMENT FOR EUROPE”**

### **A. Host country preparations for the Conference**

36. The representative of Kazakhstan informed the Committee about national preparations to host the Seventh Efe Ministerial Conference. The Conference was planned to be held in Astana in September or October 2011. In addition to the Efe Ministerial Conference, in Astana in September 2010 Kazakhstan would be hosting the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) Ministerial Conference on Environment and Sustainable Development, with a focus on green growth. The representative of Kazakhstan emphasized that Kazakhstan was planning to link these two high-level events. For this purpose, the Government had established an interministerial working group to prepare both conferences and plan the necessary actions. Non-governmental organizations and the private sector were being actively involved in the preparatory process.

37. Kazakhstan reconfirmed its readiness to host the Seventh Efe Ministerial Conference. The internal costs for the organization of both conferences would be covered by the State budget. In addition to the State budget allocated for organization of the Conference itself, the delegation of Kazakhstan asked countries for financial and in-kind support to assist the national preparatory process for the Conference.

38. The Committee took note of the provided information and thanked Kazakhstan for the progress made in preparing the Conference. It expressed its wish for and expectation of a continuing efficient cooperation for a successful Conference in 2011. The secretariat would prepare a paper, with an overview of necessary resources both at the international and national levels, for the Extended Bureau meeting in March 2010.

### **B. Preparations of the assessment reports for the Conference**

39. The Chairperson briefed the Committee on the outcomes of the brainstorming meeting of its Extended Bureau (Geneva, 19 May 2009). The meeting had considered options for preparing the next pan-European state-of-the-environment assessment. The Executive Director of EEA briefed the Committee on the outcomes of the EEA high-level consultation meeting reforming the pan-European assessment reporting process (Copenhagen, 3 July 2009), and presented a proposal for the Astana Assessment in the form of an “assessment of assessments” (AoA) report. The objective of such a report would be to provide a critical review and analysis of the existing material in order to: (a) make a gap analysis of the regional needs and priorities for conducting assessments; (b) evaluate progress on targets, implementation of conventions and agreed actions; and (c) develop proposals for a framework and options to build a regular process for regional environmental assessments, including potential costs. The organization of work for preparing the AoA report implied the establishment of an ad hoc steering group, a group of experts and national contact points.

40. The Committee:

- (a) Welcomed the proposal by the EEA on the preparation of the AoA report;
- (b) Decided to establish an ad hoc Steering Group under the Committee on Environmental Policy which would be responsible for:
  - (i) Setting the scope, focus and outline for the AoA report;
  - (ii) Guiding and assessing the work in progress on the AoA report;
  - (iii) Reviewing the draft report on AoA;
  - (iv) Facilitating contacts with participating countries and organizations.
- (c) Decided that the Steering Group should be co-chaired by the EEA Executive Director and a representative of a country from Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (to be selected by counties from the subregion);
- (d) Agreed that the membership of the Steering Group should be balanced and should include representatives of Governments, the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment, international organizations and institutions, and civil society. The composition of

the Steering Group would be decided by the Committee's Bureau in consultation with the Co-Chairpersons;

(e) Agreed to minimize the number of meetings and work as much as possible by technological means;

(f) Agreed that the Steering Group would invite countries and organizations to nominate experts to cover the AoA report's specific topics and to work in topical expert groups, as needed;

(g) Welcomed the interest of representatives of relevant organizations and expert bodies to contribute to the AoA by submitting information, and encouraged the Steering Group to facilitate their participation in the process;

(h) Agreed that national contact points should be designated using the existing networks of Eionet (European Environment Information and Observation Network) and the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment to coordinate country inputs;

(i) Requested the UNECE secretariat to service the Steering Group, and invited donors to provide voluntary contributions to support the servicing of the Steering Group;

(j) Invited the Steering Group to regularly inform and report to the Committee on the implementation of its mandate;

(k) Invited the UNECE secretariat to commence discussions with the Co-Chairpersons and the Committee's Bureau regarding preliminary steps for preparing the Steering Group's first meeting.

41. The Committee requested the secretariat to prepare, in consultation with its Bureau, detailed terms of reference for the Steering Group, including human and financial resource implications, and to submit them for endorsement to the UNECE Executive Committee at its next meeting on 17 December 2009.

### **C. Selection of the themes for the Conference**

42. The Secretary to the Committee introduced the two background documents prepared with a view to facilitating the selection of themes for the Conference, namely: (a) a document with commitments by the Sixth EfE Ministerial Conference and issues raised in environmental assessments and statistical reports (ECE/CEP/2009/4); and (b) a compilation of summaries of assessments and statistical reports on environment (ECE/CEP/2009/5). An analysis of summaries had identified the following main environmental issues of common concern for the region: (a) climate change; (b) energy efficiency; (c) sustainable water management; (d) biodiversity loss; and (e) the lack of reliable, accessible and comparable environmental data and information.

43. The representative of the EAP Task Force<sup>3</sup> of OECD briefed the Committee on the relevant outcomes of its annual meeting (Paris, 15–16 October 2009). The Task Force had

---

<sup>3</sup> Task Force for the Implementation of the Environmental Action Programme for Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia countries.

considered its possible inputs to the Astana EfE Ministerial Conference and had proposed as a contribution the products of its work on water and sanitation, environmental financing and environmental governance. The meeting had also held a round-table discussion on environmental cooperation in the context of green growth and a special session on water sector reform.

44. The Committee welcomed the background documents and considered the priority issues of concern to the entire region. Delegations made a number of suggestions for possible themes. These included various options that concerned both water and green economy issues. After intense deliberations, the Committee agreed on the following two themes for the Astana EfE Ministerial Conference:

- (a) Sustainable management of water and water-related ecosystems;
- (b) Greening the economy: mainstreaming the environment into economic development.

45. The Committee requested the secretariat, in consultation with the Bureau, to develop the first draft of the outline of the Conference agenda for the consideration by the meeting of its Extended Bureau in March 2010. Interested countries were invited to submit their proposals to the secretariat by Friday, 4 December 2009.

## **V. PROGRAMME OF WORK**

### **A. Programme of work for 2010–2011**

46. The Committee considered the document with its draft programme of work for 2010–2011 (ECE/CEP/2009/3). The Committee adopted its programme of work for 2010–2011 with the following revisions:

(a) In paragraph 5: to specify that the preparation of the Astana Ministerial Conference's substantive content and format will take place in accordance with the EfE Reform Plan.

(b) In paragraph 12, to add: An ad hoc Steering Group, established by the Committee at its sixteenth session, will guide the preparation for the Astana Conference of an "assessment of assessments" report by the European Environment Agency.

(c) In paragraph 15(e), substitute the text with: The Steering Group on Environmental Assessments will help assessing the regional needs, priorities and sustainable long-term mechanisms to keep the pan-European environment under continuous review to submit concrete proposals to this effect to the Seventh Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe".

(d) In paragraph 46, to complete the part on the planned activities as follows: pending decisions by the Parma Conference, the UNECE secretariat and the Committee representatives in the European Environment and Health Committee, together with the WHO<sup>4</sup> counterpart, will fully engage in the Conference's follow-up activities. The joint work will also focus on building

---

<sup>4</sup> World Health Organization.

stronger linkages both between UNECE and WHO secretariats and between the environment and health-related activities, with a view to ensuring better synergies and joining efforts in addressing environment and health issues.

## **B. Reporting on programme performance**

47. The Chairperson briefed the Committee on the outcomes of the Bureau's discussions on programme performance in 2008–2009 and the proposed accomplishments for 2010–2011 (information paper no. 4). The Bureau agreed in general with the presented programme performance. With reference to the UNECE MEAs, one Bureau member objected to having the "number of ratifications" as an indicator of achievement and proposed instead measuring the activities undertaken to help non-Parties to establish the prerequisites for implementing the MEAs before ratifying them. The Bureau member would suggest a new indicator of achievement to be included in the proposed accomplishments for 2010–2011, bearing in mind the indicators' quantitative nature and the requirement that they be consistent and be measurable over time to enable the assessment of progress. The new indicator would be considered by the Extended Bureau meeting in March 2010. The Committee endorsed the Bureau's decision on the adoption of programme performance for 2008–2009.

48. The Committee considered and adopted the revised criteria for country eligibility for financial support as included in annex I.

49. The Committee considered the status of resources, including financial resources available in the various trust funds as of 31 August 2009, as well as estimated resources required to carrying out the respective programme of works for the upcoming year (i.e. from 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010) presented in the information paper no 5. The delegation of Switzerland proposed revising the presentation of budgetary information, and offered to help the secretariat to develop a more user-friendly template for future papers.

## **VI. CALENDAR OF MEETINGS**

50. The Committee proposed holding its seventeenth session from 2 to 5 November 2010 and agreed on the schedule of its meetings presented in annex II.

## **VII. SUMMARY OF DECISIONS BY THE COMMITTEE**

51. At its sixteenth session, the Committee:

(a) Agreed on the two themes for the Seventh Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe", namely, (i) sustainable management of water and water-related ecosystems, and (ii) greening the economy: mainstreaming the environment into economic development;

(b) Requested the secretariat, in collaboration with the Bureau, to develop a draft outline of the Conference agenda;

(c) Agreed to establish a Steering Group to oversee the preparation of the AoA report for the Astana EfE Ministerial Conference;

- (d) Reviewed the environmental performance of Uzbekistan, adopted related recommendations and agreed to integrate climate change into the EPRs;
- (e) Adopted its programme of work for 2010–2011, as presented in document ECE/CEP/2009/3 and paragraph 46 of the present report;
- (f) Endorsed the Environment programme performance for 2008–2009;
- (g) Adopted the updated criteria for country eligibility for financial support (annex I);
- (h) Agreed on the schedule of its meetings for 2010–2011 (annex II);
- (i) Decided to mandate the meeting of its Extended Bureau in March 2010:
  - (i) To work on preparing the Astana EfE Conference agenda and other related issues;
  - (ii) To review the environmental performance of Georgia;
  - (iii) To consider for approval the Guidelines for developing national strategies to use air quality monitoring as an environmental policy tool (ECE/CEP/2009/10) developed by the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment;
  - (iv) To consider the indicators of achievements for programme performance in 2010–2011.

## **VIII. CLOSURE OF THE SESSION**

52. The Committee requested its Bureau and the secretariat to follow up on the Committee's decisions. The Chairperson thanked the participants for their active engagement in the session's discussions, congratulated the Committee on the constructive work and successful outcomes, and closed the session.

53. The documents and other materials from the session are available on the UNECE website<sup>5</sup>.

---

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.unece.org/env/cep/16thsession.html>

## Annex I

## CRITERIA FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT

## Countries eligible for financial support

(As approved by the Committee on Environmental Policy at its sixteenth session, 20–23 October 2009)

Country	GDP per capita (United States dollars) <sup>1</sup>	Eligibility note
Turkmenistan	4,035	The threshold set for financial support for 2009–2010 equals \$4,500:  => Countries with GDP per capita below \$4,000 are eligible for financial support (travel expenses and DSA <sup>2</sup> );  => Countries with GDP per capita between \$4,000 and \$4,500 are eligible for financial support (DSA only).
Albania	4,120 <sup>3</sup>	
Bosnia and Herzegovina	4,319 <sup>4</sup>	
Tajikistan	707 <sup>4</sup>	
Kyrgyzstan	964	
Uzbekistan	1,026	
Republic of Moldova	1,694	
Georgia	2,918	
Armenia	3,689	
Ukraine	3,914	
<b>Countries eligible (total)</b>		<b>10</b>
<b>Countries eligible for DSA only</b>		<b>3</b>
<b>Countries eligible for travel expenses and DSA</b>		<b>7</b>

<sup>1</sup> GDP per capita at current prices converted to US\$ using current exchange rates (2008). Data were provided by the UNECE Statistical Division.

<sup>2</sup> Daily subsistence allowance.

<sup>3</sup> Data are based on IMF estimations of GDP growth.

<sup>4</sup> Data are based on UNDP estimation of population growth.

**Annex II**

**SCHEDULE OF PREPARATORY MEETINGS FOR THE SEVENTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE “ENVIRONMENT FOR EUROPE”**

<b>Committee on Environmental Policy</b>	<b>Bureau of the Committee on Environmental Policy</b>
---	Extended Bureau meeting, Geneva, 19 May 2009
Sixteenth session, Geneva, 20–23 October 2009	Bureau meeting (back-to-back with the Committee session), 20 October 2009
---	Extended Bureau meeting, Geneva, 16–17 March 2010
Seventeenth session, Geneva, 2–5 November 2010	Bureau meeting (back-to-back with the Committee session), Geneva, 2 November 2010
Special session, Geneva, May 2011 (date to be confirmed)	Bureau meeting (back-to-back with the Committee session), Geneva, May 2011 (date to be confirmed)
Special session (back-to-back with the Conference), Astana, September/October 2011	---
<b>Seventh Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe”, Astana, September/October 2011</b>	
Eighteenth session, Geneva, March 2012	

-----