

**Informal meeting on financing issues for scientific activities under EMEP and WGE
Brussels, 26 April 2016.**

A note prepared by Peringe Grennfelt, Laurence Rouil and Till Spranger

I. Introduction

1. The meeting was held at the invitation to Parties of the Convention from the Ms. Anna Engleryd – Chair of the Executive Body. Mr. Peringe Grennfelt – Chair of the Working Group on Effects (WGE) chaired the meeting.
2. The following Parties were represented: Austria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. The Chair of the Steering Body to EMEP, representative of the European Commission and a representative of the UN ECE secretariat also attended. Norway and Russian Federation provided their written comments.

II Status Quo

3. The scientific work under the Convention relies on various funding pathways:
 - (a) **National monitoring** activities are almost always financed through national funding;
 - (b) **The EMEP Programme Centres** receive a basis for their work through the trust fund under the EMEP Protocol. In most cases additional support is needed to fully finance the activities; hosting countries have a particular responsibility but from time to time other sources support project-oriented activities;
 - (c) For the **International Cooperative Programmes (ICPs)** under WGE, there is a voluntary trust fund covering up to 20-25% of the overall costs. Most of the additional costs are taken by the lead country for the respective program centre; these costs are in most cases transferred directly to the program centre (not through the voluntary trust fund);
 - (d) Costs for (chairing) **Task Forces (TFs)** are taken by the lead Parties for the TFs;
 - (e) Finally, **project-based activities** are often supported by Parties; these activities may include scientific development, assessments and meetings.

III Views of the hosting countries

4. The meeting participants expressed the following views on the current and foreseeable future funding:
 - (a) All the hosting countries (except NL) expressed their interest to continue their support to the ICPs, TFs or technical centres. However, Finland, France and the UK regularly review their work programmes and/or mentioned potential difficulties to keep the effort at the same level;
 - (b) Indirect or project based support is provided e.g. by Austria (to the Centre on Emission Inventories and Projections), Germany (Task Force on Measurements and Modelling, Task Force on Techno-economic Issues, Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen), Switzerland (various), and other countries;
 - (c) There are various co-benefits to lead countries from having (and funding) a centre, e.g. serving as a hub for international scientist;
 - (d) Additional reasons why there is an interest for the country are multiple
 - historical background (e.g. German forests or Norwegian lakes)
 - In-kind contributions allow to support (and finance) national experts
 - the ICPs or centres are sometimes hosted by an existing infrastructure (with complementary goals) in the country and keeping the centre is not a lot of additional work

- interest for a specific topic (e.g. hemispheric transport for the European Commission and the US that co-chair the Task Force on Hemispheric Transport of Air Pollution);
- (e) The European Commission should send an official letter to Ministers of Environment or high representatives in the ministries of the member States to remind them on the importance of the scientific work undertaken by the Convention for the European Union air quality policy (and the respective Directives).

IV EMEP/WGE activities in a larger perspective

5. The meeting participants exchanged information and views on EMEP/WGE activities in a larger perspective:
- (a) The Convention is at present in a period of ratification and implementation of protocols. New needs for data for performance review of the Protocols as well as for further amendments may occur by 2018-2020. The period up to that may give an opportunity for reconsidering organisation and priorities. The set-up of an ad-hoc group for taking care of the outcome of the Assessment Report should obtain information of importance for priority-setting of the scientific work within EMEP/WGE, in particular for the long-term needs;
 - (b) There are needs for EMEP/WGE competence and data in a variety of international organizations and processes. These should be identified and discussions on collaboration should be undertaken;
 - (c) The European Commission indicated that there is a need for updated information from EMEP/WGE around 2020 in connection with a new policy round within the European Union;
 - (d) The inclusion of effect-oriented monitoring in the new NEC Directive presently under negotiation will stabilize monitoring systems and increase the interest of Member States in the functioning of the ICPs and related centres.

V Coordination Centre for Effects (CCE) specific issue

6. The meeting participants exchanged information and views on the CCE specific issues:
- (a) NL roughly estimates costs of the most «important» /strategic activities of the CCE (i.e. call for data management) at 130 k€. This includes salaries, travel and expert contracts, but no methodological development, work on heavy metals, or bilateral support. It is unclear whether this includes biodiversity or not. At present, no funding is foreseen for 2017;
 - (b) The meeting suggested that a budget of 200 k€/year for CCE activity should be what we should aim for taking into account the need for taking care of the data from the new call on biodiversity;
 - (c) It is requested that the Dutch Ministry (not RIVM) sends a letter to the Executive Body to explain its decision to limit and finally cancel its support to the CCE and whether the structure as such (irrespective of NL funding) will remain;
 - (d) Also it was asked whether CCE could still be kept at RIVM (at least for 2017) with support from other countries (a couple of the present indicated a willingness to contribute) financing experts from CCE at RIVM, or whether it could/should be moved elsewhere;
 - (e) Finally the representative of the European Commission mentioned that an organization like JRC or EEA could be interested in taking over effect databases management. They have the skills and competence and already use the data for their own needs.

VI How to set priorities for sustainable funding?

7. The meeting participants discussed the priorities of the scientific work under the Convention in the context of the sustainable funding:

- (a) There is a distinction between long term priorities, which also concern core activities, and short term ones that could relate to specific projects (2 or 3 years). Both aspects should be reviewed. The « core activities » have been mentioned in various CLRTAP documents; however, they are defined in a rather open way as activities that are necessary to meet requests under “basic obligations in the work plan”;
- (b) The work plan is the appropriate tool to allow the Parties to put some budget on the activities they are willing to support. But in its current shape, this is very difficult, since activities are not associated with any estimates of costs. The timing is good to review WGE and EMEP activities, because we are in-between policy revision processes. The Parties should be active in this process, through questionnaires, surveys etc.
 - We could organize a review of the EMEP/WGE products: what are they? Are they used by Parties? How? Are they easily accessible? Would it be sufficient to compute the source-receptor matrices every 2-3 years instead of every year? Need for effects country reports?;
- (c) There is a question about the need for science that seems to rise while a lot has already been achieved. Some Parties are not sure that we should maintain the level of scientific work it at the same level as few years ago;
 - Implementation, especially in the EECCA region should drive some activities but it should complement science and not replace it. But we have to find the good balance between both. Review of the EMEP and WGE deliverables and products should help;
 - Science and monitoring is the guidance to and basis of long-term policies. A focus on emerging problems and avoidance of short-term reactions saves costs. We should actively communicate this (see e.g. Assessment Report).

VII Note on the budget

8. The meeting participants discussed the priorities of the scientific work under the Convention in the context of the sustainable funding:

- (a) The representative of the secretariat presented the relevant elements of the document ECE/EB.AIR/2015/03 from the last EB session;
- (b) There are some inconsistencies in the document. In one case there is a difference of a factor of more than 2 between recorded contribution for an ICP and what is reported as consumed. Such differences need to be explained;
- (c) In table 10 there are sometimes unexpected large differences in estimated costs for the same kind of activities. This concerns in particular database management;
- (d) On a more general level, a better understanding of the funding infrastructure is required by the Parties. Some of the countries also expressed the need for some common way of presenting national contributions to the centres.

VIII Additional views to optimise financial resources

9. The meeting participants discussed the following options to optimize financial resources:

- (a) Streamline some activities (e.g. effects databases management?);
- (b) Better and easier to access info on ICPs;

- (c) Develop cooperation with other programs likely to fund, or provide synergies with EMEP/WGE activities: Copernicus, Stockholm and Minamata Conventions, Arctic Council, OECD... ;
- (d) Look for a larger involvement of national experts in technical tasks that would support the work of the Convention (Parties are more willing to pay for their own experts). Tasks that should be borne by national experts should be identified;
- (e) Focus on EECCA countries (most need for science base and most return on investments), especially on emission inventories but also effects and air pollution monitoring;
- (f) Look for more support from the European Union, especially through funding mechanisms like LIFE, LIFE+, etc.;
- (g) Work on promotion and dissemination of EMEP/WGE labelled products to encourage the Parties to support their development. For example to add a list of deliverables to the secretariat's letter requesting for contributions to the Trust Funds.

Participants of the meeting:

Peringe Grennfelt, Sweden - chair
Petra Hagström, Sweden
Laurence Rouil, France
Till Spranger, Germany
Gudrun Schütze, Germany
Edwin Koning, Netherlands
Cristina Leonardi, Italy
Christian Lange Fogh, Denmark
Eija Lumme, Finland
Thomas Parizek, Austria
Ellen Colebrook, UK
Sabine Augustin, Switzerland
André Zuber, European Commission
Krzysztof Olendrzynski, UNECE secretariat