

ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/1

ENVIRONMENT FOR EUROPE
UN ENVIRONNEMENT POUR L'EUROPE
ОКРУЖАЮЩАЯ СРЕДА ДЛЯ ЕВРОПЫ
გარემო ევროპისათვის

BATUMI, 8–10 June 2016



Eighth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference

**Batumi, Georgia
8–10 June 2016**

Annotated provisional agenda for the Conference



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
16 March 2016

Original: English

Economic Commission for Europe

Eighth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference

Batumi, Georgia, 8–10 June 2016

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Opening of the Conference and adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the Conference

**To be held at the Batumi Sheraton and Hilton Hotels, Batumi,
starting at 9.30 a.m. on Wednesday, 8 June 2016**

I. Provisional agenda

1. Opening of the Conference and adoption of the agenda.
2. The environment dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development — moving forward in the pan-European region:
 - (a) Multilateral environmental agreements, mechanisms, policies and institutions supporting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
 - (b) Keeping the pan-European environment under review.
3. Towards a new society: 10 years of education for sustainable development.
4. Greening the economy in the pan-European region.
5. Improving air quality for a better environment and human health.
6. Reporting on the outcomes of the thematic sessions.
7. Adoption of the Conference outcomes.
8. Closure of the Conference.

II. Annotations to the provisional agenda

1. The Eighth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference will be held in Batumi, Georgia, from 8 to 10 June 2016. The Conference is being organized in accordance with the provisions of the Reform Plan of the Environment for Europe process (ECE/CEP/S/152, annex I, and Corr.1). The Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Committee on



Environmental Policy is the convening body for the preparatory process. The organizational procedures for the Batumi Ministerial Conference presented in document ECE/CEP/2014/15, adopted by the Committee in 2014, serve to guide the preparations for the Conference.

2. The Batumi Ministerial Conference will conduct its work under the following slogan: “Greener, Cleaner, Smarter!”. A cultural event will be organized by the host country on 7 June in the evening. The opening of the Conference may be preceded by a greening-the-Conference-related short interactive event for the heads of delegation, to be organized by the host country — for example, walking or riding bicycles to the Conference venue. During the Conference there will be opportunities to network and organize bilateral meetings between ministers, including on topics that are not on the Conference agenda.

3. A photograph of the heads of delegations will be taken at the end of the morning session on 8 June, between 12.30 and 1 p.m.

4. The detailed organization of work of the Conference is presented in document ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/3. All documents and materials for the Conference will be made available on the ECE website dedicated to the Conference.¹ Other information related to the Conference, including the schedule of side events organized on the margins of the Conference, will be made available on the host country website.²

1. Opening of the Conference and adoption of the agenda

Wednesday, 8 June, 9.30–10.30 a.m.

5. A high-level representative of Georgia will open the Eighth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference. Introductory remarks by the Chair of the Conference and welcoming speeches by high-level representatives of the Autonomous Republic of Ajara, ECE and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) will follow. A keynote statement on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Environment for Europe process will be delivered.

6. Delegates will be invited to adopt the agenda for the Eighth Environment for Europe Conference.

Documentation

Annotated provisional agenda for the Conference (ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/1)

Organization of work at the Conference (ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/3)

Information document

List of documents and materials for the Conference (ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/INF/3)

¹ See www.unece.org/env/efe/batumi/welcome.

² See <http://efebatumi.com/en/conference/batumi-ministerial-2016>.

2. The environment dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development — moving forward in the pan-European region

(a) Multilateral environmental agreements, mechanisms, policies and institutions supporting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Wednesday, 8 June, 10.30 a.m.–12.30 p.m.

7. The session will open with introductory remarks by the Chair of the Conference. Ministers will be invited to reflect upon the potential role of the multilateral environmental agreements, environmental performance reviews, the Environmental Action Programme (EAP) Task Force, the Regional Environmental Centres and other instruments in supporting and enhancing countries' efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Also, the experience of the Astana Water Action stakeholders in using that initiative since its launch in Astana in 2011 will be shared.

8. The session will be organized in the form of a moderated interactive discussion between ministers. High-level representatives of the private sector and civil society will also be involved in the discussion. To facilitate the preparation for the discussion and the interaction during the session, ministers will be invited to consider how one or more of the above-mentioned instruments will be used to support efforts to achieve one or more SDGs, including by strengthening integration and intersectoral cooperation. In that regard, ministers will be invited to base their intervention on a concrete example of a new action or initiative that illustrates how the instrument(s) will be used to strengthen intersectoral cooperation to support achievement of one or more SDGs.

9. The ministers will be invited to reiterate their commitment to participating in and implementing these various instruments.

10. The session will conclude with a festive event to celebrate 20 years of successful implementation of the ECE Environmental Performance Review Programme and to getting it ready to support the achievement of the SDGs.

Documentation

Final report on the implementation of the Astana Water Action: fostering progress towards improved water management (ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/10)

Information document

Mapping of the Environment subprogramme processes and activities that support countries in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/INF/1)

(b) Keeping the pan-European environment under review

Wednesday, 8 June, 3–4.30 p.m.

11. The session will open with introductory remarks by the Chair of the Conference. Progress in developing the Shared Environmental Information Systems (SEIS) across the pan-European region and the establishment of a regular environmental assessment process to keep the pan-European environment under review will be discussed in response to the commitment made by ministers in Astana in 2011.

12. Delegates will consider key findings of the European regional assessment of the Sixth Global Environment Outlook. The session will be organized in the form of a

moderated interactive discussion. To facilitate the interaction, a few questions for discussion will be prepared based on the key findings of the Outlook for the European region.³

13. Ministers will be invited to renew their commitment to establishing a regular process of environmental assessment based on SEIS, also as an efficient tool to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Documentation

Report on progress in establishing the Shared Environmental Information System in support of regular reporting in the pan-European region (ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/8)

Summary of key findings and policy messages of the European regional assessment of the Sixth Global Environment Outlook (ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/9)

Information documents

Regular environmental assessment process based on the Shared Environmental Information System (ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/INF/15)

Targets and performance indicators for measuring progress in developing the Shared Environmental Information System across the pan-European region (ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/INF/16)

3. Towards a new society: 10 years of education for sustainable development

Wednesday, 8 June, 4.30–6 p.m.

14. The High-level Meeting of Education and Environment Ministries will open with introductory remarks by the co-Chairs of this segment dedicated to education for sustainable development (ESD). Delegates will consider progress achieved in ESD as a result of 10 years of implementation of the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development (Strategy for ESD).

15. Ministers of education and environment will decide on the next steps to be taken to advance ESD in the region, as a contribution to the Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development as well as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The session will be organized in a plenary and interactive format.

16. The session will conclude with ministers of education and the environment being invited to adopt the Batumi Ministerial Statement on Education for Sustainable Development, including the framework for the future implementation of the Strategy for ESD.

Documentation

Draft Batumi Ministerial Statement on Education for Sustainable Development (ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/L.2)

Framework for the future implementation of the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development (ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/11)

³ The key findings will be finalized by mid-April 2016 and made available on the ECE website.

Information documents

Learning from each other: achievements, challenges and ways forward — Third evaluation report of the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development (ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/INF/17)

Ten years of the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development (ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/INF/18)

4. Greening the economy in the pan-European region

Thursday, 9 June, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.

17. The session will open with introductory remarks by the Chair of the first thematic segment, on greening the economy in the pan-European region. A video presenting testimonials on green economy will be screened. The meeting will be addressed by a prominent person highlighting the importance of green economy in practice.

18. The Pan-European Strategic Framework for Greening the Economy will be presented by the Chair of the Committee on Environmental Policy as a tool to advance the transition to green economy in the region. Ministers will be invited to endorse the Strategic Framework, which was adopted by the Committee on Environmental Policy at its special session in February 2016.

19. The Batumi Initiative on Green Economy (BIG-E) — a collection of voluntary commitments to operationalize the Strategic Framework made by interested countries and organizations, both public and private — will be launched at a festive ceremony.⁴ Ministers will be invited to welcome the initiative and to invite countries and other stakeholders to implement their commitments and report on progress to the Committee on Environmental Policy. A video on green economy prepared by the European ECO Forum will be screened.

20. Following the plenary part of the thematic session, the Conference will break into two parallel sessions for interactive moderated discussions on greening the economy in the pan-European region. The discussions will be held in the form of a multi-stakeholder interaction around the table. Both sessions will focus their work on the same questions for discussion outlined in paragraph 21 below. While each parallel session of the round table will address the same questions, given the different participants involved it is expected that various distinct perspectives will emerge in the discussions. The consolidated results of the discussions will be presented on the last day of the Conference and will serve as input into the Chair's Summary of the Conference.

21. To facilitate the work of the Conference, a background thematic document on greening the economy in the region has been prepared jointly by ECE and UNEP in consultation with the European Environment Agency (EEA), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for Europe, as well as with organizations participating in the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Europe and Central Asia. The following questions were prepared by the Bureau of the Committee on Environmental Policy to focus the discussion under this thematic segment:

(a) **Opportunities and challenges:** What are the pressing challenges to greening the economy in your country? What positive effects on, e.g., employment, human well-

⁴ The template for interested countries and organizations to submit their commitments is included in the appendix to the document presenting the Strategic Framework. The deadline for submitting commitments is 9 May 2016, if feasible, to facilitate the preparation of the commitment celebrations (however, commitments can be submitted up until the Conference).

being, prosperity and natural capital are evident after introducing green economy policies? Have trade-offs been taken into account in policymaking — e.g., in terms of the impact on employment, social equity and private investment?;

(b) **Paths to sustainability:** What approaches have proven most useful to promote a more efficient use of natural resources and to reduce pressures on them (e.g., circular economy, green innovation and initiatives in the fields of energy, building, transport infrastructure, water, fiscal reforms, standards and labelling)? What initiatives are working successfully or are planned to be introduced in your country to address challenges and major obstacles, including to sustainable consumption and production patterns?;

(c) **Green incentives:** What incentives concerning sustainable public procurement, environmental taxation and the removal of environmentally harmful subsidies, including fossil fuel subsidies, have been introduced, and what else can be done? What do you do to encourage green investment, including private and foreign direct investment and technology transfer in different sectors?;

(d) **Cooperation:** What steps could be taken to further promote cooperation among countries in the pan-European region to facilitate the transition to a green economy, including in the context of the post-2015 development agenda?

22. In addition, during the discussion of the above questions, a number of related issues will be addressed, as appropriate, such as: green agriculture, including its resource needs, possible loads on the environment and some good practices; how subnational and local authorities, business and civil society are involved in greening the economy in their countries; and environmental risk reduction as a key element in defining green economy.

Documentation

Pan-European Strategic Framework for Greening the Economy (ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/6)

Batumi Initiative on Green Economy (ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/13)

Greening the economy in the pan-European region (ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/4)

Information document

List of possible green economy actions (ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/INF/21)

5. Improving air quality for a better environment and human health

Thursday, 9 June, 3–6 p.m.

23. The session will open with introductory remarks by the Chair of the second thematic segment, on improving air quality for a better environment and human health. A five-minute video made to highlight the issue of air pollution will be shown. Up to three short keynote statements will be delivered.

24. The Batumi Action for Cleaner Air — an initiative to improve air quality for a better environment and human health prepared under the leadership of the Bureau of the ECE Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (Air Convention) — will be presented by the Chair of the Air Convention.

25. Ministers will be invited to endorse the Batumi Action for Cleaner Air and to invite countries and other stakeholders to implement it and report on progress to the Committee

on Environmental Policy. Countries and organizations participating in the initiative will launch it by celebrating the commitments made.⁵

26. Following the first part of the session, the plenary will break into two parallel sessions for interactive moderated discussions on improving air quality for a better environment and human health. The discussions will be held in the form of a multi-stakeholder interaction around the table. Both sessions will focus their work on the same questions for discussion outlined in paragraph 27 below. While each parallel session of the round table will address the same questions, given the different participants involved, it is expected that various distinct perspectives will emerge in the discussions. The consolidated results of the discussions will be presented on the last day of the Conference and will serve as input into the Chair's Summary of the Conference.

27. To facilitate the work of the Conference, a background thematic document on improving air quality for a better environment and human health has been prepared by ECE in consultation with the Bureau of the Air Convention and the European Environment and Health Ministerial Board, as well as EEA, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, OECD, UNEP and WHO. The Bureau of the Committee on Environmental Policy prepared the following questions to focus the discussion under this thematic segment:

(a) **Pollutants and policies:** Which air pollutants (indoor and outdoor) pose the highest risk to the environment and human health in your country, and how is this risk assessed (e.g., emission inventories, pollutants registers and air quality monitoring- and health-related data)? Which aspects of air pollution do you see as the most important to manage in the near future and in the longer term? How effective are current policies in addressing the impact of air pollution on public health, in particular in urban areas, as well as on ecosystems and crops? What can be done to make such policies more effective and how are the costs of inaction taken into account?;

(b) **Sectors and funding:** What sectors contribute the most to air pollution in your country and how successful has your Government been in integrating air pollution reduction measures into financial and development policies, as well as other sectoral policies? What role can policymakers and financing institutions play in ensuring that projects that reduce air pollution receive funding?;

(c) **Public awareness and participation:** Are the prevailing problems with air pollution and its transboundary character generally known in your country? How can communication be improved? Which channels, messages and means work best in your country? How could enabling public participation in relevant processes (e.g., policy development) improve air quality and what measures work best in your country?;

(d) **Cooperation:** Has international cooperation led to an improvement in air quality? How can international cooperation strengthen the national work? Which international instruments are the most effective in your experience? Which activities should be further strengthened to promote ratification, implementation and possible development of the ECE Air Convention and its protocols?

28. In addition, during the discussion of the above questions, a number of related issues will be addressed, as appropriate, such as green agriculture, including its resource needs, possible loads on the environment and some good practices; and how subnational and local authorities, business and civil society are involved in improving air quality.

⁵ The template for interested countries and organizations to submit their commitments is included in the annex to the document presenting the initiative. The deadline for submitting commitments is 9 May 2016, if feasible, to facilitate the preparation of the commitment celebrations (however, commitments can be submitted up until the Conference).

Documentation

Batumi Action for Cleaner Air (ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/7)

Improving air quality for a better environment and human health (ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/5)

Assessment report under the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution: summary for policymakers (ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/12)

Information document

Seven messages on air pollution for ministers (ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/INF/2)

6. Reporting on the outcomes of the thematic sessions

Friday, 10 June, 10–11.30 a.m.

29. The Friday morning session will open with introductory remarks by the Chair of the Conference. On the basis of reports from the interactive discussions, the Chairs of the thematic segments will present the outcomes under agenda items 4 and 5.

30. Each presentation will be followed by comments from the floor on the main results and findings of the interactive discussions.

7. Adoption of the Conference outcomes

Friday, 10 June, 11.30 a.m.–12.30 p.m.

31. This segment will open with introductory remarks by the Chair of the Conference presenting a draft of the agreed outcome (Ministerial Declaration).

32. In addition, interested countries and organizations will be given the opportunity to briefly present any other initiatives, agreements, pledges or policy tools on subjects related to the Conference themes. The delegates will be invited to consider any initiatives, agreements, pledges or policy tools presented.

33. Participants will then be invited to adopt the Ministerial Declaration.

Documentation

Draft Ministerial Declaration (ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/L.1)

8. Closure of the Conference

Friday, 10 June, 12.30–1 p.m.

34. The Chair of the Conference will present the results of the Conference in the form of a Chair's Summary.

35. The Conference will close at 1 p.m. on 10 June 2016.

Annex

Organization of work for the Eighth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference (Batumi, Georgia, 8–10 June 2016)

Wednesday, 8 June

Thursday, 9 June

Friday, 10 June

Wednesday, 8 June	Thursday, 9 June	Friday, 10 June
<p>1. Opening of the Conference and adoption of the agenda (plenary, 9.30–10.30 a.m.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Opening ceremony – Adoption of the agenda <p>2. The environment dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development — moving forward in the pan-European region:</p> <p>(a) Multilateral environmental agreements, mechanisms, policies and institutions supporting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (interactive discussion, 10.30 a.m.–12.30 p.m.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – ECE multilateral environmental agreements, environmental performance reviews, EAP Task Force, Regional Environmental Centres, Astana Water Action <p>Family photograph of Heads of Delegation (12.30–1 p.m.)</p> <p>Lunch break (12.30–3 p.m.), side events (1.10–2.50 p.m.)</p> <p>(b) Keeping the pan-European environment under review (interactive discussion, 3–4.30 p.m.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – SEIS progress – Launch of the European regional assessment of the Sixth Global Environment Outlook <p>3. Towards a new society: 10 years of education for sustainable development (plenary and interactive discussions, 4.30–6 p.m.)</p> <p>Official events/side events (6.15–8.15 p.m.)</p>	<p>Side events (8.15–9.45 a.m.)</p> <p>4. Greening the economy in the pan-European region (plenary and interactive discussion, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.)</p> <p><i>Questions for discussion:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Opportunities and challenges (b) Paths to sustainability (c) Green incentives (d) Cooperation <p>Lunch break (1–3 p.m.), side events (1.10–2.50 p.m.)</p> <p>5. Improving air quality for a better environment and human health (plenary and interactive discussion, 3–6 p.m.)</p> <p><i>Questions for discussion:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Pollutants and policies (b) Sectors and funding (c) Public awareness and participation (d) Cooperation <p>Official events/side events (6.15–8.15 p.m.)</p>	<p>Side events (8.15–9.45 a.m.)</p> <p>6. Reporting on the outcomes of the thematic sessions (plenary, 10–11.30 a.m.)</p> <p>7. Adoption of Conference outcomes (plenary, 11.30 a.m.–12.30 p.m.)</p> <p>8. Closure of the Conference (plenary, 12.30–1 p.m.)</p>