



UNECE's Air Convention
Policy Review Group to the 2016 Scientific
Assessment Report

Proposed Updates to the Long-Term Strategy

Geneva, Switzerland

22 May 2018



Policy Review Group

- Made policy recommendations to the UNECE's Air Convention in 2017 (2017/3 and Corr.1) in response to the 2016 Scientific Assessment Report.
- Provided highlights (2017/4) on the Air Conventions' Long-Term Strategy (LTS) for the Executive Body's 37th session and received guidance from the Executive Body (140, annex III) for implementing its new mandate in Executive Body decision 2017/4.
- Proposed updates and revisions to the LTS (2018/3), in consultation with the Executive Body's Bureau, for the Working Group on Strategies and Review's 56th session.

Overall Priorities

- Implementation of the Convention and all the current protocols
- Ratification-accession to the 3 latest protocols
- Increased cooperation with countries and regions outside the ECE region
- Any further review and possible revision and extension of protocols

Timeframe

- PRG proposes the time frame for the revised LTS be until 2030.
 - This allows for contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Goals for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda and SDGs).
 - The proposal also considers possible developments over a longer time frame, up to 2050.
- Timing of LTS revisions are also in line with opportunities globally.
 - UNEA resolutions 1/7 and 3/8.
 - WHO, CCAC, WMO, IMO, UNFCCC, Stockholm, Minamata and Biodiversity Conventions.
 - Batumi Action for Cleaner Air also provides an opportunity to inspire voluntary national actions and promote additional collaboration within and beyond the ECE region.

The Proposed LTS

- Sets a vision for the Convention out to 2030 and beyond, based on its unique strengths and successes, and lays out priorities to meet remaining and emerging challenges for human health and ecosystems.
- Responds swiftly to emerging challenges where there is a clear benefit to doing so for the UNECE region.
- Further promotes the multi-effect multi pollutant framework.
- Maintains and where necessary extends its scientific network.
- Sets forth a clear priority for increasing ratification and implementation.
- Sets a goal to improve cooperation with other countries, regions and organizations to advance efforts to address air pollution more broadly.
- Sets clear priorities for the best use of scarce resources of Parties and the Secretariat.

Strengths and Successes

- Effects-oriented approach
 - Multi-Pollutant & Multi-Effect
- Core expertise in the subsidiary bodies
 - Scientific tools
 - Robust system of emission inventories, monitoring and modelling
- Evidence-based policy process
 - Review of adequacy, tracking of achievements, updates as needed
- Collaboration with other international bodies
 - ECE/WHO Joint Task Force on Health
- Geographical coverage (North America, Europe, EECCA)
- Policy Leader
 - Protocols on POPs and Heavy Metals led to global agreements
- Adaptable mechanism & consensual process

Remaining Challenges

- Ozone and its precursors
 - Still evidence of widespread damage to human health and the environment
 - Methane increasingly important
- Particulate matter and its precursors
 - Significant health effects on morbidity and mortality & soiling and corrosion of materials
 - Ammonia increasingly important
- Nitrogen and sulphur
 - Biological recovery shows substantial delay.
- Importance of action in certain sectors
 - E.g., agriculture and wood/solid fuel (residential heating)

Remaining Challenges

- Persistent organic pollutants and heavy metals
 - Long-term risks still exist.
- Long-range transboundary air pollution
 - Transcontinental air pollution is significant and of increasing importance, including from outside ECE region.
 - Local air pollution is also influenced by transboundary air pollution.
- Air pollution links to ecosystems and climate change
- Monitoring & modelling assessment
 - Long-term operations need resources.
- Communication and awareness-raising
 - Necessity for further action to improve health and the environment.

Strategic Priorities

Maximizing the Impact of the Convention

- Increase ratification and implementation of the protocols to ensure objectives of the 3 latest protocols are met.
- Enhance skills development through capacity building and transfer knowledge related to monitoring, emissions inventories and projections and abatement strategies.
- In future review for the Gothenburg Protocol, consider:
 - commitments and mandatory emissions reporting for black carbon;
 - further requirements for particulate matter, acid rain and ozone precursors already specifically targeted in the Gothenburg Protocol, including ammonia;
 - steps to address ozone precursors not yet addressed such as methane; and
 - shipping emissions.

Strategic Priorities

Maximizing the Impact of the Convention

- Focus on combustion-related POPs and consider additional measures that strengthen BAT.
- Act as a centre of expertise for UNEP on reducing heavy metals.
- Consider opportunities for an integrated approach to environmental policy when considering updates to protocols.
- Consider additional flexibilities that could facilitate ratification and implementation by countries in the EECCA region.

Strategic Priorities

Improve the Scientific & Technical Basis

- Ensure that policy remains evidence-based and effective.
- Exchange data and experiences of the effectiveness of abatement measures taken at the national and local scale.
- Maintain or extend monitoring networks in countries and make monitoring networks serve multiple clients.
- Improve inventories and projections.
- Further assess health effects of particulate matter.
- Further investigate the impacts of air pollution at the hemispheric scale, and engage in policy conversations on the need to address hemispheric transport.
- Assess impacts of air pollutant measures taken at the regional, national and international scale on local and urban air quality, including health and ecosystem impacts.
- Discuss new options for financing activities not covered by the EMEP Protocol.

Strategic Priorities

Enabling Sound Policy

- Concentrate on air pollutants best controlled at a regional level.
- Continue scientific work, including for heavy metals and persistent organic pollutants and address new scientific developments.
- Strive for an integrated, multi-pollutant, multi-sector approach to environmental policy.
- Recognize air pollution as a central link for interactions between ozone, nitrogen, climate change and ecosystems; therefore an important science-policy item for the Convention.
- Analyze economic costs of the impacts of air pollution and the cost-effectiveness of policies to control it, including economic and competitiveness benefits that can be realized by implementing reduction measures.

Strategic Priorities

Communication, Outreach and Cooperation

- Communicate successes of addressing transboundary air pollution, including at the political level & increase awareness of the importance of addressing air pollution for health and environmental reasons.
- Implement an updated communication approach.
- Improve cooperation with other countries, regions and organizations to advance efforts to address air pollution more broadly.
 - Take a key role in the UNEA/3 resolution implementation and platform for cooperation.
- Encourage more national action on air pollution within and outside the ECE region through the Batumi Action for Cleaner Air.
- Respond to emerging scientific information and policy priorities, taking into account relevant work outside the Convention.

Overarching Conclusions

- There is still much work to be done to address transboundary air pollution.
- Global cooperation is essential to address air quality in the ECE.
- Continued improvements to the technical and scientific basis will maintain the Convention's leadership role which will include:
 - Using the best available science and further develop the multi-effect multi-pollutant framework
 - Advancing efforts to address air pollution at a broader scale;
 - Promoting exchange of experiences of the effectiveness of measures taken at the national scale; and
 - Striving for an integrated approach.

Next Steps

- Discuss the proposed updates to the Long-Term Strategy at the Working Group on Strategies and Review.
- Incorporate comments from WGSR and submit an official document in all 3 languages for the Executive Body in December 2018.
- Aim is to have Air Convention's decision-making body approve the revised strategy in December 2018.