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## Economic Commission for Europe

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

### Working Group on Strategies and Review

#### Fifty-eighth session

Geneva, 26–29 May 2020

Item 3 of the provisional agenda

#### Progress in the implementation of the 2020–2021 workplan

## Report of the Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen

### *Summary*

At its twenty-fifth session (Geneva, 10–13 December 2007), the Executive Body for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution established the Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen (ECE/EB.AIR/91/Add.1, decision 2007/1). In accordance with its revised mandate set out in the annex to decision 2018/6, the Task Force is required to report on progress in its work to the Working Group on Strategies and Review.

The present report of the Task Force presents the outcomes of its fourteenth meeting (Brussels, 2 October 2019) and summarizes the progress in the implementation of the 2020–2021 workplan for the implementation of the Convention (ECE/EB.AIR/144/Add.2, forthcoming).



## I. Introduction

1. The present report presents the outcomes of the fourteenth annual meeting of the Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen (Brussels, 2 October 2019), which was held back-to-back with a workshop on integrated sustainable nitrogen management (Brussels, 30 September and 1 October 2019). The report also summarizes the progress of the Task Force in implementing the 2020–2021 workplan for the implementation of the Convention (ECE/EB.AIR.144/Add.2, forthcoming).

## II. Fourteenth annual meeting of the Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen

### A. Organization of work

2. The meeting was attended by 117 experts from 30 countries, including those from national authorities, universities and research institutions. The meeting was co-chaired by Mr. Mark Sutton (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), Ms. Claudia Marques dos Santos Cordovil (Portugal) and Mr. Tommy Dalgaard (Denmark).

3. The agenda of the meeting included the following items:

- (a) Introduction;
- (b) A report on the workshop on integrated sustainable nitrogen management;
- (c) A report on progress in the implementation of the “Towards the Establishment of an International Nitrogen Management System (Towards INMS)” project and the Inter-convention Nitrogen Coordination Mechanism;
- (d) Reports from the expert panels of the Task Force;
- (e) Progress in the implementation of national ammonia codes and next steps;
- (f) Joint Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen/Task Force on Integrated Assessment Modelling report on ammonia;
- (g) A report on tools and trust;
- (h) An overview of current national activities and reports in Germany;
- (i) A report on nitrogen management in Romania: experience and perspectives.

4. The expert panels of the Task Force held parallel sessions, the outcomes of which were reported at the plenary discussion. The cost of organizing the meeting was shared by the European Union and the “Towards INMS” project.

### B. Summary of the main discussion points

5. The coordinators of the Expert Panel on the Mitigation of Agricultural Nitrogen noted that, with the entry into force of the amended Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone (Gothenburg Protocol) and the upcoming review of the Protocol, it was expected that there would be a need for the Expert Panel to update the Guidance document on preventing and abating ammonia emissions from agricultural sources (ECE/EB.AIR/120). The Expert Panel discussed with the Co-Chairs of the Task Force on Techno-economic Issues possibilities for including information on best practices and measures to mitigate agricultural nitrogen in the Clearing House of Control Technologies maintained by the Task Force on Techno-economic Issues.<sup>1</sup> The Expert Panel informed participants of its plan to provide access to an online database containing illustrated and

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://tfei.citepa.org/en/clearing-house>.

descriptive information on mitigation measures seen as a supplement to the guidance document. That work would be carried out in conjunction with the “Towards INMS” project.

6. The Task Force discussed the outcomes of the workshop on integrated sustainable nitrogen management and progress in the preparation of a guidance document on integrated sustainable nitrogen management, in particular its chapter entitled “Housed livestock, manure storage, manure processing”, with the involvement of the Expert Panel on the Mitigation of Agricultural Nitrogen.

7. The coordinators of the Expert Panel on the Mitigation of Agricultural Nitrogen informed participants of the recent update of the *EMEP/EEA air pollutant emission inventory guidebook*<sup>2</sup> and their collaboration with the Expert Panel on Agriculture and Nature of the Task Force on Emission Inventories and Projections on the development of a nitrogen flow tool to be used for inventory purposes and on estimation of ammonia emissions after manure application.

8. The coordinators of the Expert Panel on Nitrogen and Food informed participants of the progress in preparing a series of articles to be published in the journal *Global Food Security*. Based on those articles, a summary for policymakers would be prepared in 2020.

9. The coordinators of the Expert Panel on Nitrogen Budgets gave an overview of information presented by countries regarding the application of the Guidance document on national nitrogen budgets (ECE/EB.AIR/119). They noted that all annexes to the Guidance document had been completed, with the exception of the annex on waste due to a lack of resources. The Expert Panel suggested that the Task Force should add a new annex on the energy sector. The Task Force was expected to endorse that addition at its next meeting. The Task Force noted that the Expert Panel was sharing the approach to nitrogen budgets with various partners beyond the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region under the “Towards INMS” project.

10. The coordinators of the Expert Panel on Nitrogen in Countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia gave an overview of information presented by experts from Belarus, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova concerning the measurement, calculation and mitigation of ammonia emissions from agriculture.

### III. Progress in the implementation of the 2020–2021 workplan for the Convention<sup>3</sup>

11. The present section contains a summary of the results of the review of progress in activities outlined in the 2020–2021 workplan by workplan item.

#### Item 1.1.3.3: Ammonia assessment report in 2020

12. At its fourteenth meeting, the Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen considered the draft ammonia assessment report prepared by the Task Force on Integrated Assessment Modelling in coordination with the Task Force on Modelling and Mapping and would provide its comments to the Task Force on Integrated Assessment Modelling. The final draft would be presented to the Working Group on Strategies and Review at its fifty-eighth session (Geneva, 26–29 May 2020).

#### Item 2.1.8: Carrying out tasks specified in the mandate

13. The Task Force continued to disseminate the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Framework Code for Good Agricultural Practice for Reducing Ammonia Emissions (ECE/EB.AIR/129) and to support national focal points in its implementation. The Task Force was aware of 18 Parties to the Gothenburg Protocol that were currently

<sup>2</sup> European Environment Agency, *EMEP/EEA air pollutant emission inventory guidebook: 2019. Technical guidance to prepare national emission inventories*, Report No. 13/2019 (Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union, 2019).

<sup>3</sup> In several cases, the titles in this section abbreviate or summarize much longer workplan items. For the full text of each item, see ECE/EB.AIR/144/Add.2, forthcoming.

implementing national ammonia codes, including those that had them embedded with other national codes.

**Item 2.1.9: Input provided to support the review of the Gothenburg Protocol**

14. The Expert Panel on the Mitigation of Agricultural Nitrogen would consider closely the inputs provided to inform the upcoming review and prepare a background note to support the implementation of foreseen tasks. The document could be made available as soon as a respective decision had been made. The Task Force had already begun preliminary discussions on potential updates to annex IX to the Gothenburg Protocol.

**Item 2.2.2: Guidance on reduction of emissions from agricultural residue burning**

15. The Task Force on Techno-economic Issues was coordinating the preparation of the guidance on reduction of emissions from agricultural residue burning. The draft document would be presented to the Working Group on Strategies and Review at its fifty-eighth session.

**Item 2.2.3: Guidance document on integrated sustainable nitrogen management**

16. The workshop on integrated sustainable nitrogen management had been co-organized by the European Union and the Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen with a view to finalizing the draft guidance document on integrated sustainable nitrogen management, which took into account pollution into air, water and soil in an integrated way. The guidance document included sections on the following issues:

- (a) Principles of integrated sustainable nitrogen management;
- (b) Livestock feeding/housing and manure processing and storage;
- (c) Fertiliser and manure application methods;
- (d) Land use and landscape management.

17. The draft guidance document would be presented to the Working Group on Strategies and Review at its fifty-eighth session. The final draft, incorporating any comments of the Working Group, would be submitted to the Executive Body for adoption at its fortieth session (Geneva, 14–18 December 2020).

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