31 May 2013

The "Environment for Europe" mid-term review of the Astana Conference main outcomes

Survey for reporting on promoting the "Environment for Europe" process and the outcomes of its ministerial conferences*

I. Introduction

1. At its eighteenth session in April 2012 the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP) invited the secretariat to organize consultations (in the form of a survey) with UNECE member States to collect information on how countries have been promoting objectives and priorities of the "Environment for Europe" (EfE) process and strengthening implementation of outcomes of the Astana Ministerial Conference, including through national policies and relevant partnerships.

2. The secretariat will prepare a summary report on the basis of responses received to the survey. The report will support the discussion during the EfE mid-term review of the Astana Conference main outcomes which is being organized during the nineteenth session of CEP (Geneva, 22–25 October 2013).

3. The survey, contained in section V of the current document, was developed by the secretariat in consultation with the CEP Bureau. In addition, an overview of main achievements of the EfE process is provided in section II. Section III focusses on outcomes of Astana Ministerial Conference, and section IV includes background information on the mid-term review of relevance to the survey. For convenience, the Reform Plan of the EfE process is provided in the annex to this document.

II. Overview of the "Environment for Europe" process: main achievements

4. Since its launch in 1991 the EfE process supports countries efforts to advance in environmental governance. The EfE process is a unique partnership of member States within the UNECE region, organizations of the United Nations System represented in the region, other intergovernmental organizations and bodies, Regional Environmental Centres, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and other major groups. UNECE, which has been closely associated with the EfE process since its inception, serves as its secretariat.

* This document has not been formally edited.

5. The process and its ministerial conferences provide an effective high-level platform for stakeholders to discuss, decide and join efforts in addressing environmental priorities across the 56 countries of the UNECE region, and is a regional pillar of sustainable development.

6. At the same time, the process focuses on supporting the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia and of South-Eastern Europe in their efforts to raise environmental standards and comply with international commitments.

7. The EfE process provided the framework for the development of governance policies and initiatives, legal instruments, policies and practical actions and tools that promote and improve environmental governance and strengthen sustainable development at the regional level, as well as contribute to enhancing the global sustainability. The main achievements of the EfE process include:

(a) Four assessments on the state of the environment in the pan-European region (Dobris, Aarhus, Kyiv and Belgrade assessments) and an assessment of environmental assessments (Astana).

(b) Setting up institutional mechanisms for cooperation (establishing the Environmental Action Programme Task Force, the Project Preparation Committee and the Regional Environmental Centres).

(c) Acting as a driving force for developing multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and other environmental policy instruments, and promoting their implementation.[1]

(d) Launching the UNECE Environmental Performance Review Programme for member countries that are non-OECD members.

(e) Promoting cross-sectoral activities and policy integration (energy efficiency, education for sustainable development (ESD) and greening the economy).

(f) Enhancing cooperation between Governments and civil society organizations.

8. Following a decision by Ministers in Belgrade in 2007, CEP reformed the EfE process in 2009 to ensure that it remains relevant and valuable, and to strengthen its effectiveness.

III. Main features of and lessons learned from the Astana Ministerial Conference

9. The seventh EfE Ministerial Conference (Astana, 2011) was the first EfE Conference organized in accordance with the Reform Plan of the EfE process. The Astana Ministerial Conference gathered more than 1,500 participants from Governments, the international community, civil society, business and the media throughout the UNECE region to discuss two main themes: sustainable management of water and water-related

[1] The UNECE Programme on Environmental Performance Reviews (EPRs); the UNECE Programme on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment; the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (PEBLDS); the Aarhus Convention; the Protocols on Heavy Metals and Persistent Organic Pollutants to the Air Pollution Convention; the Pan-European Strategy to Phase-out Leaded Petrol; the UNECE Strategy for ESD; the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment to the Espoo Convention; the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers to the Aarhus Convention; the Protocol on Civil Liability to the Industrial Accidents and Water Conventions; the Environment Strategy for Eastern European, Caucasian and Central Asian countries; the Carpathian Convention; and a series of guidelines and recommendations to Governments.

ecosystems; and greening the economy: mainstreaming the environment into economic development.

10. The event was organized in an interactive format, including nine high-level multi-stakeholder round tables. To support multi-stakeholder discussions during the Conference and to facilitate decision-making, substantive documents on each of the two main themes were prepared by UNECE jointly with EfE partners. For the first time, the EfE Ministerial Conference was a paper-smart event.

11. The EfE partners organized 43 side events on issues related to the two main themes of the Conference. The Conference gathered business and industry representatives, who also participated in a Green Innovations, Technologies and Ecoservices Fair, organized on the margins of the Conference. Representatives of media attended the Conference, preceded by a capacity-building workshop for journalists.

12. The Conference culminated in the adoption of the Astana Ministerial Declaration — a concise and comprehensive document — in which ministers confirmed their commitment to improving environmental protection and promoting sustainable development in the UNECE region through the EfE process, as well as decided on a number of follow up and further actions under the two themes of the Conference.

13. At its eighteenth session in April 2012, CEP assessed the effectiveness of the Astana Ministerial Conference. Delegations highly appreciated the organization and the outcomes of the Conference, structured in a new format according to the EfE Reform Plan. The success of the Conference was attributed to its two main themes, which were of importance for the entire region, its interactive format and its good outcomes, as well as its efficient preparatory process[2].

14. Meeting participants observed that the Astana Conference had demonstrated once again that the EfE process provided a unique high-level platform for addressing environmental concerns across the region and should be continued. Delegations expressed the wish for the future EfE conferences to be prepared in the same manner, including an even higher interactivity during the conference.

15. At the same time, some delegations observed that the biggest challenge for future conferences was to provide new structures or frameworks to address emerging themes, such as green economy, given the ongoing economic crisis that affected all countries in the UNECE region.

16. Future conferences should also be better streamlined, in particular in terms of side events. Concerning identification of themes for the next conferences, delegates stressed the need to find the right balance between established and emerging themes, including enhancing the work related to green economy and the mainstreaming of environmental concerns into the economic development.

IV. The "Environment for Europe" mid-term review of the Astana Conference main outcomes

17. In accordance with the EfE Reform Plan and following a decision by the Astana Ministerial Conference, CEP is convening a mid-term review in 2013 to assess the progress in implementation of the Conference's main outcomes. The mid-term review would provide

[2] The preparatory process for the Astana Ministerial Conference commenced in 2009 and included four meetings of CEP (October 2009, November 2010, May and September 2011), two meetings of CEP Extended Bureau (May 2009 and March 2010), and one joint meeting of the Bureaux of CEP and of the Water Convention (January 2010).

renewed impetus to the process and its findings would be taken into account in the preparatory process for the next conference.

18. The EfE Reform Plan stipulates that particular efforts should be made by all relevant responsible actors to implement the outcomes of the EfE Ministerial Conferences. Member States should regularly consider how to promote objectives and priorities of the EfE process and strengthen implementation of the outcomes, including through national policies and relevant partnerships.

19. Furthermore, the Reform Plan stipulates that active participation by and input of all interested UNECE countries, and in particular of interested countries from subregions with specific needs in improving their environmental situation is crucial for the success of the activities under the EfE process. Also, countries taking the lead for one or more issues were encouraged to do so in ways that would contribute significantly to the EfE process' objectives and priorities.

20. The Astana Conference main outcomes include: (a) ratifying and implementing the relevant multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs); (b) implementing the Astana Water Action; (c) promoting a green economy in the region and the Green Bridge Partnership Programme; (d) conducting a third cycle of environmental performance reviews (EPRs); (e) establishing a regular process of environmental assessment and developing a Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS); and (f) continuing the work of the Environmental Action Programme Task Force (EAP Task Force) and strengthening the work of the Regional Environmental Centres (see ECE/ASTANA.CONF/2011/2/Add.1).[3]

V. Survey

21. The purpose of the survey is to collect information (in accordance with the request by CEP) from the UNECE member States about the promotion of the EfE objectives and priorities in general, as well as strengthening implementation of the outcomes of the Astana Ministerial Conference in particular, including through national policies and relevant partnerships.

22. Following to the EfE Reform Plan, which stipulates in paragraph 16 that "member States should regularly consider how to promote objectives and priorities of the EfE process", the survey aims at assessing the progress made by countries in implementing the EfE objectives and priorities as set out in the 2009 EfE Reform Plan (paragraphs 6 and 7). The EfE priorities adopted in 2009 cover most of activities carried out at present by the UNECE Environment subprogramme, as well as a number of activities carried out by the EfE partners. These activities are included in sections 2 and 3 of the survey.

23. In addition, following up on paragraph 16 of the EfE Reform Plan stipulating that "member States should strengthen the implementation of the outcomes of the EfE Conferences", the survey aims at assessing the progress in implementation of the main outcome activities of the 2011 Astana EfE Ministerial Conference (refer to paragraph 20 of the present document). These activities are included in section 4 of the survey.

24. Furthermore, the survey seeks to identify country views on environmental priorities and themes that could be addressed at the next ministerial conference, as well as on possible efficient interactive modes for conducting discussions at ministerial level. These issues are included in sections 5 and 6 of the survey.

[3] The Astana Ministerial Declaration and other Conference documents are available on the ECE website (http://www.unece.org/env/efe/astana/welcome.html).

25. It is recognized that countries may engage in a particular issue, treaty or process without the direct attribution of that engagement to the EfE process. Therefore it is recommended that the responses to the survey questions also explain the extent to which the EfE process has influenced the attention and priority given to an issue, process or treaty. If the response to a question is "not applicable", "disagree" or "not foreseen", but the particular issue is nonetheless important for the country, it could be explained that the issue is addressed primarily through means other than the EfE process or UNECE activities.

26. The target group of the survey comprises the representatives of national Governments of the UNECE region.

27. The structure of the survey has been developed to be user-friendly, mostly using a "tick box" approach, which is complemented by an explanatory section to allow respondents to elaborate on their choice. Such an approach is expected to facilitate the process of filling in the survey.

28. On the basis of responses received the UNECE secretariat will prepare an analysis for consideration by the nineteenth session of CEP. The analysis along with the responses received from countries will be posted on the CEP website.

29. UNECE member States are invited to complete the survey below and submit it to the secretariat (efe@unece.org) **by Friday, 28 June 2013**, at the latest.

1. Contact information

Please indicate the name, title, organization and country, as well as the contact data of the person who filled in the survey

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Date:	Ju.ly 8, 2013

2. Progress in promoting the objectives of the "Environment for Europe" process

In the table below, please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements and provide an explanation, as appropriate. The boxes can be ticked by double-clicking on the box and choosing "checked" under the "default value" from the popping up window. N/A means not applicable. If you choose N/A, nevertheless please elaborate on your choice.

The EfE process continues to serve as a mechanism to:

(a) Improve the environment throughout the region, contributing to sustainable development which may in turn contribute to poverty eradication, to improving quality of life, and to a safer world

☐ strongly agree / ☐ somewhat agree / ☒ somewhat disagree / ☐ strongly disagree / ☐ N/A

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

…The EfE process seems to have its greatest value in contributing to Sustainable Development in particular parts of the region, specifically in the EECCA region. This is as the EfE process was originally conceived and continues today. If it continues to offer value for these regions it may be justified in continuing but it does not and its purpose is not to make a contribution "throughout" the region.

(b) Enhance the implementation of strengthened national environmental policies

☐ strongly agree / ☐ somewhat agree / ☒ somewhat disagree / ☐ strongly disagree / ☐ N/A

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

… It may in some countries, particularly in the EECCA region, but otherwise it does not.

(c) Support convergence of environmental policies and approaches, while recognizing the benefits from a diversity of approaches to achieve common goals, and the prioritisation of environmental objectives

☐ strongly agree / ☒ somewhat agree / ☐ somewhat disagree / ☐ strongly disagree / ☐ N/A

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

… It can be helpful but often is less respectful of the diversity of approaches than the US would prefer.

(d) Encourage the participation of civil society

☐ strongly agree / ☐ somewhat agree / ☒ somewhat disagree / ☐ strongly disagree / ☐ N/A

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

…The participation of civil society if far too focused on European environmental NGOs and not nearly enough on the private sector and other parts of civil society.

(e) Promote broad horizontal environmental cooperation

☐ strongly agree / ☒ somewhat agree / ☐ somewhat disagree / ☐ strongly disagree / ☐ N/A

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

…

3. Progress in promoting <u>the political priorities</u> of the "Environment for Europe" process

In the table below, please, provide a brief summary of how your country is progressing in promoting the EfE political priorities, based on commitments already made under the EfE process, including through national policies and relevant partnerships. Please tick the box that best corresponds to the current situation or level of implementation in your country. Provide an explanation, as appropriate. N/A means not applicable. If you choose N/A, nevertheless please elaborate on your choice.

The progress (in your country) on EfE political priorities may include:

(a) Improvement of environmental governance, including strengthening environmental institutions and implementation of policy instruments *(by your country)*

– improvement of environmental governance:

☐ not started / ☐ initiated / ☐ in progress / ☐ accomplished / ☒ N/A

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

…The U.S. is firmly committed to strong environmental and is constantly seeking ways to make it more effective but the EfE does not and should not contribute to this effort.

– strengthening environmental institutions:

☐ not started / ☐ initiated / ☐ in progress / ☐ accomplished / ☒ N/A

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

… The U.S. is firmly committed to strong environmental and is constantly seeking ways to make it more effective but the EfE does not and should not contribute to this effort

– implementation of policy instruments:

☐ not started / ☐ initiated / ☐ in progress / ☐ accomplished / ☒ N/A

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

… The U.S. is firmly committed to strong environmental and is constantly seeking ways to make it more effective but the EfE does not and should not contribute to this effort

(b) Streamlining the implementation by your Government of commitments made to existing UNECE legally-binding and legally non-binding instruments

Overall assessment:

☐ not started / ☐ initiated / ☐ in progress / ☐ accomplished / ☒ N/A

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

… The U.S. is firmly committed to implementing the commitments that it makes. But that is not influenced by the EfE process. We have sought to focus the EfE on implementation and to promote a strong commitment of those facilitating the various instruments to work with countries to fully understand the commitments required to implement new instruments before joining them, as we do in the U.S., but this has not been as successful as we would have hoped for.

Air Pollution Convention and its Protocols	– Status *(more than one box can be ticked)* ☐ signed / ☒ ratified/acceded/approved / ☐ in the process of ratification/accession/approval / ☐ not foreseen / ☐ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …We are strongly committed to this Convention and the protocols to which we have acceded but this commitment is not influenced by the EfE process. – Implementation ☐ not started / ☐ initiated / ☐ in progress / ☒ well-implemented / ☐ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* … We are strongly committed to this Convention and the protocols to which we have acceded but this commitment is not influenced by the EfE process. – Formal reporting (national implementation reports) ☐ never submitted / ☐ submitting occasionally / ☒ submitting regularly / ☐ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …… We are strongly committed to this Convention and the protocols to which we have acceded but this commitment is not influenced by the EfE process.
Water Convention	– Status *(more than one box can be ticked)* ☐ signed / ☐ ratified/acceded/approved / ☐ in the process of ratification/accession/approval / ☒ not foreseen / ☐ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …We have agreements with the countries with which we share waters. We also have strong water laws domestically. Those agreements and laws predate the Water Convention and while we welcome the contribution of the Convention we do not foresee joining it. – Implementation ☐ not started / ☐ initiated / ☐ in progress / ☐ well-implemented / ☒ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …
Protocol on Water and Health	– Status *(more than one box can be ticked)* ☐ signed / ☐ ratified/acceded/approved / ☐ in the process of ratification/accession/approval / ☐ not foreseen / ☒ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* … – Implementation ☐ not started / ☐ initiated / ☐ in progress / ☐ well-implemented / ☒ N/A

	Please elaborate (up to 250 words): … – Formal reporting (national implementation reports) ☐ never submitted / ☐ submitting occasionally / ☐ submitting regularly / ☒ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …
Industrial Accidents Convention	– Status *(more than one box can be ticked)* ☒ signed / ☐ ratified/acceded/approved / ☐ in the process of ratification/accession/approval / ☐ not foreseen / ☐ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* … We have agreements with the countries with which we share boarders. We also have strong liability laws domestically. While we signed the Convention when it was agreed, we have not moved to ratify the convention and do not actively participate in its work. We do not foresee a change in that situation. Implementation ☐ not started / ☐ initiated / ☐ in progress / ☐ well-implemented / ☒ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* … – Formal reporting (national implementation reports) ☐ never submitted / ☐ submitting occasionally / ☐ submitting regularly / ☒ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …
Protocol on Civil Liability	– Status *(more than one box can be ticked)* ☐ signed / ☐ ratified/acceded/approved / ☐ in the process of ratification/accession/approval / ☒ not foreseen / ☐ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* … – Implementation ☐ not started / ☐ initiated / ☐ in progress / ☐ well-implemented / ☒ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …
Espoo Convention	– Status *(more than one box can be ticked)* ☒ signed / ☐ ratified/acceded/approved / ☐ in the process of ratification/accession/approval / ☐ not foreseen / ☐ N/A

	Please elaborate (up to 250 words): … We have robust environmental assessment laws domestically. The U.S. signed the Convention when it was drafted but we have not moved to ratify it and do not actively participate in its meetings or implementation beyond the enforcement of domestic laws many of which served as a basis for the drafting of the Convention. Implementation ☐ not started / ☐ initiated / ☐ in progress / ☐ well-implemented / ☒ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* … – Formal reporting (national implementation reports) ☐ never submitted / ☐ submitting occasionally / ☐ submitting regularly / ☒ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …
Protocol on SEA	– Status *(more than one box can be ticked)* ☐ signed / ☐ ratified/acceded/approved / ☐ in the process of ratification/accession/approval / ☒ not foreseen / ☐ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* … – Implementation ☐ not started / ☐ initiated / ☐ in progress / ☐ well-implemented / ☒ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* … – Formal reporting (national implementation reports) ☐ never submitted / ☐ submitting occasionally / ☐ submitting regularly / ☒ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …
Aarhus Convention	– Status *(more than one box can be ticked)* ☐ signed / ☐ ratified/acceded/approved / ☐ in the process of ratification/accession/approval / ☒ not foreseen / ☐ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …The U.S. was the author and promoter of Rio Principle 10 at the UNCED Conference in 1992. We are strongly committed to the ideas of Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matter. However because of the specific obligations and provisions of the are not compatible with existing US laws and are in fact with the provisions of the U.S. Constitution, especially regarding the authorities and responsibilities of the Federal and State Governments.

	Implementation ☐ not started / ☐ initiated / ☐ in progress / ☐ well-implemented / ☒ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* … – Formal reporting (national implementation reports) ☐ never submitted / ☐ submitting occasionally / ☐ submitting regularly / ☒ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …
Protocol on PRTRs	– Status *(more than one box can be ticked)* ☐ signed / ☐ ratified/acceded/approved / ☐ in the process of ratification/accession/approval / ☒ not foreseen / ☐ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …The U.S. has a robust equivalent to a PRTR system with our Toxic Release inventory. We consulted with other UNECE governments in the drafting of the PRTR protocol . However, we do not anticipate joining the Protocol. – Implementation ☐ not started / ☐ initiated / ☐ in progress / ☐ well-implemented / ☒ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* … – Formal reporting (national implementation reports) ☐ never submitted / ☐ submitting occasionally / ☐ submitting regularly / ☒ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …
Strategy for ESD	– Status *(more than one box can be ticked)* ☐ adopted / ☐ actively participating / ☒ not engaged / ☐ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …The U.S. strongly believe is education for sustainable development (ESD) and we have been involved in it for many decades. Indeed, U.S. Agricultural extension, which dates back over 100 years, is an excellent example of ESD. The U.S. also pioneered environmental education which has many common elements with ESD; but, formal education is strongly decentralized in the US and while some systems actively engage in programs that could be considered ESD others do not. In higher education too, there are university programs in sustainability and graduate programs in sustainability, even in some engineering and business schools. However, we find the declaration and approach taken by the to ESD in the UNECE to be too prescriptive for our approaches and we are not active in its meetings or formal implementation.

	– Implementation ☐ not started / ☐ initiated / ☐ in progress / ☐ well-implemented / ☒ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* … – Formal reporting (national implementation reports) ☐ never submitted / ☐ submitting occasionally / ☐ submitting regularly / ☒ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …
THE PEP	– Status *(more than one box can be ticked)* ☐ adopted / ☒ actively participating / ☐ not engaged / ☐ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …We view THE PEP is a partnership in which we share best practices with others and learn from their efforts. We do not view THE PEP as a prescriptive set of programs that needs to be formally implemented. That said we have long understood the nexus of Transport, Health and Environment and we have many different programs, mostly at a subnational and local level but some with encouragement from the federal government, that address the nexus. – Implementation ☐ not started / ☐ initiated / ☒ in progress / ☐ well-implemented / ☐ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* … – Reporting (responding to THE PEP survey on progress in the attainment of the Amsterdam Goals) ☒ never submitted / ☐ submitting occasionally / ☐ submitting regularly / ☒ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …
(c) Enhancing efforts in environmental monitoring Overall assessment in your country: ☐ not started / ☐ initiated / ☐ in progress / ☒ well-implemented / ☐ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …We have been committed to environmental monitoring for a very long time and continue to look for ways to make these efforts more efficient and effective and to utilize them in decision making. Our commitment has not been influenced by the EfE but we have welcomed the efforts of the European member states to undertake a shared environmental information system.	
Production of	☐ never produced / ☐ in progress / ☒ producing occasionally / ☐ producing regularly /

indicator-based state-of-the-environment reports	☐ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …
Enterprise environmental monitoring and reporting	☐ not started / ☐ initiated / ☒ in progress / ☐ well-implemented / ☐ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …
(d) Ensuring implementation of the UNECE Environmental Performance Review (EPR) Programme Overall assessment of your country's role: ☐ not active / ☒ active as donor / ☐ active as reviewed country / ☐ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …We have contributed personel to the teams conducting the EPRs.	
Participation in the EPR process as a reviewed country in the future	☐ not interested / ☐ initiated / ☐ in progress / ☒ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …As an OECD country we have participated in the OECD EPRs.
Participation in the EPR process as a donor country (in-kind and/or providing financial support)	☐ not interested / ☐ initiated / ☒ on-going / ☐ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …
Implementation of EPR recommendations by the reviewed country	☐ not started / ☐ initiated / ☒ in progress / ☐ accomplished / ☐ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …We have assisted some reviewed countries implement aspects of the recommendations through our bilateral aid programs.
(e) Raising public awareness on environmental issues Overall assessment in your country: ☐ not started / ☐ initiated / ☒ in progress / ☐ well-implemented / ☐ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …This is an on-going efforts that proceeded the EfE process and will continue regardless of the EfE process.	
Ensuring public access to environmental information	☐ not started / ☐ initiated / ☐ in progress / ☒ well-implemented / ☐ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …

Ensuring public participation in environmental-decision making	☐ not started / ☐ initiated / ☐ in progress / ☒ well-implemented / ☐ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …
Ensuring public access to environmental justice	☐ not started / ☐ initiated / ☐ in progress / ☒ well-implemented / ☐ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …
(f) Promoting linkages between environmental policy, economic and social well-being and competitiveness Overall assessment in your country: ☐ not started / ☐ initiated / ☐ in progress / ☒ well-implemented / ☐ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* … This is an on-going efforts that proceeded the EfE process and will continue regardless of the EfE process.	
Mainstreaming the environment into economic development	☐ not started / ☐ initiated / ☐ in progress / ☒ well-implemented / ☐ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …
Implementing environmental policies through economic/market instruments (e.g. phasing out subsidies, introducing environmental taxation, payment for ecosystems services, etc.)	☐ not started / ☐ initiated / ☐ in progress / ☒ well-implemented / ☐ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …
Implementing environmental policies through regulatory/normative instruments (e.g. norms, standards, bans, etc.)	☐ not started / ☐ initiated / ☐ in progress / ☒ well-implemented / ☐ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …
Implementing environmental policies through information	☐ not started / ☐ initiated / ☐ in progress / ☒ well-implemented / ☐ N/A *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …

based/voluntary instruments (e.g. labelling, etc.)	

4. Progress in strengthening the implementation of outcomes of the Astana EfE Ministerial Conference

In the table below, please, provide a brief summary of how your country is progressing in implementing the commitments made at the Astana Conference. Please tick the box that best corresponds to the current situation or level of implementation in your country. Provide an explanation, as appropriate. N/A means not applicable. If you choose N/A, nevertheless please elaborate on your choice.

The main outcomes of the Astana Conference include:

(a) Ratifying and implementing the relevant multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) *(by your country)*

Please provide additional information, as relevant, that was not provided under section 3(b) (up to 250 words):

…Our decisions regarding the ratification of MEAs is not impacted by the EfE process.

(b) Implementing the Astana Water Action *(by your country)*

☐ not started / ☐ initiated / ☒ in progress / ☐ well-implemented/ ☐ not foreseen

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

…We support the implementation of this in some EECCA countries through our bilateral assistance efforts.

(c) Promoting a green economy *(by your country)*

…

☐ not started / ☐ initiated / ☐ in progress / ☐ well-implemented/ ☐ not foreseen

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

… We support the implementation of this in some EECCA countries through our bilateral assistance efforts.

Promoting the Green Bridge Partnership Programme *(by your country)*

☐ not started / ☐ initiated / ☐ in progress / ☐ well-implemented/ ☒ not foreseen

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

…We are still uncertain what this program is.

(d) Ensuring implementation of the <u>third cycle</u> of environmental performance reviews (EPRs) *(by your country)*

☐ not foreseen / ☒ active as donor / ☐ active as reviewed country / ☐ N/A

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

…

(e) Establishing a regular process of environmental assessment (RPEA), including developing a Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS) *(by your country)*

☐ not started / ☐ initiated / ☐ in progress / ☐ SEIS developed / ☐ RPEA established

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

…We undertake a variety of environmental assessments but this cycle is not influenced by the EfE.

(f) Participation in the continued work of the Environmental Action Programme Task Force (EAP Task Force), including on the sustainable management of water and water-related ecosystems, and on greening the economy: mainstreaming the environment into economic development *(by your country)*

☒ not foreseen / ☐ active as donor / ☐ active as beneficiary / ☐ N/A

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

…

Participation in strengthening the contribution of Regional Environmental Centres (RECs) in both promoting green economy and better environmental governance at the local, national, subregional and regional levels *(by your country)*

☐ not foreseen / ☒ active as donor / ☐ active as beneficiary / ☐ N/A

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

…

5. Thematic priorities of the "Environment for Europe" process for the Eighth Ministerial Conference

In the table below, please indicate thematic priorities that might be addressed at the Eighth EfE Ministerial Conference, including a brief justification note for each proposed priorities. Please also indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the proposed several themes, as well as organising a high-level segment on MEAs and the proposed theme. Please kindly note that the idea to organize a high-level segment on MEAs emerged from the discussion at the informal meeting of representatives of governing bodies of MEAs and CEP (Geneva, 27 February 2013).

First thematic priority (an "established" theme of importance to the entire region, e.g. the Astana Conference addressed the "established" theme sustainable management of water and water related ecosystems)

Please propose a theme: …

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

…We are not yet convinced of the need for an eight Ministerial Conference. If there is a Conference it should consider a theme of how innovation can contribute to a cleaner environment.

Second thematic priority (an "emerging" theme of importance to the entire region, e.g. the Astana Conference addresses the "emerging" theme greening the economy: mainstreaming the environment into economic development)

Please propose a theme: …Integrating environmental information in policy decisions and development planning.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">and decision making.

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

…</td></tr>
<tr><td>Enhancing the work on greening the economy and the mainstreaming of environmental concerns into the economic development</td><td>A possible "emerging" theme for the Eighth Ministerial Conference to follow up on the Astana EfE and Rio+20 Conferences commitments

☒ strongly agree / ☐ somewhat agree / ☐ somewhat disagree / ☐ strongly disagree

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

…If a Conference is held this would be an important issue.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Promoting a sustainable consumption and production</td><td>A possible "emerging" theme for the Eighth Ministerial Conference to follow up on the Rio+20 Conferences commitments

☐ strongly agree / ☐ somewhat agree / ☒ somewhat disagree / ☐ strongly disagree

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

…Resource productivity should be considered instead.</td></tr>
<tr><td>"Greening" International Financial Institutions (IFIs) policies</td><td>A possible "emerging" theme for the Eighth Ministerial Conference to follow up on the Rio+20 Conferences commitments

☐ strongly agree / ☐ somewhat agree / ☐ somewhat disagree / ☒ strongly disagree

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

…The focus should be on action at the national level.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Resilience and Change</td><td>A possible "emerging" theme for the Eighth Ministerial Conference to encompass the need for disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, emergency preparedness and contingency planning to be ready for both environmental and demographic change in the coming years, i.e., the expected increase in extreme weather events due to global warming, but also to the foreseen changes in demographics (aging populations and south-north migration), in particular in urban areas)

☐ strongly agree / ☒ somewhat agree / ☐ somewhat disagree / ☐ strongly disagree

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

…</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Organizing a high-level segment on assessing the progress in establishing a regular process of environmental assessment and developing the SEIS across the region

☒ strongly agree / ☐ somewhat agree / ☐ somewhat disagree / ☐ strongly disagree

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

…</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Organizing a high-level segment on UNECE MEAs</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">☐ strongly agree / ☐ somewhat agree / ☐ somewhat disagree / ☒ strongly disagree

Please elaborate (up to 250 words):

…The MEAs meet regularly, if an EfE is held, it should provide a venue to discuss topics that are not on the agenda as regularly.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Role of public participation in effective implementation of MEAs</td><td>A possible theme for a possible high-level segment on UNECE MEAs (of relevance to all UNECE MEAs)
☐ strongly agree / ☐ somewhat agree / ☒ somewhat disagree / ☐ strongly disagree
Please elaborate (up to 250 words):
The MEAs meet regularly, if an EfE is held, it should provide a venue to discuss topics that are not on the agenda as regularly.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Need to develop new structures or frameworks to address emerging themes, such as green economy, giving the on-going crisis that affected all countries in the UNECE region
☐ strongly agree / ☐ somewhat agree / ☐ somewhat disagree / ☐ strongly disagree
Please elaborate (up to 250 words):
…There are already too many structures and frameworks; TOO MANY MEETINGS! THE CEP can handle new issues.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Greening the economies</td><td>Elaboration of subregional roadmaps (e.g. EU, SEE, Central Asia, Caucasus, Eastern Europe)
☐ strongly agree / ☐ somewhat agree / ☐ somewhat disagree / ☒ strongly disagree
Please elaborate (up to 250 words):
…
Elaboration/harmonization of regional eco-standards for products and production processes
☐ strongly agree / ☐ somewhat agree / ☐ somewhat disagree / ☒ strongly disagree
Please elaborate (up to 250 words):
…
Other (please suggest demand-driven frameworks/structures)
☐ strongly agree / ☐ somewhat agree / ☐ somewhat disagree / ☒ strongly disagree
Please elaborate (up to 250 words):
…</td></tr>
<tr><td>Strengthening implementation of ESD</td><td>Mainstreaming ESD into technical and vocational training to meet future labour market demand
☐ strongly agree / ☐ somewhat agree / ☐ somewhat disagree / ☒ strongly disagree
Please elaborate (up to 250 words):
…</td></tr>
</table>

	Mainstreaming ESD into teachers/educators' training ☐ strongly agree / ☐ somewhat agree / ☐ somewhat disagree / ☒ strongly disagree *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* … Implementing an ESD school plan in every school (i.e. addressing campus management, curricula and community interaction) ☐ strongly agree / ☐ somewhat agree / ☐ somewhat disagree / ☒ strongly disagree *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …
Strengthening environmental considerations in other social and economic sectors	Sustainable urban development (e.g. bringing together the relevant activities under THE PEP, Environment and Health process, and green building) ☐ strongly agree / ☐ somewhat agree / ☒ somewhat disagree / ☐ strongly disagree *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):* …

6. Format of the Eighth EfE Ministerial Conference

In the table below, please, indicate/propose an interactive format for the next Conference. Provide an explanation, as appropriate.

Interactive format for the Conference (for a more productive ministerial participation) *Please propose an interactive format(s) to stimulate the work of the Conference:* … *Please elaborate (up to 250 words):*If a Conference is held. …	
Parallel thematic round-tables	☒ strongly agree / ☐ somewhat agree / ☐ somewhat disagree / ☐ strongly disagree *Please elaborate:* …
Interactive discussions e.g. similar to "BBC Question Time"	☐ strongly agree / ☐ somewhat agree / ☐ somewhat disagree / ☐ strongly disagree *Please elaborate:* …
[please propose an interactive format]	☐ strongly agree / ☐ somewhat agree / ☐ somewhat disagree / ☐ strongly disagree *Please elaborate:* *WEA like thematic small panels with Ministers and CEOs* …

7. Any other issues you consider important

[please include any issues relevant to the scope of this survey that you may wish to address …]

Please elaborate: We should not presume an EfE Conference is necessary.

…

Annex

Reform of the "Environment for Europe" process: Reform Plan

Excerpt from the report of the Committee on Environmental Policy on its special session (Geneva, 27–29 January 2009)

I. Background

1. The Sixth Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" (Belgrade, 10–12 October 2007) recognized the important value of the "Environment for Europe" (EfE) process as a unique pan-European forum for tackling environmental challenges and promoting broad horizontal environmental cooperation, and as a pillar of sustainable development in the UNECE region. The EfE process was considered to be an important framework for bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the region. The added value of the EfE process was recognized in its close links with other regional and subregional initiatives and processes, which help to integrate environmental and sectoral policies.

2. The ministers in Belgrade agreed that the EfE process, initiated in 1991, needed to be reformed. They committed themselves to continuing a focused and needs-based EfE process concentrated on results-based, action-oriented activities that improve the environment and advance sustainable development in the region and to actively seeking partnerships with civil society, including the private sector. The purpose of the reform was to strengthen its effectiveness and to ensure that it remained appropriate for, and fully aligned with, the growing needs of the UNECE region and the evolving political and economic landscape, as well as the environmental priorities of the region.

3. The Belgrade Ministerial Declaration stated that the reform should focus on, although may not be limited to, the following aspects:

(a) The format, focus and priorities of the process and Ministerial Conferences;

(b) Evaluating the performance and impact of the process;

(c) Attracting the broader interest and more active engagement of all stakeholders, in particular the private sector;

(d) Expanding the use of partnerships as vehicles for improving implementation;

(e) Leveraging external contributions of expertise, manpower and resources;

(f) Assessing ways and means to promote more effectively the UNECE region-wide dimension of environmental cooperation;

(g) The full cost of the process and the effective allocation of available resources;

(g) Future secretariat arrangements.

4. In order to address the above issues in depth and with due consideration, the ministers invited the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP) to develop, in consultation with EfE partners a plan for EfE reform so that it could be endorsed at the political level by UNECE in spring 2009.

5. The ministers further decided that the next EfE Ministerial Conference would be organized on the basis of the agreed reform.

II. Objectives and priorities of the "Environment for Europe" process

6. The EfE process should continue to serve as a mechanism to:

(a) Improve the environment throughout the region, contributing to sustainable development which may in turn contribute to poverty eradication, to improving quality of life, and to a safer world;

(b) Enhance the implementation of strengthened national environmental policies;

(c) Support convergence of environmental policies and approaches, while recognizing the benefits from a diversity of approaches to achieve common goals, and the prioritisation of environmental objectives;

(d) Encourage the participation of civil society;

(e) Promote broad horizontal environmental cooperation.

7. The political priorities should be based on commitments already taken under the EfE process. These priorities may include:

(a) Improvement of environmental governance, including strengthening environmental institutions and implementation of policy instruments;

(b) Streamlining the implementation by Governments of commitments they have made to existing UNECE legally binding and legally non-binding instruments;

(c) Enhancing efforts in environmental monitoring;

(d) Ensuring implementation of the Environmental Performance Review programme;

(e) Raising public awareness of environmental issues;

(f) Promoting linkages between environmental policy, economic and social well-being and competitiveness.

8. Furthermore, thematic priorities of the EfE process would be identified in line with current needs, national circumstances and in respect to future emerging issues.

9. In the future, the EfE process will be based on general principles and agreements on the operational modalities, as described below.

III. General principles

10. The ministers in Belgrade agreed that the EfE process should:

(a) Keep its UNECE region-wide dimension and be open for all interested countries of the region;

(b) Engage all stakeholders, including the private sector, to strengthen the work in partnership;

(c) Maintain close links with other regional and subregional initiatives, and focus on specific needs that are not entirely addressed by other cooperative frameworks, instruments or processes in the region and its subregions;

(d) Concentrate on results-based, action-oriented activities;

(e) Be kept open to issues on which the process can provide added value;

(f) Use delivery as a major criterion of its effectiveness. CEP should regularly consider and assess progress achieved under the process.

11. To complement the above principles, a consensus emerged from CEP in relation to the EfE process and the Conference:

(a) On the one hand, the EfE process-related principles are as follows:

(i) Broader engagement from the Governments to achieve long-term policy integration of environmental considerations into other sectors;

(ii) Stronger focus on implementation of the outcomes of the EfE Ministerial Conferences by relevant responsible actors in the period between Conferences;

(iii) Encouragement of and support to subregional activities including stronger involvement of relevant subregional structures in the implementation process, including RECs;

(iv) Enhanced cooperation between the regional and subregional partners in the region;

(v) Identification of ways to strengthen linkages between the activities under the EfE process and those of relevant international processes.

(vi) Enhancement of relevant Governments' implementation and compliance with their commitments under multilateral environmental agreements;

(vii) Utilization of the Environmental Performance Reviews as an important instrument for protection of the environment and promotion of sustainable development.

(b) On the other hand, the Conference-related principles are:

(i) The ministerial level of the Conferences should be maintained;

(ii) Specific mechanisms for attracting high-level participation, including those from the private sector, should be developed;

(iii) A limited number of themes, not more than two, to be identified in advance and addressed by each Conference;

(iv) Within the identified themes there should be a focus on specific needs of the subregions, in order to contribute to better cooperation and more substantive and action-oriented outcomes of the Conference;

(v) An effective communication strategy, including broad mass-media coverage, as appropriate, should be further developed, comprising, inter alia, special events for journalists, circulation of electronic newsletters and maintaining a dedicated website;

(vi) The outcome documents, in all forms, should be focused and action-oriented;

(vii) Carbon neutrality of the Conferences based on the voluntary contributions available.

IV. The "Environment for Europe" Conference

Preparatory process

12. Materializing the above-mentioned principles calls for streamlining and improving the preparatory process for the Conferences. In this spirit, the following measures should be taken:

(a) Not later than 18 months before the Conference the CEP at its regular session will decide on not more than two themes and discuss the outline of the agenda of the Conference. When deciding on the themes preliminary findings of available assessments and statistical reports on environment should be taken into consideration. A decision on the agenda of the Conference should be taken at the regular meeting of the CEP approximately 12 months prior to the Conference and further preparatory work would commence. Documents on substantial themes of the Conference should be released 6 weeks before the Conference;

(b) CEP would act as the convening body for the preparatory process. To maintain the open nature of the preparatory process and the engagement of all stakeholders, representatives of major groups will be invited to participate in meetings of the CEP in preparation of the Conference, as appropriate, in accordance with the existing UN rules and procedures. Furthermore, CEP would consider and approve the official documents for submission to the Conference. Special sessions of the CEP could be scheduled, if needed, in the year prior to the Conference;

(c) Particular efforts would be made to involve private-sector representatives in the preparatory process and the Conference;

(d) To reduce the amount of documents produced for the Conference, only one official document per selected theme would be prepared by the UNECE or another EfE partner, in close cooperation with other EfE partners. The official substantive documentation would thus comprise the pan-European assessment and theme-specific reports;

(e) Interested UNECE member States, EfE partners and other stakeholders could produce other documents featuring their activities and initiatives related to the EfE process, which would be circulated as information documents;

(f) The preparatory process would be serviced by the UNECE secretariat;

(g) For the preparatory process of the Conference and the Conference itself, the necessary extrabudgetary financial resources would have to continue to be provided to UNECE to supplement the United Nations core budget resources;

(h) The host country should assume relevant financial commitments.

Format

13. The periodicity, duration and the organization of discussions at the Conference should be as follows:

(a) The Conferences should be held every four to five years, with each Conference lasting two-and-a-half to three days maximum;

(b) Based on the previous experience, the Conference should start with a short opening event. The host country would be given an opportunity to organize events highlighting its special features in addition to the official Conference agenda;

(c) The discussions at the Conference should be arranged in an interactive manner and combine various types of sessions, e.g. plenary sessions, roundtables and moderated panel discussions, with a limited number of main speakers from different stakeholders (e.g. UNECE member States, EfE partners and major groups). When possible, interactive sessions, such as roundtables, could be run in parallel;

(d) The Conference could be structured around the following main clusters (all of them focusing on the agreed priorities):

(i) Plenary sessions for the presentation and discussion of the priority topics;

(ii) Sessions on ongoing cooperation and partnerships in the UNECE region and its subregions with different stakeholders, including the private sector;

(iii) A session of environmental NGOs and ministers in the roundtable format as an integral part of the conference;

(iv) A session of private sector representatives and ministers in the roundtable format as an integral part of the conference;

(v) Sessions dedicated to announcing new partnerships and initiatives by stakeholders;

(vi) A brief concluding session with the presentation (and adoption, if appropriate) of the main outcomes of the Conference;

(e) To address issues relevant to the agenda of the Conference in more detail, side-events should be organized by interested UNECE member States, EfE partners and relevant stakeholders;

(f) To attract the attention of the private sector, opportunities should be provided for the organization of promotional events such as poster exhibitions, trade fairs, roundtables and environmental award initiatives.

Outcomes

14. Conference outcomes might include:

(a) A chairperson's summary;

(b) Statements, initiatives, agreements, pledges by interested ministers and stakeholders on specific subjects and/or for specific subregions;

(c) An agreed outcome of two pages on follow up and further actions strictly limited, in terms of scope, to the themes of the Conference;

(d) Policy tools, including strategies, action plans with time frames, guidelines, recommendations, best practices and lessons learned that are presented to the Conference by interested countries of the UNECE region and/or organizations taking the lead for these issues, and that were not negotiated within the preparatory process for the Conference;

(e) Assessment reports used in preparation of or presented to the Conference that are important for the implementation of the Conference's outcomes.

V. Implementation

15. Particular efforts should be made by all relevant responsible actors to implement the outcomes of the EfE Ministerial Conferences.

16. Member States should regularly consider how to promote objectives and priorities of the EfE process and strengthen implementation of the outcomes of the EfE Conferences, including through national policies and relevant partnerships.

17. A mid-term review to be convened by the CEP to assess progress of the implementation of the outcomes of the EfE Conferences and provide renewed impetus to the process. The review should be based on existing information. The findings of the review should be taken into account in the preparatory process of the next conference.

18. Active participation by and input of all interested countries of the UNECE, and in particular of interested countries from subregions with specific needs in improving their environmental situation is crucial for the success of the activities under the EfE process.

19. The RECs network should continue to play a role in the preparatory process for the Conference and should be encouraged to play a greater role in the achievement of the overall EfE process’ objectives and priorities.

20. Other EfE partners should continue to be actively involved in the preparatory process and implementation of the EfE process.

21. Countries and/or organizations taking the lead for one or more issues are encouraged to do so in ways that would contribute significantly to the EfE process’ objectives and priorities.