

Decision 2019/16

Revised mandate for the International Cooperative Programme on Assessment and Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects on Forests

The Executive Body,

Recalling the relevant provisions of articles 7 and 8 of the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution,

Recalling also its decision 1999/2 concerning the structure and organization of work,

Recalling further the terms of reference for the International Cooperative Programme on Assessment and Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects on Forests (EB.AIR/WG.1/2000/4, annex II), noted at its eighteenth session (ECE/EB.AIR/71, para. 58 (c)),

Recalling its decision 2002/1 on the financing of core activities, as amended by decision 2018/8,

Acknowledging the achievements of the International Cooperative Programme on Assessment and Monitoring of Air Pollution on Forests, including:

(a) Continuous data collection from the two levels of the forest ecosystem monitoring and research infrastructure installed by the member States; continuous improvement of quality assurance measures in the field and in laboratories and quality control measures during data submission;

(b) Data dissemination and evaluation activities in support of various research activities within the Convention and beyond;

(c) Joint evaluation activities comparing the Cooperative Programme for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-range Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe modelling estimates and International Cooperative Programme on Assessment and Monitoring of Air Pollution on Forests field measurements, with important outcomes for both programmes; the launch of various publications relating observed effects, modelled Cooperative Programme for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-range Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe estimates and on-site measurement of environmental conditions, including soil conditions, affected by deposition and climate;

(d) Joint activities with the International Cooperative Programme on Integrated Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects on Ecosystems (integrated study) and the International Cooperative Programme on Effects of Air Pollution on Natural Vegetation and Crops (ozone symptoms) ;

(e) Increased focus on evaluations of long-term trends using data from its respective surveys (deposition, crown condition and tree damage causes, meteorology, phenology and leaf area index, ozone concentrations and ozone-induced injury, ground vegetation, litterfall, parameters from soil and soil solution and foliar analyses, tree growth) under additional consideration of space, under additional consideration of space;

(f) Support to various studies on cause-effect relationship;

(g) Progress in the evaluation of biodiversity aspects derived from International Cooperative Programme on Assessment and Monitoring of Air Pollution on Forests field surveys (influence of nitrogen deposition could be shown);

(h) Increased consideration of/focus on other aspects relevant for forest ecosystems, such as climate change effects, in many cause-effect studies;

(i) Annual popularized publications; regular publication of a technical report and contributions to various scientific publications;

(j) Strengthened cooperation with the European Union on activities relevant to the European Union National Emissions Ceilings Directive¹ and pursued in cooperation with the International Cooperative Programme on Integrated Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects on Ecosystems, the International Cooperative Programme on Modelling and Mapping of Critical Levels and Loads and Air Pollution Effects, Risks and Trends, the International Cooperative Programme on Effects of Air Pollution on Natural Vegetation and Crops, the International Cooperative Programme on Effects of Air Pollution on Natural Vegetation and Crops and the International Cooperative Programme on Assessment and Monitoring of the Effects of Air Pollution on Rivers and Lakes;

(k) Update of the *Manual on methods and criteria for harmonized sampling, assessment, monitoring and analysis of the effects of air pollution on forests*.²

Recognizing the need to update the mandate of the Programme to ensure its consistency with the provisions of the amended Protocols to the Convention, and its strategic priorities, as set out in the following documents:

(a) The revised long-term strategy for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (ECE/EB.AIR/142/Add.2);

(b) The 2016 scientific assessment of the Convention;³

(c) The policy response to the 2016 scientific assessment of the Convention (ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/2017/3 and Corr.1 and ECE/EB.AIR/2017/4).

Noting with appreciation the hosting of the Programme Centre by the Johann Heinrich von Thünen Institute, Federal Research Institute for Rural Areas, Forestry and Fisheries, in Braunschweig, Germany, and the ongoing leadership of the Programme Task Force by Germany,

1. *Adopts* the Programme's revised mandate as contained in the annex to the present decision, which includes the key objectives and functions of the Programme Task Force and the Programme Centre to be carried out on an ongoing basis, whereas additional activities and specific tasks and associated deliverables to be carried out in a shorter time frame will be included in the biennial workplans for the implementation of the Convention;

2. *Decides* that:

(a) The Programme Centre, in cooperation with the Chair of the Programme Task Force, is responsible for the detailed planning and coordination of the Programme;

(b) The lead country or countries are responsible for leading and coordinating the Task Force's ongoing work and tasks, organizing its meetings, communicating with participating experts and other organizational arrangements, in accordance with the biennial workplan. Chairs of the Task Force are appointed by the lead country or countries to carry out these tasks;

(c) In the event that a lead country needs to discontinue its leadership role, it is encouraged to notify the secretariat, Co-Chairs, and other lead countries as soon as possible, but preferably no later than one year prior to the time it will need to cease its leadership activities. The withdrawing lead country will make every effort to ensure a smooth transition to the next leadership model, by ensuring that all data and any other information required for Task Force operations are provided to the appropriate country or person(s);

(d) The Programme Centre is responsible for coordinating the relevant activities under the Programme, including development of technical projects, provision of deliverables according to the workplan (including annual reports and access to all relevant information

¹ Directive (EU) 2016/2284 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 December 2016 on the reduction of national emissions of certain atmospheric pollutants, amending Directive 2003/35/EC and repealing Directive 2001/81/EC, *Official Journal of the European Union*, L 344 (2016), pp. 1–31.

² Most recent version available at <http://icp-forests.net/page/icp-forests-manual>.

³ See Rob Maas and Peringe Grennfelt, eds., *Towards Cleaner Air: Scientific Assessment Report 2016* (Oslo, 2016) and United States Environmental Protection Agency and Environment and Climate Change Canada, *Towards Cleaner Air: Scientific Assessment Report 2016 – North America* (2016).

and data), participation in the relevant Task Force meetings, organizing technical workshops and training workshops, communicating with national experts and providing direct support to Parties, maintaining an up-to-date web page that includes information on the Programme and other organizational arrangements, in accordance with the biennial workplan;

(e) The Programme Centre is responsible for the compilation and provision of all information and data on air pollution impacts on forests necessary for the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols by the Parties;

(f) The Programme Centre and the Chair of the Task Force are responsible for carrying out the work assigned to them in the biennial workplans approved by the Executive Body, reporting thereon and keeping other relevant bodies apprised of their work.

Annex

Revised mandate for the International Cooperative Programme on Assessment and Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects on Forests

1. The International Cooperative Programme on Assessment and Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects on Forests will continue to monitor and assess the effects of air pollution on the condition and development of forest ecosystems in Europe and to contribute to a better understanding of cause-effect relationships in forest ecosystem functioning in various parts of the region.

2. The Programme Centre and the Chair of the Task Force report on their activities and deliverables to the Working Group on Effects.

3. The functions of the Programme Centre and the Task Force are to:

(a) Support Parties in installing and operating their forest monitoring and research infrastructures by providing and constantly developing respective technical and analytical guidelines (for example, by updating the *Manual on methods and criteria for harmonized sampling, assessment, monitoring and analysis of the effects of air pollution on forests*⁴ and organizing or supporting intercomparison courses);

(b) Permanently update and further develop the International Cooperative Programme on Assessment and Monitoring of Air Pollution on Forests collaborative database, carry out quality control and quality assurance measures on data submitted by Parties, provide assistance to Parties directly and via adequate documentation and foster dissemination of high-quality data within and outside of the Convention;

(c) Contribute to the work and publications of other international institutions (such as the European Union, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Acid Deposition Monitoring Network in East Asia) and research institutes to promote the Convention's visibility and its aims and to ensure the further development of evaluation techniques and strategies regarding possible cause-effect relationships;

(d) Support Parties (in general) by organizing annual Task Force meetings, workshops and related activities to exchange experiences and make suggestions to further develop the monitoring and research activities of the International Cooperative Programme on Assessment and Monitoring of Air Pollution on Forests at all levels;

(e) Support specifically the Parties in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and further encourage them to intensify or install forest monitoring infrastructures in line with International Cooperative Programme on Assessment and Monitoring of Air Pollution on Forests standards;

(f) Further collaborate with thematically related international cooperative programmes (such as the International Cooperative Programme on Integrated Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects on Ecosystems, the International Cooperative Programme on Modelling and Mapping of Critical Levels and Loads and Air Pollution Effects, Risks and Trends and the International Cooperative Programme on Effects of Air Pollution on Natural Vegetation

⁴ Most recent version available at <http://icp-forests.net/page/icp-forests-manual>.

and Crops) and Cooperative Programme for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-range Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe bodies (such as the Meteorological Synthesizing Centre-West) by designing joint evaluations, organizing common scientific events and producing joint publications;

(g) Carry out other tasks assigned to them by the Working Group on Effects and the Executive Body.