

PROJECT CONCEPT NOTE

Project Title	Promotion and implementation of the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution
Project Manager	Ms. Alina Novikova
Subprogramme	Environment
Implementing Entity	UNECE
Start Date	2006
End Date	Open-ended
Budget	ca. USD 230,000 per year
Beneficiary Countries	Countries in Eastern Europe, South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia
Cooperating Entities within the UN System	
Other Implementing Partners	none

Background

Air pollution emissions have been considerably reduced in the UNECE region over last decades in part by relying on integrated air pollution management strategies that were developed jointly under the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (the Air Convention) and its protocols. However, the progress is uneven across the region: it was less prominent in countries with economies in transition, in particular in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. The increase in energy production, industrial and urban development including transport lead to further increase of air pollution and its adverse impacts on health and the environment. In 2014, WHO declared air pollution the single largest environmental health threat, responsible for about 7 million deaths annually; 600,000 alone in the WHO European region. The economic cost of premature death and disability from air pollution in Europe, calculated by WHO and OECD, is close to US\$ 1.6 trillion.

The Executive Body for the Air Convention at its twenty-second session noted the importance of the Convention's work in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and the need for workshops, manuals and implementation guides to encourage implementation in countries of that subregion, and recognized the importance of adequate resources for that work (ECE/EB.AIR/83, para. 56 (g)). Subsequently, the trust fund project E112 was created for the purpose of capacity-building. In 2007, the revised action plan for Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/2007/17) was adopted by the Executive Body, where the need to raise the political profile of the Convention, to facilitate information exchange and better involvement of the target countries in the activities of the Convention, and to encourage ratification through capacity-building was stressed accordingly. The capacity-building in countries with economies in transition and more active involvement of a greater number of Parties in the work of the Convention was highlighted as one of the Convention's priorities in its Long-term Strategy (ECE/EB.AIR/106/Add.1).

This trust fund project became the first UNECE project to support countries in Eastern, South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia under the Convention. It is an open-ended project and currently has no final date. The target group comprises the national environmental authorities, decision-makers responsible for development of policy related to air pollution abatement and technical experts involved in the process of collecting, processing and reporting of emission data in the mentioned beneficiary countries.

The project supports target countries in their achievement of the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In addition, it is going to support the target countries to deliver on their voluntary commitments made under the Batumi Action for Cleaner Air, an initiative aimed at catalysing action to improve air quality, which was adopted at the Eighth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference in Batumi, Georgia (June 2016).

The project supports the implementation of capacity-building and awareness-raising activities aimed at improved ratification and implementation of the Convention and its protocols (co-funded by other trust fund projects under the Convention), as well as increased involvement of the target countries in the activities under the Convention, in particular the participation of their delegates and experts in the Convention's regular meetings. The project also co-funds the secretariat staff support to implement capacity-building and awareness-raising activities.

In implementation of the assignments, the Secretariat will endeavor to strengthen the participation of women in conformity with the UNECE Gender Action Plan, with concrete strategies designed to achieve equal participation of women in the activities.

Relationship to the Strategic Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals

The proposed project directly contributes to the implementation of the UNECE Strategic framework for the period 2016-2017 and the proposed Strategic framework for the period 2018-2019, as it will advance the objective of the Environment subprogramme to improve environmental governance and performance throughout the region for safeguarding the environment and health. Specifically, the project contributes to the Expected Accomplishments (a) and (b) of both ECE strategic documents: (a) Improved response to environmental challenges by ECE constituencies, and (b) Strengthened implementation and increased geographical coverage of ECE multilateral environmental agreements.

The project supports target countries in their achievement of the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Most notably, the improved air quality management will help countries in: reducing the world's largest environmental health risk for non-communicable diseases (Goal 3 Good health and wellbeing, targets 3.4 and 3.9); tracing progress towards improving urban air quality (Goal 11 Sustainable cities and communities, target 11.6); and ensuring the environmentally sound management of chemicals throughout their life cycle and to reduce their release to air (Goal 12 responsible consumption and production, target 12.4).

Objective

To strengthen the implementation and ratification of the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (CLRTAP) and its protocols in countries of Eastern, South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

Expected accomplishments

EA1. Increased political profile of the Convention and raised awareness among decision-makers of the beneficiary countries on environmental and health effects of air pollution;

E.A.2. Improved access of the beneficiary countries to information and tools on air pollution abatement and their strengthened involvement in emissions reporting, monitoring and modelling activities under the Convention;

E.A.3. Increased ratification of the Convention and its Protocol on Long-term Financing of the Cooperative Programme for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-range Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe (EMEP), the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants, the Protocol on Heavy Metals and the Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone (Gothenburg Protocol).

Indicators of achievement

1.1 Number of meetings with national authorities.

1.2 Number of outreach publications, press-releases and web-pages issued or updated;

2.1 Number of additional countries providing their reports, participating in modelling and monitoring activities under the Convention;

2.2 Number of experts trained or consulted on various aspects of the implementation of the Convention and its protocols;

2.3 Number of participants from Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia participating in the meetings of the Convention;

3.1. Number of actions to support the ratification of the Convention and its protocols.

Main activities

The list of specific activities contributing to above-listed expected accomplishments varies from one year to another in accordance with the Convention's workplan, target countries' needs and availability of resources. The cost of activities are often shared with other trust fund projects under the Convention, where the current project extensively covers the cost of staff support to organize these activities.

In general, following activities are being held to contribute to the project's expected accomplishments:

A1.1 Organizing or participation of the secretariat in the meetings with national authorities aimed to promote the Convention and its protocols and to explain the effects of air pollution and benefits of their implementation.

A1.2. Production of related information materials, press releases and the web-site update

A2.1. Organizing workshops, trainings and consultation on various aspects of the implementation of the Convention and its protocols, including those on emission data collection and reporting;

A2.2. Travel support to delegates and experts from the target countries to facilitate their participation in the meetings of the Convention's Executive Body and subsidiary bodies.

A3.1. Organization of analysis of national legislation with a view to identify regulatory gaps and provide recommendations on further steps towards improved implementation and ratification.

Assumptions and Risks

The main assumptions for the project are: a) political stability in the target countries, and b) the commitment of Governments to improve air quality management, to participate in the proposed activities and to improve the implementation/ratification of the Air Convention and its protocols.

The risks for the delivery of activities are low.

Results-based work plan

As mentioned above, the yearly results-based workplan depends on the availability of funds, activities planned in accordance with the Convention's biennial workplan and specific needs expressed by the target countries contributing to the project's expected accomplishments. The indicative results-based workplan is presented in Annex 1.

Budget

The project budget is about USD 230,000 per year (including the standard UN Programme Support Cost). It may vary depending on the availability of contributions to this trust fund project. Among the Parties regularly contributing to this trust fund project, there are Norway and Switzerland. The Netherlands and Canada have also contributed to this trust fund project in the past. The indicative budget is presented in Annex 2.

Results-based work plan

EA	Activity	Budget class and Code	Amount (USD)
EA1 Increased political profile of the Convention and raised awareness among decision-makers of the beneficiary countries on environmental and health effects of air pollution	A1.1 Organizing or participation of the secretariat in the meetings with national authorities aimed to promote the Convention and its protocols and to explain the effects of air pollution and benefits of their implementation.	Staff and personnel costs (GTA)	\$ 25,000
		Travel of Staff	\$ 6,666
		Operating and other direct costs	\$1,000
	A1.2 Production of related information materials, press releases and the web-site update	Staff and personnel costs (GTA)	\$ 16,000
		Operating and other direct costs	\$ 1,000
EA 2 Improved access of the beneficiary countries to information and tools on air pollution abatement and their strengthened involvement in emissions reporting, monitoring and modelling activities under the Convention	A2.1 Organizing workshops, trainings and consultation on various aspects of the implementation of the Convention and its protocols, including those on emission data collection and reporting	Staff and personnel costs (GTA)	\$ 30,000
	A2.2. Travel support to delegates and experts from the target countries to facilitate their participation in the meetings of the Convention's Executive Body and subsidiary bodies.	Travel of meeting participants	\$95,000
EA3. Increased ratification of the Convention and its Protocol on EMEP, the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants, the Protocol on Heavy Metals and the Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone (Gothenburg Protocol).	A3.1. Organization of analysis of national legislation with a view to identify regulatory gaps and provide recommendations on further steps towards improved implementation and ratification.	Travel of staff	\$3,333
		Staff and personnel costs (GTA)	\$25,000

Budget

Staff and personnel costs (010) \$ 96,000 (Total)

Staff assistance to perform the tasks of the project, in support of activities A1.1, A1.2, A2.1, A2.2 and A3.1: 7 work months x (\$13,700 per work month) = \$96,000.

Travel of Staff (160): \$ 10,000 (Total)

3 missions by UN staff in support of activities A1.1 and 3.1.
(\$3,333 average mission cost) x (3 of missions) = \$10,000.

Operating and other direct cost expenses (125): \$ 2,000 (Total)

In support of A1.1 and 1.2 = \$2,000.

Travel of meeting participants (160): \$ 95,000 (Total rounded)

In support of activities A2.2. approximately 38 participants x (\$2,500) = \$95,000

Total direct cost USD 203,000

13% UN Programme Support Cost USD 27,000

Total budget USD 230,000