



Meeting Report

Virtual meeting with RCs and UNCTs in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Turkey subregion

03 June 2020 (15:00-16:30, Geneva time) – MS Teams

Five RCs and one RCO representative attended the meeting: Shombi Sharp – RC Armenia, Joanna Kazana-Wisniowiecki – RC Belarus, Sabine Machl – RC Georgia, Simon Springett – RC Moldova, Alvaro Rodriguez – RC Turkey, Osnat Lubrani – RC Ukraine; Shams Mustafayeva – representative from RCO Azerbaijan

Representatives of UNCTs, UNDCO, and 14 IBC members participated: FAO, ILO, IOM, OHCHR, UNDP, UNECE, UNEP, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNOPS, UN Habitat, UN Women, WFP, and WMO

Observer: UNAIDS

The meeting was co-chaired by UNEP, UNESCO and UNECE.

Opening and welcoming statements were delivered by: Bruno Pozzi, Director, UNEP Europe Office; Ana Luiza Massot Thompson-Flores, Director, UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe; Nicholas Bonvoisin, Chief of the Operational Activities & Review Section (on behalf of Marco Keiner, Director), Environment Division, UNECE; and Irena Vojackova-Sollorano, a.i. Regional Director UNDCO Europe & Central Asia.

The co-chairs presented the IBC on Environment and Climate Change, the results of a survey of the needs of RCs and the IBC workplan and possible actions for 2020 under the three pillars (see IBC terms of reference and background paper). The RCs present in the meeting took the floor to introduce themselves and express their expectations of the IBC.

Main conclusions:

- RCs called for the IBC to be a source of knowledge and inspiration for the countries in the subregion as well as a platform to identify concrete examples of solutions and best practices relating to important environment and climate change challenges and opportunities.
- RCs emphasized the importance of the IBC, notably in supporting building back better and crosscutting issues and links between environment and climate change, as well as health, water resources, air pollution and the green/ circular economy.



- RCs noted that the concern of the majority of the countries during the post COVID-19 period is ensuring economic recovery, and that the IBC could provide some guidance to ensure the environmental perspective is not forgotten, notably in the socioeconomic assessments and recovery plans being carried out in the context of the pandemic.
- RCs noted that in some circumstances, countries were more amenable to environmental or climate change projects, but not necessarily open to policy discussions.
- RCs stated that although there has been a temporary benefit in terms of the environment, as the pandemic has limited our economic activities, the beneficial impacts will pass quickly with relaxation of measures during the post COVID-19 recovery.
- The RCs expect the IBC to support and collaborate with RCOs and national ministries on transboundary environmental issues.
- RCs welcomed support from the IBC on data and knowledge in the areas of waste management, food security, biodiversity, water management, green economy, nature-based solutions and mining.
- The RCs also highlighted the key role that the IBC could have in the process of elaborating CCAs and UNSDCFs in the area of environmental and climate change, notably in ensuring consistency and relevance in outcomes and outputs.
- The RCs suggested the IBC should develop capacity-building activities in order to meet RCO staff and UNCTs needs, and to work on raising awareness on environment and climate change.

Annex 1: Meeting agenda

Annex 2: Meeting presentation