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Item 3 of the provisional agenda

ISSUES CALLING FOR ACTION BY THE COMMISSION

Note by the Executive Secretary *

Addendum

Summary

At its thirteenth session in October 2006, the Committee on Environmental Policy invited the Bureau to discuss its revised Terms of Reference further at its meeting in February 2007 and to submit the text to the Commission for adoption at its sixty-second session in April 2007.

The Bureau of the Committee considered the draft Terms of Reference at its meeting on 13 February 2007, which the secretariat had revised on the basis of the feedback received during and after the Committee's October session. Following further amendments to the text, the Bureau approved the draft and invited the secretariat to submit it to the Commission.

The Commission is therefore invited to approve the revised Terms of Reference for the Committee on Environmental Policy as reproduced below.

* Late submission since the Bureau of the Committee on Environmental Policy took its decision only on 13 February 2007.

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

The Committee on Environmental Policy concentrates its efforts on preventing environmental damage, promoting sustainable management of environmental resources and, to contribute towards the convergence of countries of the UNECE region, hence lead to improvements in the region's environment conditions primarily by implementing the goals set out in the document "Future strategic directions for the environment", adopted in 2003 (CEP/2004/2), and the workplan on UNECE reform adopted in 2005 (E/ECE/1434/Rev.1).

In particular, the Committee, as a multilateral forum for cooperation in the area of environment in the UNECE region, will:

1. Serve as an instrument for UNECE member States to provide policy direction and to launch international initiatives, including the preparation of ministerial meetings in the region to review environmental priorities and adopt a strategic environmental policy;
2. Strengthen environmental information and observation capacity, particularly in countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) and South-Eastern Europe (SEE), in order to provide reliable and relevant information on the state of the environment as a basis for improved policymaking and public awareness, and use indicators to assess progress as appropriate;
3. Consider the need for and develop, as appropriate, legally binding instruments, recommendations, methodologies and guidelines for improving environmental management in member countries.
4. Conduct and support international activities which promote environmental protection and sustainable development in the region at the subregional and transboundary levels; promote cooperation among all parties concerned in order to make action effective and cost-efficient, as well as to encourage public participation in environmental decision-making with the involvement of civil society organizations, including the private sector;
5. Promote cooperation and share experience among the UNECE environmental conventions by providing support for effective implementation of these instruments and to improve compliance with their cross-cutting provisions;
6. Promote implementation of policy instruments and tools for strengthening the capabilities of countries in EECCA and SEE through technical assistance, advisory missions and capacity-building, including the legally binding instruments of the UNECE, to prevent and reverse environmental degradation;
7. Assist Member States as necessary to integrate environmental considerations into other policies and to use indicators to assess progress as appropriate;

8. Contribute to the UNECE region's implementation of the environmental pillar of sustainable development and support the regional implementation meetings organized in preparation for the sessions of the Commission on Sustainable Development;
9. Regularly review its programme of work to ensure the coherence of its activities with the overall objectives of UNECE; develop synergies and propose to the UNECE Commission modalities for cooperation with other sectoral committees on issues of common concern;
10. Facilitate coordination between environment-related programmes initiated by Governments and the European Union; cooperate with other United Nations regional commissions, with international organizations and with other relevant bodies, including financing institutions, to avoid duplication of work and enhance synergies;
11. Promote and support Member States' efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.
