



# UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Programme des Nations Unies pour l'environnement

Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Medio Ambiente

Программа Организации Объединенных Наций по окружающей среде

برنامج الأمم المتحدة للبيئة

联合国环境规划署



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Dear Mr. Keiner,

UNEP is pleased that the excellent partnership established some time ago with ECE, building on our individual strengths and synergies to promote environmental sustainability and support sustainable development processes in the Pan European region, has been further strengthened since the Astana Conference. The state of our regional cooperation is strong: UNEP and ECE work together in a number of areas, not only as part of the Environment for Europe process (EfE), but also on other joint processes and initiatives.

In 2011 and 2012, UNEP collaborated with ECE in the regional preparatory process for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20). And, through the Regional Coordination Mechanism, under the leadership of ECE and UNDP, jointly with other UN partners prepared the publication *From Transition to Transformation: Sustainable and Inclusive Development in Europe and Central Asia*. UNEP in 2012 and 2013, again through the Regional Coordination Mechanism and under the leadership of ECE and UNDP, jointly with other UN partners developed the Post 2015 UN Development Agenda common vision for the Pan European region in an advocacy paper as well as additional environment related Issue Briefs to be published shortly.

UNEP has continued the collaboration with ECE, the World Health Organization (WHO) and other partners in the European Environment and Health Process (EEHP) by supporting and contributing to the work of the European Environment and Health Ministerial Board (EHMB) and European Environment and Health Task Force (EHTF) to ensure the implementation of commitments made within the EEHP, and is planning to revitalise its collaboration with ECE and the WHO on the Transport, Health and Environment Pan European programme (THE PEP) in the preparations for the Fourth High Level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment. UNEP will closely cooperate with ECE in strengthening the institutional and legal capacity of the Interstate Committee on Sustainable Development (ICSD) of Central Asia, and in the support to the Action Plan of the ICSD and its functional bodies in implementing recommendations of the Rio+20 Outcome Document.

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With regards to environmental policy and management in the Pan European region, as part of its continued engagement with ECE in the Environmental Performance Review (EPR) programme, UNEP has provided experts to participate in three reviews since the Astana Conference: Albania, Romania and Croatia. UNEP also participated as part of the team in the first non ECE region EPR in Morocco in 2012.

UNEP welcomes the continuation of the EfE process as a critical space to satisfy environmental aspirations and needs of the Pan European region. In UNEP's view, the EfE continues to have an irreplaceable role as a genuinely Pan European, multilateral high level forum for stocktaking and guidance on environmental issues of importance to the Pan European region and a platform for promoting, launching and concluding regional and sub-regional initiatives and agreements.

In this regard, it is important to recall other initiatives that were borne from the EfE process and continue to enjoy successes that are recognized in the region. UNEP is a partner with ECE, OSCE, UNDP and REC, and NATO as an associated partner, in the Environment and Security Initiative, now in its tenth year contributing to the reduction of environment and security risks in Central Asia, Eastern Europe, Southern Caucasus, and South-Eastern Europe. The Framework Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (Carpathian Convention) has recently celebrated the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its adoption at the Kyiv EfE Conference in 2003, and now includes three protocols. The Pan European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (PEBLDS) has been given new life by the participating governments and transformed in the Pan European Biodiversity Platform with a newly adopted Pan European 2020 Biodiversity Strategy. UNEP, along with ECE, continues to support the Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) agenda and engages in the UN Inter-Agency Committee for the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (IAC). Sustainable Consumption and Production initiatives have also been strongly supported by the Ministers participating in the EfE process. Rio+20 reaffirmed that promoting sustainable patterns of consumption and production (SCP) is one of the three overarching objectives of, and an essential requirement for sustainable development, and adopted the 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns (10YFP), of which UNEP is the secretariat.

UNEP fully supports the ECE as secretariat of the EfE process. UNEP jointly prepared with the ECE Secretariat the background paper on Green Economy (ECE/CEP/2013/10) that will be discussed at the 19<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP). In this background paper the most recent developments of UNEP's Green Economy Initiative is presented. It is evident that the success of the Initiative is built on the strong partnerships that have been fostered with other UN and non-UN institutions. UNEP, therefore, welcomes the further cooperation with ECE on the Green Economy work in the Pan European region since the Astana Conference. An important example of this cooperation is the implementation of the project entitled *Greening the Economies in the Eastern Neighborhood (EaP Green)* with UNECE, OECD and other partners.

We look forward to our own continued strong involvement in the EfE process. The importance of UNEP's role in addressing sustainable development at the regional level has been enhanced in the Rio+20 outcome and the efforts of the Pan European region to transition to inclusive green economies. UNEP, as a global organization with a regional mandate, strongly advocates the use of the EfE process also as a forum to reflect at the Pan European level on ideas and actions of global relevance – and for this reason will be leading a side event during the

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forthcoming CEP session on the newly established United Nations Environment Assembly. We take this opportunity also to stress again the important role of NGOs and trade unions, local authorities and academia – in general, civil society – and the private sector in the EfE process, a role that we continue to advocate for and support. UNEP stands ready to continue to strengthen its cooperation and collaboration with ECE as an established partner in this region.

Mr. Jan Dusik  
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