

EXECUTIVE BODY FOR THE CONVENTION ON
LONG-RANGE TRANSBOUNDARY AIR POLLUTION

Bureau to the Executive Body

**REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE BUREAU
TO THE EXECUTIVE BODY FOR THE CONVENTION
14 April 2008, Geneva**

Prepared by the secretariat in consultation with the Bureau

The first meeting of the Bureau in 2008 was chaired by the Chairman of the Executive Body, Mr. M. Williams (United Kingdom), and was attended by Vice-Chairpersons Mr. R. Ballaman (Switzerland), Mr. D. Fantozzi (United States), Mr. Atle Fretheim (Norway), Mr. T. Johannessen (Norway), Ms. M. Lešnjak (Slovenia) and Mr. J. Schneider (Austria). Mr. W. Harnett (United States) was invited to attend the meeting as observer since Mr. Fantozzi was unable to attend at the start of the meeting. Mr. M. Rico (France) and Mr. A. Zuber (observer for the European Commission) sent their apologies. Mr. K. Bull attended for the UNECE secretariat.

**I. NOTE OF THE BUREAU MEETING OF 10 DECEMBER 2007
(EB BUREAU/2007/3) INCLUDING MATTERS ARISING NOT ELSEWHERE
ON THE AGENDA**

1. The note of the meeting had been circulated and the Bureau agreed that it should be placed on the Convention's website at www.unece.org/env/cb/bureau.

II. ISSUES RELATED TO THE WORKING GROUP ON EFFECTS

2. Mr. Johannessen noted the attention drawn to biodiversity indicators at the Executive Body session in December; the Working Group and its subsidiary bodies were giving this due attention. He also noted the informal document on monitoring guidelines that was to be presented to the Working Group on Strategies and Review. Discussions in the Bureau of the Working Group on Effects had suggested the usefulness of developing guidelines analogous to those used by EMEP. It was planned to present a report to the Working Group on Effects session in September. An adjustment to the workplan was needed to enable an official report to be presented in September.

3. Mr. Johannessen also drew attention to a consolidated report being prepared for the Working Group on Effects which, inter alia, demonstrated the links between critical loads exceedances and observed effects. It was planned to print this report

following the Working Group's approval. He also noted development of a brochure on the activities of the Working Group.

4. The Bureau welcomed the efforts of the Working Group on Effects to contribute to the work of the Convention.

III. ISSUES RELATING TO THE STEERING BODY OF EMEP

5. Mr. Schneider informed the Bureau he was to step down as Chair of the Steering Body. He also noted that some other Bureau members would not seek re-election. The Chair of the Task Force on Emission Inventories and Projections, Ms. Kristen Rypdal, was changing jobs and would be replaced. It seemed likely that the United Kingdom would now lead the Task Force and appoint a new Chair. He noted the smooth transition in transferring the emissions database to the new EMEP Centre in Austria. This Centre for Emissions and Projections (CEIP) was now fully operational.

6. Mr Schneider also noted EMEP's plans to revise its long-term strategy and its monitoring strategy. Both would soon approach their end dates, so revision was needed. The current strategies had proved useful; they had successfully predicted new scientific efforts, such as synergies with climate change. The new strategies should also attempt to identify new important areas of work. A draft outline text had already been circulated to the EMEP Bureau and this was being used as the basis for developing text for submission to the Steering Body.

7. The Bureau welcomed the developments under EMEP and stressed the need for continuity through the anticipated changes in the coming year. It thanked Mr. Schneider for his contribution to the work of EMEP and his support to the work of the Bureau and the Convention.

8. Mr Johannessen suggested that the strategies of EMEP and the Working Group on Effects should be harmonized to provide a scientific strategy for the Convention. Mr. Williams noted that the Executive Body had not developed a long-term strategy for the Convention. It was suggested that such a strategy should build upon the scientific strategies but include policy issues.

9. The Bureau agreed that it would be useful to consider developing a long-term strategy for the Convention. While such a strategy should focus on air pollution, it should not ignore the links with other issues and it should be developed through strategic reflection on recent developments under the Convention (e.g. very long-range transport, the nitrogen cycle). Developing such a plan could involve input from outside the Convention. It should particularly engage countries with economies in transition to ensure their input to the strategy. The Bureau agreed to present a draft proposal to the Executive Body in December. The time frame for the strategy could be similar to that envisaged by EMEP and the Working Group on Effects (about 10 years), and the strategy could provide guidance for work following adoption of any new or revised protocols in the next few years. It was agreed that the idea be raised at the Working Group on Strategies and Review to gain the reaction of delegations.

IV. HEAVY METALS

10. Mr. Ballaman noted that, following decisions by the Executive Body, the Task Force on Heavy Metals had not been charged with specific actions with regard to any revision of the Protocol on Heavy Metals. The Task Force was looking at issues of updating the Best Available Techniques, as listed in the guidance annex III, and had planned a capacity-building workshop in Armenia to be held in May.

V. POPs

11. Mr. Ballaman outlined plans for discussions on the revision of the Protocol on POPs at the forty-first session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review. The obligations related to substances would be discussed in plenary while a group of technical experts would work on possible revisions to the annexes to the Protocol. The technical group would report to the Working Group towards the end of its session.

12. The Bureau noted that the forty-second session of the Working Group was scheduled for the week of 1-5 September 2008. This would enable Parties to the Protocol to formally propose amendments to the Protocol after the session but before the 90-day limit specified in the Protocol.

VI. EMISSION REPORTING GUIDELINES

13. Mr. Ballaman outlined plans for discussion of the Guidelines at the forty-first session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review. The report from the ad hoc Group of Legal Expert provided clear guidance on what might be done to improve the text of the Guidelines. It was anticipated that a revised text would be agreed. This would be forwarded to the EMEP Steering Body for information and to the Executive Body for adoption. The Group of Legal Experts had stressed the limitations on strengthening the Guidelines further. It had noted that this could only be done through amendment of the Convention and/or its protocols.

14. The Bureau noted the work being done and hoped that the Guidelines would be available for the Executive Body session in December.

VII. REVISION OF THE GOTHENBURG PROTOCOL

15. Mr. Ballaman informed the Bureau of planned discussion on revision of the Gothenburg Protocol at the forty-first session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review. It was open for discussion whether a revised protocol or a new one would be most appropriate. While major changes were anticipated, the Working Group was only about to start its discussions. Mr. Ballaman noted that the work on integrated assessment modelling needed to consider such issues as the baseline scenario, the use of expert estimates for when official data were not available, and possible measures for EECCA countries that would allow accession (e.g. BAT without full optimization).

16. The Bureau noted the plans and drew attention to the need to consider annex revisions, the importance of taking EU plans into consideration, and the need to invite North American Parties to consider how they might involve themselves in the revision process.

VIII. EECCA ACTION PLAN

17. The secretariat noted that fund raising to support the Action Plan had been slow, so new initiatives had not been possible in the EECCA region. Most donations received were used to support participation at meetings in Geneva. The Czech-funded project with Moldova was awaiting final agreement from Moldova on the proposed contract with the UN. The Dutch funded project with five West Balkans countries had now started. So far only Albania and Montenegro had responded positively to the invitation to participate in the project. Follow-up letters had been sent to the other countries to stimulate a response from ministries. The secretariat noted the plans for the heavy metals workshop in Armenia in May; this was an initiative of Armenia that had been taken up by Germany, the lead country of the Task Force on Heavy Metals. There were also tentative plans for a workshop in Kazakhstan on techno-economic issues; this was being organized by the lead countries of the Expert Group on Techno-economic Issues.

18. The Bureau took note of the activities and welcomed the initiatives of lead countries to hold workshops in the EECCA region.

19. The secretariat informed the Bureau of communications it had had with the Russian delegation regarding its participation in discussions at the Working Group on Strategies and Review. It was understood that participation of delegates was proving difficult at this time. Discussions between the secretariat and the Russian mission in Geneva suggested that a possible reorganization of ministries in the Russian Federation could lead to a much improved situation in the future.

IX. IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

20. Mr. Fretheim informed the Bureau of the recent meeting of the Implementation Committee. The second meeting of the year would be held in July. Mr. Fretheim noted the heavy workload of the Committee and the associated work of the secretariat. Funds had been donated for a consultant to assist with the in-depth review of protocols in 2008.

X. OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

21. The secretariat reported on activities of the Global Atmospheric Pollution Forum (GAPF), of which the Convention was a member, being represented on the Steering Committee by the secretariat and the Chair. The Chair noted plans for a Forum workshop, on the co-benefits of addressing air pollution and climate change; details of the proposal agreed with the Swedish Development Agency, Sida, (the

major funder of the Forum) had been circulated to the Bureau. The workshop was scheduled for September in Geneva or Stockholm. The Forum had requested that the workshop be held “under the Convention” and included in the Executive Body’s workplan for 2008.

22. Members of the Bureau expressed concern that the information provided on the GAPF workshop suggested that participation would be by invitation only; this was not current practice for any workshop held under the Convention. There was also concern that the organization of the workshop, though involving the secretariat and the Chair, was nominally the responsibility of an NGO. Again this was not common practice; the Bureau felt that there could be no proper control exercised by the Convention, its Parties or its secretariat. The Bureau agreed it should turn down the request to include the workshop in the workplan. However, it also agreed to request GAPF to share the workshop results with the Convention so that Parties could benefit from the conclusions reached.¹

23. The Bureau noted the need to consider criteria for “ambassadors for the Convention” as requested by the Executive Body. The secretariat provided the Bureau with a draft list of criteria to aid its deliberations. Bureau members agreed to provide written comments to the secretariat within 3 to 4 weeks.

24. The secretariat provided information on communications with the UNEP secretariat of the Malé Declaration. It proposed sending the information provided by UNEP, in particular the outline of future work under the Declaration, to the Convention’s subsidiary bodies. This would help assess where links could be built between the two agreements. The scientific and technical work was expected to be targeted.

XI. UPDATING THE 2008 WORKPLAN

25. The Bureau noted the need to take decisions on amendments to the current workplan, provided by its mandate approved at the twenty-fifth session of the Executive Body. The secretariat drew attention to the following items for addition to the workplan:

- (a) A report on Guidelines for monitoring to be submitted to the twenty-seventh session of the Working Group on Effects by its Bureau;
- (b) The workshop of the Task Force on Hemispheric Transport of Air Pollution to be held on 9 to 13 June 2008;
- (c) A plan for a Convention Strategy to be submitted to the twenty-sixth session of the Executive Body by its Bureau;
- (d) Joint Expert Group on Dynamic Modelling to hold its ninth meeting on 20 to 22 October 2008 in Sitges, Spain;

¹ Following communications between the secretariat, the Head of the Swedish delegation to the Working Group on Strategies and Review, and the GAP Forum secretariat, it was confirmed that: (a) the workshop would be hosted by Sweden, which would act as lead country and ensure reporting; and (b) the workshop would be open to experts from Parties to the Convention. Based on this information, members of the Bureau agreed by consensus to include the workshop in the 2008 workplan of the Executive Body.

(e) Workshop on air pollution-climate change co-benefits to be held in Stockholm 17 to 19 September 2008.²

26. The Bureau agreed the amendments to the workplan in principle and requested the secretariat to circulate it with the draft corrigendum to the workplan for its final agreement.

XII. OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS FOR MEETINGS

27. Mr. Bull informed the Bureau that he had followed up on the Executive Body's request to determine the reasons for the late documents provided to the recent session of the Executive Body and to seek assurances of improved service in the future. He had sent a memo to Mr. Almoman, Director, Central Planning and Coordination Service of UN Conference Services, in January but had received no reply. He had sent a further memo in March reminding Mr. Almoman of the information required, but again no reply had been received.

28. The Bureau expressed its disappointment at the lack of response from Mr. Almoman. It requested its Chair to write to Mr. Almoman stressing the need for a reply since the Executive Body had requested its Heads of Delegation to be informed of the follow-up.

XIII. ACCREDITATION OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

29. The secretariat reminded the Bureau that there had been agreement at the Executive Body session to make decision 2006/11, on the accreditation of non-governmental organizations, provisional for a further year.

30. The Bureau had no suggestions for revising decision 2006/11 but agreed to discuss the issue again at its next meeting.

XIV. SECRETARIAT STAFFING

31. Mr. Bull noted that Albena Karadjova had successfully applied for a fixed-term appointment in the secretariat. She would continue with her responsibilities with the Implementation Committee and with the Working Group on Strategies and Review, but she would also be secretary of the Industrial Accidents Convention. It was anticipated that the IA Convention would occupy only a small percentage of her time; most of the work for that Convention would be done by two other support staff. One of these would provide important input to the work of the Air Convention. In this way, the support to the Air Convention should continue at the same level or even increase.

32. With Ms Karadjova's appointment, the secretariat was discussing how to make effective use of the staff available. In particular, Ms Tea Aulavuo had quickly adapted

² Item added in accordance with decision taken as indicated in footnote 1.

to the work of the Convention and was ready to assume new responsibilities. Mr. Bull would inform the Bureau of developments.

33. Mr. Bull also noted that he was due to retire from the UN at the end of 2008. Plans for his replacement were pending as the Director's post for the Division was still vacant following the retirement of Mr. Barlund. The Bureau expressed concern that Mr. Bull's retirement at the end of 2008 could present difficulties for completing the necessary work and actions after the Executive Body session in December. The Bureau recognized that extensions beyond retirement in the UN were only given by the Secretary-General in exceptional circumstances, but the Chair indicated he would support such a request for this if it proved necessary.

XV. OTHER BUSINESS

34. The secretariat noted the recent short article on the report of the Task Force on Hemispheric Transport of Air Pollution in UNECE Weekly. This had failed to mention either the Task Force or the Convention. This had been drawn to the attention of the editors so that such oversights did not happen in the future. The secretariat noted that there were always opportunities to put articles into UNECE Weekly to highlight the work of the Convention and its subsidiary bodies.

XVI. DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

35. The Bureau agreed to meet at the time of the next session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review in September 2008 and provisionally agreed Monday 1 September at 10 a.m. The secretariat would confirm this and make the necessary arrangements for the meeting room.

36. The Bureau noted the need for a High-level Coordinating Group meeting with the European Commission. Andre Zuber would be consulted for a suitable time and place.