
EXECUTIVE BODY FOR THE CONVENTION ON
LONG-RANGE TRANSBOUNDARY AIR POLLUTION
Bureau to the Executive Body

Note of the Bureau Meeting on 3 September 2010

Attendance: Ms. V. Galatone participated via audioconference. All other Bureau members and observers attended, Mr. M. Keiner, Director of EHLM Division, as well as Mr. S. Ludwiczak, Mr. K. Olendrzynski, Ms. T. Aulavuo and Ms. A Karadjova from the secretariat were present. Mr. A. Romanov from the Russian Federation was also present.

Before turning to discussion of the items on the agenda, the Bureau considered more important to discuss the matter of secretariat resources. It requested the secretariat to prepare a paper on how it intends to use its available resources in the next year and to circulate it to the Bureau prior to the EB meeting. Several Bureau members stressed the importance of making a distinction between task forces and looking for solutions. It was recognized that different task forces needed different degree of support and guidance, newly established task forces/expert groups in particularly in need of such support. It was also recommended to make a wider and more active distribution of documents through electronic means. The importance of Bureau and joint Bureaux meetings of subsidiary bodies was stressed. The secretariat stressed that servicing of Bureaux meetings had never been in question and reassured that it would continue to organize and service these meetings.

Item 1: Draft long-term strategy for the Convention

The Bureau discussed the draft long-term strategy and the comments made by WGSR. It agreed that the WGSR comments would be made available to the EMEP Steering Body and the WGE meetings as an informal document. The Bureau agreed that, once the strategy adopted, it was very important to discuss how the strategy will be implemented over the next year in practical terms. It was once again stressed that the strategy should govern the further revision of the Gothenburg Protocol and the prioritization of work on POPs and heavy metals vis-a-vis the Stockholm Convention and the UNEP mercury convention under negotiation.

Item 2: The role of Task Force on Hemispheric Transport of Air Pollution and the Expert Group on Black Carbon in the revision of the Gothenburg Protocol

The Bureau discussed the major conclusions of the Executive Summary of the Task Force on Hemispheric Transport of Air Pollution and the report of the Ad hoc Expert Group on Black Carbon. It highlighted the importance of outreach activities to other regions, eventually opening the Convention to countries outside the UNECE and the

proposal for a confederation of air pollution agreements around the world. It was agreed that the reports of the TFHTAP and the BCEG were a good opportunity to start a discussion on these issues at the Executive Body session.

It was also stressed that there was a very short window of opportunity for the Convention to move into the area of linkages between air pollution and climate change by incorporating methane and PM/black carbon into the revision of the Gothenburg Protocol. Mr. Meulepas reminded however, that the inclusion of methane into a revised Gothenburg Protocol might be much more sensitive issue for many EU member states than black carbon. On the other hand the increased understanding of the importance of methane for regional ozone pollution may shift positions.

It was further recognized that the TFHTAP did not explore any control options as its remit was scientific. Should a decision for further action be taken, it would be necessary to task EGTEI or another group to present such options.

On the other hand, the report of the Expert Group on Black Carbon would provide concrete recommendations for the EB on how to move forward with black carbon. The EB was also expected to discuss extending the mandate of the expert group.

Item 3: Draft Terms of reference for the coordinating group on EECCA

The Bureau approved the terms of reference for the Coordinating group on EECCA and agreed to forward them for formal adoption to the EB.

Mr. Romanov informed the Bureau about a possible initiative by the Russian Federation to organize a high-level event in the first half of 2012, bringing together decision-makers and experts from EECCA countries and representatives from the western part of the UNECE region. The goals of this event would be to show the mechanisms developed under the Convention over 30 years, to demonstrate the progress in terms of lower emission and air quality, the benefits of expert cooperation, the link between better air quality, economic development and welfare and the options to move forward.

The Bureau welcomed such an initiative.

Item 4: Draft agenda for the 28th session of the Executive Body

The EB Bureau discussed the format of the plenary meetings and concluded that a lot of time was spent on presentations on pre-published documents. It agreed to change this practice and use the time in the most efficient manner. It agreed to apply this procedure to the forthcoming EB session. It requested the secretariat to prepare and submit the draft agenda for the EB session.

Item 5: Organization of work and meetings in 2011

The secretariat announced preliminary dates for plenary meetings of the EB and the major subsidiary bodies in 2011. It was agreed that this list will be presented at the EB session.

Item 6: Other business

Mr. Ballaman expressed his dissatisfaction with the secretariat and informed that he was going to step down.

Item 7: Date, time and place of next meeting

The next meeting of the Bureau will be on 13 December 2010 in Geneva.