

TRANSLATION

Report

First session of the Coordinating group
on promotion of actions towards implementation
of the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution
in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia
(EECCA Coordinating Group)

Introduction

The Coordinating group on promotion of actions towards implementation of the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution (CLRTAP) in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA Coordinating Group) under chairmanship of the Russian Federation was established in accordance with the Decision 2010/17 of the Executive body of the CLTRAP (ECE/EB.AIR/106).

The Ministry of the Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation imposed the duties of the chairman upon Mr. Andrey Nedre, Director General of the JSC "Scientific Research Institute for Atmospheric Air Protection" (SRI Atmosphere, JSC), St.Petersburg.

The First session of the Coordinating group was held on 18th March 2011 in St.Petersburg, Russian Federation within the St.Petersburg International Air Congress "Atmosphere-2011".

The meeting brought together the officials from Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, the UN ECE CLRTAP Secretariat, the Expert Group on Techno-economic Issues of the CLRTAP, and regional and international experts.

Financial support of the session was provided by the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency in the framework of Swedish-Russian co-operation and by SRI Atmosphere.

Activities within the Agenda

1. Representative of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation Mr. Sergey Vasilyev opened the session with welcoming remarks and notified the audience that the Ministry leading the Coordinating group on behalf of the Russian Federation appointed Mr. Andrey Nedre, Di-

rector General of SRI Atmosphere, JSC, as chairman of the Coordinating group.

2. The Chairman of the Coordinating group Mr. Andrey Nedre presented the main objectives of the group, namely: development of approaches to atmospheric air quality regulation on national and transboundary level applying the CLRTAP mechanisms, providing of assistance to the countries of the region concerning the accounting of air pollutant releases, implementation of the impact assessment on environmental systems and application of critical loads, analysis of the corresponding techno-economic factors, enhancement of regional and international cooperation in the area of transboundary air pollution abatement. The importance of participation of the countries of the region in activities within the CLRTAP despite their current membership status was highlighted.
3. Item 1 of the Agenda: The Chairman of the Coordinating group presented the Memorandum "**On development of eastern dimension of the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution**", conformed and signed by the Ministries of natural resources and environmental protection of Belarus, Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation in 2010.

The Representative of **Azerbaijan** supported the Memorandum and informed the participants that it is expected to be approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic;

The Representative of **Tajikistan** expressed interest of the country towards the Memorandum and the accession to it;

The Representative of **Kyrgyzstan** noted that the process of accession to the Memorandum is being carried out;

The Representative of **Uzbekistan** explained that the issue of the main UNECE Conventions is now being discussed with relevant Ministries and Agencies. In particular the Office of the Government of the Republic was charged to study the issue of ratification of the LRTAP Convention which is connected directly to the possibility of accessing to the Memorandum.

The Representative of **the Republic of Moldova** (State Environmental Inspection) noted that all three protocols are signed (only Protocols on POPs and HM are ratified). The Deputy Minister is now considering the accession to the Memorandum.

4. Item 2 of the Agenda: opportunities/provisional timelines for accession to the CLRTAP and/or its protocols. The representatives of the countries shared information on the ongoing and planned work in the framework of the Convention and its protocols, based on a questionnaire sent out previously on behalf of the Chairman of the Coordinating group.

The Representative of **the Russian Federation** noted the difficulties with compiling a full pollutant emissions report and proposed to introduce into the Protocols of the Convention a possibility for the countries with economies in transition to report on emissions only from large point sources for a 5 year period after ratification of the HM and Gothenburg protocols as an element of flexibility for the EECCA countries. It was reported that the law on ratification of the Stockholm Convention had been submitted for adoption to the Upper Chamber of the Parliament. It is expected that fulfilling the obligations under the Stockholm Convention will promote actions towards ratification of the Protocol on POPs (2013-2014). With regard to the date of ratification of the protocols an opinion was expressed that the accession to the Gothenburg protocol will be possible in 2013-2014.

The Representative of **Belarus** reported on active work on emissions inventory in accordance with the EMEP/EEA Air Pollutant Emission Inventory Guidebook. The Protocol on POPs is the first priority to accede to (the Action Plan on POPs and the appropriate plans on POPs emission reduction are prepared), currently the accession to the revised Protocol on POPs is planned for 2012 (tentatively). The second priority is the Gothenburg Protocol for which the essential issue is to assess economic consequences of the accession that can be realized using the GAINS model within the joint project with Sweden, thereby preparations to implementation and accession to the Protocol will be possible no earlier than 2014-2015. As for the Protocol on HM it was expressed that the preparation process for its implementation and ratification will depend on the level of measures in the area of regulation and reduction of particulate matter emissions that is currently discussed in the context of the Gothenburg Protocol revision process.

The Representative of **Tajikistan** informed that the country has long-term plans for accession to the LRTAP Convention;

The Representative of **Azerbaijan** informed that currently as a priority the EMEP Protocol is being translated into the national language with an aim of accession to it. Installation of an EMEP background monitoring station is in process of preparation. In addition the Stockholm Convention on POPs has been ratified enabling the country to consider the prospects of accession to the Protocol on POPs. The meeting with the UNECE Secretariat on intensification of activities under the Convention is planned in the second half of 2011.

The Representative of **Kyrgyzstan** informed that the CLRTAP has been ratified in 2000, currently there are no certain plans on accession to the protocols.

The Representative of **Uzbekistan** informed that the Action Plan on Environment protection for 2008-2012 has been adopted and implemented in the country which includes the issues of atmospheric air protection. Further the ratification of the Convention and the accession to the Gothenburg Protocol as the priority will be discussed;

The Representative of **Kazakhstan** informed that the country has been a party to the Convention since 2001; efforts have been made on preparation and ac-

cession to its protocols. Difficulties were identified with emissions reporting and with harmonization of reporting requirements on the national level with the requirements of the EMEP/EEA Emission Inventory Guidebook. The first inventory (2002-2003) of atmospheric emissions since 1990 was prepared; at the moment the national inventory and correspondent reports are updated. The lack of skilled professionals and the need for software for automated data processing and receiving of air pollution reports were pointed out. In addition the accessing to all three protocols is included into the Action Plan on Environmental protection till 2014 of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The rationale for accession to the Protocols of the Convention are supposed to be submitted in 2011.

The Representative of **the Republic of Moldova** informed that the National Action Plan for implementation of the Gothenburg Protocol was developed, at the moment it is considered by the UNECE Secretariat and further will be submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers. The accession to the EMEP Protocol is being discussed. The lack of specialists and the need of further training of experts was also pointed out.

5. Item 3 of the Agenda: The coordination of a joint regional position regarding the revision of the Heavy Metals Protocol and the Gothenburg Protocol, the representative of the UNECE CLRTAP Secretariat reported on the background, structure, aims and objectives of the Convention noting the importance of active participation of the EECCA countries in the activities within the Convention with aim of accessing to it and to its protocols and fulfilling respective obligations. In particular, the importance of active participation of the countries was pointed out in relation to their activities on elaboration of a regional position on the revision of the Protocol on heavy metals and the Gothenburg Protocol which should be expressed on the 48th session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review (11-15 April 2011).
6. Co-chairmen of the Convention Expert Group on Techno-Economic Issues (EGTEI) commented on the procedures related to the current process of the revision of the Protocol on heavy metals and the Gothenburg Protocol. Also it was noted that in relation to the interest expressed by the countries of the region towards the techno-economic evaluation of measures aimed at emissions reduction and the relevant analytical documents developed by EGTEI in the framework of the revision of the Annexes to the Gothenburg protocol, the translation of the documents into the Russian language will be provided by the EGTEI, SRI Atmosphere and other interested parties.
7. The representative of **the Russian Federation** reported on the practical issues of introducing amendments to the CLRTAP protocols which are aimed at enhancement of their flexibility for the countries of the region – countries with economies in transition. In particular, examples of flexibility elements introduced into the Annexes III and VI of the revised POPs Protocol

(ECE/EB.AIR/104) related to the baseline year and the terms of application of critical loads and best available technologies for the new and the existing stationary sources were presented as well as similar proposals for the revised Protocols on heavy metals (Annexes I and IV).

8. Item 4 of the Agenda devoted to prospective project activities the representative of **the UN ECE CLRTAP Secretariat** reported on the project proposal focused on promotion of implementation of multilateral environmental agreements in Central Asia. The copies of the draft project proposal were distributed among the participants of the session.

The Chairman of the Coordinating group presented the concept of a regional project of facilitating the harmonization of national emission assessment systems with the system employed within the CLRTAP based on the EMEP/EEA air pollutant emission inventory guidebook which is currently being translated by SRI Atmosphere with partial financial support of Norway (the translation is expected to be finished in mid-2011).

The Representative of **Belarus** supported the project proposed by the Russian Federation in general noting that the unified approach to emission inventory should consider national specificity;

The Representative of **Azerbaijan** supported the project and proposed petrochemical industry as a focal sector;

The Representative of **Tajikistan** supported the project;

The Representative of **Kyrgyzstan** proposed to consider the levels of specification of atmospheric emissions sources, noted that large industrial sectors are absent in the country and supported the project;

The Representative of **Uzbekistan** supported the project and proposed metalurgy, petro – and gas chemical industry as focal sectors;

The Representative of **Kazakhstan** supported the project and suggested to take into account the classification of industrial activities and availability of information;

The Representative of **the Republic of Moldova** supported the project.

9. Item 5 of the Agenda: the Chairman of the Coordinating group presented proposals on coordination of activities performed by countries within the CLRTAP and its protocols, the Stockholm Convention on persistent organic pollutants and the Minamata Convention on mercury (preliminary title) with aims of optimization of material resources. In particular, the need for unification of the requirements related to the fulfillment of national obligations under the agreements was noted, especially those on emissions reporting. It was proposed to contact the UNECE CLRTAP Secretariat with a request to analyze possibilities of such unification.

In general the representatives of the countries approved the idea of integrated approach to respective national obligations under the three agreements:

The Representative of **Belarus** supported the idea of unification of technical and methodological approaches for assessing the same pollutants under the three agreements as well as the possible unification of approaches to compilation and submission of emission inventory reports;

The Representatives of **Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and the Republic of Moldova** approved the idea of the unified approaches to emissions reporting under the three agreements;

The Representative of **Uzbekistan** supported the idea pointing out the need for harmonization of final reports as well as the primary approaches to data collection and processing;

The Representative of **the LRTAP Convention Secretariat** taking into account the positions on the issue expressed by the representatives of the countries recommended addressing the corresponding request to the Secretariat on behalf of the group of countries or on behalf of the Coordinating group.

10. Item 6 of the Agenda: administrative procedures concerning the membership of the Coordinating group were discussed. According to them an authorized national authority in area of environmental protection is to notify the Chairman of the Coordinating group about its intention to join the group and appoint its representative as a member of the group. Planning of a consultation meeting prior to the 48th session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review (WGSR) of the CLRTAP on 11 April 2011 in Geneva was also discussed; the 2nd session of the Coordinating group is planned to be held during the 29th session of the CLRTAP Executive Body in December 2011. The Work plan of the Coordinating group in 2011 was presented.

Conclusions and decisions

1. The participants noted the importance of establishment and activities of the Coordinating group and thanked Belarus for the initiative on its creation, the Russian Federation for organizing its functioning, the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency and SRI Atmosphere, JSC, for financial and technical support of its First session, the UN ECE CLRTAP Secretariat and the Co-chairmen of the Expert Group on Techno-economic Issues of the CLRTAP for informational and expert support;
2. The participants of the meeting supported the Memorandum "*On development of eastern dimension of the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution*" and expressed provisional readiness to accede to the document in accordance with national procedures; the corresponding letters will be sent as the decisions are taken;
3. The countries of the region have long-term plans of work within the CLRTAP, however the unequal technical development levels and the existing problems in the sphere of air quality management should be taken into account; tentative timelines of accession to the protocols were presented:

Belarus: 2012 – Protocol on POPs (revised), 2014-2015 – Gothenburg protocol;

Russian Federation: 2012-2013 – Gothenburg protocol, 2013-2014 – Protocol on POPs;

Kazakhstan: 2014 – EMEP Protocol, Protocol on POPs, Protocol on HM and the Gothenburg protocol;

Moldova: signed all three protocols, preparation to ratification of the Gothenburg protocol is in process;

Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan: expressed their intention to accede to the protocols as medium and long term goals.

4. The participants of the meeting expressed support to the inclusion of the flexibility mechanisms for the countries with economies in transition into the revised Protocol on heavy metals likewise the Protocol on persistent organic pollutants (ECE/EB.AIR/104), namely: 15-year term for compliance with the emission limit values and implementation of the best available techniques, the base year of the obligations between 1985 and the year of entry of the protocol in force for a Party. In general the consolidated position was supported on introducing a 5-year transition period for reporting within the Convention during which the reporting on emissions can be limited to large point sources by the request of each country. The decision was taken to keep the list of countries with economies in transition in accordance with the decision 2006/13;
5. The participants thanked Co-chairmen of the Expert Group on Techno-economic Issues of the Convention for the proposal to organize translation of the analytical documents on techno-economic issues related to the revision of the Gothenburg protocol into Russian language and pointed out the importance of enhancing cooperation between EGTEI and the Coordinating Group;
6. The participants supported the preparation and implementation of the project proposed by the Russian Federation on assistance to the Coordinating group member countries in harmonization of national emission assessment systems with the system adopted under the CLRTAP and based on the EMEP/EEA Air Pollutant Emission Inventory Guidebook translated into Russian language;
7. The participants supported the preparation and implementation of the project of the UN ECE Environmental Protection Department on promotion of the UN ECE multilateral environmental agreements in Central Asia in area of atmospheric air protection;
8. The participants kindly requested the UN ECE CLRTAP Secretariat to consider the possibility of unification of approaches to potential compliance with the obligations under the three MEAs: the Stockholm Convention on POPs, LRTAP Convention and the future global legally-binding agreement on mercury, prior to the 29th session of the Executive body of the CLRTAP, and develop proposals to a plan on cooperation between the working bodies of these agreements;
9. The participants noted that the activities of the Coordinating group members countries on considering proposals on the revision of the Protocols were complicated by absence of the Russian language versions of the documents (includ-

ing ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/2011/1, ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/2011/2,
ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/2011/3, ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/2011/4) on the web-site of the
Secretariat of the UN ECE CLRTAP;

10. The participants adopted the work plan of the Coordinating group for 2011 (Annex);
11. The participants adopted this report as the official report of the First session of the Coordinating group.

Work plan
of the Coordinating group on
promotion of actions towards implementation
of the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution
in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia in 2011

№	Activity	Implementation/ realization period
1.	Preparation of the first session of the Coordinating group	November 2010 – February 2011
2.	First session: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Working on the issues within the process of the review of the Protocol on heavy metals and Gothenburg protocol for the 48th session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review of the Convention 2. Review of general situation in the countries of the region in area of atmospheric air protection in the context of the Convention 3. Project activities in the region on the issues of emission inventory and accession to the Protocols 	March 18, 2011 In the framework of the International Congress "Atmosphere-2011", St.Petersburg, Russia (prior to the 48 th session of WGSR)
3.	Consultation meeting prior to the 48 th session of the WGSR	48 th session of WGSR, Geneva
4.	Activities on preparation to the second session of the Coordinating group; preliminary coordination of positions for the 49 th session of WGSR	April – October 2011
5.	Coordinating meeting prior to the 49 th session of WGSR	49 th session of WGSR, Geneva
6.	Consultation expert meeting: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Practical approaches to the emissions inventory by the countries of the region in accordance with the methodology of the EMEP/EEA Air Pollutant Emission Inventory Guidebook; 2. Implementation of the mechanisms of the Convention into the national air protection practice for resolving national problems; 3. Discussions/recommendations for intermediate results of the EECCA Project; 4. Elaboration of a consolidated position of the countries of the region for 29th session of the Executive body of the LRTAP Convention (December 2011). 	September 2011 Eupatoria, Ukraine
7.	Preparation of the official consolidated position of the countries of the region for 29 th session of the Executive body of the LRTAP Convention (December 2011).	October – November 2011.
8.	Second session Before 29 th session of the Convention Executive body	December 2011, Geneva