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

NOTE OF THE BUREAU MEETING
Monday, room S1, Palais des Nations, 9 December 2013
09:00 – 13:00

Attendance: All Bureau members attended. Ms. C. Hamilton participated via Skype. Mr. A. Zuber attended as an observer on behalf of the EU. Mr. M. Keiner, Mr. S. Ludwiczak, Ms. A. Karadjova, Mr. K. Olendrzynski, Ms. F. Ilg, Ms. A. Novikova and Ms. K. Wenzel from the ECE secretariat attended. The meeting was chaired by Mr. M. Williams, Chair of the Executive Body.

1. *Preparations for the 32nd session of the Executive Body*

The Chair informed the Bureau about rearrangements of the agenda items of the session due to travel plans of speakers. The Bureau discussed the need to form break-out groups for the work on outstanding issues in the agenda. It agreed that there was such a need for the work on emission reporting guidelines; the break-out group could meet during the breaks in the session.

2. *Action Plan for the implementation of the Long-term strategy*

The Chair listed three issues to be considered and discussed in relation to the recommendations of the ad hoc group of experts on the implementation of the Long-term strategy (LTS): a) conclusions of the review of International Cooperative Programmes (ICPs), as contained in the document ECE/EB.AIR/2013/2; b) reorganization of subsidiary bodies; and c) the timetable of the meetings of subsidiary bodies. The Chair noted that there was no strong contention on the conclusions and recommendations of the review of ICPs. As regards the potential merger of the scientific bodies, he proposed that the EMEP Steering Body and the WGE be integrated by having joint meetings without formally merging with each other, taking into account the existing reluctance to merge. In doing so, each group could keep its autonomy and decide on having joint meetings; there was experience with regard to joint meetings within ECE. Common reports could be prepared for joint meetings having the names of the two groups in their headings.

The Bureau discussed various options for revising the calendar of meetings in order to keep sufficient time between the meetings and the information flow from

scientific bodies to the policy body and then to the Executive Body. The Bureau also took into consideration the need for the latest available information to be used by scientific bodies and the risk of overlap with other international meetings. The Bureau decided to suggest the following timetable for consideration by the Executive Body: the sessions of the WGE and the EMEP SB to be held in September, the session of the WGSR in December and the session of the Executive Body in late May – June. Thus, no session of the Executive Body was going to take place in 2015.

3. The 2014-2015 Workplan including the template/outline for reporting by task forces/expert groups

The EU informed the Bureau about its proposal for revising the text of the workplan that could be displayed at the plenary: it reflected a number of recommendations from the ad hoc group of experts on the implementation of the LTS concerning communication and the ICP review. The Bureau agreed that going through the text of the workplan at the plenary would be the most suitable approach, and in case of a deadlock, a break-out group could be formed.

The secretariat presented the draft template for reporting by task forces and expert groups, providing the background and listing the options for its potential introduction. The Bureau noted the usefulness of introducing the template as of 2014-2015. At the same time, it underscored the need for providing an option to present relevant scientific, technical or policy relevant information in addition to the information included in the summary. The Bureau agreed that additional technical details could be annexed to the summary report prepared in accordance with the outline, so that one official document was produced by each task force or expert group for the attention of WGSR and the scientific subsidiary bodies. The option of annexing technical details would also allow for translation of the entire report in accordance with the established word limit of 10,700 words for documents submitted by intergovernmental bodies. The Bureau agreed that the final decision including the guidance on whether the template should be mandatory had to be adopted by the Executive Body.

Action: Secretariat to post the updated template, with due account to the comments by the Bureau, as an informal document for the EB session under agenda item VI on the 2014-2015 Workplan.

4. Opening up of the Convention

The Chair gave an overview of the discussions in the past regarding the opening up the Convention for countries outside the ECE region and the reasons for bringing up this issue again: the recommendations of Saltsjobaden V workshop, the hemispheric and global character of air pollution problems, and the opening up of the ECE Water Convention. The secretariat informed the Bureau about the current state of the opening up the other ECE multilateral environmental agreements and on-going

consideration of the issue by the Committee on Environmental Policy and preparation of a relevant document for discussion at the next “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference. The Russian Federation considered it not sensible to open up the Convention due to its specificity and restriction to the EMEP geographical region. The United States agreed that there are sufficient other challenges identified by the LTS and that opening may divert the resources to directions different from those indicated in the Strategy. Several Bureau members noted the importance of maintaining science cooperation with other regional networks. The Bureau decided to continue the discussion at the plenary to formulate the exact response.

5. UNECE activities aimed at promoting the implementation of the LRTAP Convention and its Protocols in the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia

The secretariat provided an update on its recent efforts to promote the ratification and implementation of the Convention, particularly in Central Asia: a) finalization of the high-level missions to five member States in Central Asia, the results and the agreements made with the national authorities and the need for a follow-up, and b) the workshop on emission inventories for particulate matter in Uzbekistan. The secretariat noted that the draft workplan 2014-2015 contained a separate section on capacity-building reflecting the indicative plans for future activities. The European Union shared information on its on-going Air Quality Governance project aimed at supporting the countries of Eastern Europe and the Caucasus in ratification and implementation of the Convention’s protocols and informed about the agreement to be signed with the ECE for its grant to support capacity-building activities in the EECCA region. The secretariat expressed appreciation to contributing Parties for co-financing the dedicated post and providing resources for wider assistance. It proposed creating an informal advisory group to be composed by Parties providing major contributions and recipient countries to advise the secretariat on activities to be part of the assistance package in order to ensure transparency and effectiveness. The Bureau welcomed this proposal.

The Russian Federation informed the Bureau about the decision of the EECCA countries to postpone the high-level meeting on actions to promote improved air quality due to the lack of preparedness of the mentioned countries to declare ratification at that meeting. The update of the meeting’s concept and agenda will be made a year before it takes place. In response to the question by the Russian Federation on the possibility to keep the deposited funds for the high-level meeting at the ECE account, the secretariat clarified that a relevant request from the donor would be needed.

Action: For the secretariat to delete from the draft 2014-2015 Workplan the entry on the high-level meeting.

6. *Cooperation with the Stockholm Convention on POPs*

The Bureau considered the draft letter prepared by the Chair of the WGSR in response to the letter from the Chair of the Global Coordination Group of the Global Monitoring Plan under the Stockholm Convention. The United States informed that some editorial comments would be provided, in consultation with Canada. The Chair of WGE suggested that some language be added on the importance of scientific cooperation. The Bureau agreed to further coordinate on that matter in writing.

7. *Organization of work and meetings in 2014*

The Bureau discussed the organization of its meetings in 2014 based on the list prepared by the secretariat. The timetable for meetings as of 2015 had been discussed under agenda item 2 of the meeting. The Bureau considered the option of combining the meetings of the EB, the EMEP SB and the WGE Bureaux in March 2014 in view of addressing several cross-cutting items for the common discussion during a joint EB-EMEP-WGE Bureau meeting in the afternoon of 26 March. It decided to hold three meetings in 2014 - in March, September and December. The Bureau would not meet in the framework of the WGSR session in June/July.

8. *Other business*

The US member of the Bureau referred to a draft decision on reporting on strategies and policies he had circulated to the Bureau on 8 December. At its previous meeting the Bureau had discussed a draft note by the secretariat outlining the legal Convention/Protocol provisions setting out reporting requirements and associated EB decisions. The Bureau had further discussed if a draft decision by the EB was necessary and concluded that it would be sufficient to include language in the report of the EB. Following up on this, the secretariat had included such draft language in the revised note on strategies and policies reporting made available to the EB as an informal document No.14. . The secretariat pointed out that the note and the draft language it had prepared on the basis of it contained a proposal to discontinue reporting on strategies and policies under the first four protocols, while in the proposal by the US this reporting was maintained. The Bureau agreed with the draft decision, as proposed and circulated by the United States and requested the secretariat to make it available as an informal document for consideration by the Executive Body at its session under agenda item V(a).

In view of the upcoming elections of new members of the Implementation Committee, the secretariat provided an overview of the nominations received: nominations of five legal (Canada, Croatia, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Romania) and six technical experts (Austria, Estonia, France, Republic of Moldova, Serbia, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) had been received by Parties. The Chair of the Implementation Committee underscored the fact that seven out of eleven nominees

were not Parties to the Gothenburg Protocol, which should be taken into account by the Executive Body in light of paragraph 10 of the Annex to Decision 2012/25 which stipulates that only Committee members that are Parties to the protocol in respect of which compliance procedures are under review may participate in such procedures and that if the size of the Committee is reduced to four members or less, the matter shall be referred to the Executive Body. The secretariat furthermore informed the Bureau that Norway as a Party of the Implementation Committee in the midst of its term was a Party to the Gothenburg Protocol and that the Executive Body was to decide at the forthcoming session on the adoption of the ceiling of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, which, in the affirmative, would imply that it would become a Party to the Gothenburg Protocol with immediate effect.

The Bureau agreed to continue discussions on the election of IC members in the margins of the EB session, as the elections would take place on the last day of the session.

The Bureau discussed the need for revising Rule 13 of the Rules of procedure (decision 2010/19) in order to clarify the type of credentials required for the adoption of amendments to the annex to the EMEP Protocol. The United States thanked the secretariat for drafting the proposal to amend the text. The Bureau agreed that the Chair of the Executive Body would present the proposal under agenda item III of the session.

9. Date, time and place of next meeting

The Bureau agreed to have its next meeting on 26 March 2014 with a separate morning session continued by a joint session with the EMEP SB/WGE Bureaux in the afternoon.