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Economic Commission for Europe**Committee on Environmental Policy****Nineteenth session**

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Item 11 (a) of the provisional agenda

**Programme of work: review of programme
performance in the biennium 2012–2013****Biennial evaluation report of the Environment
subprogramme for 2012–2013****Note by the secretariat***Summary*

The Executive Committee of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) has requested that the work of the ECE subprogrammes be evaluated on a biennial basis (E/ECE/1416, para. 28 (c)).

The Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP) approved the plan for the evaluation of performance of the Environment subprogramme in the biennium 2012–2013 at its eighteenth session in April 2012 (ECE/CEP/2012/2, para. 82).

The present document provides the biennial evaluation report of the Environment subprogramme for 2012–2013. It is structured in accordance with the clusters grouping the Environment subprogramme's activities.

CEP will be invited to consider the document at its nineteenth session for approval.

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Introduction

1. In its strategic framework for 2012–2013 (A/65/6 (Prog. 16)), the Environment subprogramme of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) has three expected accomplishments on the implementation of which it reports to the General Assembly of the United Nations.

2. The activities in the Environment subprogramme for the biennium 2012–2013 are grouped into clusters, with their own expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement, on which the subprogramme reports to ECE as set out below. The “actual 2012–2013” performance measures are generally presented as at 31 July 2013, given that this document was prepared before the end of the biennium under reporting.

Cluster 1 Environmental monitoring and assessment

Expected accomplishment

Strengthened national capacity for environmental monitoring and assessment systems in countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe

Statement of accomplishments/results achieved

3. Capacity for environmental observations in countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia has been further strengthened and progress has been made in enhancing the legal basis for environmental monitoring and assessment. Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Russian Federation, Serbia, Tajikistan and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia adopted new legislation in support of monitoring networks. In addition, the Russian Federation issued a decree on the application of ECE indicators in its state-of-the-environment report.

4. Many of countries have further expanded their monitoring capacities. For air monitoring, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Montenegro, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Ukraine installed new stations and new software for data management or established new analytical control centres and mobile laboratories; Azerbaijan, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova expanded their networks of new stations for hydro-meteorological or biological monitoring; and further progress has been made by Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Montenegro in biodiversity monitoring.

5. Furthermore, countries have taken steps to improve data handling, the quality of reporting and the use of indicators in environmental assessments. Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia developed or improved their online data collection systems; access to real-time data collection on air quality progressed in Belarus and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; and an integrated system of data management was established by Montenegro and Serbia.

6. Furthermore, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia made efforts to improve the quality of reporting and the state-of-the-environment reports of Kyrgyzstan, Montenegro, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Uzbekistan were further strengthened by the application of ECE environmental indicators.

Lessons learned/areas needing improvement

7. In many countries the main bottleneck remains the lack of adequate primary data to support the production of indicators, mostly because of difficulties in data collection or

sharing. Despite progress achieved, there is still a need for substantial improvement of capacity for regular production and publishing of indicator-based environmental assessments across the region. Also, regular production of environmental indicators and sharing of data needs to be further strengthened.

8. Additional efforts should also be made in countries to ensure better coordination between ministries of environment, statistical offices and other line ministries. Country efforts should be supported by the United Nations and international organizations through providing external expert advice, training and extensive exchange of good practices. Adequate donor support is also crucial.

Indicator of achievement

Increased number of countries applying the environmental indicators as defined in the ECE Guidelines for the Application of Environmental Indicators in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia

Performance measures

2008–2009: 6 countries

2010–2011: 11 countries

Target 2012–2013: 14 countries

Actual (as of 31 July 2013) 2012–2013: 13 countries

Cluster 2

Follow-up to the Seventh “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference

Expected accomplishment

Successful implementation of the reform of the “Environment for Europe” (EfE) process

Statement of accomplishments/results achieved

9. Pursuant to the provisions of the reform plan of the EfE process, during the period 2012–2013 the Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP), as the body responsible for the preparatory process of the EfE ministerial conferences, focused its work on organizing the mid-term review of the main outcomes of the Seventh EfE Ministerial Conference (Astana, 2011).

10. The Astana Ministerial Conference invited CEP to convene in 2013 a mid-term review to assess the progress in implementation of Conference’s main outcomes. At its eighteenth session, in April 2012, CEP decided to organize the mid-term review at its nineteenth session and approved the proposed preparations for the mid-term review. Following requests by CEP, a number of reports are being prepared by the secretariat and by relevant EfE partners for the mid-term review.

11. The Astana Conference main outcomes include: (a) ratifying and implementing the relevant multilateral environmental agreements; (b) implementing the Astana Water Action; (c) promoting a green economy in the region and the Green Bridge Partnership Programme; (d) conducting a third cycle of environmental performance reviews (EPRs); (e) establishing a regular process of environmental assessment and developing a Shared Environmental Information System (SEIS); and (f) continuing the work of the Environmental Action

Programme Task Force (EAP Task Force) and strengthening the work of the Regional Environmental Centres (see ECE/ASTANA.CONF/2011/2/Add.1).¹

12. The results of the mid-term review will be included in the report on the nineteenth session of CEP.

Lessons learned/areas needing improvement

13. Similarly, an overview of preliminary lessons learned will be included in the report of the nineteenth session of CEP, following the mid-term EfE review. At the same time, the analysis of answers by countries to the EfE survey (ECE/CEP/2013/21), currently under preparation, will support the identification of lessons learned and of areas needing improvement.

Indicator of achievement

Consensus reached by member States on the mid-term review

Performance measures

2008–2009: Consensus reached on the reform plan of the EfE process

2010–2011: Consensus reached on the organization and outcomes of the Astana Ministerial Conference

Target 2012–2013: Consensus to be reached on the mid-term review

Actual (as of 31 July 2013) 2012–2013: Consensus reached on the organization of the mid-term review

Cluster 3

Follow-up to World Summit on Sustainable Development

Expected accomplishment

Successful review of progress in the implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development outcomes and Agenda 21 within the biennial Commission on Sustainable Development implementation cycle

Statement of accomplishments/results achieved

14. The Fifth Regional Implementation Meeting on Sustainable Development (RIM), originally planned for 2012, was not organized as a separate meeting. The follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20 Conference) was addressed during the high-level segment of the sixty-fifth session of ECE in April 2013.

15. The session was organized as a multi-stakeholder panel discussion focusing on two themes. The first, “sustainable development governance: regional implications and perspectives for the post-Rio+20 institutional set-up” looked at the regional implications of the establishment of a high-level political forum (HLPF) on sustainable development to provide input to global-level discussions and the General Assembly negotiation process on future Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and also addressed the development of SDGs. The second — “The future of sustainability: from transition to transformation” — focused on how and in which areas ECE could best follow up on the Rio+20 Conference and the Secretary-General’s five-year action agenda.

¹ Available from <http://www.unece.org/env/efe/astana/welcome.html>.

16. Two background documents to facilitate the above discussions were prepared by the secretariat (E/ECE/1465 and E/ECE/1466). The outcomes of the high-level segment are presented in a Chair's Summary of the discussion (E/ECE/1464, annex II) and were transmitted to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.²

Lessons learned/areas needing improvement

17. The panel discussions noted that the RIMs organized by the regional commissions had provided a useful platform for the exchange of sustainable development viewpoints and best practice experiences. The lessons learned from these meetings should be taken into account when addressing the institutional structure for regional inputs to HLPF. The regional commissions should assume an active and strong role in both the HLFP and the SDGs processes, also acting as a "conductor" between the global and national levels. ECE could continue to facilitate the discussions on issues that are specific to the region with a view to contributing to the work of HLPF.

18. The role of ECE in the implementation of policy decisions should also be considered. The efficient cooperation with the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) and other partners in the region should be continued.

19. Regarding input to HLPF, support was expressed for the continuation of the organization of regional meetings convened by ECE in partnership with UNEP and others. The importance of the major groups' active involvement and participation in ECE RIMs and other meetings was highlighted. It was suggested to continue with this approach.

Indicator of achievement

Consensus reached by member States on key challenges to be addressed as they relate to the themes of the CSD cycle

Performance measures

2008–2009: Consensus reached at Third RIM, January 2008

2010–2011: Consensus reached at Fourth RIM, December 2011

Target 2012–2013: Consensus to be reached at Fifth RIM in 2012

Actual (as of 31 July 2013) 2012–2013: Consensus reached at panel discussion on follow-up to the Rio+20 Conference, organized as part of the sixty-fifth session of ECE in April 2013

Cluster 4 Education for sustainable development

Expected accomplishment

Enhanced implementation of the ECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) at the national level

Statement of accomplishments/results achieved

20. The ECE Strategy for ESD is the regional implementation pillar of the United Nations Decade of ESD (DESD). While member States stressed their dedication to continue working on implementing all aspects of the Strategy, they adopted three priority action

² Available from http://www.unece.org/commission/2013/65th_index.html.

areas for its third phase of implementation (2011–2015): (a) to promote an ESD school plan in every school by 2015; (b) to reorient technical and vocational education and training in support of sustainable development and green economies; and (c) to incorporate ESD into teacher education. In 2013, an ongoing electronic working group on the priority action areas was established by the Steering Committee to support implementation.

21. The Steering Committee on ESD also continued to promote educator competences for ESD. It mandated the ECE Expert Group on Competences for ESD to develop tools for policy and practice workshops on ESD competences. These tools were finalized and will be published in 2013 (ECE/CEP/169, forthcoming).

22. A number of capacity-building activities were carried out, including a Central Asian subregional workshop on competencies in ESD organized in June 2012 jointly with the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Centres in Bishkek and Astana.

23. In 2013, ECE, in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), held a consultation meeting for the ECE region on the final assessment of the DESD (2005–2014) and its follow-up.

Lessons learned/areas needing improvement

24. The following key challenges in implementing ESD in the ECE region were identified:

(a) *Strategizing ESD*: ESD is not always sufficiently understood or connected to wider discourses in education or economic development and its place in international affairs needs to be further clarified;

(b) *Structural integration of ESD*: while a multitude of activities were implemented, the structural integration of ESD remains a challenge. There is a need for overarching frameworks to complement and support the many bottom-up activities. Moreover, in some countries there is little cooperation between grass-roots organizations and policymakers and grassroots organizations are not always sufficiently visible.

(c) *National coordination*: in many cases ESD was being implemented through one ministry. Some countries wanted to extend that agenda and connect it with multiple ministries, although coordinating across ministries also presented challenges. In addition, countries with a decentralized education system found it difficult to develop a national ESD vision and to coordinate efforts to support it. Lack of coordination also made it difficult to report on the implementation of ESD;

(d) *Resourcing*: The lack of dedicated resources (financial, staffing, etc.) remained an obstacle to ESD implementation. Steps taken to increase awareness of the relevance of ESD to national and regional priorities might address that situation.

25. The Steering Committee expressed its strong support for continuing the implementation of the Strategy for ESD beyond implementation phase III and requested the secretariat to develop a post-2015 implementation framework, which should be closely linked to the post-DESD programme framework that UNESCO is currently developing. In particular, the reporting requirements should be closely aligned.

Indicator of achievement

Successful measures to implement ESD Strategy at the national level, assessed through the reporting by member States

Performance measures

2008–2009: Not applicable (N/A)

2010–2011: 36 countries

Target 2012–2013: 40 countries

Actual (as of 31 July 2013) 2012–2013: 42 countries³

Cluster 5 Transport, health and environment

Expected accomplishment

Enhanced integration between transport, health and environment policies through exchanging experiences, good practice and capacity-building with a special focus on Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe

Statement of accomplishments/results achieved

26. The Steering Committee of the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP), which oversees the implementation of the 2009 Amsterdam Declaration, held its tenth session in November 2012. The eleventh session is scheduled to take place in November 2013. THE PEP 2012 Symposium was held back to back with the Steering Committee session and the 2013 Symposium will be organized back to back with the eleventh session in 2013. The Symposiums focus on Amsterdam Goals 3 and 4: reduction of emissions of air pollution, greenhouse gases and noise; and active mobility. At its tenth session, THE PEP Steering Committee launched preparations for the Fourth High-level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment to be held in April 2014 in Paris, hosted by the Government of France.

27. In 2012 and 2013, THE PEP continued to share experiences in sustainable urban transport throughout the region through its hallmark “Staffette” or relay race. The Staffette travelled from Kyiv to Moscow for the fifth workshop on Sustainable Development of Urban Transport: Challenges and Opportunities (June 2012) and thereafter to Almaty, Kazakhstan, for a sixth workshop on Green and Health-friendly Sustainable Mobility: Focus on Urban Central Asia (September 2013). A summary of results of all six workshops held thus far will be reflected in the Compendium of Staffette Experiences, to be launched at the Fourth High-Level Meeting.

Lessons learned/areas needing improvement

28. THE PEP seeks to encourage an intersectoral policy approach to sustainable transport with a focus on urban mobility and green and health-friendly livelihoods. In recent years, more emphasis has been placed on integrating science, policy and academic research to share information and knowledge under THE PEP. The operation and management of the cross-sectoral and inter-institutional activities of THE PEP require considerable secretariat resources for coordination of work among stakeholders, including the three sections of the tripartite secretariat (the Transport and Environment Divisions of ECE and the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe).

³ Nineteen countries submitted their reports for the seventh meeting of the Steering Committee on ESD in March 2012, and twenty-two countries submitted their reports for the eighth meeting of the Steering Committee on ESD in March 2013.

29. The same holds true for the organization of capacity-building activities requiring cooperation among (at a minimum) the ministries of transport, health and environment of the countries (mainly) in Eastern and Central Europe, as well as in the Caucasus. Sufficient extrabudgetary funds are also not available to maximize the capabilities of THE PEP Clearing House, a portal for intersectoral policy research, and to allow it to play a pivotal role in making the process visible. In fact, no resources could be made available for a Clearing House content manager and, following transfer to a new server system and urgent information technology maintenance by ECE, the Clearing House continued in an automatic mode which was apparently not adequate to encourage regular uploading of documents by its clients. Particular efforts are required so that more countries and organizations shoulder the extrabudgetary assistance for THE PEP activities, and thus ensure its sustained and efficient management and operation.

Indicator of achievement

Number of member States, international governmental organizations (IGOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) engaged in meetings of THE PEP Steering Committee and relevant workshops undertaken in this framework

Performance measures

2008–2009: Participation of 30 countries and 10 IGOs and NGOs per meeting in three substantive meetings, including one high-level meeting, one capacity-building workshop and one session of THE PEP Steering Committee

2010–2011: Participation of 69 countries and 28 IGOs and NGOs in five substantive meetings, including three “staffete” capacity-building workshops (to disseminate best practice) and two sessions of THE PEP Steering Committee

Target 2012–2013: Participation of 60 countries and 20 IGOs and NGOs in five substantive meetings, including three capacity-building workshops and two sessions of THE PEP Steering Committee

Actual (as of 31 July 2013) 2012–2013:⁴ Participation of 37 countries and 19 IGOs and NGOs in four substantive meetings, including two capacity-building workshops and two sessions of THE PEP Steering Committee

Cluster 6

Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution

Expected accomplishment

Increased ratification and strengthened implementation of the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution (Air Convention) and its three most recent protocols (the Protocol on Heavy Metals, the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants and the Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone (Gothenburg Protocol)) by ECE members States, in particular countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe

⁴ The figures include the tenth meeting of THE PEP Steering Committee in November 2012 and the Moscow workshop in June 2012, as well as the registered participants for the Almaty workshop as at 31 July 2013. The figures are lower than the target for 2012–2013 because the eleventh meeting of THE PEP Steering Committee has yet to take place (scheduled for November 2013). Also, more participants are expected to register for the Almaty workshop. Overall, it is anticipated that there will be at least 60 participating countries during 2012–2013 and at least 22 participating IGOs and NGOs.

Statement of accomplishments/results achieved

30. In 2012 the Air Convention revised two of its most recent protocols: the Protocol on Heavy Metals and the Gothenburg Protocol. The Convention's Executive Body decided on the inclusion in a revised Gothenburg Protocol of particulate matter and black carbon — both proven to cause significant health problems and environmental damage. In addition, measures to allow needed flexibility for countries in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia have been introduced in the revised Protocols to help these countries with implementation and ratification.

31. The revised Gothenburg Protocol will contribute to the green economy by setting obligations for Parties to take cost-effective measures to reduce harmful emissions, promoting the introduction of new and clean technologies, bringing economic and health benefits and preventing the loss of biodiversity. Emissions and deposition of nitrogen compounds cause damage and loss of biodiversity. The Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen under the Convention has been exploring cost-effective measures to reduce nitrogen pollution, particularly from the agriculture sector by improving the nitrogen-use efficiency in animal and crop production, which will save farmers money while reducing nitrogen pollution and helping Parties achieve environmental improvements. The Task Force published a summary for policymakers of the European Nitrogen Assessment.

32. The Long-term Strategy for the Convention (ECE/EB.AIR/106/Add.1, decision 2010/18, annex), adopted in 2010, calls for strengthened interregional cooperation and outreach activities with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), other United Nations regional commissions and other institutions outside the ECE region dealing with air pollution issues. In 2012, the secretariat continued its support to a project to review existing and required capacities for addressing adverse environmental impacts of transboundary air pollution in North-East Asia, as well as making recommendations with respect to setting priorities and institutional and legal frameworks. The project, led by the Russian Federation in collaboration with the ESCAP subregional office in Incheon, Republic of Korea, builds upon the experience and knowledge of the Convention.

Lessons learned/areas needing improvement

33. The remaining challenges and strategic priorities for further work are identified in the Long-term Strategy for the Convention. These include, inter alia, the following areas for improvement:

(a) Parties will critically assess the current structure of the Convention's subsidiary bodies, groups and task forces, and the number and frequency of meetings to streamline and rationalize operations and to make them more transparent. The aim will be to prioritize the work by the bodies, to find ways for more effective use of resources by the Executive Body and the subsidiary bodies and technical bodies/expert groups, to reduce the bulk of official documents and to increase the operational efficiency of main subsidiary body meetings;

(b) Increased ratification and related implementation of the three most recent protocols is particularly important for countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, and this priority will be emphasized in the revision of, or amendments to, these protocols. Measures and action to facilitate wider ratification and implementation in these countries, including financial support, will be pursued vigorously;

(c) Parties recognized that the priorities for work and action under the Convention need to be regularly reviewed in the light of new priorities and progress already achieved, as well as wider policy developments on the regional and global scale. This will require a change in the balance of the activities of the Convention; it may be necessary to

scale down or even stop work where it can no longer add value, while opening up opportunities for other newly relevant issues.

Indicators of achievement

Indicators of progress in implementing the Convention and its three most recent Protocols:

(a) The number of reviews of strategies and policies by Parties to the Convention for the abatement of air pollution;

(b) The intensity of capacity development in non-Parties to the Air Convention (average participant-days per non-Party);

(c) The number of ratifications of the three most recent Protocols to the Air Convention;

(d) The number of training sessions targeting implementation of the Air Convention and its protocols in the countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia

Performance measures

2008–2009: (a) 34; (b) 159; (c) 84; (d) 3

2010–2011: (a) 35; (b) 220; (c) 87; (d) 6

Target 2012–2013: (a) 38; (b) 220; (c) 90; (d) 6

Actual (as of 31 July 2013) 2012–2013: (a) 37; (b) 220 (c) 91; (d) 6

Cluster 7

Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters

Expected accomplishment

Increased ratification and strengthened implementation of the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) and its Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (Protocol on PRTRs)

Statement of accomplishments/results achieved

34. The Aarhus Convention and its Protocol on PRTRs are presently the only international legally binding instruments that flesh out Principle 10 of the 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and promote environmental democracy. As such, the success of these two regional instruments was central for the Rio+20 Conference negotiations and its outcomes. During the Conference, the secretariat, in cooperation with numerous partners, organized, coordinated and provided input to a number of side events, including an event on Principle 10 in the context of governance, and an event to promote Principle 10 in the context of green economy.

35. The Convention continued to attract attention of countries outside the ECE region. To that end, Parties offered their support to the development of a regional instrument on Principle 10 for Latin America and the Caribbean, led by Chile, and welcomed an initiative on promoting access to justice in environmental matters in Japan. The secretariat also organized a mission to Mongolia, which had expressed its interest in joining the Convention.

36. The Convention's Compliance Committee has continued providing valuable assistance to Parties in achieving compliance. In six intensive meetings in 2012 and 2013 (until July), the Committee considered issues of compliance concerning Armenia, Austria, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Kazakhstan, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, as well as the European Union (EU). As a result, several Parties' obligations under the Convention have been increasingly clarified and their legal and administrative systems have been adjusted.

37. The Task Force on Access to Information agreed on priorities for future work to facilitate public access to environmental information at its first meeting (2013). The first meeting also featured a workshop addressing the needs for, challenges to and good practices on the accessibility of environmental information on products and suggested the way forward in this area.

38. The Task Force on Public Participation in Decision-making held three meetings in 2012–2013, all joint events focused on a public participation in a specific sector, namely: decision-making on water and health (with the Protocol on Water and Health); strategic decision-making and strategic environmental assessment (with the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment); and decision-making in the nuclear domain (with the European Commission Directorate-General for Energy and the Association Nationale des Comités et Commissions Locales d'Information). The Task Force also drafted recommendations on public participation in decision-making (still in preparation) to assist Parties and other interested States in implementing the Convention.

39. The Task Force on Access to Justice focused on issues of standing, costs and remedies in 2012 and 2013. In addition, a subregional meeting for Central Asia that also included a session devoted to high-level members of the judiciary was organized jointly by ECE and OSCE in May 2012.

40. The secretariat continued to actively support efforts to promote the principles of the Convention in various international forums, working with other United Nations bodies; other environmental treaty bodies, international organizations and financial institutions. Two thematic sessions on the subject were organized under the Working Group of the Parties in 2012–2013.

41. The role of the Protocol on PRTRs in measuring progress in reducing pollutants, critical for advancing sustainability and ensuring the success of a green economy, has been increased. The work in 2012 and 2013 focused on enhancing cooperation among countries and relevant organizations in order to strengthen countries' capacities for developing PRTRs. A subregional workshop for South-Eastern Europe and Israel, which promoted the implementation and ratification of the Protocol, was organized by ECE and OSCE. To promote synergies, two global events will take place in 2013: (a) a round table on PRTRs under the auspices of ECE and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in cooperation with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR); and (b) a round table on genetically modified organisms under the auspices of ECE and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity. The round tables will, e.g., review the status of implementation in these fields to date and discuss challenges and strategic directions for future cooperation.

Lessons learned/areas needing improvement

42. There are three challenges going forward. First, the innovative compliance mechanism is what makes the Convention a living treaty: Parties need to implement decisions on compliance matters even more effectively. Second, after the Rio+20 Conference, requests for advisory support from the secretariat by States, international

financial institutions, other organizations and international forums are noticeably increasing, though the secretariat is not always able to respond to these requests fully due to its limited capacity. Third, accession to and implementation of the Protocol on PRTRs is more challenging for countries with economies in transition mainly due to its technical requirements. This requires political decisions in those countries to allocate appropriate resources. At the same time, it also offers potential for partner organizations to engage in capacity-building activities and consequently enhance accession and implementation.

Indicators of achievement

An increased number of countries working to improve implementation of the Convention and its Protocol on PRTRs assessed through:

- (a) The intensity of capacity development for non-Parties to the Aarhus Convention (average participant-days per non-Party);
- (b) The intensity of capacity development for non-Parties to the Protocol on PRTRs (average participant-days per non-Party);
- (c) The number of ratifications of the Aarhus Convention;
- (d) The number of ratifications of the Protocol on PRTRs;
- (e) The number of countries submitting national implementation reports to the Meeting of the Parties (MOP) to the Convention, indicating progress in implementing key obligations;
- (f) The number of countries submitting national implementation reports to the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on PRTRs, indicating progress in implementing key obligations

Performance measures

2008–2009: (a) 6; (b) 3; (c) 43; (d) 23; (e) 41; (f) N/A

2010–2011: (a) 8; (b) 4; (c) 45; (d) 27; (e) 41; (f) N/A

Target 2012–2013: (a) 8; (b) 4; (c) 45; (d) 28; (e) 43; (f) 18

Actual (as of 31 July 2013) 2012–2013:⁵ (a) 4; (b) 3; (c) 46; (d) 32; (e) N/A;⁶ (f) N/A⁵

Cluster 8

Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context

Expected accomplishment

Increased ratification and strengthened implementation of the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention) and its Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment (Protocol on SEA)

⁵ Lower numbers are due to: (a) lack of interest from some non-Parties to participate in capacity-building activities; and (b) several capacity-building activities had a subregional focus and therefore only some of the eligible non-Parties participated.

⁶ In 2012–2013 no national implementation reports are due. The next reporting cycle is in 2014 both for the Convention and the Protocol.

Statement of accomplishments/results achieved

43. As at 31 July 2013 the membership of the Protocol on SEA reached 25, with Denmark and Portugal becoming Parties in 2012. The biennium has been work-intensive for the Implementation Committee under the Convention and its Protocol. The Committee held four meetings (as of 31 July 2013; two more are scheduled for the second half of 2013) and considered three submissions from Parties having concerns about other Parties' compliance with their obligations under the Convention, as well as information from a number of NGOs (information gathering). Two of the submissions and several of the information-gathering cases concerned the planned construction of nuclear power plants.

44. By the end of June 2013, the respective Parties had to report on their implementation of the Convention and the Protocol during the period 2010–2012.⁷ This first reporting by the Parties to the Protocol provides valuable information on the level of implementation of SEA in the ECE region and highlights shortcomings and further assistance needs.

45. In 2013 the ECE secretariat, together with OECD, UNEP and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, started a large project on "Greening Economies in the Eastern Neighbourhood" funded by the EU. The objective is to promote the use of SEA as an essential planning tool for sustainable development with a focus on Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

46. Moreover, the first pilot project on post-project analysis under the Convention was launched in Belarus and Ukraine (Brest, Belarus, April 2013), and a subregional cooperation workshop was held for the Baltic Sea area (Tallinn, September 2012); two legislative advice projects were initiated for Belarus and the Republic of Moldova, and the simplified version of the Resource Manual to Support Application of the Protocol was published. Outreach activities continued with a Workshop on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in a Transboundary Context in Eastern Asia (Seoul, June 2012).

47. To maximize synergies with other ECE multilateral environmental agreements, a workshop on public participation in SEA was organized jointly with the Aarhus Convention (Geneva, October 2012).

Lessons learned/areas needing improvement

48. Given the growing concerns over the impacts of nuclear energy-related activities, the Working Group on EIA and SEA decided to invite the next MOP to establish a drafting group to develop guidance to codify good practice to support the application of the Convention in that field.

49. The two amendments⁸ to the Convention have not yet entered into force, although a long time has elapsed since their adoption. Increased efforts are being made to enable entry into force of the amendments, which will among others open the Convention to accession at the global level.

⁷ Of the 44 States Parties to the Convention, 38 provided a report by the deadline, as did 19 of the 24 Parties to the Protocol.

⁸ The first amendment was adopted at the second session of the MOP held in Sofia in 2001 and the second was adopted at the third session in Cavtat, Croatia, in 2004. The first amendment will allow the MOP to approve the accession to the Convention of States outside the ECE region. The second will strengthen the implementation of the Convention, including by clarifying the legal basis for the procedures for the review of compliance and for reporting, as well as extending the list of development activities subject to the Convention's provisions.

Indicators of achievement

Increased number of countries working to improve implementation of the Convention and its Protocol on SEA assessed through:

- (a) The number of countries contributing to subregional cooperation under the Espoo Convention;
- (b) The number of Parties reporting on their implementation of the Espoo Convention;
- (c) The intensity of capacity development in non-Parties to the Espoo Convention (average participant-days per non-Party);
- (d) The intensity of capacity development in non-Parties to the Espoo Convention's Protocol on SEA (average participant-days per non-Party);
- (e) The number of ratifications of the Protocol on SEA

Performance measures

2008–2009: (a) 23; (b) 38; (c) 8; (d) 9; (e) 12

2010–2011: (a) 28; (b) 42; (c) 31; (d) 9; (e) 23

Target 2012–2013: (a) 29; (b) 44; (c) 32; (d) 10; (e) 27

Actual (as of 31 July 2013) 2012–2013: (a) 16;⁹ (b) 38; (c) 11;¹⁰ (d) 10;¹¹ (e) 25

Cluster 9**Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes***Expected accomplishment*

Increased ratification and strengthened implementation of the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) and the Protocol on Water and Health

Statement of accomplishments/results achieved

50. The most important achievement of the ECE Water Convention during the biennium was its opening to accession by all United Nations Member States following the adoption of amendments to the Convention, which entered into force on 6 February 2013. In addition, at its sixth session (Rome, November 2012), the MOP adopted a decision facilitating accession by non-ECE countries. The amendments are expected to be operational by early 2014, when all countries which were Parties to the Convention in November 2003 will have ratified them.

⁹ Some of the activities included in the workplan under “Subregional cooperation and capacity-building” have not yet been implemented due to lack of funds or other difficulties experienced by lead countries.

¹⁰ Several activities are planned for the second half of 2013, including legislative advice on EIA for Georgia. Pre-accession legislative assistance for Uzbekistan has been carried forward to 2014.

¹¹ Several activities are planned for the second half of 2013, including training workshops on SEA for Belarus and Ukraine and round-table consultation meetings in Belarus and the Republic of Moldova to discuss the draft results of legislative advice.

51. Globalization is already a priority of the Convention: representatives from more than 40 non-ECE countries have participated in the Convention's activities and several capacity-building events were held outside the region, such as a session for African countries and an international round table for countries of the Southern Mediterranean, both held in November 2012, as well as an international workshop to exchange experience between Latin American and European countries in June 2013.

52. The MOP also established and elected the Implementation Committee, which will provide tailored assistance to prevent water-related disputes and support countries in implementing the Convention. The establishment of the Committee is an important step in the evolution of the Convention, which will strengthen its implementation and increase its effectiveness and normative authority.

53. The work of the Task Force on Water and Climate and the yearly workshops on water and climate change adaptation in transboundary basins in 2010–2013 have had significant impacts at the political level, as well as on the ground. The need for transboundary cooperation in climate change adaptation has been increasingly recognized. This has led to concrete results, with some of the pilot projects undertaking the first-ever joint assessments of climate change impacts and vulnerabilities at the basin level in those basins.

54. The National Policy Dialogues (NPDs) on Integrated Water Resources Management and Water Supply and Sanitation under the EU Water Initiative have made an important contribution to the development of water sector reforms and the achievement of the water-related Millennium Development Goals in nearly all countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. The dialogues respond to countries' needs and are much requested by countries as well as appreciated by donors and international organizations.

55. In general, work under the Convention focused increasingly on projects on the ground, which have supported implementation of the Convention at the regional, national and subnational levels. They resulted in concrete outcomes, for example, the signature of the Memorandum of Understanding in the Drin Basin or the creation of a regional platform for water quality in Central Asia, as well as the signature of the Dniester treaty.

56. The Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health continued to implement its ambitious programme of work adopted at the second session of the MOP (Bucharest, November 2010). Member States were supported in elaborating policies on equitable access to water and sanitation in order to progressively realize the internationally recognized human right to safe drinking water and sanitation. Good practices to ensure equitable access to water and sanitation in the pan-European region were published and launched at the sixth World Water Forum in Marseille, France, in March 2012.

57. In addition, a practical self-assessment tool (score-card) will be finalized and published in 2013 to help member States evaluate the situation on the national and subnational levels and identify priority areas for action to reduce disparities in access to water and sanitation. In order to improve the participation of the public in the implementation of the Protocol, a guide on public participation will be submitted to the third session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (Oslo, November 2013).

58. Assistance to member States was also provided on the national and subregional levels. Subregional workshops for Central Europe (Bratislava, May 2012), Nordic and Baltic countries (Oslo, November 2012) and the Caucasus (Tbilisi, May 2013), as well as national projects in Armenia, the Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova and Tajikistan, focused on setting and implementing targets on water and health and reporting under the Protocol. Several countries also received advice on benefits of acceding to the Protocol.

Lessons learned/areas needing improvement

59. The Rio+20 Conference has reconfirmed that water is at the core of sustainable development, as it is closely linked to a number of key global challenges, such as food security and sustainable agriculture, protection of human health, sustainable cities and human settlements, protection of biodiversity and prevention of desertification and land degradation. This underlines the importance of adopting an intersectoral approach to water resources management, which the Water Convention supports, for example through the preparation of a thematic assessment of the water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus in a limited number of transboundary basins.

60. The application and implementation of the Water Convention at the global level is a priority to promote transboundary cooperation worldwide. The opening of the Convention beyond the ECE region will bring new opportunities as well as new challenges and resource requirements. Awareness-raising, capacity-building and activities on the ground in other regions will be needed and have already started. The globalization of the Convention also entails a growing involvement of non-ECE countries in the Convention's activities, enriching both ECE and non-ECE countries with new perspectives. The attendant needs will have to be taken into account in the development of future programmes of work. Moreover, an enhanced framework and resources for servicing and assisting implementation of the Convention will be required to support its globalization.

61. The results of the second reporting exercise under the Protocol on Water and Health in 2013 demonstrated progress in the compliance of Parties with their reporting requirements and a generally improving trend on water and health issues in the ECE region, notably in access to water and sanitation. However, the reporting cycle also highlighted common challenges and gaps, such as regarding the obligation to set targets under the Protocol for several Parties and the need to further strengthen intersectoral cooperation and public participation. In addition, it revealed persistent issues, such as health problems due to insufficient wastewater treatment or its discharges into water bodies.

Indicators of achievement

Increased number of countries indicating progress in implementing the Water Convention and the Protocol on Water and Health assessed through:

(a) The intensity of capacity development in non-Parties to the Water Convention (average participant-days per non-Party);

(b) The intensity of capacity development in non-Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health (average participant-days per non-Party);

(c) The number of ratifications to the Protocol on Water and Health

Performance measures

2008–2009: (a) 10; (b) 8; (c) 24

2010–2011: (a) 50; (b) 20; (c) 25

Target 2012–2013: (a) 45; (b) 18; (c) 26

Actual (as of 31 July 2013) 2012–2013: (a) 66; (b) 25; (c) 26

Cluster 10

Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents

Expected accomplishment

Strengthened implementation of the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (Industrial Accidents Convention)

Statement of accomplishments/results achieved

62. In the period 2012–2013 the Convention pursued its mandate to promote industrial safety in the region. In 2012 the Conference of the Parties held its seventh meeting and the Convention celebrated its twentieth anniversary. Parties took the opportunity to start a review of the Convention. The first step was to reconvene the Working Group on the Development of the Convention and to mandate it to: (a) align annex I¹² to the Convention with the United Nations Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals; and (b) to evaluate the possible amendment of the Convention to address, among others, the scope of the Convention, the opening of the Convention to other United Nations Member States and to strengthen the provisions on public participation. The results of this review are to be reported in 2014 at the eighth meeting.

63. In addition, in the biennium 2012–2013, the Convention continued its activities under the Assistance Programme. Among the activities carried out were the continuation of the Project on Hazard and Crisis Management in the Danube Delta (one of the outcomes of the project is an initial draft of ECE regional safety guidelines for oil terminals) and the continuation of activities under the area of prevention for Croatia, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The Convention and its Working Group on Implementation also continued to support countries in the use of the tools provided under the Assistance Programme. Furthermore, together with the UNEP-Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Joint Environment Unit and the UNEP Division of Technology, Industry and Economics, the Convention developed a three-hour introductory online training on industrial accidents, currently available in English, French and Russian.

64. The Conference of the Parties decided in November 2012 to adopt a long-term sustainable financial mechanism that should make funding more predictable. Together with enhancing financial stability, the Convention has been working on strengthening synergies both inside and outside ECE. The Convention secretariat was the successful initiator of an inter-agency meeting (Geneva, April 2013) aiming at identifying synergies among actors (from international organizations and NGOs) dealing with industrial safety. In 2013 the Convention also included OSCE as a partner. A joint activity with the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission will tackle the difficult issue of land-use planning.

65. Two more countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro) became Parties to the Convention during the reporting period, reducing the number of non-Parties benefitting from the Assistance Programme.

Lessons learned/areas needing improvement

66. Despite the steps forward and the progress achieved in the biennium, from the information derived from the review of the national reports on implementation and the tools under the Assistance Programme it is evident that beneficiary countries are still facing

¹² The annex providing guidance to Parties on which installations fall within the scope of the Convention.

challenges on key elements of the Convention. The implementation of the Strategic Approach through the use of the indicators and criteria has, so far, and for the countries having used it, facilitated the identification of the precise actions to be undertaken to improve the situation.

67. Among the aspects in which exchange of good practices between countries would be beneficial (including countries with developed economies, even if at different levels), are: transboundary cooperation in preparedness and response, public participation and siting and land-use planning.

Indicators of achievement

Increased number of reports from countries indicating progress in implementing the Convention in five key areas:

- (a) Intensity of capacity development in non-Parties to the Industrial Accidents Convention (average participant-days per non-Party);
- (b) Intensity of capacity development in Parties to the Industrial Accidents Convention (average participant-days per Party);
- (c) Identification of hazardous activities through training sessions;
- (d) Prevention — application and strengthening of preventive measures for hazardous activities through capacity-building sessions;
- (e) Notification of industrial accidents using the Industrial Accidents Notification System implemented through training sessions

Performance measures

2008–2009: (a) 21; (b) 30; (c) 35; (d) 35; (e) 24

2010–2011: (a) 31; (b) 23; (c) 40; (d) 40; (e) 40

Target 2012–2013: (a) 35; (b) 17; (c) 43; (d) 40; (e) 40

Actual (as of 31 July 2013) 2012–2013: (a) 26; (b) 32; (c) 43; (d) 40; (e) 40¹³

Cluster 11 Environmental performance reviews

Expected accomplishment

Improved environmental performance in countries with economies in transition

Statement of accomplishments/results achieved

68. Four EPR publications were issued during the current biennium. The second EPR of Tajikistan, which was reviewed in 2011, was published in 2012. The first EPR of Turkmenistan and the second EPRs of Albania and Romania were carried out. The EPR reports were submitted to the EPR Expert Group, which met in March 2012 in Ashgabat to review the EPR of Turkmenistan and in April 2012 in Geneva to review the EPR reports of Albania and Romania. Subsequently, the EPR recommendations to the three countries were adopted by CEP in April 2012. The second EPRs of Albania and Romania confirmed improved environmental performance of these countries since the first review. Albania had fully or partially implemented 74 per cent of the 65 recommendations of its first review. Romania had fully or partially implemented 96 per cent of the 55 recommendations of the

¹³ These figures also include activities that will take place in the second half of 2013.

first EPR that were reported. Turkmenistan showed a strong commitment to environmental improvement, although much remains to be done.

69. Two EPR reports were launched in 2012. The second EPR report of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia was presented by the Minister of Environment and Physical Planning in March 2012 to an audience of key governmental institutions, NGOs, the private sector and international institutions.

70. Similarly, in June 2012, the Chair of the State Committee for Nature Protection of Uzbekistan presented the second EPR of Uzbekistan at the National Press Centre of Uzbekistan, during EcoWeek 2012, to the main governmental bodies, NGOs, business and international institutions.

71. In the second part of the biennium, three EPRs were carried out: for Croatia, Morocco and the Republic of Moldova. The Morocco review was notable as it is the first country outside of the region to request an EPR from ECE, and the process was undertaken in cooperation with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. The review mission took place in November 2012. The Republic of Moldova was the first country reviewed under the third cycle. The review mission took place in February 2013. The review mission for the second EPR of Croatia took place in March 2013. The three EPR reports will be submitted to the EPR Expert Group, which will review the EPR of Morocco in September 2013 in Rabat and the EPR of Croatia and the Republic of Moldova in October 2013 in Geneva. Subsequently, the reports will be submitted to the nineteenth session of CEP for the peer review.

Lessons learned/areas needing improvement

72. Full implementation of the recommendations from previous reviews has yet to be achieved. Environment is not a priority for the Governments of Albania and Romania. Lack of capacity and resources, as well as gaps in legislation, institutional development and administrative organization have been constraining factors in countries' efforts to implement the EPR recommendations.

Indicators of achievement

(a) Increased number of countries with improved environmental performance

Performance measures

2008–2009: 10 countries

2010–2011: 15 countries

Target 2012–2013: 18 countries

Actual (as of 1 January 2013) 2012–2013: 18 countries

(b) Number of recommendations implemented by the reviewed countries, and contributed to policy formulation

Performance measures

2008–2009: 255 recommendations

2010–2011: 460 recommendations

Target 2012–2013: 677 recommendations

Actual (as of 1 January 2013) 2012–2013: 636 recommendations
