

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

NOTE OF THE BUREAU MEETING
Monday, room S4, Palais des Nations, 14 December 2015,
14:30 – 18:00 hrs

Attendance: The following Bureau members attended: Mr. W. Harnett (Chair of WGSR), Ms. L. Rouil (Chair of the EMEP SB) and Mr. S. Vasiliev (Russian Federation). Mr. R. Ballaman (Switzerland) and Mr. M. Schroeder (Chair of the Implementation Committee) participated by teleconference. Ms. V. Galatone (Canada) was not able to participate. Mr. A. Zuber attended as an observer on behalf of the EU. Mr. S. Ludwiczak, Mr. N. Bonvoisin, Ms. A. Karadjova, Mr. A. Mamadzhanov, Ms. A. Novikova, Ms. C. Sanz Noriega, Mr. K. Olendrzynski and Ms. N. Iliukhina from the ECE secretariat attended.

Ms. J. Kerr (Canada) attended the meeting to provide the North American perspective on certain issues on the agenda of the Executive Body Bureau.

The meeting was chaired by Ms. A. Engleryd, Chair of the Executive Body.

1. *Preparations for the 53rd session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review and the 34th session of the Executive Body*

Documentation: Provisional Agenda for the thirty-fourth session of the Executive Body (ECE/EB.AIR/132); Provisional agenda for the fifty-third session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review (ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/113)

The Bureau discussed preparations for the 53rd session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review and the 34th session of the Executive Body. The Chairs of the Executive Body (EB) and the Working Group on Strategies and Review (WGSR) reported on the preparations for the back-to-back sessions of the two bodies.

The Chair of EB informed the Bureau about the changes to the WGSR agenda described in the letter from the Chairs of EB and WGSR from 1 December 2015 addressed to the Heads of delegations. The changes were introduced following some recent events including an informal meeting of the Executive Body Bureau in Stockholm (9-10 November 2015). The proposed changes would allow the EB that was scheduled for only one day, to move more quickly through the agenda.

The secretariat briefed the Bureau about the availability of official documents for both meetings. The Bureau discussed the order in which documents should be considered during sessions of WGSR and EB, including the consideration of two draft guidance documents at the WGSR session.

The Bureau discussed presenting the CEP document 'Draft Batumi Action for Cleaner Air' at the WGSR meeting. The EB Chair clarified the process of developing the document, which was submitted to the CEP on behalf of the EB Bureau. The Chair also clarified that comments received at and after the 21st session of the CEP had been integrated into the document, but that the revised version was still open for comments through the CEP focal points.

Mr. Vasyliiev expressed his concern against the principle that Bureau submits the document on behalf of the Parties, without agreeing with the Parties. The Chair of the EB and the secretariat provided clarification that this document is a product of the Bureau and that it will not be submitted on behalf of the Parties.

The Chair of the EB proposed to consider the document in the EB meeting very shortly without deep discussion and to encourage delegations having comments to contact their CEP national focal point. *Follow-up to the informal EB Bureau meeting in November 2015*

Documentation: Note on "Ways forward decided at the informal extended EB Bureau meeting in Stockholm 9-10 November 2015".

The Bureau addressed follow-up issues which were discussed at the informal Bureau meeting held on 9-10 November 2015 in Stockholm and considered the handling of these items during the back-to-back WGSR and EB sessions. The issues discussed include, among others, the following items:

- Request from Luxembourg to the Ad-hoc group of legal experts

The Bureau proposed to consider the circulation of the request from Luxembourg to the secretariat regarding the application of some provisions of the amended Gothenburg Protocol vis-à-vis the provisions of the original Protocol as a room document during the EB session.

- Mid-term evaluation of the Long-term Strategy

It was proposed to consider the inclusion of the mid-term evaluation as a part of the 2016-2017 workplan. The decision should be taken at the EB session in May 2016 to review/revisit the Long-term Strategy for the Convention. The review should be presented in 2017. An ad hoc group should be formed and tasked with preparing the policy responses to the Assessment report (see below). This group could also be tasked with preparing the review of the Long-term Strategy.

- Convention's Assessment Report (including its promotion and launch)

The Bureau agreed to have discussions on the Assessment report during both meetings of the WGSR and the EB. The EB Chair informed that work was ongoing to find a time and location for launching the report.

- Financing of scientific and effects-related work (including financing of activities under the Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen)

Regarding the issue of financing problems concerning in particular the voluntary trust fund for the effects-related work and also a recent announcement that funding for the Coordination Center for Effects and the Task Force for Reactive Nitrogen are being significantly decreased, the Bureau suggested to consider organizing a meeting of main donors to hold a discussion on how to ensure adequate financing in the future and encourage more Parties to contribute. It was pointed out that it was important to have a top down coordinated approach to solving financial issues.

It was proposed to discuss this item at the WGSR meeting.

- Communication and outreach (including updates from secretariat on recent outreach activities (COP-21, IG17 of EANET))

The Bureau proposed to have presentation on the communication and outreach activities by the Convention secretariat during the WGSR session.

2. The draft 2016-2017 workplan for the implementation of the Convention

Documentation: The draft 2016-2017 workplan (ECE/EB.AIR/2015/1-ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/2015/1)

The Bureau discussed the handling of the discussion on the draft 2016-2017 workplan during the back-to-back WGSR and EB sessions. The Chair of the EB referred to the discussions held by the EB Bureau in Stockholm on the ways of linking items in the workplan to the Long-term Strategy of the Convention, taking into account that the strategy itself may need to be reviewed and updated, possibly with a longer timeframe beyond 2020. Overall, there was a belief that interactions with other bodies and conventions should be a logical outgrowth of the strategy. It was agreed to discuss those items at the WGSR meeting in preparation for a decision on ways forward at the EB.

3. Support to the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia

The secretariat informed the Bureau about the on-going work to support Ukraine in preparing its Informative Inventory Report and to produce a brochure on the effects of air pollution and the Convention in English and Russian. It also shared its plans for early 2016 and, referring to the call for contributions circulated in September 2015 to support the travel of participants from Eastern, South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia to attend the regular meetings in Geneva, informed about the contribution of CHF 20,000 by Switzerland earmarked for delegates from Central Asia and Azerbaijan. It also stressed the need for additional contributions, given that the existing resources would be exhausted by the end of 2016.

Upon the question by Mr. Vasiliev, the secretariat clarified that the main activities within the project funded by the Russian Federation were going to start in 2016.

4. *Organization of work and meetings in 2016 and beyond*

Documentation: List of meetings in 2016

The secretariat presented to the Bureau an updated list of meetings of the main subsidiary bodies for 2016. According to the proposed planning, 2016 will be a transition year when the EB will meet in May, the EMEP SB/WGE in September and the WGSR and EB back to back in December (2 days for each session). The complete draft schedule of main meetings under the Convention in 2016 is contained in annex to this note.

The Bureau also discussed the planning of meetings beyond 2016 in light of the discussion at the informal EB Bureau meeting in Stockholm, where the need for a change in the sequence of meetings of the Executive Body and the main subsidiary bodies under the Convention was highlighted. It was agreed that the sequence of meetings needs to be re-changed for practical reasons. EB shall meet once a year and have the possibility to get a full week when needed. The new practice of joint EMEP SB/WGE meetings should be continued.

The new meeting calendar would be as follows:

- WGSR meeting in late spring (May/June)
- EMEP SB/WGE in September; and
- EB in December.

The new sequence will be fully functioning in 2017.

The secretariat was tasked with preparing the necessary draft decision by the EB approving the sequence of meetings in 2016 and beyond.

5. *Other business*

The Bureau discussed the document containing the informal guidance "Towards enhanced cooperation of UNECE MEAs" and a draft annex to the informal guidance listing synergistic activities jointly implemented by two or more UNECE MEA. The Chair of the EB highlighted that the document should be a living document and that the Bureau should consider if any relevant inputs should be made. It was proposed to slightly revise a description of the Convention which is not correct under the first bulleted point. The secretariat clarified that the purpose of joint activities in the

framework of UNECE MEA's referred to in the guidance document is to benefit from sharing successful experiences, joint contributions and projects.

The secretariat updated the Bureau on the status of outreach and communication activities and briefed the Bureau on recent participation of the Air Convention secretariat at the COP-21 in Paris. The secretariat serviced a number of events, in which the Air Convention was promoted: a side-event at the EU pavilion on 'Reduce Air Pollution to Save Lives and Combat Climate Change' (4 December), the Thematic Event on SLCPs (4 December), a CCAC working group meeting (7 December) and the 7th CCAC High-Level Assembly (8 December), two events on Health and Climate Change (8 and 9 December), an event by the German Federal Environment Agency event on "Tackling climate change, air pollution and waste management - needs, potentials and challenges of integrating sector policies" (9 December). In addition an information booth was organized together with WHO on Health and Air Pollution as part of the ONE UN exhibit. A flyer has been produced to provide visibility of the Convention.

6. Date, time and place of next meeting

The Bureau decided to hold the next meeting in May 2016, on the margins of the 35th session of the Executive Body (Geneva, 2-4 May). It was agreed to hold the meeting of the Bureau in the evenings of 2 and 3 May following the closure of the EB session on those days.

ANNEX

List of meetings in 2016

26-28 January: 36th session of the Implementation Committee (Geneva)

14-17 March: Joint meeting of the Extended Bureaux of the EMEP Steering Body and the Working Group on Effects (Geneva)

2-4 May: 35th session of the Executive Body (Geneva, 2-4 May);

2-3 May: Meeting of the Executive Body Bureau on the margins of the 35th EB session (6-7.30 p.m. on 2 May, tentatively 6-7.30 on 3 May)

13-16 September: Second Joint Session of the Steering Body to the EMEP and the Working Group on Effects (Geneva)

13-15 September: 37th meeting of the Implementation Committee (Geneva, 13-15 September, tentatively)

12 December: Meeting of the Executive Body Bureau (Geneva)

13-14 December: 54th session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review (Geneva)

15-16 December: 36th session of the Executive Body (Geneva)