

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Forty-third Meeting
Geneva, 19 September 2011

EXCOM/CONCLU/43

CHAIRMAN'S CONCLUSIONS

**Meeting of the Executive Committee
19 September 2011**

Chairman's conclusions

27 September 2011

FORMAL SEGMENT

Item 2 – Decision on the servicing of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe by ECE (Formal document ECE/EX/2011/L.15)

The EXCOM welcomed the commitment of interested donors to providing extrabudgetary resources in support of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee, including secondment of staff.

The EXCOM approved that the ECE/FAO Forestry and Timber section contributes to the servicing of the negotiation of the Legally Binding Agreement on Forests in Europe within existing UN resources.

Item 3 – Decision on matters relating to Inland Transport Committee: Establishment of a Group of Experts on European Agreement Concerning Work of Crews of Vehicles Engaged in International Road Transport (AETR) (Formal document ECE/EX/2011/L.16)

The EXCOM approved the establishment of the Group of Experts on European Agreement Concerning Work of Crews of Vehicles Engaged in International Road Transport and its Terms of Reference as contained in document ECE/EX/2011/L.16.

INFORMAL SEGMENT

Item 5 – Review of the 2005 ECE Reform (Informal documents 2011/12 and 2011/13)

The EXCOM welcomed the briefing notes and the templates prepared by the secretariat

The EXCOM requested that documents concerning the subprogrammes in relation to the review process be circulated to EXCOM members 10 calendar days before each relevant meeting to enable a proper examination of the documents.

The secretariat was also requested to provide a list of the decisions that established the subsidiary bodies and defined their mandates. This would be a living document which could be later updated and to which additional information might be introduced as appropriate.

The Russian delegation emphasized that the recommendations and conclusions resulting from the review should be adopted by consensus and that the review should not be a pretext for another reform of ECE as it is currently carrying out its work in conformity with the provisions of the 2005 reform of ECE.

Item 6 – Establishment of a new Group of Experts on Risk Management in regulatory and standardization policies under the Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies (Informal document 2011/14)

It was agreed that the secretariat could proceed to submit a formal proposal for EXCOM to approve the establishment of a Group of Experts on risk management in regulatory and standardization policies at its next meeting. However, the document should be amended to make the tasks of the group more precise and to state clearly that the Group could be serviced within existing resources and that, upon completion of its work in 2013, it would cease to exist unless otherwise decided.

Item 7 – Extrabudgetary projects (Informal document 2011/15)

The EXCOM endorsed the three extrabudgetary projects:

- Servicing of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) to prepare a Legally Binding Agreement (LBA) on Forests in Europe
- Strengthening cooperation on transboundary watershed management between Afghanistan and Tajikistan in the upper Amu Darya River basin
- Capacity-building for cooperation on dam safety in Central Asia, phase 3

With regard to the project "Capacity-building for cooperation on dam safety in Central Asia, phase 3", the EXCOM noted that the financial resources required to implement the project were not yet entirely assured and that further funding-raising was needed.

Item 8 – Other business

The EXCOM agreed to defer the approval of the programmes of work of Sectoral Committees until the end of the review process as proposed by the Chairman in Informal document 2011/16, with a revision in paragraph 5 to clarify that "work can continue in relation to activities planned to take place in 2012 in accordance with the programme budget" (see full text in Annex).

The Chairman announced that two subprogrammes would be reviewed at its next meeting on 18 October, namely, Subprogramme 7 - Timber and Forestry, and Subprogramme 8 - Housing and Land Administration (population and ageing will be treated separately since the Committee on Housing and Land Management does not address issues of population and ageing).

Approval of programmes of work of Sectoral Committees

Note by the Chairman

1. Since the 2005 ECE reform, the Executive Committee (EXCOM) duly approves the programmes of work of the Sectoral Committees, in accordance with its terms of reference.
2. Given that the review process has started and that discussions on each subprogramme will take place through July 2012, member States may wish to postpone their decision on the programmes of work until at least the end of the reviews of the subprogrammes if not until the end of the whole review process so as not to prejudge its outcome.
3. Since all the elements of the programme of work for 2012-2013 for each subprogramme are contained in the proposed 2012-2013 programme budget submitted to the General Assembly for its approval at the end of 2011, once the programme budget is approved, it will allow the secretariat to start implementing the work of each subprogramme while awaiting the results of the review and the adoption of the programmes of work for each subprogramme.
4. Therefore the EXCOM, while maintaining its prerogative to approve the programmes of work, may wish to decide to defer to the second half of 2012 the submission of the programmes of work of all Sectoral Committees for its formal approval.
5. More specifically, what can be envisaged is that all 2012-2013 programmes of work of Sectoral Committees will be submitted for formal approval by EXCOM in the last quarter of 2012, with the understanding that work can continue in relation to activities planned to take place in 2012 in accordance with the programme budget and that EXCOM may still decide to adjust these programmes of work for the remainder of the 2012-2013 biennium in light of the outcome of the review.
6. Adjustments that need to be made to the subprogrammes resulting from the review will be subsequently effected in the proposed programme budget for 2014-2015 and corresponding programmes of work of Sectoral Committees.