

Proposal for the WGSR at its 59th session

Forum for International Cooperation on Air Pollution (FICAP)

The forum for international Cooperation on Air Pollution was established by Executive Body decision 2019/5.

The importance of cooperation beyond the UNECE region has been recognized in the updated long-term strategy for the Convention (ECE/EB.AIR/142/Add.2, decision 2018/5, annex, para 76). The need for coordinated actions has also been highlighted by many other international fora (e.g. through the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) and World Health Assembly resolutions). Given the Conventions 40 years of experience in tackling transboundary air pollution on a regional basis, it is keen to cooperate with other regions to ascertain common challenges and to exchange experiences on air pollution policy. At its 38th session in 2018, following a special event on clean air globally, the Executive Body agreed to establish a forum for collaboration on reducing air pollution and requested the Bureau of the Executive Body to further elaborate this proposal.

The proposal was presented to the 39th session of the Executive Body as informal document no.4 and defines the purpose of the forum as “a forum for international exchange of information and mutual learning on both the scientific/technical and policy levels. It is intended to be a repository for technical information and a convenor of countries and organizations with the goal of increased international cooperation on addressing air pollution”. It also advises on its vision and mission, structure and operation and proposes possible activities of the forum. Part III para 2 of inf document no 4 proposes that the Forum, in its initial phase, be led by one or more countries, including at least one from the UNECE region, who are to appoint chairperson(s). Countries have been invited to express their interest to the UNECE secretariat.

The United Kingdom and Sweden are pleased to confirm our readiness to co-chair the forum and propose to establish it as a Task Force under the Working Group on Strategies and Review. We are eager to get feedback from the WGSR, which we will consider in preparing a draft terms of reference for consideration by the Executive Body at its 41st session in December 2021.

Questions for discussion at WGSR 59

Do parties agree with the forum being set up as a Task Force? If yes, is it best placed under the WGSR? Other views?

Do the purpose, vision and mission, structure and operation as set out in inf document no 4 still seem appropriate?

The co-chairs consider the provision of a website and annual event (in person or virtually) to be important for delivering the forum. Do parties have any views on delivering the forum which the UK and Sweden should consider in developing the forum?

Are there any activities in terms of information sharing on policy or science or technical capacity building and sharing of funding opportunities listed in inf document no 4, that parties would now not like to see the forum undertake?

Do parties have views on how to best reach out to non-UNECE countries and organisations, and are there specific countries and organisations that should be targeted for participation in the forum?