

Chair's report on the activities of the EECCA Coordinating Group in 2021

The EECCA Coordinating Group (CG) (under the chairmanship of the Russian Federation) met on 26-27 April in a joint format together with the Task Force on Techno-economic Issues (virtual meeting). The meeting was attended by representatives of Armenia, Georgia, Kyrgyz Republic, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Turkey as well as Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Sweden, and the EU Commission. This joint event was co-arranged and supported by the UNECE Secretariat. Simultaneous English-Russian translation was provided.

Agenda was focused on the following topics:

1. Progress of work on air quality issues in member countries
2. Exchange of views on the revision of the Gothenburg protocol
3. Needs for further capacity-building and technical assistance
4. TFTEI work related to the amended Gothenburg Protocol (in light of the future revision), and update on other developments of potential interest for the EECCA

The joint meeting was well-attended, agenda was adopted with no alterations.

1. On the progress of member countries

Overall, with the COVID-19 pandemic ongoing, most of the countries of the CG showed continuous progress in their work related to various aspects air quality management. At the same time, overall participation and communication among the members of the CG have decreased. COVID-related limitations made some countries to re-prioritize their agendas and focus on essential/urgent domestic activities, postponing work related to the further development and implementation of the air protection regulations.

In **Georgia**, project activities directed on enhancing air quality management capacities as well as emission inventory and projections continue. The ambient air quality monitoring network is further extended with the monitoring data generated to be fed into the newly introduced air quality modelling system. A new rule on mandatory self-monitoring of emissions from stationary sources is being finalized. The Code of good practice for reducing NH₃ Emissions in agriculture has been prepared in national language and adopted. A number of measures related to several annexes of the Gothenburg Protocol (IV, V, VI, VIII, IX, X, XI).

The 2010/75/EU Directive on industrial emissions related action plan, in its draft version, has been prepared, and is under initial review in **Ukraine**. Introduction of the BAT concept in the national legislation through respective regulatory actions is being planned. Development and implementation of the technical regulations for combustion plants, including waste incinerators are currently under consideration.

In **the Republic of Moldova**, work on the AQ Law and the Industrial Emissions Law is carried out in accordance with relevant EU directives. In particular, the Law on Air Quality to be adopted by the Parliament, at latest, by the end of 2021, promotes the national Air Quality Monitoring Network and provides the basis for analyses and assessments based on reliable data regarding air pollutants and ensure sharing of information and indicators of air quality with the public in real time. The Network is being developed and gradually established with support of Germany and other partners.

In **the Russian Federation**, the “Clean Air” Federal project is further in progress. Initially planned to cover 12 of the most polluted cities across the country, it is to be extended to cover over 40 urbanized areas in 2022-2030. Quotas on emissions of particular pollutants for major polluters are being developed and released. By 2022 all Category 1 entities will be obliged to manage their emissions withing the quotas issued. It will allow gradual decrease in pollution concentrations in 12 cities with the reduction target of min. 20% to be reached by 2024-2025. Additionally, the Presidential Decree #Pr-1096, item.1 3)-1 of 1 July 2021 was issued with the goal to reduce the volume of net greenhouse gas emissions between 2021 and 2050 in the Russian Federation to lower values compared to the indicators of the European Union and to develop an action plan ("road map") to reduce the carbon intensity of the Russian economy. This would allow further actions towards reducing emissions of “traditional pollutants” across various sectors, and primarily, energy generation and distribution.

In **Armenia**, the air quality management policy framework is being built on the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA) signed between the European Union, the European Atomic Energy Community and their Member States and the Republic of Armenia (of 24 November 2017). The bill “On Amendments to the National Law on Atmospheric Air Protection” submitted to the National Government in 2020 is under consideration. Adoption of the law will allow gradual implementation of the requirements in line with relevant EU directives.

For the first time in the CG context, **Turkey** provided an overview of the air quality management activities in the country. The air quality monitoring and air pollution management systems established and in operation in the country cover all major aspects of the cumbersome air quality management tasks. Information and experience sharing in the regard among the CG members and beyond seem useful and highly relevant.

2. Exchange of views on the upcoming revision of the Gothenburg Protocol

Overall, it was reiterated by the CG members that the upcoming revision of the GP would likely further complicate its implementation. Countries of the CG remain at different levels of understanding of the complexity and implementation issues with regard to the 2012 revised GP. CG could propose the following:

- indicate in the revised text of GP that new measures and reporting provisions are of non-mandatory nature for new Parties;
- the time limitations for flexible mechanisms application should be removed from the text;
- introduce a new approach to ratification, e.g. staged ratification (annex by annex),
- include in the text of the protocol separate/specific conditions for the EECCA region (e.g. an special annex listing countries and respective obligations), as established for the US and Canada.

CG member countries reiterated their willingness to actively participate in the upcoming discussions of another GP revision, and underlined that the development of the GP should not further jeopardize ratifications by the EECCA countries due to overcomplications and unreachable level of ambition. It was further highlighted that related discussions and negotiations should be held in the face-to-face (traditional) form to ensure full participation and exchange by all stakeholders.

3. Capacity-building and the CG workplan for 2021-2022

UNECE Secretariat kindly provided an update on capacity-building activities in 2021-2022. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions the capacity-building work has been largely redirected to online/hybrid meetings and workshops, with some activities postponed or largely reconsidered. The CG appreciates the Secretariat's efforts to implement planned activities despite existing limitations and donors' understanding, and ongoing support*.

Assistance related to capacity-building in countries of the CG is still required, and donors' support is very welcome.

4. TFTEI contribution to further promotion of ratification among the countries of the CG

The TFTEI co-chairs and experts illustrated the AGP review process, highlighting possible joint contributions to be developed in collaboration with the EECCAs (e.g. answers to the questions guiding the review process, as in Annex I, section 1.6, of document "Preparation for the review of the AGP") (ECE/EB.AIR/2020/3–ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/2020/3). The TFTEI experts also presented on a number of activities on BC and PAH, methane, maritime shipping and two sector analyses on Aluminium and Cement, recently developed by TFTEI (available on the web site of the Convention). These works are part of the basis for the techno-scientific support to the review process.

The CG highly appreciates the effort and support provided by the TFTEI co-chairs, experts and other colleagues to make the meeting useful and productive.

* CG sincerely thanks EU, Germany, Norway, the Russian Federation, Sweden, and Switzerland for their contributions

