

Meeting of the Heads of Delegation to CLRTAP WGSR, 27-30 September 2022

Themes and lead questions

Background documents (versions as of 9 July) are found in the annex to this agenda. As some of them are under development, the latest versions will be put on website <https://unece.org/environmental-policy/events/meeting-heads-delegation-clrtap-wgsr> after the 9th of September.

Monday afternoon / Tuesday morning: slot for possible meetings of GPG, RRG, WGSR bureau, others

The meeting will start at 13.00 h Tuesday 27th of September and end at 13 h latest on Friday 30th of September

Session A. Gothenburg Protocol Review

Indicative timing: Tuesday afternoon

Aim: to get feedback on the review and the process as such. Capture any missing information.

- Presentation on GP review conclusions
- Comments by Georgia on the review process and result (t b c)
- Comments by Portugal on the review process and result (t b c)

Lead Questions:

- Has the review process itself been satisfactory? Any suggestions for future review processes?
- Can the draft review document be considered complete/conclusive? Any information missing? Any parts that need to be reformulated or complemented?

Session B. The Gothenburg Protocol as an instrument

Indicative timing: Tuesday afternoon, Wednesday morning

Aim: to get feedback on how Parties consider that the protocol has functioned as an instrument and discuss alternatives.

- Presentation of the importance of the Gothenburg Protocol as an instrument to develop harmonized science tools for policy support
- Presentation of flexibilities in the Gothenburg protocol
- Presentation on national experience regarding the Gothenburg protocol and its implementation and applicability.
 - European perspective
 - EU perspective including the complementarity with the NECD
 - West Balkan perspective (t b c)
 - North American perspective (t b c)

Lead Questions:

- What has been accomplished?
- What has worked and what has not worked: in general? in a national context?
- What is missing from the Protocol?
- What is superfluous?
- What has become obsolete?

Session C. How to deal with methane in air pollution policy?

Indicative timing: Wednesday late morning, afternoon

Aim: to discuss further develop policy options for methane as an ozone precursor in the post-review phase

- Presentation on the result of the brain storming sessions organized by the European commission including short introduction to the methane pledge
- Presentation of options

Lead Questions:

- It has been concluded that methane is important for the formation of ground-level ozone and therefore relevant in the context of the Gothenburg Protocol objectives. Taking existing policy frameworks into consideration, which of the potential options (listed in the options paper, including the no action option), or combinations thereof, would be most useful and/or realistic to address methane as an ozone precursor? Why?
- Specifically, would you favour
 - mandatory measures / regulations or voluntary measures?
 - technical standards (in the form of a technical annex, guidance document or similar) and/or national emission reduction commitments?
 - high ambition commitments by a group of UNECE countries (establish a “gold standard”) or lower ambition commitments applicable to all, or a combination of both?

- What would be the timing of the policy options discussed above, considering the need to quickly reduce emissions and its negative effects on human health and ecosystems?

Session D. How to take into account and maximize linkages and synergies with other policy areas (beyond the methane issue)?

Indicative timing: Thursday morning

Aim: to get input on how to best integrate other policy areas into the scientific and policy work of the Convention, and to maximize added value of the Convention to climate, nitrogen, and biodiversity policy frameworks.

- Presentation on contacts/discussions between the Air convention secretariat and other relevant secretariats (CBD, Water, UNFCCC...)

Lead questions:

- What should be the role of the Air Convention vis-à-vis other policy platforms in terms of reaching the different policy frameworks' objectives?
- Which synergies are most relevant/possible to take into consideration?
- What is the role of non-technical measures in this respect?
- Which would be the best way of taking synergies into account in this Convention, in protocols/other policy instruments? In guidance documents? Or only in scientific and technical work?

Session E. Technical Annexes and Guidance Documents

Indicative timing: Thursday late morning, afternoon

Aim: Discuss the future of technical annexes and guidance documents, how they can be developed and the need for updates

- Presentation on the role of guidance documents and annexes in the Gothenburg protocol
- Presentation of the role of guidance documents and annexes for the effects oriented approach
- Presentation on needs and possibilities for updating annex II

Lead questions:

- What is / should be their function in attaining focus and objectives of the GP?
- Should the functional relation between Protocol, Annexes, Guidance Documents be revisited?
- How to include non-technical measures?
- Focus Annexes and Guidance Documents on sectors instead of on pollutants? Or both?
- If sectors, how to preserve the effects-oriented approach?
- Is their complexity a barrier to ratification or is it an asset for setting abatement standards?
- Staggered approach or all at the same time?

- Should annex II be revised?
 - If so, when?
 - Which target year ?
 - Which substances? Include methane?
 - Specific focus/ tougher requirements for certain substances? Which? Why?

Session F. What could follow the review?

Indicative timing: Friday morning

Aim: to get feedback on the next step and what it may look like. Gather ideas on options for the way forward

- Presentation on ideas for possible next steps

Lead Questions:

- Based on the draft review and the tentative conclusions, should the Gothenburg protocol be revised?
- Should another policy instrument be developed to take the work on acidification, eutrophication and ground level ozone further? Which kind of instrument could that be?
- Binding instrument versus voluntary agreement, advantages and disadvantages? Combinations ?
- Timeline – how to best get action fast? Does a revision incl ratification process take too long?
- What should /could be the role of the Batumi Action for Cleaner Air?