

Economic Commission for Europe

Executive Body for the Convention on Long-range
Transboundary Air Pollution

Bureau of the Executive Body

Meeting

16 February 2023

Via videoconference

Note of the meeting

I. Attendance

Bureau members: Ms. Kimber Scavo (United States of America) Chair, Mr. Noe Megrelishvili (Georgia), Vice-Chair, Mr. Eduard Dame (Netherlands), Vice-Chair, Ms. Elizabeth Nichols (United States of America), Vice-Chair, Mr. Till Spranger (Germany), Chair of the Working Group on Strategies and Review, Ms. Isaura Rabago (Spain), Chair of the Working Group on Effects and Mr. Marek Maasikmets (Estonia), Chair of the Implementation Committee

Observer: Ms. Susanne Lindahl (European Union)

Not present: Ms. Laurence Rouil (France), Chair of the EMEP Steering Body

II. Preliminary Remarks/Information

The Chair of the Executive Body reminded the Bureau members to sign the impartiality declaration as passed by the Executive Body at its forty-second session (Geneva, 12-16 December 2022). The secretariat informed the Bureau about the timeline envisaged for this session's report finalization with the publication of the English advance version in early March 2023 (tentatively).

III. Outcome of the joint meeting of the Extended Bureau of the EMEP Steering Body and the Working Group on Effects

The Chair of the Working Group on Effects informed the Bureau about the outcomes of the Extended Joint Bureau meeting (online, 7-8 February 2023). Regarding the work following the review of the Gothenburg Protocol by the Expert Group on Policy Options Development, she noted that further information would be needed to determine the need for any scientific simulations. Regarding the assessment of options for the relocation and re-allocation of the tasks of the Meteorological Synthesizing Centre East (MSC-E), she informed about statements received from Parties, task forces as well as other Multilateral Environmental Agreements, in response to questions circulated on the use of the MSC-E outputs. The Bureau reiterated the importance of including the full range of options in this assessment and decided to further discuss the progress on this matter at its next meeting. The options will be further discussed at the next in-person joint meeting of the Extended Bureau of the EMEP Steering Body and the Working Group on Effects (Sweden, 24-26 April 2023) with a view of presenting the respective results at the meeting of the EMEP Steering Body in September 2023.

IV. Review of compliance in 2023 and preparations for the forty-ninth session of the Implementation Committee

The Chair of the Implementation Committee informed the Bureau that the Committee's meeting would be held in July 2023. The secretariat reminded the Bureau of the timelines for submission of emission data and their implications for planning the work on the review of compliance.

V. Preparations for the sixty-first session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review and organisation of work of the Expert Group on Policy Options Development

The Chair of the Working Group on Strategies and Review informed the Bureau about the main points on the agenda of the sixty-first session of the Working Group, which included task force reports, consideration of new guidance documents, the follow-up to the review of the Gothenburg Protocol and the policy part of the 2024-2025 workplan for the implementation of the Convention. He noted the potential difficulty to agree on the policy part of this workplan without knowing the Parties' decision on addressing the conclusions of the review of the Gothenburg Protocol.

The secretariat noted that it had received 12 nominations for the Expert Group on Policy Options Development following decision 2022/4. The Chair of the Working Group on Strategies and Review informed about the planned organisation of the Expert Group's work, noting the intersessional outreach webinar to be held on 17-18 April (in the afternoons, Geneva time, online) to discuss the Expert Group's first draft of the policy options document. This webinar will follow Chatham House rules and will allow for feedback to inform the Expert Group's options document. The Bureau discussed options to provide for simultaneous interpretation during the intersessional webinar.

VI. Ad hoc Group of Experts on the review of the Rules of Procedure

The Bureau member from the Netherlands, leading the work of the ad hoc Group of Experts on the review of the Rules of Procedure, informed the Bureau about the timeline envisaged for the finalization of the report and its submission to the Working Group on Strategies and Review as an informal document. The observer noted that a submission in July would not allow for enough time for the EU Council procedure to be ready to adopt any decision with legal effect in December 2023 and having a document ready in early May 2023 would be necessary for this purpose. It was noted that according to EB Decision 2021/6, the ad hoc review group should present recommendations to the EB at its 43d session but that this does not necessarily mean that the Parties must make their final decision during this session if there is not yet full agreement on the matter.

VII. Review of the mandate of the Implementation Committee

The Bureau asked the secretariat to provide suggestions for a revision of the current mandate of the Implementation Committee. The secretariat, referring to its advice to the Bureau provided in 2020, agreed to send the necessary information for discussion at the next Bureau meeting. The Bureau agreed to involve the ad hoc Group of Legal Experts into the review process as necessary.

VIII. Review of the mandate of the EECCA Coordinating Group

The Bureau briefly discussed the Executive Body's request to review the mandate of the EECCA Coordinating Group and set it as an agenda item for the next meeting.

IX. Publication of the Agenda and Notes of the Bureau

The Bureau agreed to publish the dates and the agenda in advance of its meetings as well as short notes regarding the outcomes on the CLRTAP's website.

X. Date, place and time of the next meetings

The Bureau provisionally agreed to have its next meetings on 3 May 2023 (15:30-17:30, Geneva time, hybrid) and 11 September 2023 (10:00-12:00, Geneva time, hybrid). It also agreed that, if necessary, it might have a short 1-hour meeting on 4 September 2023, prior to the start of the session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review.