

Steering Committee of the Transport, Health and
Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP)
Sixth session

Geneva, 28-29 April 2008

Report of the Ad-hoc session of THE PEP Extended Bureau

14-15 February 2008, Brussels

Summary

1. The Bureau of THE PEP Steering Committee held an ad-hoc session on 14 to 15 February 2008 in Brussels. The objective of the meeting was to agree on the key elements that could form the basis of the draft declaration to be discussed at the Steering Committee session. The Bureau also received preliminary information on the hosting of the Third High-level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment (3HLM) and met with the European Commission (DG Tren, DG Environment and DG Sanco, see annex).

Participation

2. The meeting was chaired by Mr. François André (Belgium), the chair of THE PEP. He noted that the Steering Committee would need to elect a new chair for its sixth session. Bureau members were requested to consider possible candidates to put forward in advance of the Steering Committee meeting and to inform THE PEP secretariat.

3. The following Bureau members attended: Mr. Robert Thaler (Austria), Mr. François André (Belgium), Mr. Mario Fruianu (Netherlands), Mr. Vadim Donchenko (Russian Federation), Mr. Jan Janiga (Slovakia), Mr. Nigel Dotchin (United Kingdom), Mr. Charles Ashley (United States).

4. THE PEP secretariat was represented by Ms. Francesca Racioppi, Ms. Sonja Kahlmeier (WHO) and Ms. Brinda Wachs (UNECE). Mr. Francois Decaillet of the WHO Regional Office for Europe welcomed the participants to the Brussels office.

Planning and declaration for the 3HLM

5. The Netherlands informed the Bureau that it would host the 3HLM meeting. The meeting is tentatively scheduled for 22-23 January 2009 at a venue to be communicated in due course. Detailed planning on the programme, public relations and publication of key documents would continue during the Steering Committee meeting and thereafter.

6. The Bureau considered the draft declaration prepared by the secretariat based on the guidance provided by the Bureau at its last meeting (ECE/AC.21/SC/2008/2 - EUR/08/5068055/2). The Bureau welcomed the structure and provided detailed comments on the text. It decided to formulate three overarching regional priority goals: 1) reducing emissions; 2) promoting health and safety and 3) managing sustainable mobility and promoting a more efficient transport system. In addition, it proposed that the THE PEP maintain its current cross-cutting goals (i.e. focus on the particular needs of EECCA/SEE and the protection of ecologically-sensitive areas”) and invited the Steering Committee to consider adding a new one: “protection of vulnerable populations (e.g. children, elderly and those with reduced mobility)”.

7. As mandated by the Declaration of the Second High-level Meeting, the Steering Committee will be invited to re-examine the question of whether to start negotiations on a framework convention.

8. The declaration would be submitted to the Steering Committee in advance of its sixth session as a Conference Room Paper (CRP) in English, French and Russian, allowing countries to adequately carry out consultations and to prepare their input.

Other business

9. The Bureau suggested that at its next meeting it propose ways of increasing attention given to transport and environment issues and greater visibility of THE PEP within both the ECE’s Committee on Environmental Policy and the Inland Transport Committee.

Next meetings

10. The next meeting of the Extended Bureau will be held on 30 April 2008 in Geneva at WHO headquarters (9:00-13:00, room G), following the sixth Session of the Steering Committee. Possible occasions for meetings of the Extended Bureau to advance the planning for the 3HLM could be back-to-back with a sub-regional workshop on Sustainable and Healthy Urban Transport and/or on Transport, Health and Environment on which preparatory discussions are currently underway with interested host countries. If necessary, a separate meeting of the Extended Bureau may be scheduled before the end of 2008 to ensure adequate preparation for the 3HLM in January 2009.

Annex

Report of joint meeting of the THE PEP Bureau and the European Commission (EC)

15 February 2008, Brussels

1. The objective of the joint meeting was to promote synergies between THE PEP and the EC on policy integration and intersectoral cooperation in transport, environment and health; to have an exchange of views on experiences in the promotion of sustainable urban transport; to identify common priorities, particularly support to New Member States and neighbouring countries and to discuss preparations for the Third High-level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment (3HLM) (tentatively scheduled for 22-23 January 2009 in the Netherlands).
2. The meeting was chaired by Mr. François André (Belgium), the chair of THE PEP. The following Bureau members attended: Mr. Robert Thaler (Austria), Mr. François André (Belgium), Mr. Mario Fruianu (Netherlands), Mr. Vadim Donchenko (Russian Federation), Mr. Jan Janiga (Slovakia), Mr. Nigel Dotchin (United Kingdom), Mr. Charles Ashley (United States). The European Commission was represented by Ms. Barbara Bircksens and Ms. Isabelle Kardacz (Directorate General Transport and Energy - DG TREN), Mr. Giulio Gallo (Directorate General Health and Consumer Protection – DG SANCO) and Mr. Ian Hodgson (Directorate General Environment – DG ENV). From the THE PEP secretariat Ms. Francesca Racioppi, Ms. Sonja Kahlmeier (WHO) and Ms. Brinda Wachs (UNECE) attended. Mr. Francois Decaillet of the WHO Regional Office for Europe welcomed the participants to the Brussels office.
3. Mr. François André presented THE PEP framework, its current priorities and programme of work and outlined preparations for the 3HLM.
4. Representatives of the EC presented current activities related to transport, environment and health, in particular its recent Green Paper: “Towards a new culture for urban mobility”.
5. The EC welcomed the joint meeting and THE PEP as a useful and important framework for the integration of health and environmental concerns into transport policies. Main subject areas identified for potential synergy and collaboration included: efficient, safe and sustainable urban transport, health effects of noise and air pollution, economic valuation of transport-related health effects, road safety and security, and counteracting congestion, climate change and obesity. THE PEP could also serve as useful framework to disseminate the key messages and available tools of the Green Paper to Accession Countries.
6. The following possibilities for contributions were identified:
 - (a) Green Paper consultation process (deadline for contributions 15 March 2008): WHO and UNECE will provide contributions.
 - (b) Sixth session of THE PEP Steering Committee on 28-29 April 2008, in Geneva at WHO headquarters: a formal invitation letter will be sent to the three DGs to encourage participation from all three sectors.

(c) Inclusion of further relevant materials into THE PEP Clearing House (<http://www.thepep.org/CHWebSite>): the DG representatives will be provided with more information on the submission procedure.

(d) Subregional workshops under THE PEP, including for example a workshop on sustainable and healthy urban transport: Participation by the EC would depend on availability and resources of DG representatives.

(e) Further development and dissemination of tools and checklists for health impact assessment of new infrastructure projects which could also be of relevance for the Directorate General Regional Policy (DG REGIO).

(f) CIVITAS conference in Bologna (November 2008): possibilities for a contribution of THE PEP will be explored.

(g) THE PEP 3HLM (tentatively scheduled for 22-23 January 2009, the Netherlands): possibilities for the further involvement of the EC into the preparatory process, as well as for contributions at the HLM will be further explored.

(h) The International Forum on Urban Mobility (July 2009): possibilities for a contribution of THE PEP will be explored.