

Economic Commission for Europe

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

Bureau of the Executive Body

Meeting

15 November 2023

Virtual meeting

Note of the meeting

I. Attendance

Bureau members: Ms. Kimber Scavo (United States of America), Chair; Mr. Eduard Dame (Netherlands), Vice-Chair; Ms. Elizabeth Nichols (United States of America), Vice-Chair; Mr. Noe Megrelishvili (Georgia), Vice-Chair; Mr. Jesper Leth Bak (Denmark), Chair of the Working Group on Effects; Ms. Laurence Rouil (France), Chair of the EMEP Steering Body; Mr. Till Spranger (Germany), Chair of the Working Group on Strategies and Review and Mr. Marek Maasikmets (Estonia), Chair of the Implementation Committee

Observer: Mr. Alex Hurley and Ms. Panagiota Dilara (European Union)

II. Preparations for the forty-third session of the Executive Body

On the preparations of the upcoming session of the Executive Body (Geneva, 11–14 December 2023), the secretariat informed the Bureau about a delay in the submission and translation of the formal document “Financial requirements for the implementation of the Convention” (ECE/EB.AIR/2023/2) available on the website of the session in its advance version since 2 October 2023 and its plans to make a translation available as soon as possible before the meeting. It further informed the Bureau about the status of registrations for the session and pointed to its plan to only list credentialed participants under their respective country in the list of participants. It also informed the Bureau about the number of registrations from NGOs and the secretariat’s role in approving such registrations. The Bureau agreed to the approach taken by the secretariat so far, whereas the secretariat agreed to make a list of NGO registrations available to the Chair. The Bureau was also informed that due to additional energy saving measures at the Palais des Nations, delegates will have to leave the meeting room at 18:30.

The Chair of the EMEP SB summarized the progress made in exploring options 1) to 3) on the reorganization and relocation of the Meteorological Synthesizing Centre-East (MSC-E) activities (ECE/EB.AIR/GE.1/2023/7–ECE/EB.AIR/WG.1/2023/7). To this purpose she presented the results of consultations with the Jožef Stefan Institute (JSI) (located in Slovenia), Ukraine and Georgia. She emphasized that a potential new host institution would have to have the capacities to interpret data, run models, deal with emissions inventories and have the respective high performance computing capacities. She also referred to a planned consultation with the Institute currently hosting MSC-E (located in the Russian Federation). She further informed the Bureau that she had asked the JSI to present a document of possible work items and a necessary budget for 2024 for publication as an informal document on the website of the session. The Bureau took

note of the EMEP SB's recommendation to have the results of the consultation process presented by the Chair of the EMEP SB at the upcoming EB session.

The Bureau also discussed a draft decision on the reorganization and relocation of the MSC-E activities. The Chair asked the Bureau Members for comments on this draft before it is posted as an informal document on the website of the session. The Chair of the EMEP SB pointed to the necessity of emphasizing that data and models paid for under the EMEP Protocol are a public good. The secretariat additionally noted that the EB would also have to look at the costs connected to the possible conclusion of the partnership with the Institute currently hosting MSC-E, in light of the EB decision pausing the funding of the Institute taken in 2022.

The Bureau also noted the need to prepare for a decision on the letter by the Russian Federation of 2 August 2023 indicating a direct payment of its mandatory contributions for 2022 and 2023 to the Institute currently hosting MSC-E.

The secretariat brought a proposal to align the funding under the EMEP Protocol to the Bureau's attention and the Bureau agreed that this option should be further explored.

The Chair of the WGSR informed the Bureau of the plan to structure the discussion on the follow-up to the review of the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended. He informed about the necessity of determining the next steps for the revision process at the upcoming session of the EB, including changes to be made in the 2024-2025 workplan, the timing of meetings, the list of documents and specific tasks for the WGSR and other subsidiary bodies. He and the Chair agreed to work on a more specific proposal for the EB following the upcoming meeting of the WGSR Bureau. The Chair of the WGSR also pointed to the session(s) planned for non-Parties of the amended Gothenburg Protocol which would take place on the margins of the EB session. The session(s) are aiming at involving non-Parties in the process.

The Chair of the Implementation Committee informed the Bureau about his discussions with the Members of the Implementation Committee on the decision on a new mandate for the Implementation Committee. He transmitted that the Implementation Committee Members, including himself, preferred to have the mandate on the agenda for an EB decision in 2024 when operating procedures for the Committee would also be available.

The secretariat informed the Bureau that it had received the assessment by the ad hoc group of legal experts on 3 November 2023, and that the assessment had been circulated to the members of the Rules of Procedure Review Group and made available as an informal document on the website of the session. The secretariat noted that a follow-up process would have to be set up by the EB.

The secretariat informed the Bureau that it had not received any nominations for Vice-Chairs or other nominations so far.

The Chair let the Bureau know that the delegation of the United States of America was planning to inform the Executive Body about the UNEA-6 resolution on air pollution process under the "Other business" agenda item.

III. The secretariat's resources

The secretariat introduced the document "Options for streamlining the secretariat's activities in 2024" that was intended for publication as an informal document on the website of the upcoming EB session. The secretariat further informed the Bureau about the resource needs for the extension of the JPO post beyond October 2024. Resources for a possible extension would have to be raised by mid-2024. The secretariat

additionally expressed its hope of finding a more durable solution in terms of financing post(s) in the secretariat that could be based on assessed contributions.

The Chair asked the Bureau to comment on the document by 20 November 2023 in order to come to a recommendation on one of the options. She expressed support to the idea of setting a minimum contribution for Parties' assessed contributions and invited the Bureau to consider the proposal of introducing a scale of recommended contributions to support intergovernmental work under the Convention.

IV. Improvements on the Convention website

The secretariat briefly pointed to its presentation concerning the display of the EB's decisions on the website made in September and raised the unresolved issue of archiving decisions again. The Bureau agreed that the secretariat could move decisions that are clearly outdated or have been revoked or superseded into a category labelled as "archive". The secretariat assured the Bureau that no decision currently published would be removed fully from the website.

V. Vision for the future of the Convention

The Chair presented her plan that the Bureau could develop and present its thoughts on what the Convention should especially focus on during 2024. She emphasized that the Convention should be part of the upcoming policy discussions at the international level. The Chair of the WGSR suggested a first discussion before UNEA-6.

VI. Date, place and time of the next meetings

The Bureau agreed on an informal in-person Bureau meeting on 11 December 2023 (10:00–12:00, Geneva time).