

Decision 2019/17

Revised mandate for the International Cooperative Programme on Effects of Air Pollution on Natural Vegetation and Crops

Recalling the relevant provisions of articles 7 and 8 of the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution,

Recalling also its decision 1999/2 concerning the structure and organization of work,

Recalling further the terms of reference for the International Cooperative Programme on Effects of Air Pollution on Natural Vegetation and Crops (EB.AIR/WG.1/2000/4, annex V), noted at its eighteenth session (ECE/EB.AIR/71, para. 58 (c)),

Recalling its decision 2002/1 on the financing of core activities, as amended by decision 2018/8,

Acknowledging the achievements of the International Cooperative Programme on Effects of Air Pollution on Natural Vegetation and Crops, including:

(a) The establishment of more than 20 ozone flux-based critical levels for vegetation (including forests) – biologically a more relevant indicator of the risk of ozone impacts on vegetation than concentration-based critical levels – and identifying areas most at risk of ozone impacts;

(b) Provision of evidence of ozone impacts on vegetation, including interactions with nitrogen pollution and climate change, and consequences for ecosystem services and biodiversity, showing that impacts are widespread;

(c) Demonstrating that no clear trends of ozone impacts on vegetation have been observed in the last two decades, hence ozone pollution remains of global concern, with background concentrations rising in Europe, contributing to impacts on vegetation;

(d) Monitoring of heavy metal and nitrogen concentrations in naturally growing mosses since 1990, identifying declines in concentrations in many areas of Europe with hotspots of heavy metal and nitrogen pollution still remaining;

(e) Identifying considerable decline in cadmium and lead concentrations in mosses since 1990 and, to a lesser extent, mercury concentrations, thus providing evidence for the success of heavy metal air pollution abatement policies in Europe, with mercury pollution remaining of global concern.

Recognizing the need to update the Programme's mandate to ensure its consistency with the provisions of the amended Protocols to the Convention, and its strategic priorities, as set out in the following documents:

(a) The revised long-term strategy for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (ECE/EB.AIR/142/Add.2);

(b) The 2016 scientific assessment of the Convention;¹

(c) The policy response to the 2016 scientific assessment of the Convention (ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/2017/3 and Corr.1 and ECE/EB.AIR/2017/4).

Noting with appreciation the hosting of the Programme Centre by the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology at Bangor, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the ongoing leadership of the Task Force by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland,

1. *Adopts* the Programme's revised mandate as contained in the annex to the present decision, which includes the key objectives and functions of the Programme Task Force and

¹ See Rob Maas and Peringe Grennfelt, eds., *Towards Cleaner Air: Scientific Assessment Report 2016* (Oslo, 2016) and United States Environmental Protection Agency and Environment and Climate Change Canada, *Towards Cleaner Air: Scientific Assessment Report 2016 – North America* (2016).

the Programme Centre to be carried out on an ongoing basis, whereas additional activities and specific tasks and associated deliverables to be carried out in a shorter time frame will be included in the biennial workplans for the implementation of the Convention;

2. *Decides that:*

(a) The Programme Centre, in cooperation with the Chair of the Programme Task Force, is responsible for the detailed planning and coordination of the Programme;

(b) The lead country or countries are responsible for leading and coordinating the Task Force's ongoing work and tasks, organizing its meetings, communicating with participating experts and other organizational arrangements, in accordance with the biennial workplan. Chairs of the Task Force are appointed by the lead country or countries to carry out these tasks;

(c) In the event that a lead country needs to discontinue its leadership role, it is encouraged to notify the secretariat, Co-Chairs, and other lead countries as soon as possible, but preferably no later than one year prior to the time it will need to cease its leadership activities. The withdrawing lead country will make every effort to ensure a smooth transition to the next leadership model, by ensuring that all data and any other information required for Task Force operations are provided to the appropriate country or person(s);

(d) The Programme Centre is responsible for coordinating the relevant activities under the Programme, including development of technical projects, provision of deliverables according to the workplan (including annual reports and access to all relevant information and data), participation in the relevant Task Force meetings, organizing technical workshops and training workshops, communicating with national experts, providing direct support to Parties, maintaining an up-to-date web page that includes information on the Programme and other organizational arrangements, in accordance with the biennial workplan;

(e) The Programme Centre is responsible for the production and provision of information and data on air pollution impacts on natural vegetation and crops necessary for the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols by the Parties;

(f) The Programme Centre and the Chair of the Task Force are responsible for carrying out the work assigned to them in the biennial workplans approved by the Executive Body, reporting thereon and keeping other relevant bodies apprised of their work.

Annex

Revised mandate for the International Cooperative Programme on Effects of Air Pollution on Natural Vegetation and Crops

1. The International Cooperative Programme on Effects of Air Pollution on Natural Vegetation and Crops will continue to investigate the impacts of air pollutants on crops and natural vegetation.

2. The Programme Centre and the Chair of the Task Force report on their activities and deliverables to the Working Group on Effects.

3. The functions of the Programme Centre and the Task Force are to:

(a) Plan and conduct technical work to collate and review evidence of:

(i) Air pollution impacts on vegetation from monitoring activities, experiments, surveys and the literature, including impacts in a changing climate, at the local, regional and global scale, and assess spatial patterns and temporal trends;

(ii) Spatial patterns and temporal trends of the deposition of, for example, heavy metals, nitrogen and persistent organic pollutants to vegetation, using naturally growing mosses as biomonitors.

(b) Develop further and apply flux-based ozone critical levels for vegetation; map areas at risk of ozone impacts on vegetation and exceedances of critical levels at the regional and global scale in the current and future climate; update the *Manual on Methodologies and Criteria for Modelling and Mapping Critical Loads and Levels and Air Pollution Effects*,

*Risks and Trends*² and associated background documents with the latest relevant scientific knowledge; collate and review information on impacts of air pollution on food production (including economic assessments), ecosystem services and biodiversity;

(c) Encourage outreach activities and train new partners, in all Parties and other countries (for example, the International Cooperative Programme on Effects of Air Pollution on Natural Vegetation and Crops-Asia network), to apply methodologies described in paragraph 3 (a) and (b) above and liaise with global networks and initiatives inside and outside the Convention to contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals; invite new partners to attend the annual Task Force meeting and specific workshops;

(d) Support Parties in further developing and implementing the methodologies described in paragraph 3 (a) and (b) above, including requirements of the new European Union National Emissions Ceilings Directive;³ organize the annual Task Force meeting and invite Parties to attend, present their work related to the Programme and contribute to discussions and new developments;

(e) Following the transfer of the coordination of the moss survey to monitor deposition of specified air pollutants (see paragraph 3 (a) (ii) above) to the Russian Federation in 2014 to enhance participation of countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, use contacts made within this network to stimulate participation in ozone-related activities; translate relevant documents into Russian to stimulate knowledge transfer and encourage the organization of relevant meetings and workshops in countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia;

(f) Collaborate with: the International Cooperative Programme on Assessment and Monitoring of Air Pollution on Forests on monitoring and modelling ozone impacts on forests and monitoring deposition of relevant air pollutants to mosses; the International Cooperative Programme on Modelling and Mapping of Critical Levels and Loads and Air Pollution Effects, Risks and Trends on further developing critical levels and loads for vegetation; the Meteorological Synthesizing Centre-West on modelling ozone fluxes and nitrogen deposition to vegetation; the Meteorological Synthesizing Centre-East on modelling heavy metal deposition to vegetation; the Task Force on Integrated Assessment Modelling and the Centre for Integrated Assessment Modelling on modelling ozone fluxes in the Greenhouse Gas and Air Pollution Interactions and Synergies model; and the Task Force on Hemispheric Transport of Air Pollution on modelling ozone fluxes to vegetation using Task Force on Hemispheric Transport of Air Pollution scenarios and assess implications for food production and ecosystem services;

(g) Collaborate with: the Tropospheric Ozone Assessment Report – initiated by the International Global Atmospheric Chemistry Project – on producing reports and generate globally easily accessible ozone exposure and dose metrics; and the Climate and Clean Air Coalition to Reduce Short-Lived Climate Pollutants and future United Nations Environment Programme initiatives benefiting from assessment of the risk of ozone impacts on vegetation;

(h) Carry out other tasks assigned to them by the Working Group on Effects and the Executive Body.

² Most recent version available at http://icpmapping.org/Latest_update_Mapping_Manual.

³ Directive (EU) 2016/2284 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 December 2016 on the reduction of national emissions of certain atmospheric pollutants, amending Directive 2003/35/EC and repealing Directive 2001/81/EC, *Official Journal of the European Union*, L 344 (2016), pp. 1–31.