

GOTHENBURG PROTOCOL ENTERS INTO FORCE!



The 1999 Gothenburg Protocol - to prevent acidification, eutrophication and ground-level ozone - enters into force today 17 May 2005. With this, all eight protocols to the Convention are in force for those Parties signed up to them.

The Executive Body adopted the Protocol at a special session held in the city of Gothenburg, Sweden on 30 November 1999. The following day ministers and their representatives lined up to sign the Protocol. A total of thirty-one Parties became Signatories.

The Gothenburg Protocol was the first multi-pollutant, multi-effect protocol to the Convention. It was also the first protocol to include ammonia control measures and the first to seek controls to limit the effects of ozone using critical levels. Even now we recognize this was an ambitious and bold step forward towards tackling air pollution from emissions of sulphur, nitrogen oxides, VOCs and ammonia.

With Portugal's ratification of the Protocol on 16 February this year, the Protocol acquired the

necessary ratifications for entry into force. The 16 Parties to the Protocol on 17 May will be the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the United States and the European Community. On 28 April Slovakia also ratified the Protocol. Entry into force for it will be in July.

The first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol will take place at the twenty-third session of the Executive Body in December this year. The seventeen Parties, plus any other Parties to the Convention that complete their ratification process at least 90 days before the session, will need to make decisions regarding the future review of the Protocol. Under the terms of the Protocol, the first review must start within 12 months of entry into force.

The Parties must review the obligations in the Protocol. This will include those related to the calculated allocation of emission reductions and those regarding the adequacy of the obligations, as well as the progress made to achieve the Protocols objectives. Following such a review, Parties may consider what additional steps might be taken to strengthen emissions controls to protect man and his environment. Since 1999 scientific understanding has advanced in many areas so we are now in a much better position to identify priority measures.



Lars Björkbom (Chair, Working Group on Strategies) Jan Thomson (Chair, Executive Body) Kjell Larsson (Swedish Environment Minister) Lars Nordberg (secretariat) John Beale (United States) talk to the press at Gothenburg

WHO has drawn attention to the major effects of fine particles on human health across Europe. In response to the concern of Parties, the Executive Body established a new Expert Group on Particulate Matter, under the leadership of Germany and the United Kingdom, to consider what might be done to improve the situation. Its first meeting will be held on 23-24 May in Berlin. In addition, a new Task Force on Hemispheric Transport of Air Pollution is looking at the importance of hemispheric movement of pollutants such as fine particles and ozone. Led by the United States and the European Community, the Task Force will meet on 1-3 June in Brussels.

Meanwhile, updated information on critical loads and levels, a new EMEP transport model, new abatement costs information, and improved integrated assessment modelling will give us a new perspective on what Gothenburg set out to do and what has been achieved.

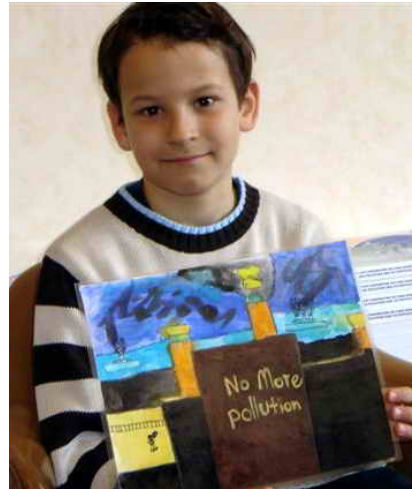
Some of these new data and models have already been explored through the European Commission's Clean Air for Europe programme for the development of the Commission's Thematic Strategy. This will provide an important starting point for the Convention's work.

The Convention and the Parties to the Protocol will also need to consider how the Protocol and any subsequent measures might most effectively be implemented in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. This region, targeted as a priority by both the Convention and UNECE, has encountered obstacles ratifying recent protocols and is an area where air pollution is becoming increasingly important.

Prize winner of 25th anniversary art competition visits Palais des Nations.....

Luca Barbieri, a burgeoning young artist from the International School of Geneva, was given a tour of the Palais des Nations and presented with a prize for his winning picture of the anniversary art competition.

Keith Bull and Brinda Wachs from the secretariat spoke with him at the Palais des Nations with his teacher, Isla Gordon.



Luca and his winning entry

When asked about his thinking in designing his drawing, he explained that he wanted to depict air pollution (thus the greys, blacks and smoke-filled sky) but also to show that air pollution could be prevented (thus the bright colors, and images of screens and filters on factories). Luca, aged 10 from Class 6G of La Châtaigneraie, International School of Geneva, said he completed the drawing over a few weeks during art class, using crayons, and goache, as well as inks and gold pen.



Teacher Isla Gordon and Luca talk with the secretariat

And what did Luca think of his artwork - "I was afraid it was too dark and sloppy, though it started to grow on me. But I NEVER EVER thought I would win first prize!"

Thank you LUCA for your contribution to our celebrations, and...CONGRATULATIONS!!

Executive Body Bureau has CAFE meeting

The Bureau of the Executive Body held one of its regular meetings with the European Commission staff responsible for its Clean Air for Europe (CAFE) programme in Brussels on 12 May. These "High-level Coordinating Group" meetings have been a useful way of looking at problems or potential problems that might arise through the Convention and CAFE work running in parallel.

In the lead up to the review of the Gothenburg Protocol and the revision to the EU's National Emissions Ceilings Directive both sides agreed on the importance of continuing regular discussions. They noted the need to coordinate activities and avoid duplication of effort whilst recognizing that the geographic scope and implementation procedures for each side would be different. Matching timetables could present special difficulties. It would be a challenge, but both sides were keen to find solutions.

The meeting also discussed the preparations for the first meeting of the Task Force on Hemispheric Transport of Air Pollution. It was reported that a good cross-section of experts had registered from Europe, North America and Asia. Co-Chair of the Task Force, André Zuber, drew attention to the new website for the Task Force (www.htap.org) where details of the first meeting could be found. A detailed agenda for the meeting would be available soon.



While the Convention's Parties cover a large part of the Northern hemisphere, it is important to include experts from Asia, Mexico and North Africa to get the full picture.

Introducing the Executive Body Bureau.....

Back to back with the above meeting, the Bureau held one of its own meetings to review the Convention's

work and in particular the plans for the sessions of the Working Group on Effects, EMEP Steering Body and Working Group on Strategies and Review.

A note of the meeting will be made available on the Convention's website www.unece.org/env/eb/bureau.

Membership of the Bureau consists of the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Executive Body. In recent years, the Chairs of the main subsidiary bodies have always been elected to ensure the Bureau is effectively informed of the different areas of work. In addition, Bureau members from Europe and North America ensure a broad geographic perspective to the discussions.



Harald Dovland (Norway) Chairs the Bureau and Executive Body. From the Norwegian ministry, Harald has long experience with EMEP and the Convention. He also sits on the Norwegian delegation for the Climate Change Convention.



Patrick Széll (United Kingdom) Chair of the Implementation Committee, has long experience of the Convention and has been responsible for drafting much of the texts we use today. **Jürgen Schneider** (Austria) is Chair of the EMEP Steering Body. Working at the Federal Environment Agency in Austria he recently spent time in Bonn working for WHO on air pollution effects. **Richard Ballaman** (Switzerland) is Chair of the Working Group on Strategies and Review. He works at the Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape.

Heinz Gregor (Germany) Chair of the Working Group on Effects, works at the Federal Environment Agency in Germany. He has long experience with the Convention and was first Chair of the Task Force on Mapping that prepared the first critical loads maps.



Martin Williams (United Kingdom) from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, is a former Chair of the EMEP Steering Body. He was elected to the Bureau last December. **Matti Vainio** (European Commission) is the Commission's nominated observer to the Bureau. He provides an important link to activities that are going on in Brussels, in particular the Clean Air for Europe programme. **Peggy Farnsworth** (Canada) from Environment Canada, is an elected member of the Bureau. She ensures that the North American dimension is fully covered in the Bureau's deliberations. **Andrzej Jagusiewicz** (Poland) now works for the Polish ministry but spent some years working in the Convention's secretariat in Geneva. He was also elected to the Bureau last December.

Air pollution experts look to implement monitoring strategy

The 6th meeting of the Convention's Task Force on Measurements and Modelling (4-7 April, Zagreb) looked at the Convention's newly adopted strategy to monitor air pollutants. Under EMEP, the monitoring strategy provides guidance for observing and measuring various atmospheric pollutants and sets standards regarding frequency of measurements and spatial distribution. Parties to the Convention are being encouraged to develop consistent monitoring strategies at the national level. The Task Force also considered the measurement and modelling of naturally emitted particles, such as those from wind-blown dust and sea salt. Fine particles, from both natural and man-made sources, will assume increasing importance under the Convention in future. A new Expert

Group on Particulate Matter, led by Germany, will consider health problems associated with these pollutants and what measures might be taken to prevent their release.

Ammonia experts discuss good practices for reducing emissions from agriculture

The sixth meeting of the Expert Group on Ammonia Abatement (13-15 April, Segovia) discussed housing and feeding of cattle, pigs and chickens and manure management techniques to reduce ammonia emissions on farms. The agricultural sector is one of the greatest sources of ammonia in Europe. These emissions when deposited cause ecological effects - eutrophication (the effects of excess nitrogen) and, after oxidation of the ammonia, acidification. Ammonia emissions also contribute to the formation of fine particulates that can cause serious health problems. Parties to the Convention agreed to tackle the problem of ammonia when agreeing to the Gothenburg Protocol. With the entry into force of the Protocol today, Parties are expected to initiate a protocol review when they meet in December. There are likely to be calls for updated information on best practices in ammonia abatement, as well as suggestions for new ceilings for ammonia emissions.

