



Forum for International Cooperation on Air Pollution

FICAP or 'The Forum'

Background



- As part of the 38th session of the Executive Body in 2018, a global event on clean air was held where representatives of countries, organizations and networks from different regions participated.
- Following this event, the Executive Body agreed to establish a forum for collaboration on reducing air pollution and requested the Bureau of the Executive Body to further elaborate this proposal.
- The forum for international Cooperation on Air Pollution was established by Executive Body decision 2019/5.

Purpose

- The purpose is to provide a forum for international exchange of information and mutual learning on both the scientific/technical and policy levels, to help address the threat to human health and ecosystems from air pollution.
- It is intended to be a repository for technical information and a convenor of countries and organizations with the goal of increased international cooperation on addressing air pollution.

Possible activities of the Forum

The informal document number 4, of the Thirty-ninth session of the Executive Body in 2019 outlined the following possible activities:

Information sharing on policy

1. Providing a platform to exchange information and views on addressing air pollution and raise awareness of its health and environmental impacts;
2. Providing an overview of international policy initiatives in the air pollution field and summarize the state of international efforts to address air pollution;
3. Seeking connections with relevant organizations or bodies involved in practical efforts to reduce air pollution;
4. Sharing experiences on regional cooperation, including the UNECE Air Convention's multilateral regional structure and framework as a model for other regions;
5. Promoting tools such as the Batumi Action for Cleaner Air;
6. Promoting an integrated approach for the management of air quality and other environmental issues to achieve multiple benefits and coordinating to that end with relevant organizations as appropriate;
7. Promoting regional cooperation on air pollution in existing or future networks;

Possible activities of the Forum

The informal document number 4, of the Thirty-ninth session of the Executive Body in 2019 outlined the following possible activities:

Information sharing on science

8. Facilitating access to scientific information, for example online databases for best available control technologies;
9. Encouraging sharing information related to international transport and global emissions of air pollution and their impacts on ecosystems and human health;
10. Helping to establish contacts for science cooperation (for example, to share lessons learned with harmonized handbooks, monitoring methods, risk assessment and evaluation of the effectiveness and benefits of air pollution reductions on health and the environment, and targeted “hands-on” training workshops) and possibly adaptation of UNECE Air Convention tools for other geographic scopes or activities;

Possible activities of the Forum

The informal document number 4, of the Thirty-ninth session of the Executive Body in 2019 outlined the following possible activities:

Technical capacity building and information sharing on funding opportunities

11. Reaching out to funding organizations and providing a platform for information sharing on funding opportunities for country participants and other organizations;
12. Providing a platform for information sharing on available capacity-building and training opportunities;
13. Sharing experience and information that could inform the development of action plans for addressing air pollution, including in urban centres;
14. Promoting an evidence-based approach to air quality management, including related to the development of emission inventories and the communication of health and ecosystem impacts to the public.

Recent progress

- Identified countries willing to lead the forum – United Kingdom and Sweden confirmed
- The WGSR has recommended to the Executive Body that the forum be established as a task force reporting to the WGSR. The Working Group invited the lead countries to develop a draft mandate for the task force, taking into consideration, inter alia, the comments received from delegations, and to submit it for consideration by the Executive Body at its forty-first session.
- Addition of the forum to the WGSR 2022-2023 workplan [pending EB decision] – including carrying out activities specified in the mandate, developing a website and holding the first meeting as appropriate and resources permit.
- Reaching out to more globally focussed organizations, NGOs and stakeholders to explore possible synergies in activities and facilitate sharing of information and expertise developed in CLRTAP.

Questions for discussion

1. Are there views on how to best reach out to non-UNECE countries and organisations, and are there specific countries and organisations that should be targeted for participation in the forum?
2. Are there current capacity building activities being carried out by Task Forces that could be promoted through the forum? Would there be any benefit to coordinating this activity through the forum in some way?
3. What science/technical topics would be most important to include in the first meeting of the forum?
4. We are interested in developing a scientific and technical toolkit for the website – a page of links to advice and guidance. Are there views on what this should include to make it accessible to the broadest range of countries and organisations?