

Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Environmental Policy

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Annual programme of work of the Environment subprogramme for 2023 and outline of key components of the programme of work of the Environment subprogramme for 2024

Information paper No.18

22 September 2022

Outline of key components of the programme of work of the Environment subprogramme for 2024

Note by the Secretariat

Introduction

1. This document presents an outline of key components (objective, strategy and deliverables) of the programme of work of the Environment subprogramme (“the subprogramme”) for 2024. These components are based on the subprogramme-related section of the ECE proposed programme budget for 2023, with modified or new elements highlighted in track changes. The Committee on Environmental Policy (“the Committee”) is invited to consider this information and provide recommendations on these components, as necessary. Those modifications and/or member States’ recommendations agreed by the Committee and included in its decisions will be reflected in the proposed programme plan of the subprogramme for 2024. It will be prepared by the secretariat at the end of 2022 and included in the ECE proposed programme budget for 2024.

Outline of key components of the programme of work

I. Objective

2. The objective, to which this subprogramme contributes, is to improve environmental governance and performance for safeguarding the environment and health.

II. Strategy

3. The responsibility for the subprogramme is vested in the Environment Division.
4. To contribute to the objective, the subprogramme will:
 - (a) support the implementation of outcomes of global and regional summits and conferences, and support and promote the implementation by countries of the ECE multilateral environmental agreements, contributing to achieving mainly SDGs 3, 6, 9, 11 to 13, 15 and 17, through the core interlinked functions of international policy dialogue, normative work, capacity-building and the dissemination of good practices and lessons learned in the areas of air quality, water, industrial safety, public participation, impact assessment, environmental monitoring and assessment, environmental performance, education for sustainable development, and mainstreaming of environmental concerns into other dimensions of sustainable development;

- (b) support and promote the implementation by countries of the ECE policy tools that include the ECE Environmental Performance Review Programme, contributing to achieving mainly SDG 6, 11, 12, 13 and 15; the ECE Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Programme, contributing to achieving mainly SDG17; the ECE strategy for education for sustainable development, contributing to achieving SDG 4, 12 and 13; and the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme, contributing to achieving mainly SDG 3, 11, 13 and 17;
- (c) support and promote the sharing of information (e.g., through the Shared Environmental Information System), experiences and good practices in the ECE region;
- (d) continue to promote synergies between ECE multilateral environmental agreements, through joint activities;
- (e) conduct Environmental Performance Reviews, assisting countries in the implementation of the recommendations from those Reviews and monitoring the impact of the recommendations on national policies;
- (f) using a country needs-based approach, support countries, with a focus on those in the Caucasus, Central Asia and Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, in environmental policymaking, monitoring, assessment and management, including by providing an intergovernmental decision-making platform, organizing capacity-building activities and providing advisory services;
- (g) work with interested non-ECE countries, including those wishing to join the multilateral environmental agreements that are open to global accession; and
- (h) support member States by developing policy packages and/or recommendations, such as those addressing emerging issues related to the work of the subprogramme, including ensuring effective access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in the case of a crisis that have been identified as being of concern during the economic recovery phase.

5. The above-mentioned work is expected to result in:

- (a) Member States having improved environmental governance and performance;
- (b) Strengthened integration of environmental concerns into sectoral policies, including during the subsequent post-pandemic economic recovery phase in the ECE member States;
- (c) More effective development and implementation of environmental legislation and policy by member States;
- (d) Improved response to environmental challenges by member States;
- (e) Enhanced cross-border cooperation between countries and effective international and national cooperation; and
- (f) Strengthened implementation of ECE multilateral environmental commitments and increased geographical coverage.

III. Deliverables to be implemented in 2024

6. The below table provides an outline of deliverables that are expected to contribute to the attainment of the objective stated above.

<i>Category and subcategory</i>	<i>2023 planned</i>	<i>2024 planned</i>
A. Facilitation of the intergovernmental process and expert bodies		
Parliamentary documentation (number of documents, per entity)	183	183
1. Committee on Environmental Policy and subsidiary bodies	19	19

<i>Category and subcategory</i>	<i>2023 planned</i>	<i>2024 planned</i>
2. Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes and subsidiary bodies and Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health and subsidiary bodies	24	24
3. Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents and subsidiary bodies	4	4
4. Executive Body for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution and subsidiary bodies	34	34
5. Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context and subsidiary bodies and Meeting of the Parties to the Convention serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context and subsidiary bodies	42	42
6. Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters and subsidiary bodies and Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Register to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters and subsidiary bodies	50	50
7. High-level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment and subsidiary bodies	3	3
8. Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development	7	7
Substantive services for meetings (number of three-hour meetings, per entity/theme)	230	230
9. Committee on Environmental Policy and subsidiary bodies	24	24
10. Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes and subsidiary bodies and Meetings of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health and subsidiary bodies	46	46
11. Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents and subsidiary bodies	17	17
12. Executive Body for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution and subsidiary bodies	31	31
13. Parties to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context and subsidiary bodies and Meetings of the Parties to the Convention serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context and subsidiary bodies	34	34
14. Parties to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters and subsidiary bodies and Meetings of the Parties to the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Register and subsidiary bodies	70	70
15. High-level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment and subsidiary bodies	2	2
16. Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development	6	6
B. Generation and transfer of knowledge		
Seminars, workshops and training events (number of days)	68	68
17. Workshops on environmental issues, including on air quality, water, industrial safety, public participation, environmental assessment, monitoring and performance and education for sustainable development, for government officials and other stakeholders in the ECE region to improve environmental governance and performance	68	68
Publications (number of publications)	13	13
18. Guidance, policy briefs, good practice publications on environmental issues and multilateral environmental agreements administered by the subprogramme	8	8
19. Progress reports and performance reviews on environmental issues	4	4
20. Multilateral environmental agreements administered by the subprogramme	1	1
C. Substantive deliverables		
Consultation, advice and advocacy: advisory services for some 100 government officials and other stakeholders of Member States participating in the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia on water, energy and other environmental issues.		

<i>Category and subcategory</i>	<i>2023 planned</i>	<i>2024 planned</i>
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D. Communication deliverables

Outreach programmes, special events and information materials: Environmental Performance Review (synopsis and highlights) to facilitate broad dissemination and user-friendly access to key messages and recommendations by representatives of at least 6 categories of stakeholders, such as Government, local authorities, academia, business and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as mass media in the reviewed countries; electronic newsletter of the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment submitted to all member States in the region, including representatives of Government, academia and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

External and media relations: press releases on environmental issues, for global and regional access.

Digital platforms and multimedia content: website of the subprogramme.