

# Informal Heads of Delegations meeting

Den Haag, Netherlands, 26-30 September 2022

*See Informal Document no. 7!*

Till Spranger / Anna Engleryd

HoD meeting Co-Chairs

42<sup>nd</sup> session of the Executive Body Dec 12-16, 2022

# A: Gothenburg Protocol Review

- Participants were largely very content with the review process:
  - considered transparent and inclusive
  - Regular update by Gothenburg Protocol Review Group (GPG), numerous and regular occasions for all to comment and contribute, good science-policy interaction
  - Further work concerning barriers and flexibility necessary -> thematic session 13 December
  - No obstacles for adoption of the review report at EB42 identified

## B: The Gothenburg Protocol as an instrument...

- contributed to better emission control through inventories and reporting,
- led to significant emission reductions, although not sufficient to reach the aims of the protocol which would require further work,
- provided an important push for national action,
- increased awareness of the air pollution problem,
- served to develop mechanisms for an effects-oriented approach (monitoring networks, databases), and strengthened the science-policy interface.
- faces different levels of engagement from different parts of the UNECE region, partly due to the complexity of the instrument as well as the lengthy process from negotiation to action.

## C. How to deal with methane in air pollution policy?

- Participants largely agreed to the following main statements, but with different emphasis on follow-up actions:
  1. Methane contribution to transboundary ozone is significant enough to take policy action under the Air Convention.
  2. The current work underway on methane as an ozone precursor by a number of scientific and technical bodies of the Air Convention should continue.
  3. Recommendation to EB42 to task WGSR with further discussing appropriate policy mechanisms by which to achieve methane reductions for the purposes of reducing ozone;  
and to establish a drafting group (*see session E*).

## D. Linkages and synergies with other policy areas (beyond methane)

- How to best integrate e.g. biodiversity, nitrogen, and chemical pollution policies into the scientific and policy work of the Convention; and how to maximize added value of the Convention to those policy frameworks.
- Various links identified (global and regional), inter alia
  - Various activities under UNEP
  - Working Group on Effects (WGE) with respect to biodiversity and climate effects,
  - Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen(TFRN) with respect to the establishment of a global nitrogen management governance.
  - Future role of the Task Force on International Cooperation on Air Pollution (TFICAP)
- Follow-up by EB Bureau recommended

## E. Technical Annexes and Guidance Documents

- Do mandatory emission limit values (ELVs) in Technical Annexes (TAs) help non-Parties in implementing air pollution abatement and ratifying protocols?
- What could a „step-wise approach“ mean?
- Recommend to update both TAs and GDs regularly
- Recommend drafting a policy options paper in 2023 on pros and cons and their links with the emission reduction commitments (*see session C*).
- Central function of Annex II (& I) should remain; include non-technical, structural measures; choose later base and target years should Annex II be updated.

## F. What could follow the review?

- Review has shown that long-term goals are not yet met, a follow-up is needed. Options to be discussed may be e.g.
  - a revision of - or amendment(s) to - the current protocol,
  - a new instrument or voluntary agreement.
- Any possible decision on opening negotiations not @EB42 (would require a formal proposal as well as authority from national governments).
- Possible way forward:
  - adopt the review report at EB 42, take into account the thematic session, and decide a process with a clear timeline;
  - convene a new group under the WGSR and task it with investigating options, prepare discussions at WGSR 61, and present its findings to EB 43 in December 2023