



Economic Commission for Europe**Executive Body for the Convention on Long-range
Transboundary Air Pollution****Forty-first session**

Geneva, 6–8 December 2021

Report of the Executive Body on its forty-first session**I. Introduction**

1. The forty-first session of the Executive Body for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution was held on 6–8 December 2021 in Geneva. Due to the ongoing coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and related restrictions, the session was held in a hybrid mode, allowing for both remote and limited in-person attendance.

A. Attendance

2. The session was attended by representatives of the following Parties to the Convention: Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, European Union, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America. Delegates from Uzbekistan also attended the meeting.

3. Representatives from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Meteorological Organization participated in the session. Also present were representatives from non-governmental organizations and scientific institutions, including: the Meteorological Synthesizing Centre-East; the Air Pollution and Climate Secretariat; the European Action Germany; the European Environmental Bureau; the European Federation of Clean Air and Environmental Protection Associations; the French National Institute for Industrial Environment and Risks; the Institute of Environmental Protection – National Research Institute (Poland); and the Technical Reference Centre for Air Pollution and Climate Change.

B. Organizational matters

4. The meeting was chaired by Ms. Anna Engleryd (Sweden).



5. The Executive Body adopted the agenda for its forty-first session, as set out in document ECE/EB.AIR/147.¹

6. The Executive Body adopted the report on its fortieth session (Geneva, 18 December 2020), as contained in document ECE/EB.AIR/146.

II. Report on credentials

7. Delegations were invited to submit their credentials in advance of the session. The officers of the session reported that 36 Parties to the Convention, which constituted a quorum, had submitted credentials. The Executive Body took note of the report on credentials.

III. Review of implementation of the 2020–2021 workplan

8. The subsidiary bodies and the secretariat reported on the implementation of the 2020–2021 workplan for the implementation of the Convention (ECE/EB.AIR/144/Add.2).

A. Science

9. The Chair of the Steering Body to the Cooperative Programme for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-range Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe (EMEP) and the Chair of the Working Group on Effects reported on the implementation of item 1 (science) of the workplan and, in particular, on the outcomes of the seventh joint session of the EMEP Steering Body and the Working Group on Effects (Geneva, 13–16 September 2021), including the conclusions and recommendations for the Executive Body's consideration.²

10. The Chair of the EMEP Steering Body informed Parties about the status of emission reporting under the Convention and its protocols, in-depth review of emission inventories, and review of adjustment applications under the Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone (the Gothenburg Protocol). She drew the attention of the Executive Body to the need for technical guidance for Parties to the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012, making adjustment applications with respect to their emission reduction commitments. The Chair of the EMEP Steering Body also informed the Executive Body of the road map the EMEP Steering Body had agreed on with regard to accounting for the condensable part in particulate matter. She noted that the implementation of that road map would be facilitated by an ad hoc group comprising experts from the EMEP centres and national experts. The Chair of the EMEP Steering Body gave an overview of information provided by the EMEP task forces and centres for the review of the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended.

11. A representative of the European Union noted its particular interest in complete and updated guidance on inventory adjustments of emission reduction commitments under the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended, for the transition from ceilings to percentage reduction commitments. She noted that the ad hoc group of experts on condensables had made less progress than expected and encouraged the ad hoc group to accelerate its work, notably with a view to the Gothenburg Protocol review and its follow-up, with the support of, and with due consideration of input from, the Parties.

12. The Chair of the Working Group on Effects gave an overview of the main outputs of the work of the international cooperative programmes and the Task Force on Health, as well as their scientific findings for the review of the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended. Among the key points of those findings, she noted a significant decrease in corrosion, the lack of a decreasing trend in soiling, the risk of acidification of freshwater ecosystems, the continued

¹ All documentation for the session is available at <https://unece.org/environmental-policy/events/executive-body-forty-first-session>.

² ECE/EB.AIR/GE.1/2021/2–ECE/EB.AIR/WG.1/2021/2, advance version available at <https://unece.org/environmental-policy/events/seventh-joint-session-emeep-steering-body-and-working-group-effects>.

threat posed by eutrophication for terrestrial ecosystems, and expected yield losses throughout the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) region caused by ozone. She also noted that the results of research had confirmed that emission abatement actions had produced the intended effects on exceedances of critical loads for acidification and eutrophication and ecosystem impacts. The Chair of the Working Group on Effects drew attention to the recommendation of the Working Group on Effects to amend decision 2002/1 on the financing of core activities³ to reflect the change in the institution hosting the Programme Centre of the International Cooperative Programme on Integrated Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects on Ecosystems.

13. The Executive Body:

(a) Took note of the report of the seventh joint session of the EMEP Steering Body and the Working Group on Effects;

(b) Requested the EMEP Steering Body to prepare a formal update of the Technical Guidance for Parties Making Adjustment Applications and for the Expert Review of Adjustment Applications (ECE/EB.AIR/130) during 2022 and to present the results to the Executive Body at its forty-second session (Geneva, 12–16 December 2022, tentatively);

(c) Welcomed the possibility of an advance version of the updated technical guidance to be made available for Parties as support for preparation of inventory adjustment applications in 2022;

(d) Welcomed the information that the ad hoc group on condensables had been convened and encouraged the group to accelerate its work.

B. Policy

14. The Chair of the Working Group on Strategies and Review reported on the implementation of workplan item 2 (policy) and the outcomes of the fifty-ninth session of the Working Group (Geneva, 18–21 May 2021). She highlighted the preparation and discussion of draft guidance documents and the ammonia assessment report, information-sharing by Parties on good practices to strengthen the implementation of air pollution-related policies, strategies and measures, elaboration of the policy part of the draft 2022–2023 workplan, as well as discussions by the Working Group on condensables, hemispheric transport, broader geographical cooperation, and amendments to the rules of procedure for sessions of the Executive Body.

15. The secretariat informed the Executive Body of the progress in acceptance of amendments to and ratification of the key protocols to the Convention. It noted the entry into force of the amendment to the text of and annexes other than III and VII to the Protocol on Heavy Metals (decision 2012/5) on 8 February 2022, and the amendment to the text of and annexes I, II, III, IV, VI and VIII to the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants (decision 2009/1) on 20 January 2022. A representative of Switzerland stressed the importance of wide communication with respect to the entry into force of those amendments and publicity for both Protocols.

16. The representative of the European Union presented its proposal for establishing a methodology for making technical corrections to the emission baseline and emission reduction commitments of the European Union set out in tables 2–6 of annex II to the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012, to account for changes in its membership.

17. The Executive Body:

(a) Took note of the report of the Working Group on Strategies and Review on its fifty-ninth session (ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/126);

(b) Adopted decision 2021/1 on the adoption of the Guidance document on reduction of emissions from agricultural residue burning (see annex below);

³ All Executive Body decisions referred to in the present document are available at <https://unece.org/decisions>.

(c) Adopted decision 2021/2 on the adoption of the guidance document entitled “Prioritizing reductions of particulate matter from sources that are also significant sources of black carbon – analysis and guidance” (see annex below);

(d) Welcomed the assessment report on ammonia (ECE/EB.AIR/2021/7 and informal document No.1) and took note of further need for research, as specified in its annex I;

(e) Took note of the information on the status of ratification of the Protocol on Heavy Metals, the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants and the Gothenburg Protocol and acceptance of amendments to them, and welcomed the upcoming entry into force of the amendments to the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants and the Protocol on Heavy Metals;

(f) Encouraged Parties to the Protocol on Heavy Metals, the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants and the Gothenburg Protocol who had not yet accepted the amendments to do so as soon as possible;

(g) Adopted decision 2021/3 on a methodology for making technical corrections to the emission baseline and emission reduction commitments of the European Union set out in tables 2–6 of annex II to the Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone, as amended in 2012, to account for changes in the membership of the European Union (see annex below).

C. Compliance

18. The Chair of the Implementation Committee reported on the implementation of workplan item 3 (compliance), presenting the outcomes of the Committee’s forty-sixth and forty-seventh sessions (Geneva (online), 5 and 6 May 2021, and 14–16 September 2021, respectively), as contained in the Committee’s twenty-fourth report to the Executive Body (ECE/EB.AIR/2021/3). He provided an overview of cases of reviewed compliance by Parties with their emissions reduction and reporting obligations. He noted that five cases of reviewed compliance with emissions reduction obligations considered by the Committee in 2021 had been closed, and six cases would continue to be reviewed in the period 2022–2023.

19. The Executive Body took note of the report of the Implementation Committee and thanked the Committee for its work.

D. Capacity-building to promote ratification and implementation in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia

20. The Chair of the Coordinating Group on the promotion of actions towards implementation of the Convention in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (Coordinating Group) informed Parties of its activities, in particular the meeting of the Coordinating Group (online, 26–27 April 2021) co-organized by the Task Force on Techno-economic Issues and the secretariat, and the outcomes of discussions held at that meeting. The secretariat informed the Executive Body of the capacity-building and awareness-raising activities it had organized in 2021 in Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and the Republic of Moldova to enhance skills of national experts in reporting national emission data, support to Kazakhstan in developing its national action plan for ratification and implementation of the key protocols, and development of an online educational tool on the Convention.

21. Representatives of Georgia and Kazakhstan thanked the secretariat and Parties providing contributions for continued support.

22. The Executive Body:

(a) Took note of the report of the Chair of the Coordinating Group;

(b) Also took note of the report of the secretariat on the implementation of capacity-building and awareness-raising activities;

(c) Expressed its appreciation to Parties that had provided contributions to support capacity-building and awareness-raising activities;

(d) Requested such Parties to continue to do so and invited other Parties to also support financially the capacity-building and awareness-raising activities managed by the secretariat.

E. Communication and outreach

23. The secretariat presented information on the implementation of communication and outreach activities, as included in informal document No. 6. It noted that the implementation of those activities would have not been possible without support by Parties providing their contributions. The secretariat thanked Parties that had provided inputs to *Regulating Air Quality: The first global assessment of air pollution legislation*⁴ and the Global Air Quality Policy update report.

24. The representative of Switzerland, referring to the recommendation by the Working Group on Strategies and Review at its fifty-ninth session (Geneva, 18–21 May 2021) concerning the Batumi Action for Cleaner Air initiative,⁵ suggested exploring the two following possible avenues in terms of continuing to use the initiative beyond the Ninth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference (Nicosia, 5–7 October 2022): keeping the Batumi Action initiative open for ECE member States and Parties to the Convention not yet Parties to its Protocols as a toolbox for making commitments in relation to air quality improvement; or, launching an international version of the Batumi Action initiative under the auspices of the Task Force for International Cooperation on Air Pollution, allowing for cooperation with countries outside the ECE region without specific reference to the Protocols. A representative of the European Union supported the proposal to use the Batumi Action initiative as a toolbox within the forum for international cooperation on air pollution and as a framework for dialogues with other regions.

25. The Co-Chair of the Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen reported on the work of the task team developing terms of reference for the Inter-convention Nitrogen Coordination Mechanism. A report by that team proposing the way forward for cooperation between the Convention and other multilateral environmental agreements on nitrogen would be available the following year. He welcomed the involvement of the Chair of the Working Group on Strategies and Review and the Chair of the Executive Body in the work of the task team.

26. The Executive Body:

(a) Took note of the information by the secretariat;

(b) Invited Parties to share views and proposals regarding cooperation with UNEP and to send that information to the secretariat;

(c) Requested the Task Force for International Cooperation on Air Pollution to consider the possibility of using the Batumi Action initiative as an instrument for countries outside the ECE region and to adapt it as necessary.

IV. Review of sufficiency and effectiveness of the Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone

27. In accordance with decision 2020/2 on the plan for undertaking the review of the Protocol to the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone, as amended in 2012, pursuant to its article 10, the Chair of the Working Group on Strategies and Review informed the Executive Body about the progress in the review of the Gothenburg Protocol as amended, including the outcomes of the discussion at the fifty-ninth session of the Working Group and the inputs provided by other subsidiary bodies. The Chair of the Gothenburg Protocol review group,

⁴ United Nations Environment Programme (Nairobi, 2021).

⁵ ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/126, para. 36.

convened by the Chair of the Working Group, provided information on the draft report content, the timeline for submitting additional inputs and the list of documents accompanying the main report.

28. The representative of the European Union made general comments related to future steps, noting that more specific comments on the report itself had been included in an informal document for the session. She underscored the interest of the European Union in maximizing opportunities for Parties to have both formal and informal fact-finding and information exchange to ensure quality outputs of the review. Representatives of Canada and the United States of America noted that they would send their specific comments on the draft report. The representative of Canada also noted the submission of information from Canada and the United States of America for a respective chapter in time for inclusion in the second draft of the report. A dedicated technical report on North America would be prepared in 2022. She suggested that preliminary findings be included in the second draft based on available scientific information.

29. The Executive Body:

(a) Took note of the reports of the Chair of the Working Group on Strategies and Review and the Chair of the Gothenburg Protocol review group;

(b) Welcomed with appreciation the draft report on the review of the Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone, as amended in 2012 (ECE/EB.AIR/2021/4), noted the excellent progress on the review by the subsidiary bodies, and agreed that work should continue in accordance with decision 2020/2, with the aim of finalizing the review and submitting its conclusions to the forty-second session of the Executive Body (Geneva, 12–16 December 2022) for consideration of including of next steps;

(c) Invited Parties to provide detailed comments on the draft report to the secretariat by 10 December 2021;

(d) Requested that the Gothenburg Protocol review group revise the draft report based on those and other inputs and submit it for consideration by the Working Group on Strategies and Review at its sixtieth session (Geneva, 11–14 April 2022);

(e) Endorsed the request of the Working Group on Strategies and Review at its fifty-ninth session for the Gothenburg Protocol review group, in cooperation with the Centre for Integrated Assessment Modelling, to prepare an informal document on synergies with other policy areas, in particular air-climate synergies, for consideration at its sixtieth session, and to inform consideration of methane in a future instrument, and requested that the scope of the pollutants covered in the informal document include methane, black carbon and nitrogen and its compounds;⁶

(f) Took note that the Working Group on Strategies and Review had agreed at its fifty-ninth session that an official document on flexibilities and barriers to ratification and implementation should be developed and submitted for consideration at its sixtieth session;⁷

(g) Highlighted the importance of holding a thematic session on flexibilities and barriers to ratification and implementation in 2022, and that said session should ideally be in-person;

(h) Underscored the value of having a meeting of heads of delegation to the Working Group on Strategies and Review in 2022, and invited Parties to consider options for hosting such a meeting, and possibilities for co-locating it with other meetings;

(i) Encouraged Parties not yet Parties to the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended, that had received a request to complete the shortened questionnaire on flexibilities and barriers to ratification and implementation of the Protocol to do so, and to send it to the secretariat by 10 January 2022.

⁶ ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/126, para. 25.

⁷ *ibid.*, para. 23.

V. Financial requirements for the implementation of the Convention

30. The secretariat presented in detail the financial requirements for the implementation of the Convention, as contained in document ECE/EB.AIR/2021/1. The representative of the European Union expressed regret about missing cash contributions and trust fund payments, stressing the need to pay those contributions in full and without further delay. She agreed with the need to strengthen the financing of scientific activities, notably the core activities other than those covered by the Protocol on Long-term Financing of the Cooperative Programme for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-range Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe (EMEP Protocol).

31. With respect to the EMEP Protocol, the Executive Body:

(a) Decided on the detailed use of resources in 2021, as set out in table 2 of document ECE/EB.AIR/2021/1;

(b) Agreed on the schedule of mandatory contributions from Parties for 2022, as set out in table 3 of document ECE/EB.AIR/2021/1;

(c) Supported the Steering Body's call on the Parties to the EMEP Protocol to consider making additional voluntary contributions (in kind or in cash through the trust fund) to ensure that the work in 2022 could be accomplished as foreseen in the 2022–2023 workplan for the implementation of the Convention;

(d) Requested the Steering Body, with the assistance of its Bureau, to present the details of the 2023 budget for approval by the Executive Body at its forty-second session;

(e) Urged Parties that had not yet done so to pay their 2021 contributions in cash to the trust fund and, in 2022, to pay their contributions so that they reached the trust fund in the first half of the year;

(f) Urged Parties in arrears to pay them in full to the trust fund;

(g) Requested the secretariat to present a revised annex to the EMEP Protocol and a revised scale of mandatory contributions for 2023, based on the most recent United Nations scale of assessments, for consideration at the forty-second session in 2022.

32. With respect to the core activities not covered by the EMEP Protocol, the Executive Body:

(a) Took note of the contributions made to the trust fund for effects-oriented activities for 2021, and welcomed the payments made, but also expressed disappointment at the lack of response by many Parties;

(b) Urged all Parties that had not yet done so to provide the recommended contributions to the trust fund for financing core activities without delay;

(c) Decided that the essential international coordination costs for financing the core activities of the Convention and its Protocols, other than those covered by the EMEP Protocol, would be \$2,358,700 in 2022, and would provisionally be \$2,358,700 in 2023 and \$2,358,700 in 2024;

(d) Agreed on the recommended scale of contributions from Parties for 2022, as set out in table 11 of document ECE/EB.AIR/2021/1;

(e) Requested the secretariat to inform Parties of the recommended contributions made to the trust fund to meet the 2022 budget, inviting them to make those contributions as agreed in revised decision 2002/1;

(f) Encouraged Parties to make the recommended contributions to the trust fund before 30 November of each year;

(g) Noted with appreciation the essential support provided to the Convention and its bodies by lead countries, countries hosting centres and those organizing meetings, as well as countries that funded activities of their national focal centres/points and the active participation of national experts;

(h) Adopted an amendment to decision 2002/1 on the financing of core activities (see annex below) to reflect the change in the institution hosting the Programme Centre of the International Cooperative Programme on Integrated Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects on Ecosystems;

(i) Invited the secretariat to provide information on the amount of contributions made to the trust fund for effects-oriented activities as of 30 November 2022 at the forty-second session of the Executive Body, and to use the amount as a basis to co-fund the effects-oriented activities in 2023;

(j) Decided that, in the event that the amount of contributions was lower than the agreed costs of \$2,358,700, unearmarked contributions should be divided equally among the centres;

(k) Requested the secretariat to present a revised recommended scale of contributions for 2022, based on the most recent United Nations scale of assessments, for consideration at its forty-second session in 2022.

33. With respect to the promotion and implementation of the Convention, the Executive Body:

(a) Reiterated its support for that element of the work programme, the successful enlarged implementation of the Convention in countries in transition of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia being crucial for the future of the Convention;

(b) Invited all Parties, in particular those that led task forces and expert groups, to promote activities such as special workshops in countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, and to collaborate with the secretariat in developing and carrying out such projects;

(c) Approved the proposed 2022–2023 budget of \$1,860,000 for promotion and implementation of the Convention;

(d) Welcomed the contributions to the trust fund and thanked those countries that had contributed.

34. The secretariat presented the financing of the Air Convention and the resources available for its long-term functioning and the implementation of its biannual workplans. It drew attention to the insufficient secretariat resources to ensure essential secretariat functions. It stressed the need for Convention Parties to establish a stable and predictable funding mechanism for core secretariat functions. The representative of the European Union emphasized the high level of support by Parties, for example in hosting of centres/task forces and providing national experts to perform Convention work. She agreed on the need to strengthen the financing of the scientific activities notably by ensuring full contributions in line with the agreed annual budget. She further expressed worries about the vulnerability of relying to a high extent on the United Nations regular budget and the stretched secretariat resources. She noted the need for more details on resource requirements and on the expected impact of a decreasing budget during the coming years, including a transparent explanation of the current amount of secretariat work per task.

35. The representatives of Canada, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America welcomed the points raised by the secretariat and expressed their readiness for further discussions. The representative of Switzerland noted the considerable progress in the work under the Convention and the growing demand for support by the secretariat. He welcomed the idea of establishing a stable financing mechanism to ensure proper functioning of the secretariat and that all Parties should contribute on the basis of the United Nations scale of assessment. The representatives of Canada and the United States of America noted the need for a clearer understanding of the secretariat activities that were precariously supported and for prioritizing solutions for closing resources gaps with respect to the organization of additional sessions of the Working Group on Strategies and Review.

36. The Chief of the Transboundary Cooperation Section of the ECE Environment Division stressed the link between the organization of an additional session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review and the issue of financing of the secretariat.

37. With respect to secretariat support, the Executive Body:

(a) Took note of the information presented by the secretariat;

(b) Requested the Executive Body Bureau:

(i) In cooperation with the secretariat, to assess the financial situation of the Convention in further detail, using as a basis the information presented at the current session, giving initial consideration to an assessment of the financial requirements for holding an additional meeting of the Working Group on Strategies and Review in 2023;

(ii) To present its draft findings to the Working Group on Strategies and Review at its sixtieth session.

(c) Requested the Working Group on Strategies and Review to consider the findings and to recommend options for the organization of its second meeting in 2023, for consideration by the Executive Body at its forty-second session;

(d) Requested the Executive Body Bureau to present its assessment of the financial situation of the Convention, in particular on the funding of the secretariat on a stable basis, for discussion at the forty-second session of the Executive Body.

VI. Forum for international cooperation on air pollution

38. A representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland presented the draft mandate of the Task Force for International Cooperation on Air Pollution and its preliminary plan for activities in 2022–2023.

39. The representative of Canada provided comments on the draft mandate of the Task Force. Representatives of the European Union and Norway expressed their willingness to contribute to the work of the forum for international cooperation on air pollution and welcomed the presented outline of work. A representative of the United States of America welcomed the establishment of the forum as a task force and expressed support for the forum's work in promoting collaboration to prevent and reduce air pollution and in facilitating dialogue and exchange of information between Parties and countries outside the ECE region.

40. The Executive Body:

(a) Welcomed the willingness of Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to lead the work of the forum;

(b) Adopted decision 2021/5 on the mandate of the Task Force for International Cooperation on Air Pollution (see annex below).

VII. Draft 2022–2023 workplan for the implementation of the Convention

41. A representative of Turkey requested that Turkey be referred to by name in the introductory paragraph of part IV of the 2022–2023 workplan for the implementation of the Convention on capacity-building and awareness-raising to promote ratification and implementation, in line with the current workplan.

42. The Executive Body adopted the 2022–2023 workplan for the implementation of the Convention, including the list of meetings of the Executive Body, its subsidiary bodies, their Bureaux and the Implementation Committee, and the list of official documents for the sessions of the Executive Body and its subsidiary bodies in 2022–2023 (see

ECE/EB.AIR/148/Add.1). The Executive Body noted the potential need to revisit the workplan in 2022 in accordance with availability of resources.

VIII. Review of rules of procedure for the Executive Body

43. The representative of Canada presented a proposal for the process of review of the rules of procedure for sessions of the Executive Body, as contained in the respective informal document of the session. The representatives of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America supported the proposal to establish a dedicated ad hoc group and expressed their readiness to put forward their candidates. The representative of the European Union noted that the outcome of the review should not be pre-empted, and that any changes proposed by the group should be well justified and assessed by the group of legal experts and a first step should be to assess whether any section was, in fact, not fit for purpose or was in need of clarification. She asked for the time required by the European Union for internal coordination to be taken into account when deciding on the timeline of the review. The representative of Switzerland suggested that due consideration be given to devoting time of the Working Group on Strategies and Review at its sixtieth session to the issue in view of other priorities. The representative of Canada stressed the importance of using the momentum gained and not postponing the review until 2023.

44. The Executive Body adopted decision 2021/6 on the review of the rules of procedure for the sessions of the Executive Body for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution as adopted by decision 2010/19 and amended by decision 2013/1 (see annex below).

IX. Election of officers

45. The Executive Body re-elected Ms. Engleryd as its Chair for a fourth term. It elected Mr. Noe Megrelshvili (Georgia) and Mr. Eduard Dame (Netherlands) and re-elected Ms. Elizabeth Nichols (United States of America) for a third term, as Vice-Chairs. It elected Mr. Till Spranger (Germany) as Chair of the Working Group on Strategies and Review.

X. Other business

46. The representative of the European Union proposed that the Executive Body consider the commonly accepted good practice of a conflict of interest declaration. She suggested that a Executive Body recommendation on that matter would concern the Executive Body Chair and Vice-Chairs, the Chair of the Working Group on Strategies and Review and the Implementation Committee Chair and members, who all answered to the Executive Body; and that the Working Group on Strategies and Review, the EMEP Steering Body and the Working Group on Effects might wish to implement the same good practice in connection to their elected Chairs and Vice-Chairs. The Director of the ECE Environment Division supported the idea of establishing such a practice and offered support from the secretariat in developing a proposal either for a stand-alone practice or for respective provisions in the rules of procedure.

47. The Executive Body:

(a) Requested its Bureau, in consultation with the secretariat and the ad hoc group of legal experts as necessary, to develop a proposal for establishing the practice of a conflict of interest declaration by officials elected by the Executive Body and to present it to the Executive Body at its forty-second session;

(b) Invited Parties to designate legal experts to the ad hoc group by 14 January 2022.

XI. Adoption of the draft report on the forty-first session

48. The Executive Body reviewed and adopted the draft report containing decisions taken during the current session. It entrusted the secretariat with finalizing the report of its forty-first session.

Annex

Decision 2021/1

Adoption of the Guidance document on reduction of emissions from agricultural residue burning

The Executive Body,

Recalling item 2.2.2 of the 2020–2021 workplan for the implementation of the Convention (ECE/EB.AIR/144/Add.2),

Recognizing the importance of reducing emissions of air pollutants, including those that are also short-lived climate pollutants, from agricultural residue burning to mitigate their adverse effect on human health, environment and economy,

Decides to adopt the Guidance document on reduction of emissions from agricultural residue burning contained in document ECE/EB.AIR/2021/5.

Decision 2021/2

Adoption of the guidance document entitled “Prioritizing reductions of particulate matter from sources that are also significant sources of black carbon – analysis and guidance”

The Executive Body,

Recalling the Long-term strategy for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution for 2020–2030 and beyond (ECE/EB.AIR/142/Add.2, decision 2018/5),

Recalling also item 2.2.1 of the 2020–2021 workplan for the implementation of the Convention (ECE/EB.AIR/144/Add.2),

Emphasizing the importance of reducing emissions of black carbon, a short-lived climate forcer, to help mitigation of near-term climate change, as well as to provide benefits for human health and the environment,

Decides to adopt the guidance document entitled “Prioritizing reductions of particulate matter from sources that are also significant sources of black carbon – analysis and guidance” contained in document ECE/EB.AIR/2021/6.

Decision 2021/3

Methodology for technical corrections to the emission baseline and emission reduction commitments of the European Union set out in tables 2–6 of annex II to the Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone, as amended in 2012, to account for changes in the membership of the European Union

The Executive Body,

Considering that changes in the membership of the European Union should be reflected in its emission baseline and its emission reduction commitments per pollutant set out in tables

2–6 of annex II to the Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone (the Gothenburg Protocol), as amended in 2012,

Noting that a methodology to update the emission baseline and the emission reduction commitments per pollutant, based exclusively on a mathematical calculation using only information that is already set out in tables 2–6 of annex II to the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012, needs to be established to account for changes in the membership of the European Union,

Recalling the invitation by the Parties to the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution at the thirty-sixth session of the Executive Body (Geneva, 15 and 16 December 2016) to the European Union to consider ways forward regarding possible procedures by which the ceilings of the Gothenburg Protocol could be adjusted to reflect European Union membership,¹ noting that the considerations regarding the emission ceilings of the European Union also apply to the emission reduction commitments of the European Union,

Welcoming the entry into force of the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012, on 7 October 2019,

1. *Decides*, without prejudice to article 13 (1) of the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012, to establish a methodology for updating the emission baselines and emission reduction commitments for 2020 and beyond per pollutant, expressed in reduction percentage from 2005 levels, both set out for the European Union in tables 2–6 of annex II to the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012, in the event of changes in the membership of the European Union, as follows:

(a) The European Union emission baseline per pollutant shall be the sum of the emission baselines per pollutant for the European Union member States, taking into account any accession to or withdrawal from the European Union;

(b) The European Union emission reduction commitments per pollutant in tables 2–6 of annex II to the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012, shall be calculated by:

(i) Applying to the 2005 emission levels of each European Union member State the reduction commitments for 2020 of that European Union member State, resulting in the reductions to be achieved, in kilotons;

(ii) Adding together the reductions to be achieved for all European Union member States in kilotons as calculated under subparagraph (i) above;

(iii) Calculating the reduction percentage for the European Union by dividing the sum of the reductions to be achieved as calculated under subparagraph (ii) above by the sum of the 2005 emission baselines of each European Union member State, in kilotons, and multiplying the result by 100.

2. *Also decides* that the European Union shall communicate the emission baselines for 2005 and the updated emission reduction commitments per pollutant, updated to account for changes in the membership of the European Union based on the methodology as set out in paragraph 1 above, in writing to the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, who shall further communicate the updated figures, including the corresponding calculations, to all Parties to the Convention for information.

Decision 2021/4

Amendment to decision 2002/1 on the financing of core activities

The Executive Body,

¹ ECE/EB.AIR/137, para. 37.

Recalling its decision 2002/1² on the financing of core activities, paragraph 1 (c) and appendix I, as amended by decisions 2018/8 and 2019/22,

Recalling also its decision 2019/18 on the Revised mandate for the International Cooperative Programme on Integrated Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects on Ecosystems,

Expressing its gratitude to Finland for having hosted the Programme Centre for the International Cooperative Programme on Integrated Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects on Ecosystems at the Finnish Environment Institute since 1988, when planning of the Integrated Monitoring database began,

Welcoming the offer of Sweden to host the Programme Centre as of 2022,

Decides to amend its decision 2002/1, appendix I, as follows:

After “Programme Centre for the International Cooperative Programme on Integrated Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects on Ecosystems”, the words “at the Finnish Environment Institute, Helsinki, Finland” are replaced by “at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Uppsala, Sweden”.

Decision 2021/5

Mandate of the Task Force for International Cooperation on Air Pollution

The Executive Body,

Recognizing the importance of cooperation beyond the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) region,

Recalling the Long-term strategy for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution for 2020–2030 and beyond (decision 2018/5, annex),³

Recalling also its decision 2019/5 on the establishment of the forum for international cooperation on air pollution,

1. *Decides* to establish a Task Force for International Cooperation on Air Pollution;
2. *Adopts* the mandate of the Task Force as contained in the annex to the present decision, which includes the key objectives and functions of the Task Force to be carried out on an ongoing basis, whereas additional activities and specific tasks that are to be carried out in a shorter time frame will be included in the biennial workplans for the implementation of the Convention;
3. *Decides* that:
 - (a) The lead country or countries is/are responsible for leading and coordinating the ongoing work and tasks of the Task Force, for organizing its meetings, for communicating with participating experts, for maintaining an up-to-date web page that includes information on the activities, work, meetings and participants of the Task Force, and for 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 subject to availability of resources;
 - (b) The Task Force is responsible for carrying out the work assigned to it in the biennial workplans approved by the Executive Body, and for reporting thereon, as well as for keeping other relevant bodies apprised of its work;

² All Executive Body decisions referred to in the present decision are available at <https://unece.org/decisions>.

³ All Executive Body decisions referred to in the present decision are available at <https://unece.org/decisions>.

(c) The Task Force will be comprised of experts from the Parties and other interested countries and international organizations;

(d) Meetings will be open to representatives of intergovernmental or accredited non-governmental organizations, researchers, industry associations and other relevant organizations;

(e) 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. In that event, the withdrawing lead country will make every effort to ensure a smooth transition to the next leadership group, by ensuring that all information required for the operations of the Task Force is provided to the appropriate country or person(s).

4. *Welcomes* the offer of Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to lead the Task Force;⁴

5. *Invites* Parties, centres and task forces, as well as interested States and organizations working in the field of air quality, to engage actively with the Task Force;

6. *Requests* Parties, centres and task forces, and invites interested States and organizations outside the ECE region, to nominate focal points to participate in the activities of the Task Force;

7. *Invites* Parties and other participants to make voluntary in-kind or cash contributions to support the work of the Task Force.

Annex

Mandate of the Task Force for International Cooperation on Air Pollution

1. The Task Force for International Cooperation on Air Pollution will promote international collaboration towards preventing and reducing air pollution to improve air quality globally. It will be a forum for the international exchange of information and mutual learning on both the scientific/technical and policy levels. It is intended to be a repository for technical information and a convener of countries and organizations, with the goal of increasing international cooperation on addressing air pollution.

2. The Task Force will report on the progress in its work to the Working Group on Strategies and Review and, as needed, to the Executive Body.

3. The functions of the Task Force are to:

(a) Act as an international platform to facilitate mutual learning and collaboration on air pollution;

(b) Foster emissions reductions of air pollutants through exchange of information on best practices and policy approaches;

(c) Facilitate the sharing of information on funding opportunities and technical capacity-building;

(d) Promote an evidence-based approach to air quality management;

(e) Work towards raising global public awareness of the health and environmental impacts of air pollution;

(f) Organize international forum events to foster information-sharing and stimulate the engagement of non-Parties to the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution;

⁴ ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/126, para. 38. Available at <https://unece.org/environmental-policy/events/working-group-strategies-and-review-fifty-ninth-session>.

- (g) Deliver a web page and communications package to raise awareness of the Task Force and its work;⁵
- (h) Conduct the work identified above through coordination, cooperation and collaboration with:
 - (i) Other subsidiary bodies under the Convention;
 - (ii) Related international organizations and scientific efforts, including, but not limited to, the United Nations Environment Programme, the World Meteorological Organization, the World Health Organization and the Climate and Clean Air Coalition to Reduce Short-lived Climate Pollutants;
 - (iii) Carry out other tasks assigned to it by the Working Group on Strategies and Review and the Executive Body.

Decision 2021/6

Review of the rules of procedure for the sessions of the Executive Body for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution as adopted by decision 2010/19 and amended by decision 2013/1

The Executive Body,

Recalling that the rules of procedure for the Convention have now been in place for more than 10 years and also noting that the activities of the Convention have evolved over this time,

Noting the Convention's ambitious agenda to undertake considerable work to drive concrete improvements in air quality, as reflected in the Long-Term Strategy for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution for 2020–2030 and beyond (decision 2018/5, annex),⁶

Acknowledging the priority of the ongoing work of the review of the Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone,

Noting the challenges that the Convention has faced during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, including regarding the organization of hybrid meetings and insufficient meeting time,

1. *Decides* to undertake a comprehensive review of the rules of procedure for the Convention;
2. *Also decides* that the review will be undertaken by an ad hoc group of experts, including notably with experience in the Convention or other multilateral environmental agreements, convened by the Chair of the Working Group on Strategies and Review, with the aim of first assessing the need for potential revisions and, as appropriate, providing recommendations on further steps;
3. *Invites* Parties to designate participants in the ad hoc group and to provide the names and contact information of nominated experts to the secretariat by 14 January 2022;
4. *Encourages* interested Parties to submit views on potential review considerations or needs for revisions to the rules of procedure by a deadline to be set by the ad hoc group;
5. *Requests* that the ad hoc group of experts assess the views already put forward by Parties, as well as any additional views received, and that it also take into consideration the current rules of procedure, including in the context of the continued effective smooth

⁵ Subject to availability of resources.

⁶ All Executive Body decisions referred to in the present decision are available at <https://unece.org/decisions>.

functioning of the Convention, and make recommendations on the need for revisions and, as appropriate, make related recommendations, based on this information;

6. *Requests* that the ad hoc group of legal experts undertake a legal assessment of any recommendations for revisions proposed by the ad hoc group of experts;

7. *Requests* that the Working Group on Strategies and Review discuss the review conclusions and the proposed changes to the rules of procedure, if any, at its sessions in 2022–2023, and report on progress at the forty-second session of the Executive Body, and that the ad hoc group of experts present its final recommendations for consideration by the Executive Body at its forty-third session.
