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Executive Body for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution

Working Group on Strategies and Review

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Draft 2024–2025 workplan for the implementation of the Convention: policy-related aspects and elements

Summary

The present document sets out activities proposed for inclusion in the policy and communication, outreach and cooperation sections of the draft 2024–2025 workplan based on the vision and strategic priorities outlined in the long-term strategy for the Convention for 2020–2030 and beyond (decision 2018/5, annex) and the conclusions of the review of the Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone, as amended in 2012, and the path forward (ECE/EB.AIR/150, annex I, decision 2022/4). The document was compiled by the Chair of the Working Group on Strategies and Review and the secretariat, with input from the Task Force on Techno-economic Issues, the Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen, the Task Force for International Cooperation on Air Pollution, the Task Force on Integrated Assessment Modelling and the Task Force on Hemispheric Transport of Air Pollution. The workplan, including these and other sections and elements, will be considered and adopted by the Executive Body at its forty-third session (Geneva, 11–14 December 2023).



I. Introduction

1. The biennial workplan for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution translates the vision and strategic priorities set out in the long-term strategy for the Convention for 2020–2030 and beyond (decision 2018/5, annex)¹ into a list of activities to be implemented by respective bodies under the Convention during the period 2024–2025. It is structured around five main areas of work: science; policy; compliance; capacity-building and awareness-raising to promote ratification and implementation; and communication, outreach and cooperation. The tasks are assigned to the subsidiary bodies under the Convention, task forces and scientific centres, the Bureau of the Executive Body and the secretariat. The task forces and centres under the Convention carry out the activities in accordance with their mandates. The workplan contains additional activities of the task forces and centres under the Convention activities of the task forces and centres under the rational activities of the task forces and centres under the Convention activities of the task forces and centres under the rational activities of the task forces and centres under the rational activities of the task forces and centres under the Convention activities of the task forces and centres under the Convention activities of the task forces and centres under the Convention activities of the task forces and centres under the Convention activities of the task forces and centres under the Convention activities of the task forces and centres under the Convention their mandates.

2. The present document sets out activities proposed for inclusion in the policy and communication, outreach and cooperation sections of the draft 2024–2025 workplan for consideration by the Working Group on Strategies and Review (WGSR) at its sixty-first session. The draft input to the 2024–2025 workplan, presented herein, takes into account the conclusions and the next steps itemized in the review of the Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone (Gothenburg Protocol), as amended in 2012,² following a request by the Executive Body.³ The document was compiled by the Chair of WGSR and the secretariat, with input from the Task Force on Techno-economic Issues (TFTEI), the Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen (TFRN), the Task Force for International Cooperation on Air Pollution (TFICAP), the Task Force on Integrated Assessment Modelling (TFIAM) and the Task Force on Hemispheric Transport of Air Pollution (TFHTAP).

3. The workplan, including these and other sections and elements, will be considered and adopted by the Executive Body at its forty-third session (Geneva, 11–14 December 2023).

II. Aspects and elements of the draft 2024–2025 workplan for the implementation of the Convention, section II (policy)

4. In line with the priorities set out in the long-term strategy for the Convention, the policy-related work in the period 2024-2025 will, inter alia, aim to support increased ratification and implementation of the three most recent protocols as amended (i.e. the Gothenburg Protocol, the Protocol on Heavy Metals and the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants) throughout the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) region. It will also continue to focus on the pollutants best controlled at the regional level and/or requiring control in order to solve regional air pollution problems, and consider the need for further action to address emerging issues, including particulate matter (PM) and its precursors, black carbon (BC) as a component of PM, tropospheric ozone (O₃) and its precursors, eutrophying pollution with a focus on ammonia (NH₃) and, where still needed, acidifying pollution. An integrated approach for environmental policymaking will be sought that includes interaction between ground level (O₃), nitrogen (N), climate change and ecosystems; integrated N management; and co-benefits and interactions between air pollution and climate change policies. The policy work will also address the conclusions and recommendations of the review of the Gothenburg Protocol as amended (decision 2022/4 and ECE/EB.AIR/150/Add.2). Cooperation with other stakeholders will be sought to ensure the uptake of analytical work and guidance developed under the Convention. Specific policyrelated activities in the period 2024-2025 are presented in table 1 below.

¹ All Executive Body decisions referred to in the present document are available at https://unece.org/decisions.

² ECE/EB.AIR/150/Add.2 (advance version), paras. 90–91.

³ Decision 2022/4, para. 7.

| Table 1 Policy | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--|---|--|---|--|
| Workplan item | Activity description/objective | Expected outcome/deliverable | Lead body(ies) | Resource requirements and/or funding source | |
| 2.1 | Analysis of policy-relevant information and follow-up to the review of the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended | | | | |
| 2.1.1 | Exchange of information on national, subregional and regional policies and strategies for control of major air pollutants, in accordance with art. 8 of Convention and protocols thereto | Information on strategies and policies for air pollution abatement throughout ECE region, including information on measures shared at WGSR sessions, following decision 2016/3 | Secretariat, WGSR | | |
| 2.1.2 | Follow-up on policy options chosen to respond to review of Gothenburg Protocol, as amended | Recommendations provided to Executive Body | WGSR | | |
| 2.1.3 | Provide technical support on options to inform preparations for possible future updating of annex IX to Gothenburg Protocol | Extent dependent on availability of additional resources and according to guidance from WGSR | TFRN | Subject to availability of resources | |
| 2.1.4 | Promotion of multiscale modelling for formulating effective measures and policies | Policy brief on multilevel governance | TFIAM | | |
| 2.1.5 | Policy discussions on reporting of condensable part in PM emissions | Recommendations provided to Executive Body | WGSR | | |
| 2.1.6 | O ₃ modelling of future scenarios | Organize new global model simulations of future scenarios developed by CIAM, including examination of role of CH ₄ , source attribution methods, link to regional scale and impacts | TFHTAP TFIAM, CIAM, TFMM, MSC- W, ICP Vegetation | | |
| 2.1.7 | Publication and dissemination of International Nitrogen Assessment, including preparation of specific summary for Convention's policymakers | Workshops with further analysis, including follow-up to INMS Global Nitrogen Assessment report recommendations relevant for Convention, and identification of most effective nitrogen measures. Summary for policymakers shared with WGSR and chapters available with open-access | TFRN | With funding assistance of GEF/UNEP through INMS | |
| 2.1.8 | Analyse implications of NH ₃ as energy carrier as part of decarbonization strategies, | Information note submitted to WGSR | TFRN in cooperation with | Subject to availability of resources | |

| Workplan item | Activity description/objective | Expected outcome/deliverable | Lead body(ies) | Resource requirements and/or funding source |
|------------------|--|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| | including possible emissions of NH_3 , N_2O and NO_x , and possible interactions with international N market prices | | TFIAM and TFTEI | |
| 2.1.9 | Examination of benefits and barriers to dietary change to reduce N air pollution, including co-benefits, possible scenarios and opportunities to overcome barriers | (a) Information document on benefits, including co-benefits, and barriers of dietary change, possible scenarios and opportunities to overcome barriers | TFRN in cooperation with TFIAM | Subject to availability of resources |
| | | (b) Information document on opportunities for bioeconomy technologies and measures | TFRN | |
| | | (c) Thematic session as part of WGSR session on use of non-technical (dietary) measures to reduce NH_3 and other pollutants emissions. | TFRN | Subject to availability of resources |
| 2.1.10 | Assessment of opportunities for mobilizing N recovery and reuse (white ammonia and white nitrogen) leading to extension of existing guidance through INMS Nitrogen Measures Database | Short information document | TFRN | Scale of effort subject to additional resources |
| 2.1.11 | Assessment of risks associated with "alkaline air" and analysis of policy implications | Short information document | TFRN in cooperation with WGE | Scale of effort subject to additional resources |
| 2.1.12 | Assessment of technical and non technical options for meeting Global Biodiversity Framework target 7, with special reference to N air pollution, including benefits of such action | | TFRN in cooperation with WGE | Scale of effort subject to additional resources |
| 2.1.13 | Assessment of opportunities from organic farming and agroecological approaches to reduce NH ₃ and CH ₄ emissions to air and other forms of N pollution | Scale of effort subject to additional resources | TFRN in cooperation with WGE | Scale of effort subject to additional resources |
| 2.2 | Development and promotion of | f guidance documents | | |
| 2.2.1 | Promotion of guidance documents, including those recently adopted | Explore opportunities to promote guidance documents, including those recently adopted within and beyond ECE region | TFRN, TFIAM, TFTEI | |

| Workplan item | Activity description/objective | Expected outcome/deliverable | Lead body(ies) | Resource requirements and/or funding source |
|------------------|---|---|--|---|
| 2.2.2 | Revision of guidance documents on control techniques for emissions from stationary and mobile sources | Updated guidance documents submitted to Executive Body in 2025 | TFTEI | |
| 2.2.3 | Development of guidance document on non-technical and structural measures | Draft guidance document submitted to Executive Body for adoption | TFIAM, TFRN, TFTEI | |
| 2.2.4 | Scoping of possible integrated N framework code (linking different forms of N including interactions with other gases) | Information document prepared to support discussion by WGSR in 2024 on possible merits of such a framework code in relation to needs of different audiences and relationship to other framework codes | TFRN | Subject to funding |
| 2.2.5 | Revision and publication of Guidance document on national nitrogen budgets and supporting documents | (a) Revised Guidance document on national nitrogen budgets submitted for consideration to WGSR and Executive Body in 2025 | TFRN | In-kind contributions by Germany |
| | | (b) Extended summary for policymakers based on revised Guidance document | | Subject to funding |
| | | (c) Policy brief based on revised Guidance document and extended summary for policymakers to engag with parallel activities | e | |
| | | (d) Call for data to Parties in 2025, encouraging them to make use of reporting template on national nitrogen budgets with analysis of results in 2025–2026 | | |
| 2.2.6 | Continue revision of Guidance document for preventing and abating ammonia emissions from agricultural sources | Revised Guidance document ready for submission to WGSR in 2025– 2026 (depending on availability of resources) | TFRN | Subject to co- funding from European Union and other Parties for stakeholder workshops |
| 2.2.7 | Review ECE Framework Code For Good Agricultural Practice for Reducing Ammonia Emissions and commence revision based on conclusion of revised Guidance document for preventing and abating ammonia emissions from agricultural sources | Revised document submitted in 2026–2027 | TFRN | Subject to availability of funding |
| 2.2.8 | Further elaboration on interactions between emissions of CH ₄ and NH ₃ , and other N compounds, and potential for | Guidance document and policy brief developments, following up on expected expansion of TFRN | TFRN in cooperation with TFTEI and other bodies | €50,000, subject to availability of co- funding |

| Workplan item | Activity description/objective | Expected outcome/deliverable | Lead body(ies) | Resource requirements and/or funding source |
|------------------|---|---|----------------|---|
| | their co-mitigation from agricultural sources | mandate to include agricultural CH ₄ emissions | | |

Abbreviations: CH4, methane; CIAM, Centre for Integrated Assessment Modelling; GEF, Global Environment Facility; ICP Vegetation, International Cooperative Programme on Effects of Air Pollution on Natural Vegetation and Crops; INMS, International Nitrogen Management System; MSC-W, Meteorological Synthesizing Centre-West; N₂O, nitrous oxide; NOx, nitrogen oxides; TFMM, Task Force on Measurements and Modelling; UNEP, United Nations Environment Programme; WGE, Working Group on Effects.

III. Aspects and elements of the draft 2024–2025 workplan for the implementation of the Convention, section V (communication, outreach and cooperation)

5. In accordance with the long-term strategy for the Convention for 2020-2030 and beyond, there is a need for improved communication on work under the Convention, achievements and remaining challenges in order to raise awareness among policymakers and the public. The strategy states that: "The strong available scientific evidence of the negative impact of air pollution on health, materials and ecosystems highlights the need for further action in order to improve air quality and public health, including by increasing cooperation with non-ECE regions."⁴ The strategy also states that: "The bodies under the Convention should also enhance efforts in their communication activities to raise awareness of the compelling environmental, health and economic rationale for action on air pollution and to increase the visibility of the Convention, building on the successes of multilateral cooperation within the Convention system in dealing with increasingly complex science-policy issues."5 Communication, outreach and awareness-raising activities will be undertaken to maintain the Convention's visibility within and beyond the ECE region, to foster cooperation between regional agreements around the world, and to share the Convention's experience, with a view to advancing a shared response to addressing air pollution globally, in accordance with United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP resolution 3/8 on preventing and reducing air pollution to improve air quality globally.⁶ Cooperation with other regions and forums on intercontinental air pollution issues will be pursued. The "Convention will share experience and scientific expertise"7 with other regions, specifically in the context of the forum for international cooperation on air pollution.

6. Table 2 below outlines specific communication and outreach tasks in addition to those assigned to the technical or subsidiary bodies and, as such, incorporated as items under the science and policy sections in the workplan. Communications and outreach activities in 2024 will be used to mark the forty-fifth anniversary of the Convention.

⁴ Decision 2018/5, annex, para. 43.

⁵ ibid., para. 71.

⁶ UNEP/EA.3/Res.8, para. 7 (i).

⁷ Decision 2018/5, annex, para. 76.

Table 2Communication, outreach and cooperation

| Workplan | | | | Resource requirements and/or funding source |
|----------|--|--|--|--|
| item | Activity description/objective | Expected outcome/deliverable | Lead body(ies) | (in US dollars) |
| 5.1 Com | munication and awareness-raising | | | |
| 5.1.1 | Raise public awareness of Convention and overall visibility of air pollution issues throughout ECE region and beyond, including regarding Convention's 45 th anniversary | (a) Press releases, leaflets, articles and other materials; translation of relevant documentation and communication materials into other United Nations official languages (e.g., Russian), including relevant information provided by Convention's scientific bodies, in particular non-technical summaries with conclusions, recommendations and interesting facts for dissemination among external audiences; information disseminated through social media platforms | Secretariat | 608 502 ^a |
| | | (b) Convention website as main channel for communication with public updated in user-friendly manner (within formal ECE limitations), including Russian- language version | Secretariat | |
| | | (c) Infographics, videos or other materials to inform public of positive impacts of decreasing transboundary air pollution for better air quality in cities | Parties | |
| 5.2 Outr | each and cooperation | | | |
| 5.2.1 | Compile list of topics for information-sharing through forum for international cooperation on air pollution, and list of relevant experts. This can be basis for conducting targeted regional webinars, where there is mutual interest | Basis for conducting targeted regional webinars where there is mutual interest and platform of information | TFICAP in cooperation with secretariat and other Convention bodies | |
| 5.2.2 | Organize, upon request, study tours in ECE region for countries beyond ECE region to learn, discuss and adapt policies and institutional structures for air quality management at regional, national and subnational levels | Increased understanding by study tour participants of how countries in ECE region with different governance systems can work towards common goals of Convention | TFICAP in cooperation with development agency partners including World Bank | Funded by World Bank |

| Workplan | | | | Resource requirements and/or funding source |
|----------|--|---|--|--|
| item | Activity description/objective | Expected outcome/deliverable | Lead body(ies) | (in US dollars) |
| 5.2.3 | Work with other regional organizations to understand regions' needs and interests | Better understanding of where further collaboration and cooperation could be developed | TFICAP | |
| 5.2.4 | Development of two self-paced e- learning courses on: BATs; and, health and environmental effects of air pollution | Enhanced understanding of provisions of Convention's key protocols, scientific work, and technical guidance documents to reduce air pollution | Secretariat, in cooperation with relevant task forces | 246 000 ^a |
| 5.2.5 | Adapt e-learning courses on Convention and its protocols and on how to report emissions under Convention and disseminate tools and information under Convention to countries beyond ECE region | Availability of e-learning courses in other United Nations official languages (e.g., French, Spanish) | Secretariat in cooperation with TFICAP | 91 250 ^{<i>a b</i>} |
| 5.2.6 | Develop FAQs on air quality management and Convention | FAQs developed to answer most common questions on air quality management and Convention (English, French, Russian, Spanish) | Secretariat, in cooperation with relevant task forces | 76 075 ^{a c} |
| 5.2.7 | Engage in key regional and international events and processes and organization of events (e.g., Second Global Conference on Air Pollution and Health, CoP UNFCCC) to raise awareness of Convention, its 45 th anniversary, and its work on effects of and measures to reduce air pollution and to foster cooperation | Events (e.g., webinars) on air quality management topics, policy guidance developed under Convention and on exchange of best practices and policies with other regions Strengthened cooperation with other ECE programmes and international organizations, leading to improved understanding of Convention and its work on effects of and measures to reduce air pollution, and information exchange | Secretariat, in cooperation with Bureau, relevant task forces, United Nations regional commissions and other organizations | 177 000 ^a |
| 5.2.8 | Promote participation of ECE and non-ECE experts in technical meetings and meetings of task forces and make use of web-based meeting tools as far as possible | Improved participation and outreach | Task forces and technical bodies under Convention | |

^{*a*} Subject to availability of funding.

^b Estimate per language version.

^c Estimate for frequently asked questions in English, French, Russian and Spanish.

Abbreviations: BATs, best available techniques; CoP UNFCC, Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; FAQs, frequently asked questions.