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## Economic Commission for Europe

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

#### Forty-third session

Geneva, 11–14 December 2023

Item 3 (c) of the provisional agenda

#### Review of the implementation of the 2022–2023 workplan: compliance

### Twenty-sixth report of the Implementation Committee\*

#### Submitted by the Implementation Committee

#### *Summary*

In accordance with the structure and functions of the Implementation Committee under the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution, the Committee is required to report at least once a year on its activities to the Executive Body for the Convention (ECE/EB.AIR/113/Add.1, decision 2012/25, annex, para. 9).

The twenty-sixth report of the Implementation Committee contains information on the Committee's activities in 2023 with regard to compliance by individual Parties to the Protocols to the Convention with their emission reduction and reporting obligations, summarizing the work carried out at the Committee's fiftieth session (Geneva (online), 5–7 July 2023). The report was prepared by the Implementation Committee with support of the Convention secretariat.

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\* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



## I. Introduction

1. At its forty-second session (Geneva, 12–16 December 2022), the Executive Body for the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution elected Denmark (Mr. Christian Lange), France (Mr. Jean-Pierre Chang), North Macedonia (Ms. Aleksandra Nestorovska-Krsteska) and the United States of America (Mr. Jeremy Weinberg) and re-elected Canada (Ms. Catherine Bloodworth), Estonia (Mr. Marek Maasikmets), Croatia (Mr. Josip Kovilić), Sweden (Ms. Petra Hagström) and Norway (Ms. Alice Gaustad) as members of the Implementation Committee. It elected Mr. Marek Maasikmets (Estonia) as Chair of the Implementation Committee.
2. The fiftieth session of the Implementation Committee (Geneva (online), 5–7 July 2023) was serviced by the Convention secretariat.

## II. Compliance with emission reduction obligations

3. The Implementation Committee was unable to review compliance by Croatia and the Republic of Moldova with their emission reduction obligations owing to missing submission of emission data in 2023.

### A. Follow-up to Executive Body decisions

#### 1. Protocol on Heavy Metals

##### **Follow-up to Executive Body decision 2018/2 concerning compliance by Liechtenstein with the Protocol on Heavy Metals (ref. 6/17 (Cd))**

###### *Background*

4. In decision 2018/2, the Executive Body urged the Party to fulfil its obligations under the Protocol on Heavy Metals as soon as possible. It requested Liechtenstein to provide the Implementation Committee, through the secretariat, by 28 February 2019, with:
  - (a) Information on any additional measures that could be taken to reduce emissions of cadmium and a quantitative assessment of their effects;
  - (b) A timetable specifying the year by which Liechtenstein expected to be in compliance.
5. The Executive Body invited the Party to participate in one of the Committee's meetings in 2019 to elaborate on the information provided and requested the Implementation Committee to review the progress and timetable of Liechtenstein, and to report to the Executive Body thereon at its thirty-ninth session (Geneva, 9–13 December 2019).
6. The Implementation Committee considered the case at its forty-second (Stockholm, 7–9 May 2019), forty-third (Geneva, 10–12 September 2019) and forty-fifth (Geneva (online), 15–18 September 2020) sessions. At its forty-fifth session, the Implementation Committee requested the secretariat to send a letter to the Minister of Home Affairs, Education and Environment of Liechtenstein asking her to provide the following information by 15 March 2021:
  - (a) The list of specific measures Liechtenstein intended to take to fulfil its emission reduction obligations; and
  - (b) A timetable specifying the year by which the country expected to be in compliance.
7. In its response dated 15 March 2021, Liechtenstein referred to its previous letters of 2019 and 2018 pointing to wood combustion in small and medium sized combustion plants as the main source and the growth of its share in energy production. In its letter, Liechtenstein suggested that the division of the increased wood energy consumption into the categories

1A4ai (commercial) and 1A4bi (residential) might be wrong and noted its plans to review the distribution of wood energy consumption and the emission factors for wood burning appliances in its submission in 2022. Liechtenstein also mentioned the revision of the clean air act as among its measures to reduce emissions. It was not able to provide a timetable for reaching compliance.

8. The Implementation Committee considered the case at its forty-seventh (Geneva (online), 14–16 September 2021) and forty-eighth (Geneva (online), 3–4 May 2022) sessions. It noted that reported cadmium emissions in 2019 and 2020 were exceeding the base year level. At its forty-eighth session, the Committee decided to continue to review the case at its fiftieth (Geneva (online), 5–7 July 2023) session and requested the secretariat to send a letter to the Minister of Home Affairs, Education and Environment of Liechtenstein asking her to provide:

- (a) Updated information on the measures described in the letter of 15 March 2021;
- (b) Potential additional measures to bring Liechtenstein in compliance with its obligations under the Protocol on Heavy Metals; and
- (c) A timetable specifying the year by which the Party expected to be in compliance.

9. In its response dated 28 February 2023, Liechtenstein pointed again to wood combustion as the main source of cadmium emissions and the growth of its share in energy production. Liechtenstein noted that its review of the emission factors for the wood-burning appliances commonly used in Liechtenstein as announced in its letter of 15 March 2021 had not led to a substantive change in the emissions of cadmium. It further noted that small wood-burning appliances would be controlled periodically from 2024 onwards and would have to be renovated when not meeting the requirements. Furthermore, it pointed to the intensification of an information campaign on the correct use of wood and clean combustion. Liechtenstein was not able to provide a timetable for reaching compliance.

10. The Implementation Committee invited Liechtenstein to participate in its fiftieth session. Liechtenstein informed the secretariat on 12 May 2023 that it would not be able to participate.

#### *Deliberations*

11. The Committee considered the case at its fiftieth session. It noted the information provided by Liechtenstein and that reported emissions of cadmium of 0.0037 tonne in 2021 still exceeded the 1990 base year level of 0.0023 tonne. It also noted that the measures Liechtenstein planned to implement would take time before they give effect on emission reduction. The Committee agreed to continue to review the case of exceedance of cadmium emissions in 2025.

## **2. Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants**

### **Follow-up to Executive Body decision 2018/2 concerning compliance by Liechtenstein with the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants (ref. 4/17 (HCB))**

#### *Background*

12. In decision 2018/2, the Executive Body urged Liechtenstein to fulfil its obligations under the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants as soon as possible. It requested Liechtenstein to provide the Implementation Committee, through the secretariat, by 28 February 2019, with:

- (a) Information on any additional measures that could be taken to reduce emissions of hexachlorobenzene (HCB) and a quantitative assessment of their effects;
- (b) A timetable specifying the year by which Liechtenstein expected to be in compliance.

13. The Executive Body invited the Party to participate in one of the Committee's meetings in 2019 to elaborate on the information provided and requested the Implementation

Committee to review the progress and timetable of Liechtenstein, and to report to the Executive Body thereon at its thirty-ninth session.

14. The Implementation Committee considered the case at its forty-second, forty-third and forty-fifth sessions. At its forty-fifth session, the Committee requested the secretariat to send a letter to the Minister of Home Affairs, Education and Environment of Liechtenstein, asking her to provide information by 15 March 2021 on:

(a) The list of specific measures Liechtenstein intended to take to fulfil its emission reduction obligations; and

(b) A timetable specifying the year by which the country expected to be in compliance.

15. In its response dated 15 March 2021, Liechtenstein referred to its previous letters of 2019 and 2018 pointing to wood combustion as the main source of emissions of HCB and the growth of its share in energy production. In its letter, Liechtenstein suggested that the division of the increased wood energy consumption into the categories 1A4ai (commercial) and 1A4bi (residential) might be wrong and noted its plans to review the distribution of wood energy consumption and the emission factors for wood burning appliances in its submission in 2022. Liechtenstein also mentioned the revision of the clean air act as among its measures to reduce emissions. It was not able to provide a timetable for reaching compliance.

16. The Committee continued to consider the case at its forty-sixth (Geneva (online), 5–6 May 2021) and forty-eighth sessions. At its forty-eighth session, the Committee noted that the emissions of HCB in 2020 were close to the base year level and agreed to continue to review the case in 2023.

#### *Deliberations*

17. The Committee considered the case at its fiftieth session. It noted that emissions of HCB of 0.00049 kg in 2021 were not exceeding the 1990 base year level of 0.00049 kg. The Committee concluded that there was no reason to continue reviewing the case.

## **B. Follow-up on submissions and referrals initiated by the secretariat during the period 2014–2021 that are still under consideration**

### **1. Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants**

#### **(a) Follow-up to the referral by the secretariat concerning compliance by Serbia with the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants (ref. 2/21 (PAH, PCDD/F))**

#### *Background*

18. The 2021 submission of emission data for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon (PAH) and dioxins/furans (PCDD/F) received from Serbia indicated that there was an exceedance of the base year emission level for PCDD/F by approximately 1 per cent and for PAH by approximately 0.3 per cent: in 1990, which is the base year for Serbia, emissions of PCDD/F were 595 g, while in 2019 they reached 602.4 g, and emissions of PAH in 1990 were 465.3 tonnes, whereas in 2019 they reached 466.6 tonnes. This information seemed to suggest that Serbia was in non-compliance with its obligations under article 3, paragraph 5(a) of the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

19. The secretariat informed Serbia of its intention to refer the issue to the Implementation Committee unless it could provide information to resolve the issue by showing that it was in compliance with the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants. Serbia noted that it would re-evaluate the full time series for PAH and PCDD/F for the submission of emission data in 2022 and determine the reason for an increase in their emissions. The secretariat informed the Party of the referral of the case to the Implementation Committee.

20. The Committee considered the referral at its forty-seventh session. A representative of Serbia informed the Committee about its steps in re-evaluating the full time series for PAH and PCDD/F for the submission of emission data in 2022 and to determine the reason for an

increase in emissions in 2019. At its forty-ninth session (Geneva (online), 30–31 August 2022), the Committee noted that the 2020 inventory data showed an increase in PCDD/F emissions compared to the base year of 1990. It requested the secretariat to send a letter to Serbia requesting information on the results of the re-evaluation of the full time series and decided to review the case again in 2023.

21. In its letter dated 29 June 2023, Serbia noted that for the 2023 reporting year, recalculations had been performed for all categories, which had allowed for improving the quantity and quality of input data used in the emission calculations. It pointed out that the increase in PCDD/F emissions in 2020 compared to 1990 was explained by several factors: an increase in consumption of natural gas and biomass, in particular for residential heating in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as for public electricity and heat production; an increase in the production of iron and steel, and to a lesser extent by secondary copper processing and agricultural residue burning. Serbia informed the secretariat of the adoption of the “Programme of Air Protection of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2022-2030 with Action Plan” envisaging a number of measures, which would result in reduction of emissions of PCDD/F. Further to its letter, Serbia informed the secretariat of its intention to participate in the fiftieth session of the Implementation Committee.

#### *Deliberations*

22. The Committee considered the case at its fiftieth session. It noted that the Party’s reported totals of PAH emissions of 33.6 tonnes and 30.7 tonnes for 2020 and 2021, respectively, were well below the reference 1990 baseline of 41.7 tonnes; whereas the reported totals of PCDD/F emissions of 74.2 g and 73.1 g for 2020 and 2021, respectively, remained above the 1990 baseline of 70.5 g.

23. The Committee decided that there was no need to continue reviewing the case with regard to PAH emissions.

24. The Committee appreciated the participation of the representative of Serbia at its session. It took note of the information provided, including of the expected compliance with regard to emissions of PCDD/F in two years’ time. It further decided to continue to review compliance of Serbia with respect to PCDD/F emissions in 2025.

#### **(b) Follow-up to the referral by the secretariat concerning compliance by Finland with the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants (ref. 1/19 (PAH))**

##### *Background*

25. The 2019 submission of emission data received from Finland indicated that there was an exceedance of the base year level for PAH by approximately 36 per cent. The base year level of PAH emissions was 7.47 tonnes, whereas in 2017 emissions reached 10.15 tonnes. This information seemed to suggest that Finland was in non-compliance with its obligations under article 3 (5) (a) of the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants. In its response to the secretariat’s pre-referral letter, Finland submitted information on the sources of emissions, which mainly included residential wood combustion. It clarified that the emission inventory for residential combustion took into account different types of technologies and equipment used and also changes in the use of technologies. The emission factors were based on measurements. Finland also provided information on measures implemented to reduce PAH emissions.

26. The Committee considered the referral at its forty-second session. It noted the information provided by Finland and requested the secretariat to send a letter requesting the Party to provide:

(a) A list of specific measures Finland intended to take to fulfil its emission reduction obligations under the Protocol;

(b) The quantitative and projected effects of further and more effective measures to reduce its PAH emissions up to and including the year of predicted compliance;

(c) A timetable specifying the year by which it expected to be in compliance.

27. At its forty-fourth (Geneva (online) 13–14 May 2020) session, the Committee noted the response provided by Finland on 28 February 2020, in which the Party indicated the increased use of wood for residential heating as the reason for exceedance and three categories of measures included in its National Air Pollution Control Programme. The Committee further noted that quantitative effects of the described measures had not been projected yet and that Finland was unable to specify a timetable for reaching compliance. It decided to continue to review the case in 2021.

28. The Committee continued to consider the case at its forty-sixth and forty-seventh sessions. At the Committee's forty-seventh session, a representative of Finland pointed to increased wood burning and use of sauna stoves as the main reason for PAH emission exceedance. He noted that Finland would improve statistics of wood consumption. Ongoing processes and projects were explained in the presentation with regard to the development of the measures in the National Air Pollution Control Programme. He informed the Committee that Finland expected to be in compliance during 2022 and afterwards based on the updated inventory. The Committee decided to continue to review the case in 2023.

#### *Deliberations*

29. The Committee continued to consider the case at its fiftieth session. The Committee noted that, according to the latest emission data, PAH emissions in 2021 were 20 tonnes compared to the emissions of 19.2 tonnes in 1994, the base year for Finland, which resulted in an exceedance of 5 per cent. The Committee further noted that emission data showed a continued decrease of PAH emissions in 2021 compared to 2017, 2018 and 2019 and a slight increase compared to 2020, when emissions reached 17.8 tonnes.

30. In light of the timetable presented by Finland previously and measures implemented to reduce emissions, the Committee decided to continue to review the case in 2024.

## **2. 1985 Protocol on the Reduction of Sulphur Emissions or their Transboundary Fluxes by at least 30 per cent**

### **Follow-up to the referral by the secretariat concerning compliance by North Macedonia with the 1985 Sulphur Protocol (ref. 1/14)**

#### *Background*

31. The Committee considered the referral by the secretariat concerning compliance of North Macedonia with the 1985 Protocol on the Reduction of Sulphur Emissions or their Transboundary Fluxes by at least 30 per cent (1985 Sulphur Protocol) at its thirty-fourth (Geneva, 8–10 September 2014), thirty-fifth (Budapest, 27–29 May 2015), thirty-sixth (Geneva, 26–28 January 2016), and thirty-ninth sessions. Representatives of North Macedonia participated in the thirty-ninth session, informing the Committee about plans to reduce sulphur emissions and the approval of the National Emission Reduction Plan by the Government. They furthermore stated that the implementation of the plan was under way and that it was expected that the Party would be in compliance with its obligations in time for the reporting round in 2020.

32. At the request of the Implementation Committee, North Macedonia provided its progress report in 2018, confirming that the implementation of the plans to reduce sulphur was underway and that the emissions had already been reduced. The Party expected to be in compliance with its obligations in reporting year 2020 at the earliest. North Macedonia committed to continuing to inform the secretariat in a timely fashion about progress in the implementation of the plans to reduce sulphur emissions.

33. The Committee continued to consider the case at its forty-first (Geneva, 11–14 September 2018), forty-second, forty-fourth (Geneva (online), 13–14 May 2020) and forty-fifth sessions. At its forty-fourth session, the Committee noted the increase in sulphur emissions. It requested the secretariat to send a letter to North Macedonia requesting information on:

(a) The implementation of its national emission reduction plan and the effects this implementation had on emission reduction; and

(b) The year North Macedonia expected to be in compliance with its obligations under the Protocol.

34. At its forty-fifth session, the Implementation Committee noted the information provided by North Macedonia, in which it confirmed its commitment to implement the planned measures to reduce the sulphur emissions. The Party informed the Committee that the negotiations on the permit for the largest power plant were delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the Governmental elections. The Committee decided to continue to review the case in 2022.

35. The Implementation Committee continued its consideration of the case at its forty-eighth session. It took into consideration the information provided by North Macedonia in 2021 with respect to case 1/21. The Committee decided to continue to consider the case at its fiftieth session and requested the secretariat to send a letter to North Macedonia asking it for further information regarding:

(a) The progress in the implementation of the planned measures to reduce emissions; and

(b) A timetable specifying the year by which North Macedonia expected to be in compliance with its emission reduction obligations.

36. In its response dated 23 March 2023, North Macedonia referred to its previous letters and noted that the main source for sulphur emissions in North Macedonia was the public electricity and heat production sector, contributing to 94 per cent of sulphur emissions. In December 2022, the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning issued a compliance permit to the power plant REK Bitola, the main source of sulphur emissions, that included several measures to reduce sulphur emissions, such as primary desulfurization starting in 2023, automatic systems for continuous monitoring systems of emissions and reconstruction of filters and replacements of fans and gas ducts. North Macedonia noted that the construction and installation of a desulphurization plant would considerably contribute to emission reduction and that it expected to be in compliance with the Protocol upon implementation of primary desulphurization and installation of the desulphurization plant. The Party did not provide information on the year by which the desulphurization plant was expected to be fully operational.

#### *Deliberations*

37. The Committee continued its consideration of the case at its fiftieth session and noted the information provided by North Macedonia. It also noted that sulphur emissions in 2021 were 5 per cent lower than in 2020, and that according to the 2023 submission, emissions of sulphur in North Macedonia in 2021 were 88.6 kilotonnes, which exceeded the emission reduction target of 47 kilotonnes by 88 per cent.

38. The Implementation Committee requested the secretariat to send a letter to North Macedonia requesting an update on the progress in the implementation of measures included in the compliance permit to REK Bitola, to be provided to the secretariat by February 2025. The Committee decided to continue to review the case in 2025.

### **3. The Protocol on Further Reduction of Sulphur Emissions**

#### **Follow-up to the referral by the secretariat concerning compliance by North Macedonia with the Protocol on Further Reduction of Sulphur Emissions (ref. 1/21 (SO<sub>x</sub>))**

39. The emission data for sulphur oxides received from North Macedonia in 2021 indicated that there was an exceedance of the base year emission levels by approximately 5 per cent. The indicated target was 110 kilotonnes, while in 2019 the reported emissions reached 115.7 kilotonnes. This information seemed to suggest that North Macedonia was in non-compliance with its obligations under article 2, paragraph 2 of the Protocol on Further Reduction of Sulphur Emissions. In response to the secretariat, North Macedonia pointed to

electricity and heat production as the main source of sulphur emissions and REK Bitola power plant with the largest share in it. The increase in emissions could be linked to the quality of measurements and/or the sulphur content in the coal and fuel. North Macedonia provided information on the planned measures to reduce emissions of sulphur.

40. The Committee considered the referral at its forty-seventh session. It noted the information provided by North Macedonia. It further noted that while the emissions were decreasing from 103.5 kilotonnes in 2011 to 55.7 kilotonnes in 2017, they increased to 60.7 kilotonnes in 2018 and to 115.7 kilotonnes in 2019. North Macedonia indicated that the emissions were expected to remain high for the inventory year 2020 as well. The Committee decided to continue to review the case in 2023.

#### *Deliberations*

41. The Committee continued to review the case at its fiftieth session. It noted that, according to the 2023 submission, emissions of sulphur in North Macedonia in 2021 were 88.6 kilotonnes, which was below the 2010 emission ceiling by 19 per cent. This suggested that North Macedonia was in compliance with its obligations under the 1994 Sulphur Protocol. The Committee concluded that there was no reason to continue to review the case.

### **C. New submissions and referrals initiated in 2023**

42. The secretariat informed the Implementation Committee that out of seventeen new cases of exceedance of emission reduction commitment levels by Parties in 2021, seven cases had been addressed by the secretariat. Among the latter, two cases had been resolved upon clarifications provided by Parties concerned. The Committee took note of this information.

#### **1. The Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone (the Gothenburg Protocol), as amended in 2012**

##### **(a) Referral by the secretariat concerning compliance by Romania with the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012 (ref. 4/22 (PM<sub>2.5</sub>))**

#### *Background*

43. The emission data for fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) received from Romania in 2022 indicated that it had not met its 2020 reduction commitment under the Gothenburg Protocol as amended in 2012: the agreed reduction commitment was 28 per cent from the 2005 base year level of 120.4 kilotonnes, while the reported emissions in 2020 amounted to 111.7 kilotonnes, which corresponded to a 7 per cent reduction only. This suggested that Romania was not in compliance with its obligation under article 3, paragraph 1 of the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012.

44. The secretariat informed Romania in a letter dated 30 May 2022 about its intention to refer the issue to the Implementation Committee. On 13 July 2022, Romania requested an extension of the deadline of 15 July 2022 for its response until 25 August 2022 and replied with a letter on 24 August 2022. The Party noted that in Romania, 82 per cent of PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions came from burning biomass (firewood) for household heating and that in 2020, compared to 2005, biomass consumption increased by 12 per cent. The Party specified the measures planned to reduce emissions from residential heating. According to the latest submission, emissions of PM<sub>2.5</sub> in Romania in 2021 reached 116.1 kilotonnes, which is 25 per cent beyond the emission reduction commitment. The secretariat informed the Party on 25 May 2023 of the referral of the case to the Implementation Committee. Romania informed the secretariat of its intention to participate in the fiftieth session of the Committee.

#### *Deliberations*

45. The Committee reviewed the case at its fiftieth session. It appreciated the information on the situation provided by the representative of Romania and the planned reduction measures. The Committee noted the achieved reductions for the years 2020 and 2021 from 2005 were 8.6 per cent and 3.1 per cent, respectively, while the Party's reduction commitment



was 28 per cent. It also took note of the adoption of the National Air Pollution Control Programme in February 2023 and the new projections with additional measures showing a 45 per cent decrease in emissions by 2025.

46. The Committee decided to continue to review the case in 2025.

**(b) Referral by the secretariat concerning compliance by Cyprus with the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012 (ref. 2/23 (SOx))**

*Background*

47. The 2023 submission of emission data for sulphur oxides received from Cyprus indicated that it had not met its 2021 reduction commitment under the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012: the agreed reduction commitment was 83 per cent from the 2005 base year level of 37.8 kilotonnes, while the reported emissions in 2021 amounted to 9.9 kilotonnes, which corresponded to a 74 per cent reduction only. This suggested that Cyprus was not in compliance with its obligation under article 3, paragraph 1 of the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012.

48. In its response to the secretariat's pre-referral letter, Cyprus noted that in Cyprus, 85 per cent of sulphur oxides was emitted by the energy sector in 2021. Cyprus specified the measures already taken to reduce emissions of sulphur oxides in the public electricity and heat production sector, including its attempts to supply natural gas which had in part been slowed down by the Covid-19 pandemic. Cyprus further noted that the most significant sources of sulphur emissions in 2021 were public power (87 per cent) and industry (13 per cent) with the Dhekelia power plant being the most dominant source running on hydrofluoroolefin with a sulphur content of 1 per cent and having no desulphurization unit. It also noted that unit 1-6 (steam turbines) of the Dhekelia Power Station, largely contributing to the overall emissions of sulphur oxides of Cyprus and technically not responsive to abatement measures, would cease operation in 2023 following the European Union Directive 2010/75. Cyprus also informed about the progress in renewable energy in recent years (2019–21). The secretariat informed the Party of the referral of the case to the Implementation Committee. Cyprus informed the secretariat of its intention to participate in the fiftieth session of the Committee.

*Deliberations*

49. The Committee considered the case at its fiftieth session. A representative from Cyprus participated in the session and provided information about the measures that Cyprus was considering for implementation.

50. The Committee noted that Cyprus had not met its 2021 reduction commitment of 83 per cent from the 2005 base year level of 37.8 kilotonnes under the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012. It also noted that the Party had not provided projections of emissions or an indication of an expected timeline for compliance.

51. The Committee decided to review the case in 2024 and requested the secretariat to send a letter to Cyprus requesting it to provide additional information on:

- (a) The specific measures Cyprus intends to take to fulfil its emission reduction obligations under the Protocol;
- (b) The quantitative and projected effects of further and more effective measures to reduce its emissions of Sulphur dioxides up to and including the year of predicted compliance; and
- (c) A timetable specifying the year by which Cyprus expects to be in compliance.

(c) **Referral by the secretariat concerning compliance by Lithuania with the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012 (ref. 3/23 (NMVOC, NH<sub>3</sub>))**

*Background*

52. The 2023 submission of emission data for volatile organic compounds (NMVOC) and ammonia (NH<sub>3</sub>) received from Lithuania indicated that it had not met its 2021 reduction commitments under the Gothenburg Protocol as amended in 2012: the agreed reduction commitment for NMVOC was 32 per cent from the 2005 base year level of 59.4 kilotonnes, while the reported emissions in 2021 amounted to 47.7 kilotonnes, which corresponded to a 19.6 per cent reduction only. The agreed reduction commitment for NH<sub>3</sub> was 10 per cent from the 2005 base year level of 39 kilotonnes, while the reported emissions in 2021 amounted to 38.1 kilotonnes, which corresponded to a 2 per cent reduction only. This suggested that Lithuania was not in compliance with its obligation under article 3, paragraph 1 of the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012.

53. In its response to the secretariat's pre-referral letter, Lithuania agreed that the data submitted suggested that it did not meet its reduction commitments for NMVOC and NH<sub>3</sub> in 2023. The Party further specified the measures already taken to mitigate its non-compliance, such as a revision of its National Air Pollution Control Programme (NAPCP) and an update of the Code of Good Agricultural Practices as well as planned revisions to existing legislation. The secretariat informed the Party of the referral of the case to the Implementation Committee.

*Deliberations*

54. The Committee considered the case at its fiftieth session. The Committee noted that reported NMVOC and NH<sub>3</sub> emissions for 2021 exceeded the reduction commitment targets under the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012. The Committee was thankful for the comprehensive information provided by the Party and the efforts of Lithuania to comply with its obligation to reduce NMVOC and NH<sub>3</sub> emissions and that the Party had provided a timetable identifying the year when compliance could be reached.

55. Taking into account the response, the provided timetable for the adoption of the updated NAPCP as well as the specified year by which Lithuania was expected to be in compliance with the Gothenburg Protocol, as amended in 2012, the Committee decided to continue to review the case in 2025.

**2. The Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants**

**Referral by the secretariat concerning compliance by Montenegro with the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants (ref. 5/23 (HCB))**

56. The 2023 submission of emission data for HCB received from Montenegro indicated that it had not met its 2021 reduction commitment under the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants: in 1990, which is the base year for Montenegro, emissions of HCB were 0.112 kg, whereas in 2021 they reached 0.126 kg, which resulted in an exceedance of the base year emission level for HCB by approximately 13 per cent in 2021. This suggested that Montenegro was not in compliance with its obligation under article 3, paragraph 5(a) of the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants.

57. The secretariat informed Montenegro of its intention to refer the issue to the Implementation Committee and of the referral of the case to the Implementation Committee.

*Deliberations*

58. The Committee considered the case at its fiftieth session. It noted that Montenegro had not provided any information related to the apparent non-compliance in response to the letter by the secretariat.

59. The Committee decided to continue reviewing the case in 2024 and requested the secretariat to send a letter to Montenegro inviting it to take part in the Committee's fifty-first session and requesting it to provide information on:

- (a) The specific measures Montenegro intended to take to fulfil its emission reduction obligations under the Protocol;
- (b) The quantitative and projected effects of further and more effective measures to reduce its hexachlorobenzene (HCB) emissions up to and including the year of predicted compliance;
- (c) A timetable specifying the year by which Montenegro expected to be in compliance.

### III. Compliance with reporting obligations

60. In line with item 3.1 of the 2022–2023 workplan for the implementation of the Convention, the Committee evaluated compliance by Parties with their emission data reporting obligations on the basis of information provided by the Centre on Emission Inventories and Projections and further synthesized by the secretariat, and responses by Parties. The information on reporting compiled by the Centre on Emission Inventories and Projections is presented as an informal document for the forty-third session of the Executive Body and covers data reported until 27 June 2023.

#### A. Follow-up to Executive Body decisions

##### **Follow-up to decision 2013/19 concerning compliance by the Republic of Moldova with its obligation to report gridded emission data**

61. In decision 2013/19, paragraph 4 (c), the Executive Body urged the Republic of Moldova to provide its missing gridded data for 2005 and 2010 under the Protocols on Persistent Organic Pollutants and Heavy Metals. The secretariat informed the Committee that, as of 27 June 2023, the Republic of Moldova had not provided its missing gridded data under either Protocol.

62. The Committee recalled the information provided by the Party in 2019 with respect to its obligations under the Protocol on Heavy Metals and the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants to report gridded data. It noted the information<sup>1</sup> provided by the secretariat on capacity-building activities organized in the Republic of Moldova in 2014, 2018, 2020 and 2021. The Committee suggested that the Republic of Moldova might face a systemic barrier to reach compliance with its reporting obligations and decided to draw that to the attention of the Executive Body.

#### B. Referrals concerning reporting of emission data

##### **1. Referrals initiated in 2015–2022 still under consideration**

63. At its thirty-sixth, thirty-seventh (Geneva, 13–15 September 2016), thirty-ninth, forty-first, forty-third, forty-fifth, forty-seventh, forty-ninth and fiftieth sessions, the Committee considered referrals submitted by the secretariat in 2015–2022.

##### *Liechtenstein*

64. The Committee continued to consider the referrals by the secretariat concerning compliance by Liechtenstein with its obligations to report its gridded data under the 1994 Sulphur Protocol, the Protocol on Volatile Organic Compounds, the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants and the Protocol on Heavy Metals (R10/17, R16/17, R22/17, R34/17, R2/21). The Party had not provided its missing data for 2015 and 2019. The Committee agreed to continue to review the case in 2024.

<sup>1</sup> Available at [https://unece.org/capacity-building-4#accordion\\_2](https://unece.org/capacity-building-4#accordion_2).

*Montenegro*

65. The Committee continued to consider the referrals by the secretariat concerning compliance by Montenegro with its reporting obligations under the Protocol on Heavy Metals and the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants (gridded data) (R23/17, R35/17, R6/21). The Party had not provided its missing data for 2015 and 2019. The Committee agreed to continue to review the case in 2024.

*North Macedonia*

66. The Committee continued to consider the referral by the secretariat concerning compliance by North Macedonia with its reporting obligations under the Gothenburg Protocol (R12/15) regarding missing projections for 2025 and 2030 for all pollutants. The Party had not provided its missing data. The Committee agreed to continue to review the case in 2024.

*Republic of Moldova*

67. The Committee continued to consider the referrals by the secretariat concerning compliance by the Republic of Moldova with its obligations under the Protocol on Heavy Metals and the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants to report gridded data (R25/17, R37/17, R7/21). The Party had not provided its missing data for 2015 and 2019. The Committee recalled the information provided by the Party in 2019 with respect to its obligations under the Protocol on Heavy Metals and the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants to report gridded data. It noted the information provided by the secretariat on capacity-building activities organized in the Republic of Moldova in 2014, 2018, 2020 and 2021. The Committee suggested that the Republic of Moldova might face a systemic barrier to reach compliance with its reporting obligations and decided to draw this to the attention of the Executive Body.

*Serbia*

68. The Committee continued to consider the referrals by the secretariat concerning compliance by Serbia with its obligations under the Protocol on Heavy Metals and the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants to report gridded data (R27/17, R39/17, R9/21). The Party had not provided its missing data for 2015 and 2019. The Committee agreed to continue to review the case in 2024.

*Romania*

69. The Committee continued to consider the referral by the secretariat concerning compliance by Romania with its obligations under the Protocol on Heavy Metals, the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants and the Gothenburg Protocol to report gridded data (R8/21). The Party had not provided its missing data for 2019. The Committee agreed to continue to review the case in 2024.

**2. Referrals initiated in 2023 under the Protocols to the Convention**

70. At its fiftieth session, the Committee considered the referral by the secretariat concerning compliance by the Republic of Moldova with its obligation under the the Protocol on Heavy Metals and the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants to report its 2021 annual data (R1/23). The Committee recalled that it had been unable to review compliance by the Republic of Moldova with its emission reduction obligations in 2020 owing to submissions in 2022 that were not in time for the Committee's forty-ninth session. The Committee suggested that the Republic of Moldova might face a systemic barrier to reach compliance with its reporting obligations under the Protocol on Heavy Metals and the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants and decided to draw this to the attention of the Executive Body.

71. The Committee also considered the referral by the secretariat concerning compliance by Croatia with its obligations under the Protocol on Nitrogen Oxides, the Protocol on Volatile Organic Compounds, the 1994 Sulphur Protocol, the Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants, the Protocol on Heavy Metals and the Gothenburg Protocol to report its 2021 annual data as well as to report its 2025 and 2030 projections under the Gothenburg Protocol

(R2/23). The Committee noted the information provided by Croatia and agreed to continue to review the case in 2024.

72. It further considered the referral by the secretariat concerning compliance by Spain with its obligations under the Gothenburg Protocol to report its 2025 and 2030 projections (R3/23). The Committee noted the information provided by Spain and agreed to continue to review the case in 2024.

73. The Committee considered the referral by the secretariat concerning compliance by North Macedonia with its obligations under the Gothenburg Protocol to report its 2025 and 2030 projections (R4/23). The Committee noted the information provided by North Macedonia and agreed to continue to review the case in 2024.

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