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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

EXECUTIVE BODY FOR THE CONVENTION ON
LONG-RANGE TRANSBOUNDARY AIR POLLUTION

Steering Body to the Cooperative Programme
for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-range
Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe (EMEP)
(Twenty-third session, Geneva, 6-8 September 1999)
(Item 3 of the provisional agenda)

REPORT ON THE BUREAU MEETING

(26-27 April 1999)

Prepared by the secretariat in consultation with the Chairman

Summary

The Bureau noted that 1999 was the first year in which EMEP centres were to carry out their work according to the new structure of the work-plan. In practice, this meant adopting an active integrated approach to studying and reporting on different long-range transboundary air pollution problems. The Bureau monitored progress in the work of EMEP and considered its further development, in particular its monitoring strategy and now to increase its interaction with national programmes and its cooperation with other international scientific programmes. In addition, the Bureau assessed the 1998 contributions in kind made to EMEP and the proposals for 2000. The Bureau was informed about the status of the EMEP Trust Fund. It also considered provisionally the budgets of the EMEP centres for 2000.

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Introduction

1. The Bureau of the EMEP Steering Body held its annual meeting in Geneva on 26 and 27 April 1999. The meeting was attended by Mr. M. WILLIAMS (United Kingdom), Chairman, Mr. H. HOJESKY (Austria), Mr. P. GRENNFELT (Sweden), Ms. M. LESNJAK (Slovenia), Mr. R. van AALST (Netherlands), and Ms. S. VIDIC (Croatia), Vice-Chairpersons. Representatives of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the Chemical Coordinating Centre (CCC), the Meteorological Synthesizing Centre-East (MSC-E) and the Meteorological Synthesizing Centre-West (MSC-W) also attended.

I. 1999 WORK UNDER THE CONVENTION

A. Introductory discussion

2. The secretariat informed the Bureau that the Executive Body had approved the new seventh phase programme of EMEP (1999-2001) and its long-term visions by 2005/2010 in December 1998. The Chairman of the Steering Body had informed the Executive Body about the willingness of EMEP to change its emphasis from a compartmentalized approach focusing on reports of the individual EMEP centres to a more integrated approach. He had also stressed that EMEP would address better subjects and issues of importance to the Convention and the monitoring of the implementation of its protocols. Furthermore, he had drawn attention to the enthusiasm of EMEP to seek further cooperation with other international and national scientific groups active in this field. The Executive Body had regarded a well functioning and forward-looking EMEP necessary for the Convention. The secretariat had introduced the new EMEP website to the Executive Body. The Executive Body noted the high quality of the EMEP work and the importance of continuing to guarantee international financing for this work. It had decided to increase the 1999 EMEP budget by 10% on the 1998 level.

3. The Executive Body had also considered the overall future priorities of the work under the Convention and restructuring of the work based on a proposal by its Bureau (EB.AIR/1998/5 and ECE/EB.AIR/59, paras. 55-58). It had requested its Bureau to draft the mandates for the bodies working in the new structure. The Chairman of the Steering Body, as a member of that Bureau, would participate in this work. The Bureau guided him in this important task and requested him to circulate the draft mandate for comments among its members. On the other hand, the Bureau felt that the mandates should not be too strictly formulated. There may be a need to revise them again in the very near future. In this context, the Bureau members expressed their wish to receive more information about the meetings of the other Bureaux under the Convention and about the work and meetings of the Implementation Committee.

4. The Executive Body would hold its seventeenth session in Gothenburg (Sweden) from 29 November to 3 December 1999. The multi-effect, multi-pollutant protocol was expected to be adopted and signed at that session.

B Progress of EMEP work

5. Based on the reports by the EMEP centres that had been circulated in advance, the Bureau considered the progress of work since the twenty-second session of the Steering Body in each of its work-plan's sub-sections:

- Deposition of acidifying and eutrophying compounds;
- Photo-oxidants;
- Heavy metals;
- Persistent organic pollutants;
- Fine particulates; and
- Emissions.

Furthermore, MSC-W circulated a proposal for the extension of the EMEP grid domain to include the geographical scope of EMEP.

6. The Bureau considered the status of the work of the EMEP centres. The following issues were addressed in particular.

7. As it was very important for all partners working for the Convention to use the same grid definition and numbering, MSC-W should circulate the proposal on EMEP grids to the Convention's subsidiary bodies for comments.

8. Due to changes in the time schedule of the meetings of the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (HELCOM), the annual EMEP report to HELCOM would be prepared after the Steering Body's session.

9. Analysing past and future deposition trends would require an extra effort. It was agreed that the Chairman would contact the Chairman of the Working Group on Effects on this matter.

10. The Bureau noted with satisfaction the further development of the EMEP website and requested MSC-W and the secretariat to prepare a note on it for the Steering Body. In addition, the Bureau requested MSC-W and the secretariat to inform all relevant bodies, organizations and delegates about the EMEP website. The Bureau strongly recommended that the users of EMEP data from the Internet should always make reference to the data source. The Bureau requested all EMEP documents to be made available on the Internet.

11. MSC-W would meet with the representatives of the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) on 7 May to consider in detail cooperation with EMEP.

12. The Chairman of the Steering Body would clarify the problems with the expected contribution in kind from the United Kingdom to the MSC-W work on fine particulates.

13. Work on collecting emission data from Parties had progressed well at the beginning of 1999. The secretariat and MSC-W had together prepared the updated data sets 1980-1996 for the strategies and policies review, as requested by the Executive Body. 1997 data and further updates for the previous years would be reported to the Steering Body.

14. The Task Force on Emission Inventories would meet in June 1999. The Bureau agreed that there was no need to attach the detailed expert panel reports to its Co-Chairmen's report to the Steering Body if they were available on the Internet. MSC-E was expected to prepare the evaluation of the heavy metal (HM) and persistent organic pollutant (POP) expert emission estimates for the Task Force's meeting. MSC-E had distributed the Russian version of the Atmospheric Emission Inventory Guidebook (first edition) in the context of some training workshops. The Bureau noted the problem of keeping the Russian version of the Guidebook up to date. Mr. Van Aalst promised to try to sort out any problems in exchanging emission data between international organizations, in particular problems in sending geographically disaggregated sectoral emission data from CORINAIR to MSC-W.

15. Three EMEP workshops were scheduled for the second half of 1999: (i) Second Workshop on Data Analysis and Interpretation, Dubrovnik (Croatia), 4-8 October 1999 (the report on the first workshop in this series, which has taken place in Helsinki in September 1998, would be distributed before the Steering Body's session); (ii) Workshop on Modelling of Atmospheric Transport and Deposition of POPs and Mercury, Geneva, 1-3 December 1999; and (iii) Workshop on Particles - Emissions, Modelling and Measurements, Davos (Switzerland), 22-25 November 1999. A technical workshop on HM and POP sampling and analytical procedures had been postponed. CCC was finalizing the report on the auditing workshop organized in the Czech Republic.

II. FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF EMEP

16. The Bureau considered further the development of EMEP based on a draft note "Development of EMEP: New Initiatives", prepared by Ms. S. Vidic and Mr. A. Eliassen in March 1999 and a draft note "Revision of monitoring strategy in EMEP", prepared by CCC in April 1999. The Bureau also bore in mind the discussion on visions for the EMEP work by 2005/2010, and on the seventh-phase programme (EB.AIR/GE.1/1998/3, Rev.1) at the twenty-second session of the Steering Body.

17. The Bureau agreed that there was a need to improve further the EMEP work by upgrading the interaction with national programmes and integrating their results and experience into EMEP. The Bureau felt that the discussion note by Ms. Vidic and Mr. Eliassen was a good basis for further debate at the twenty-third session of the Steering Body and requested them to submit the paper for the meeting. Furthermore, the Bureau agreed that Ms. Vidic could analyse the situation further from Croatia's point of view at the twenty-third session. The Bureau members stressed the importance of continuous close contact between the EMEP centres, Parties (national level), secretariat and other international organizations. Better reporting of emission data at the beginning of 1999 was mentioned as a positive example of the concrete value of the closer contact. More attention also needed to be paid to make the EMEP work better known and to facilitate and increase the use of its scientific results in establishing national environmental (not only air pollution) goals. The EMEP website would facilitate the exchange of information and therefore it needed to be made well known among scientists and among environmental and other relevant national (e.g. energy sector) policy makers. The new, more

analytical way of reporting by the EMEP centres, as agreed at the Steering Body's twenty-second session, was also expected to improve the use of EMEP results. The Bureau noted the differences among countries in their participation in the EMEP work and in their use of its results. Also, the national organization of work of the bodies under the Convention and other relevant bodies differed a lot, as well as awareness about the overall goals and work under the Convention. Better coordination on the national level could also improve coordination of work with other international organization.

18. The Bureau discussed separately the EMEP monitoring strategy, which should be seen as a part of the overall pre-defined information gathering strategy under the Convention. The Bureau decided to continue the consideration of the strategic monitoring needs of each substance sector (see para. 5 above), taking into account the goals and requirements of the protocols and the national needs. It was agreed that the Bureau members and the representatives of the EMEP centres should send their further comments on the CCC draft paper to CCC by 20 June 1999. During July, CCC, taking into account the requirements of the protocols and the Implementation Committee, the document on EMEP visions by 2005/2010, the present work-plan and further views of the Bureau members, would prepare a new version on strategic monitoring goals and circulate it for comments among the Bureau at the end of July. In mid-August, the informal paper (available only in English) would be sent to the Steering Body. The Bureau would consider the recommendations at its meeting before the Steering Body's twenty-third session. At that time the 1999 technical reports by the EMEP centres would also be available. Their new structure and more analytical approach to looking at the different substance areas should also facilitate the consideration of the monitoring strategy. Other subsidiary bodies under the Convention should be invited to participate in the debate within the Steering Body.

III. CONTRIBUTIONS IN KIND

19. Experts and representatives of the EMEP centres had met in Moscow on 16 February 1999 to evaluate the contributions in kind. The minutes of the meeting had been distributed in advance to the Bureau. The Bureau considered the 1998 contributions from Belarus (report, January 1999) and Bulgaria (final report, April 1999) and decided to submit them for approval to the Steering Body at its twenty-third session. MSC-E was requested to ensure that both reports as well as the 1997 report of Bulgaria (for final approval in 1999), were sent to all Steering Body members. The Bureau took note of the fact that the mandatory contribution from Bulgaria in 1999 was expected to be paid in cash to the Trust Fund. MSC-E informed the Bureau about the progress in the contribution from Belarus to MSC-E in 1999. The Bureau approved the proposal of Belarus for its 2000 contribution to MSC-E (second stage of the 1999 project).

20. Furthermore, the Bureau considered the status of arrears of Ukraine (1992-1994 and 1996-1998) and the prospects for Ukraine's future contributions (from 1999 onward). As neither MSC-E nor the secretariat had received any information from Ukraine, the Bureau requested the secretariat to contact Ukraine once more on this matter and also to inform it of how Ukraine would benefit from the EMEP work.

IV. FINANCIAL ISSUES

21. The secretariat had circulated in advance to the Bureau members information on the status of the Trust Fund and the 1999 detailed budget proposals by the centres. The Bureau took note of the information and approved the detailed budgets for 1999. The Bureau decided to continue detailed monitoring of the use of resources at each centre in 1997 and 1998 at its next meeting.

22. The Bureau requested the Chairman with the assistance of the secretary to prepare a draft budget for 2000 for further consideration at the Steering Body's twenty-third session. With reference to the Executive Body's decision (ECE.EB.AIR/59, para. 61 (d)), the Bureau also requested the Chairman and the secretary to study the budgets and mandatory contributions for the three-year period 2001-2003.

V. COOPERATION WITH OTHER BODIES

23. The secretary informed the Bureau about HELCOM and OSPARCOM activities and about the further development of cooperation between EMEP and these organizations. The EMEP and OSPAR Commission secretariats had met in November 1998 and the OSPAR/INPUT group in December 1998. The report of these meetings had been circulated in advance to the Bureau. The OSPAR Environmental Assessment and Monitoring Committee had also met on 14-16 April (progress report prepared for this meeting was circulated). The HELCOM TC-INPUT group had met on 19-23 April. The EMEP centres would prepare further details for the cooperation with OSPARCOM. In 1998, they made separate contracts with HELCOM. More information would be provided to the Steering Body at its twenty-third session.

24. Mr. A. Eliassen informed the Bureau that EUROTRAC project's Environment Assessment Group would meet immediately after this Bureau meeting. The Steering Body would be informed about cooperation with EUROTRAC at its twenty-third session. Mr. Van Aalst promised to send relevant information about the European Environment Agency's (EEA) and its Topic Centres on Air Quality and Air Emissions activities to the Steering Body members. The secretariat was requested to distribute to the Bureau members the Memorandum of Understanding between EEA and UN/ECE.

VI. TWENTY-THIRD SESSION OF THE STEERING BODY

25. The Bureau discussed the agenda and the time-schedule for the twenty-third session of the Steering Body to be held from 6 to 8 September 1999. As proposed by the secretary, the Bureau agreed that the annotated agenda should be drawn up in table format. Furthermore, all documents should have a summary on the cover page.