



Economic and Social
Council

Distr.
LIMITED

E/ECE(48)/L.14
22 April 1993

Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

Forty-eighth session
Agenda item 5(a)

DRAFT DECISION ON COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF
ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The Economic Commission for Europe,

Conscious of the importance of sustainable development for the global community as a whole and the Commission's members in particular,

Stressing the multidisciplinary nature of sustainable development, and the fact that a comprehensive view of the Commission's work is therefore required,

Taking note of the decisions of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), in particular Agenda 21 and Assembly resolution 47/191 on institutional arrangements to follow-up UNCED, in particular paragraphs 27 and 28 relating to the regional commissions,

Recalling its own decisions O (45), E (46) and E (47) on cooperation in the field of environment and sustainable development,

Also taking note of the decisions of the sixth session of the Senior Advisers to ECE Governments on Environmental and Water Problems based on the inventory made by the ECE secretariat concerning implications at regional level of the outcome of the UNCED and in particular of Agenda 21 and of the tenth session of the Executive Body for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution, and welcoming the arrangements made by the Senior Advisers for strengthening their role in the new European context,

Reaffirming that in accordance with its own decisions E (46) and E (47) cooperation in the field of environment and sustainable development is one of the Commission's priorities, with a special regard to the development of regional policies, legal instruments and preventive measures,

Taking note with satisfaction of the progress made in strengthening coordination and cooperation with the EC and organizations and institutions that are active in the field of sustainable development in the region, such as, inter alia, UNEP, Council of Europe, CSCE, and in particular the OECD; and stressing the necessity to extend such coordination and streamlining in order to ensure optimal use of existing resources and to respond better to the specific needs of the countries in transition,

1. Calls upon all its Subsidiary Bodies to promote sustainable development as one of the guiding principles for all their relevant activities and to take fully into account relevant conclusions and recommendations from UNCED in their programmes of work, and to elaborate action proposals as appropriate;

2. Calls on all ECE member States and the European Community to consider, if they have not already done so, ratification of or accession to, as appropriate, the following ECE conventions:

- the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context,
- the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents,
- the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes;

3. Encourages the Senior Advisers to review implementation and verification measures for the ECE environmental conventions, taking into account the negotiating history of each convention and the specific problems of the countries in transition for presentation to the signatories or parties to these conventions;

4. Takes note with satisfaction of the progress accomplished in the implementation of the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution; invites all member States and the EC to expedite procedures in order to sign, ratify or accede to the Protocol on Volatile Organic Compounds; and encourages them to take an active part in the ongoing negotiations for the elaboration of a second Protocol for a further reduction of sulphur emissions after 1993;

5. Welcomes the organization by Switzerland of the Conference on "Environment for Europe", to be held in Lucerne, 28 to 30 April 1993, and trusts that the Conference will provide guidance to ECE in its activities in the field of environment and sustainable development in particular for the elaboration of a long-term Environmental Programme for Europe, taking into account the recommendations by the sixth session of the Senior Advisers to ECE Governments on Environmental and Water Problems and the tenth session of the Executive Body for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution;

6. Invites the secretariat to prepare, in accordance with the provisions of Assembly resolution 47/191 on institutional arrangements to follow-up UNCED, in particular paragraphs 27 and 28 relating to the regional commissions, a report on the work of the ECE to implement Agenda 21, for consideration by the Senior Advisers (or by the Commission at its forty-ninth session), before transmission to the UN Commission on Sustainable Development in 1993, or at the latest in 1994;

7. Underlines the need to extend, on the basis of an evaluation of three pilot reviews, the system of environmental performance reviews developed by OECD to other ECE countries; and endorses the proposal of the Senior Advisers that their role in that respect be considered in detail, with the assistance of the secretariat and in the light of the outcome of the Lucerne Ministerial Conference, at the consultations of heads of delegation to be convened in autumn 1993;

8. Encourages the Senior Advisers to extend the use of workshops, as a cost effective and flexible form of cooperation, focusing on the specific needs of countries in transition in know-how and expert advice;

9. Accepts the invitation contained in UNCED Agenda 21 to study the feasibility of organizing a regional conference on transport and the environment and requests the Executive Secretary to carry out such a study in cooperation with member States, the European Community and interested organizations, making full use of the expertise and taking into account the views of the Principal Subsidiary Bodies concerned, especially the Inland Transport Committee, the Senior Advisers on Environmental and Water Problems and the Committee on Energy, and to report the results of the study to the Commission well in advance of the forty-ninth session in order to prepare its further decisions on the matter;

10. Requests the secretariat to lend all due support in the elaboration of the proposals mentioned above and stresses that, with a view to the Commission's limited resources, no new institutions shall be created to this end;

11. Notes the good progress accomplished in the framework of the Energy Efficiency 2000 Project, in particular the establishment of Energy Efficiency Demonstration Zones, and encourages the further enhancement of trade and cooperation in energy-efficient, environmentally sound technology and management practices, especially between countries in transition;

12. Requests the Executive Secretary to assure that, through the effective and efficient use of available staff and financial resources, the secretariat shall be able to concentrate on the priorities set by the Commission, and urges the Secretary-General of the United Nations to consider granting an exception to the recruitment freeze including the reprogramming of personnel and/or resources to priority areas within the ECE, so that the necessary secretariat resources be provided to the ECE in the field of environment and sustainable development;

13. Finally requests the Executive Secretary to report at the forty-ninth session of the Commission on the action he will have taken to implement this decision.