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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

(Special session, Geneva, 18-19* February 2003)

Ad Hoc Preparatory Working Group of Senior Officials

“Environment for Europe”

(Fifth meeting, Geneva, 19*-21 February 2003)

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE MEETING

to be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
beginning at 9.30 a.m. on Tuesday, 18 February 2003

Tuesday, 18 February (Committee on Environmental Policy only)

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Information on the preparations for the Spring Seminar and for the 58th session of the Economic Commission for Europe.
3. Future ECE strategic direction for the environment.
4. Presentation of the environmental performance review of Georgia and adoption of the recommendations.
5. Environmental policy in transition: lessons learned from ten years of environmental performance reviews.
6. Other business.

* On 19 February the Committee on Environmental Policy and the Working Group of Senior Officials will discuss issues of common interest.

Wednesday, 19 February (Committee and Working Group of Senior Officials)

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Environmental policy in transition: lessons learned from ten years of environmental performance reviews.
3. Update on UNECE multilateral environmental agreements:
 - (a) The draft protocol on strategic environmental assessment to the Espoo Convention;
 - (b) The draft protocol on pollutant release and transfer registers to the Aarhus Convention;
 - (c) The draft legal instrument on civil liability and compensation for damage resulting from the transboundary effects of industrial accidents on transboundary waters to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes and the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents.
4. Environmental assessment and reporting.
5. Environmental education for sustainable development.
6. Guidelines on compliance and enforcement.
7. Energy and environment.
8. Phase-out of leaded petrol.
9. Other business.
10. Closing of the joint session.

Thursday, 20 and Friday, 21 February (Working Group only)

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Future of the "Environment for Europe" process.
3. Drafting of the Ministerial Declaration.
4. Partnerships:
 - (a) EECCA environmental strategy;
 - (b) Environment, water and security in Central Asia;
 - (c) Business partnerships for environmental management.

5. The Kiev Agenda and organization of work.
6. Consideration of the joint ministerial-NGO session.
7. Update on other preparatory activities:
 - (a) Biodiversity-related issues;
 - (b) Regional mountain initiatives (Carpathian convention and legal instrument for the protection of the mountain ecosystems in the Caucasian region).
8. Financial requirements:
 - (a) Outstanding requirements to support participation in the Ministerial Conference and related meetings;
 - (b) Outstanding requirements at the national level to organize the Conference.
9. Organizational issues for the Ministerial Conference.
10. Calendar of further meetings of the Executive Committee and the Working Group of Senior Officials.
11. Other business.
12. Closing of the meeting.

EXPLANATORY NOTES TO THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Tuesday, 18 February 2003 (Committee on Environmental Policy only)

Item 1. Adoption of the agenda

The Committee is expected to adopt the agenda of its special session.

Documentation:

Provisional agenda (ECE/CEP/90)

Item 2. Information on the preparations for the Spring Seminar and for the 58th session of the Economic Commission for Europe

The Committee will be informed about the programme of the Spring Seminar on Sustainable Development in the ECE Region (3 March 2003) to be organized in conjunction with the 58th session of the Economic Commission for Europe (4-7 March 2003). It is expected that the Commission will decide on its role and follow-up work to the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

Item 3. Future ECE strategic direction for the environment

At its ninth session in November 2002, the Committee reviewed the analytical paper contained in document CEP/2002/2 and Add.1.

The Committee is expected to discuss the revised analytical paper taking into account the discussion and comments provided at the ninth session. A final draft will be submitted to the Committee's Bureau in late spring taking into account the outcome of the Commission's 58th session (March 2003) and the Kiev Ministerial Conference (May 2003). The paper will serve as reference for the Committee in developing its strategic direction for the environment and as guidance for its future role.

Documentation:

Challenges and emerging directions for ECE environmental policies (CEP/2002/3)

Item 4. Presentation of the environmental performance review of Georgia and adoption of the recommendations

The Committee will review the environmental performance of Georgia, by conducting a peer review. To that end the outcome of the discussion held during the Expert Group's meeting held on 17 February 2003 will be presented. The Committee is expected to adopt the recommendations.

Documentation:

The draft environmental performance review of Georgia (CEP/2003/3)

Item 5. Environmental policy in transition: Lessons learned from ten years of environmental performance reviews

The Committee's Bureau, at its meetings in March and July 2002, reviewed and agreed to the secretariat's proposals for an analytical paper based on all environmental performance reviews prepared to date as a possible input to the Kiev Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe".

At its ninth session, the Committee reviewed a draft of the paper entitled "Environmental policy in transition: Lessons learned from ten years of environmental performance reviews". Delegations were invited to send written comments to the secretariat by 15 November for incorporation into the revised draft to be submitted to the Committee and the Working Group of Senior Officials at their sessions in February. The paper was welcomed as a valuable contribution to the Kiev Ministerial Conference.

The Committee is invited to discuss and to provide further suggestions and amendments related to the substantive content of the paper and the executive summary for their finalization.

Documentation:

Environmental policy in transition: Lessons learned from ten years of UNECE environmental performance reviews (CEP/2003/2 - CEP/AC.11/2003/13)
Executive Summary (CEP/2003/8 - CEP/AC.11/2003/14)

Item 6. Other business

Delegations may wish to put forward other items for discussion.

Wednesday, 19 February 2003 (Committee and Working Group of Senior Officials)

Item 1. Adoption of the agenda

The Committee and the Working Group are expected to adopt the agenda for their joint session.

Documentation:

Provisional agenda (ECE/CEP/90 - CEP/AC.11/2003/1)

Item 2. Environmental policy in transition: lessons learned from ten years of environmental performance reviews

The Working Group of Senior Officials, at its third meeting (3-4 July 2002), reviewed an annotated outline for this paper, as contained in document CEP/AC.11/2002/17.

At its fourth meeting, it reviewed a draft of the paper entitled "Environmental policy in transition: Lessons learned from ten years of environmental performance reviews". The paper was welcomed as a valuable contribution to the Kiev Ministerial Conference.

On the basis of discussions, it was agreed that the draft paper would be revised and submitted to the Committee on Environmental Policy and to the Working Group of Senior Officials in February for further consideration. Delegations were also invited to send written comments to the secretariat by 15 November for incorporation into the revised draft. Members are invited to discuss how to present the paper to the Kiev Conference.

Documentation:

Environmental policy in transition: Lessons learned from ten years of UNECE environmental performance reviews (CEP/2003/2 - CEP/AC.11/2003/13)
Executive summary (CEP/2003/8 - CEP/AC.11/2003/14)

Item 3. Update on UNECE multilateral environmental agreements

The UNECE secretariat will provide an update on the status of preparation of the following multilateral environmental agreements:

- (a) The draft protocol on strategic environmental assessment to the Espoo Convention;
- (b) The draft protocol on pollutant release and transfer registers to the Aarhus Convention;
- (c) The draft legal instrument on civil liability and compensation for damage resulting from the transboundary effects of industrial accidents on transboundary waters to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes and the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents.

Documentation:

Note on the extraordinary meetings of the governing bodies of the four ECE conventions (CEP/AC.11/2003/25)

Item 4. Environmental assessment and reporting

The Chairman of the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring reported to the Committee on Environmental Policy at its ninth session, and the ECE secretariat together with the European Environment Agency (EEA) reported to the Working Group of Senior Officials at its fourth meeting, on progress in the preparation of the Kiev Assessment report and on other contributions on environmental assessment and reporting. The Committee on Environmental Policy and the Working Group of Senior Officials welcomed the progress made and stressed the importance of assessment and monitoring. Some delegations suggested that this issue should be included as a separate item in the Kiev agenda.

The Chairman of the Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and the European Environment Agency will report on further preparations related to environmental assessment and reporting.

Documentation:

Executive Summary of the Third Pan-European Assessment Report (CEP/2003/9 - CEP/AC.11/2003/29)

Conclusions from lessons learned from data collection for the Kiev Assessment (CEP/2003/10 - CEP/AC.11/2003/15)

Recommendations to countries that are not EEA members on strengthening national environmental monitoring and information systems (CEP/2003/11 - CEP/AC.11/2003/16)

Guidelines on improving national environmental reporting (CEP/2003/12 - CEP/AC.11/2003/17)

Item 5. Environmental education for sustainable development

Further to suggestions made at the third meeting of the Working Group of Senior Officials, a drafting group was established to develop a strategy for environment and education, under the leadership of Sweden and the Russian Federation. It met for the first time on 9 September. The results of this meeting and further consultation were presented to the Committee on Environmental Policy, at its ninth session, and the Working Group of Senior Officials, at its fourth meeting.

Delegations stressed that a strategic view on environment for sustainable development required coordination between Environment Ministers and Education Ministers and other bodies concerned. It was therefore decided to explore with the Council of Europe, which was currently organizing a discussion by Education Ministries on this issue, the feasibility of developing a joint process for education on sustainable development.

The Working Group requested the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe to take up this question at its session in March as part of the debate on sustainable development.

With respect to the future work of the above-mentioned drafting group on environmental education for sustainable development and its upcoming meeting scheduled for 22 November 2002 in Moscow, the Working Group directed it to provide to the Executive Committee at its meeting in January a short document on environmental education for sustainable development, examining the key issues and suggesting possible future actions, that could be the basis for decisions by the Ministers in Kiev.

The Working Group may, at its meeting in February, review the possibility of organizing a seminar on best practices in environmental education for sustainable development as a side event in Kiev.

Documentation:

Draft strategy on education for sustainable development (CEP/2003/13 - CEP/AC.11/2003/19)

Item 6. Compliance and enforcement

It was reported to the Committee on Environmental Policy, at its ninth session, and the Working Group of Senior Officials, at its fourth meeting, that agreement had been reached on guidelines

on strengthening compliance with and implementation of multilateral environmental agreements in the ECE region.

The document is submitted for adoption and subsequent endorsement to the Kiev Conference.

Documentation:

Guidelines on compliance (CEP/2003/7 - CEP/AC.11/2003/18)

Item 7. Energy and environment

At the ninth session of the Committee on Environmental Policy and the fourth meeting of the Working Group of Senior Officials, the Energy Charter secretariat reported on a draft policy statement on energy efficiency as a possible input to the Ministerial Declaration.

At the same meetings, the UNECE secretariat reported on the preparation of guidelines for reforming energy pricing and subsidies.

The Committee and the Working Group may wish to review further progress in these areas.

Documentation:

Guidelines on reforming energy pricing (CEP/2003/14 - CEP/AC.11/2003/9)

Guidelines on reforming energy subsidies (CEP/2003/14/Add.1 - CEP/AC.11/2003/9/Add.1)

Contributions of the Energy Charter to the Ministerial Declaration (CEP/AC.11/2003/24)

Item 8. Phase-out of leaded petrol

The Committee and the Working Group will be informed of further progress in the implementation of the Strategy to Phase Out Leaded Petrol.

Documentation:

Executive summary on the phase-out of leaded petrol (CEP/2003/15 - CEP/AC.11/2003/12)

Item 9. Other business

Delegations may wish to put forward other items for discussion.

Item 10. Closing of the session

The Chairpersons with the assistance of the secretariat will sum up the main conclusions and decisions.

Thursday, 20 and Friday, 21 February 2003 (Working Group only)

Item 1. Adoption of the agenda

The Working Group is expected to adopt the agenda of its fifth meeting.

Documentation:

Provisional Agenda (CEP/AC.11/2003/1)

Item 2. Future of the “Environment for Europe” process

At its third meeting, the Working Group established a drafting group on the future of the "Environment for Europe" process. The drafting group met in Geneva on 12 September and on 2 October 2002. Its draft paper was considered by the Working Group of Senior Officials during its fourth meeting. The paper was well received and valued as an important contribution to the preparations for the Kiev Conference.

The third meeting of the drafting group is scheduled for 3 December, also in Geneva. Participants in the Working Group of Senior Officials were requested to provide their written comments to the ECE secretariat by 18 November 2002 for the further revision of the document by the drafting group. The revised paper will be available for consideration by the Working Group at its fifth meeting.

Documentation:

Report of the drafting group on the future of the “Environment for Europe” process (CEP/AC.11/2003/7)

Item 3. Drafting of the Ministerial Declaration

The Working Group of Senior Officials, at its fourth meeting, decided that the Chair would prepare the first draft of elements that might be included in the Ministerial Declaration in consultation with a small drafting group, which would meet on 4 December, in Geneva. It also decided that the Executive Committee, which should be responsible for further drafting the Ministerial Declaration, would review and revise the first draft at its meeting in January 2003 and submit it to the Working Group at its fifth meeting.

Documentation:

Draft Ministerial Declaration (CEP/AC.11/2003/6)

Item 4. Partnerships

(a) EECCA environmental strategy

At its fourth meeting, the Working Group of Senior Officials was informed about the main outcomes of the third meeting of the Steering Group and expert meetings for the drawing-up of

an environmental strategy for the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) held in Tbilisi on 13-17 October 2002.

It was agreed that the first draft of the strategy would be sent out to States for comment by 10 December 2002, followed by further discussion at the national level and further revision and finalization at the fourth meeting of the Steering Group (Tbilisi, 8-9 February 2002).

The Working Group agreed that the strategy should be on the agenda of the Kiev Conference and looked forward to having an opportunity to review the final text at its fifth meeting, in February 2003. Possible issues concerning institutional or other arrangements for implementation would be viewed also in the context of the Working Group's discussion on the future of the "Environment for Europe" process.

The Working Group invited the secretariat to prepare proposals regarding the procedure for the endorsement of the strategy, for consideration by the Executive Committee at its meeting in January 2003 and, subsequently, by the Working Group in February 2003.

Documentation:

Partnerships in the context of an EECCA environmental strategy (CEP/AC.11/2003/26)
Information note by the Secretariat on the procedures for endorsing the strategy.

(b) Environment, water and security in Central Asia

The secretariat reported to the Working Group of Senior Officials at its fourth meeting on the High-level meeting of the representatives from the Ministries of Environment of countries of Central Asia (Khoudjand, Tajikistan; 1-2 October 2002). The countries of Central Asia had proposed to include an item on "Environment, water and security – basis for sustainable development" in the Kiev Agenda. This item should be based on the Central Asian initiative on sustainable development launched at the Johannesburg Summit. The development of a legal document on regional cooperation could be started after the Conference.

The countries of Central Asia proposed that, for the Kiev Conference itself, they could prepare a note of commitment, for example, a regional declaration or charter, for adoption. The delegation of Kazakhstan, speaking on behalf of the countries of Central Asia, offered to host another meeting to consider this issue.

The Working Group considered the issue to be of high importance, and it was agreed that it would be taken up again at its fifth meeting.

Documentation:

Proposals for environment, water and security in Central Asia (CEP/AC.11/2003/11)

(c) Business partnerships for environmental management

At its fourth meeting, the Working Group discussed the possible organization of an agenda item or side event during the Conference on the role of the business community in environmental management. It requested the Task Force for the Environmental Action Programme (EAP) and the Project Preparation Committee (PPC) to prepare concrete proposals on this issue for consideration at its fifth meeting.

Item 5. The Kiev Agenda and organization of work

Further to the discussions at the fourth meeting of the Working Group, it was agreed that the Chair would provide a revised proposal for the agenda and organization of work for the Kiev Conference.

Documentation:

Revised organisation of work during the Kiev Conference

Item 6. Consideration of the joint ministerial-NGO session

The representative of the non-governmental organization EcoForum will provide an update on plans for the organization of a joint ministerial-NGO session during the Kiev Conference for consideration by the Working Group.

Documentation:

Proposals for a joint ministerial-NGO session (CEP/AC.11/2003/28)

Item 7. Update on other preparatory activities

(a) Biodiversity-related issues

The Council of the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (PEBLDS) will meet in January 2003 to decide on the draft commitments that are to be put forward to the Kiev Conference for discussion and decision. The PEBLDS secretariat will provide an update to the Working Group on the results of this meeting, including a resolution on the regional implementation of biodiversity targets and the integration of biodiversity into sectoral policies.

The representative of the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe will report further on its plans to submit a background document on a framework for cooperation between PEBLDS and the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe.

Documentation:

Resolution on biodiversity (CEP/AC.11/2003/22)

(b) Regional mountain initiatives

At its third meeting, the Working Group of Senior Officials was informed about progress in the development of legal instruments for the protection of the ecosystems in the Carpathian and Caucasian mountains. It was confirmed that the Carpathian convention should be available in time for the Conference. A legal instrument on the Caucasian mountains will not be ready.

The United Nations Environment Programme will provide a progress report on the Carpathian convention.

Documentation:

Note by UNEP on the Carpathian convention

Item 8. Financial requirements

The UNECE secretariat will provide an update to the Working Group on the financial needs to ensure broad, representative participation in the Kiev Conference and its related meetings.

The Kiev secretariat will inform the Working Group on the status of its national budget.

Documentation:

Note by the UNECE secretariat on the status of the Environment for Europe Trust Fund

Note by the Kiev Conference secretariat on the national budget

Item 9. Organizational issues for the Ministerial Conference

The Chair will provide the Working Group with information on the status of national preparations for the 2003 Kiev Conference and the outcome of the meetings of the National Organizing Committee.

The UNECE secretariat will provide comprehensive information on organizational issues that have been decided to date, including rules governing participation, registration, documentation and side events.

Documentation:

Note by the UNECE secretariat on organizational issues

List of documents for the Kiev Conference (CEP/AC.11/2003/8)

List of side events for the Kiev Conference (CEP/AC.11/2003/10)

Item 10. Calendar of further meetings of the Executive Committee and the Working Group of Senior Officials

The Working Group is invited to comment on the proposed calendar of meetings of the Executive Committee and the Working Group of Senior Officials.

Documentation:

Note by the secretariat on the calendar of meetings

Item 11. Other business

Delegations may wish to put forward other items for discussion.

Item 12. Closing of the meeting

The Chair with the assistance of the secretariat will sum up the main conclusions and decisions.
