

CENTRE FOR CO-OPERATION WITH NON-MEMBERS
ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE

**Task Force for the Implementation of the Environmental Action Programme for
Central and Eastern Europe (EAP)**

**DRAFT SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FOURTEENTH MEETING OF THE TASK FORCE FOR THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PROGRAMME FOR CENTRAL AND
EASTERN EUROPE**

JOINT MEETING OF THE EAP TASK FORCE AND THE PROJECT PREPARATION COMMITTEE

October 6-7, 2003, Paris

Agenda item 2.

ACTION REQUIRED: Delegates will be invited to approve the Draft Summary Record of the 14th Meeting of the EAP Task Force, held in Tbilisi (Georgia) on 10-11 February 2003.

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FOURTEENTH MEETING OF THE TASK FORCE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PROGRAMME FOR CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

10-11 February, 2003, Tbilisi, Georgia

Draft Summary Record

Opening formalities

1. Mme Chkhobadze and Mr. Reynolds, representing the EC co-chair, welcomed participants and opened the meeting. Representatives from 32 countries and the European Commission were present, as well as representatives from International Organisations and Financing Institutions, and partners from Environmental Citizens' Organisations and the New Regional Environmental Centres in EECCA (see attached list of participants).

2. Mme Chkhobadze informed the meeting that Mr. J-F-Verstrynge had resigned his position as Co-Chair of the EAP Task Force. The EC, which serves as a permanent co-Chair, had nominated Ms. Soledad Blanco to replace him. However, due to personal reasons, Mme Blanco was unable to participate in the meeting and Mr. Reynolds would act as co-Chair on behalf of the EC. Mrs. Chkhobadze, speaking on behalf of the Task Force Co-Chair, expressed deep appreciation for Mr. J-F. Verstrynge's leadership and support for the Task Force. His personal commitment had helped raise the profile and effectiveness of the Task Force's work, and to increase the financial support provided by donors.

3. The Task Force took note of the outcomes of a consultation meeting devoted to strengthening cooperation between EAP Task Force and NGOs that took place on February 8, 2003. Delegates expressed satisfaction with the involvement of the NGO community of the EECCA region in the development and implementation of the Task Force's work programme. The Task Force noted the role of Ecoforum in this regard. The Co-Chairs encouraged donors to provide further support to NGOs to enable them to strengthen their involvement in the Task Force's activities.

4. The Co-Chair pointed out that the main objectives of the meeting, the last one before the 5th "Environment for Europe" Ministerial Conference, were to review progress in implementing the EAP Task Force work programme for the period of 2001-2003, and to make recommendations on the Task Force's input to the Kiev Conference. Recommendations would be discussed at the next meeting of WGSO in Geneva on 19-21 February, 2003.

5. The Task Force adopted the Draft Annotated Agenda of the Fourteenth Meeting [CCNM/ENV/EAP/A(2003)1] and the Draft Summary Record of the Thirteenth Meeting [CCNM/ENV/EAP(2000)21] without amendments.

Status of Preparations for the Kiev Ministerial Conference (including East/West Environmental Partnership: EECCA Environment Strategy)

6. The Task Force took note of a presentation by Mr. Stepan Lyzun, Head of the Secretariat of the Kiev "Environment for Europe" Ministerial Conference, First Deputy State Secretary of the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources of Ukraine, on the status of national preparations for the Kiev Conference. He informed delegates of the recent changes in the Ukrainian Government and the results of several meetings of the National Organising Committee, as well as on the national actions aimed at attracting greater attention to the Conference, including regular broadcasts on Ukrainian TV. He also informed delegates of the decision of the Ukrainian Government to change the Conference venue and to move it to a new Exhibition complex on the bank of the Dnieper River, as well as of the status of Conference budget and preparation of documents.

7. The representative of the UN ECE Secretariat, Mr. Bo Libert, informed delegates of the recent meeting of the Executive Committee of the WGSO (Execom), held in Kiev on 13 January 2003, and on preparations for the 5th meeting of WGSO, to be held on February 19-21, 2003 in Geneva. He also provided information on the status of Kiev Agenda and preparation of relevant documents.

8. The Task Force members took note of the results of a Steering Group Meeting on the development of the East/West Environmental partnership: EECCA Environment Strategy, held on February 9, 2003. The work of a Steering Group that was drafting the Strategy was continuing in parallel with the Task Force, and this might create difficulties for some delegations.

9. Mr. J. Reynolds, the representative of the EC, informed delegates of the actions taken by the EC on preparations for the Kiev Ministerial, including activities of the Greek Presidency. He provided information on a Communication that had been adopted by EU Members for the Kiev Conference and on plans for the next phase of EU environmental cooperation with EECCA countries.

Progress in implementing EAP Task Force Work Programme in EECCA and CEE

10. Discussion of Task Force activities and reports was organised into three blocks:

- Issues arising from the CEE and EECCA sub-programmes
- CEE sub-programme
- EECCA sub-programme.

Discussion of the two sub-programmes was organised in parallel sessions. Mrs. Chkhobadze chaired the EECCA parallel working group and Mr. Sergey Samoilo_v, was appointed rapporteur. Mrs. Helena Cizkova chaired the parallel working group on CEE and Mr. Nemeskeri was elected rapporteur. The Task Force agreed that delegates should submit any comments that they have on the documents by 21st February, 2003.

(i) Issues Arising from the CEE and EECCA Sub-Programmes

11. The Task Force endorsed Reports on: the Implementation of the Aarhus Policy Statement on Environmental Management in Enterprises (EMEs) for EECCA (see CCNM/ENV/EAP(2003)10) and CEE (see CCNM/ENV/EAP(2003)22); and Trends in Environmental Finance for the EECCA region (see CCNM/ENV/EAP(2003)13) and CEE (see CCNM/ENV/EAP(2003)23). The Task Force recommended that the WGSO consider how these reports might feature on the agenda and documentation of the Kiev Ministerial.

(ii) Sub-programme for the Central and Eastern Europe

12. The working group for the CEE sub-programme discussed the following reports:

1. Creating Congruence: Highlights and Achievements of REC Activities in Central and Eastern Europe under the Environmental Action Plan(see CCNM/ENV/EAP(2003)3);
2. Progress on the Implementation of the Aarhus Policy Statement on Environmental Management in Enterprises: Central and Eastern Europe (see CCNM/ENV/EAP(2003)22);
3. Environmental Financing in CEE and South Eastern Europe (SEE) (see CCNM/ENV/EAP(2003)23).

13. The Task Force endorsed the recommendations of the working group (see Annex 1). The Task Force expressed appreciation to all those who had contributed to the successful outcome of the CEE sub-programme, particularly the REC (Szentendre) secretariat. Even though it was envisaged that the CEE sub-programme would terminate at Kiev, the REC would still play an important role in helping to transfer relevant experience from CEE to EECCA countries.

(iii) Sub-programme for the Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia

14. The working group for the EECCA sub-programme discussed the following major reports:

- Developing Effective Packages of Environmental Policy Instruments in the NIS – Experience and Directions for Reform (CCNM/ENV/EAP(2003)4);
- Mechanisms for Mobilising and Allocating Financial Resources to Achieve Environmental Objectives, including Debt-for-Environment Swaps: A Background Paper Prepared for the East/West Environmental Partnership: EECCA Environment Strategy (CCNM/ENV/EAP(2003)11);
- Urban Water Sector Reform in EECCA Countries: Progress since the Almaty Ministerial Conference (CCNM/ENV/EAP(2003)15);
- Guiding Principles for Reform of Environmental Enforcement Authorities in Transition Economies of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) (CCNM/ENV/EAP(2003)6);
- Good Practices in Public Environmental Expenditure Management in Transition Economies (CCNM/ENV/EAP(2003)12)
- Outline of a possible post-Kiev Programme of Work for activities currently supported by the EAP Task Force Secretariat (CCNM/ENV/EAP(2003)19).

The Task Force:

Urban Water Issues

- Endorsed the report «Urban Water Sector Reform in EECCA Countries: Progress since the Almaty Ministerial Conference» as a basis for further work in the EECCA region;
- Broadly supported the proposed future work in this area and recommended that the work should also take account of rural water issues, the need to achieve the targets agreed at the WSSD on water supply and sanitation, and the importance of addressing the pre-treatment of industrial waste water;
- Noted the call by Ministers at the Almaty Conference of 2000 that a major stakeholder conference be organised no later than 2005 to review progress since Almaty meeting;
- Invited the WGSO to consider whether the report should be a Category I or II document.

Environmental Finance Issues

- Endorsed the report on «Mechanisms for Mobilising and Allocating Financial Resources to Achieve Environmental Objectives, including Debt-for-Environment Swaps» as a basis for further work in the EECCA region.
- Endorsed the «Good Practices in Public Environmental Expenditure Management in Transition Economies» and agreed to support their implementation; recommended that the document be classed as a Category I document;
- Took note of the meeting on the feasibility of a debt for environment swap for Georgia that will take place in Tbilisi on 12th February, and the potential interest that this issue may have for Ministers;
- Broadly supported proposed future work in this area;
- Asked the Secretariat to produce a report synthesising the «mechanisms» and «finance trends» reports.

Environmental Policy Issues

- Endorsed the «Guiding Principles for Reform of Environmental Enforcement Authorities in Transition Economies of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia» and agreed to support their implementation;
- Took note of the Joint Statement by the representatives of environmental enforcement authorities in the EECCA region on these Guiding Principles;
- Invited the WGSO to include this document as a Category I document for the Kiev Ministerial;
- Endorsed the report «Developing Effective Packages of Environmental Policy Instruments in the NIS – Experience and Directions for Reform» as a basis for further work in the EECCA region;
- Broadly supported proposed future work in this area; recommended that further consideration be given to how work on convergence with EU environmental Directives should be developed.

The current budgetary situation of the Task Force Programme of Work for 2001-2003 and progress in fundraising

15. The Task Force took note of the report by OECD Task Force Secretariat, on the current budgetary situation and progress in fundraising (see CCNM/ENV/EAP(2003)20). Actual expenditures were less than the estimated budget due to the later than expected arrival of donor funding. Some projects were not (fully) implemented due to lack of donor interest. Activities were driven largely by the availability of donor finance rather than agreed priorities. Uncertainties in the level and timing of donor support had created an on-going cash-flow problem that created obstacles to recruiting and retaining staff, and generally hindered efficient programme implementation.

16. The co-Chair of the Task Force stressed the importance of establishing a system for providing secure financial resources for implementation of the work programme. Some donors expressed their satisfaction with the way activities had been implemented, and provided indicative commitments for 2003, on the assumption that the Task Force's mandate was extended at Kiev.

Future Role and Organisation of the EAP Task Force after Kiev Ministerial

17. The Task Force took note of the information of the representative of Ukraine about the current status of discussion on the future of the “Environment for Europe” process. The EAP Task Force also made the following decisions and recommendations:

- Agreed on the need for the EAP Task Force to continue its work after Kiev; the focus on the EECCA region should be reinforced and the sub-programme on CEE should be terminated;
- Agreed on the importance, within the framework of the EAP Task Force, of transferring relevant experience from CEE, including the REReP, to the EECCA region, and on the useful role that REC(Szentendre) could play in this respect;
- Agreed that the activities of the EAP Task Force should be adapted to better reflect its new role and should provide for closer cooperation with New RECs and the PPC;
- Agreed that the EAP Task Force could play a significant role in monitoring and supporting the implementation of the EECCA Strategy; this would require close cooperation with the New RECs, relevant international organisations and NGOs.

Other Business

18. The Task Force endorsed secretariat proposal for a communication strategy in connection with the Kiev Ministerial Conference.

19. The Task Force agreed to organise its next meeting in the middle of October 2003 in Paris, subject to decisions made the Kiev Ministerial conference.

ANNEX 1**Recommendations from the Working Group on EAP Task Force CEE Sub-programme****10 February 2003, Tbilisi, Georgia**

The discussion in the Working Group (WG) was organized around the reports presented during the plenary session. In addition it was agreed that the financial report on the Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) sub-programme is going to be presented directly to the plenary session.

Based on the outcomes from our discussion the WG is recommending to the EAP TF and through the EAP TF to the WGSO to endorse the following reports:

1. Creating Congruence: Highlights and Achievements of the CEE Sub-programme (1998-2003);
2. Progress on the Implementation of the Aarhus Policy Statement on Environmental Management in Enterprises: Central and Eastern Europe;
3. Environmental Financing in CEE and South Eastern Europe (SEE).

Also, the WG has agreed on the following recommendations to be submitted to the EPA TF and through it to the WGSO:

1. The WG concluded that CEE countries have achieved the level of knowledge and know how in the transition period that should be transferred into the less developed regions of Europe: SEE and EECCA.
2. Therefore the CEE sub-programme of the EAP TF in its present form should be terminated at the Kiev Ministerial meeting.
3. The EAP TF and WGSO should consider the possibility of developing a concrete platform for transfer of experience, lessons learnt and know how from CEE to SEE and EECCA. This should be done through the EAP TF and its future work programme or through the development of a special work programme/ mechanism for this purpose.
4. The achievements of the CEE sub-programme are identified in the Highlights Report developed by the REC for CEE. Those achievements (e.g. economic instruments, environmental financing, strategic environmental assessment (SEA), etc.) should be translated into good practices as well as lessons learnt and transferred to SEE and EECCA.
5. Living linkage of the EAP TF with the Regional Environmental Reconstruction Programme for SEE needs to be maintained.
6. In this context the REC for CEE with its comparative advantages appears to be best positioned to work with the EAP TF to assume the responsibility for the transfer of the lessons learnt from the CEE sub-programme of the EAP TF, which is also in accordance with the REC's strategy for the period after 2004, adopted by the REC General Assembly.
7. The REC for CEE should assist the new Member States in beginning to play the role of coming donors. In this respect, the WG is supporting a good example of increased cooperation in the environmental field among the Visegrad 4 countries.
8. CEE NGOs should be involved in the process of transfer of knowledge and experience on environmental awareness raising, public involvement and environmental education. The financial and technical support for the environmental NGOs in CEE needs to continue in a systematic way.
9. The WG emphasises the importance of further efforts through different mechanisms in implementation of the following recommendations from the Highlights Report of the CEE sub-programme:

- Sofia Initiative on Economic Instruments needs to be supported in order to continue with the provision of capacity building assistance for the local authorities (e.g. pricing, public private partnerships, privatization, etc.).
- SEA based on the advanced methodology (undertaking SEA in parallel with the planning process, with as early as possible involvement of the public) that has been developed in the framework of the EAP TF needs to be further promoted.
- Dissemination of good practice and capacity building for local authorities is very much needed especially for the development of public transport sectors in the urban areas.
- Capacity building for the local authorities especially in rural communities needs to be provided in order to integrate biodiversity conservation considerations in the agricultural practices and rural development.
- National Pollutant Register needs to be further harmonized with those of the EU and in this respect, concrete assistance is needed.
- Enterprises, especially the SMEs need further capacity building in CEE and further institutional development in SEE. Advanced cleaner production methodologies need to be supported especially in the bilateral programmes of assistance.
- With regards to the EU accession, implementation and enforcement of the harmonised legislation seems to be the greatest priority. In this respect, advanced methods of financing and new role of environmental funds need to be emphasised. A matter of special concern is the project preparation and the absorption capacity and deficits from the implementation point of view.
- Improvement of the environmental democracy and justice is needed as well as the improvement of the environmental governance.
- The environmental pillar of the sustainable development needs to be further strengthened and developed in synergy with the economic and social pillar.
- Regional and cross-border cooperation within the CEE region and among CEE, SEE and EECCA remains as a priority.

In general, the WG is recommending to the EPA TF and through it to the WGSO to acknowledge the results from implementation of the CEE Sub-programme of the EAP TF and to create possibility the Highlights' Report to be presented during the Kiev conference.

The WG is also recommending to the EPA TF and through it to the WGSO to acknowledge the importance of the experience accumulated and knowledge gained during the implementation of the CEE sub-programme of the EAP TF to be transferred to SEE and EECCA in most efficient way.

ANNEX 2
14th EAP TASK FORCE MEETING
10th-11th February 2003, Tbilisi Georgia

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