



[EUR/ICP/CEH 199]

E3/61/10  
December 1982

ENGLISH ONLY

37379

SIXTH INTERSECRETARIAT MEETING ON AIR POLLUTION PROBLEMS IN EUROPE

Geneva, 23 September 1982

Report<sup>1</sup>

I. Introduction and participation

1. The Sixth Intersecretariat Meeting<sup>2</sup> on Air Pollution Problems in Europe, convened by the WHO Regional Office for Europe, took place on 23 September 1982 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.

2. It was attended by representatives of the following international and intergovernmental agencies: United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), World Health Organization, Regional Office for Europe (WHO/EURO), World Meteorological Organization (WMO), Commission of the European Communities (CEC), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA).

The Secretariats of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), International Labour Office (ILO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), Council of Europe (CE), Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA), Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (BMEPC), and International Organization of Standardization (ISO) were also invited, but were unable to attend.

A list of participants is given in Annex I.

II. Opening of the meeting and invitations

3. The meeting was opened by Dr M.J. Suess, WHO/EURO, who welcomed the participants on behalf of WHO. Mr F. Magdonelle, CEC, acted as Chairman and Dr Suess, Rapporteur.

Dr Suess then outlined the objectives of the meeting, reviewed the preparations, and summarized the responses of the invited organizations.

4. The provisional agenda (Annex II) was accepted after adding under Item 8 on "Any other business" the issues on "Technical subjects", "Elaboration on Scope and Purpose", and "Title of meeting".

5. The response of the 18 organizations invited to this meeting was reviewed and evaluated. Following the written statement by the CE of 21 June 1982 that "the Council of Europe will not be represented at the above (Sixth Intersecretariat) meeting as no activities relating to air pollution problems are included in the intergovernmental work programme of this Organization", it was decided to drop CE from the mailing list. No suggestions were made with respect to inviting new organizations.

<sup>1</sup> For the internal use of the participating Secretariats only.

<sup>2</sup> The first five meetings were held in Geneva on 12 January 1976, 9 July 1978, 16 January 1979, 1 May 1980, and 11 September 1981, respectively.

### III. Exchange of information

6. The participants exchanged information on projects completed and documentation published, and discussed in greater detail some of their more important ongoing activities. Annex III provides a summary of the various programmes.

7. Some points of interest made by the representatives of the participating organizations during the discussion of Item 6 were:

OECD: In connexion with the study on strategies for abatement of photochemical oxidants, reference was made to the models for the 6 cities - Cologne, Cothenberg, Oslo, Rotterdam, St. Louis, and Vancouver, and the examination of the effects on the interaction with oxidants and ozone from the reduction in nitrogen oxides and hydrocarbon compounds. The project on the control of specific toxic substances in the atmosphere has proceeded to the stage whereby the assessment study on benzene was completed, the one on asbestos will be completed in November, and the one on cadmium is still in progress. Following the assessments, a decision will be made on whether these substances should be controlled. Also under study is polycyclic organic matter.

WMO: With reference to a report on a meeting on standardization and measurement techniques for atmospheric carbon dioxide, a question was raised concerning the cooperation with ISO/TC 146, in case they too are studying this subject. However, none of those present were aware of present ISO involvement. Moreover, it was stated by the WMO representative that all the interested bodies were duly consulted.

UNEP: The UNEP role as catalizator and coordinator in relation to environmental projects was referred to, and information was given on several UNEP-supported projects under implimentation by various organizations, including GEMS/AIR, Mediterranean, and the Convention on long-range transboundary air pollution. UNEP also coordinates the work on ozone, and is instrumental in the promotion of activities concerned with the acidification of the environment. A suggestion was made by the representative of WHO/EURO that UNEP consider the support of an evaluation of measurement results of GEMS/AIR in Europe in comparison with measurement data from more dense monitoring networks presently in operation. It was agreed that, while the idea is a good one, a more detailed proposal would have to be prepared, which could then be sent to UNEP in Geneva for further consideration. Information was provided on negotiations, now under way between UNEP (Dr Sella) and CMEA (Professor Izrael), with respect to the organization of a meeting on air pollution terminology. Appropriate invitations will be sent in due time to all organizations concerned.

ECE: At present, the most important work within the ECE on air pollution problems is related to the implementation of the Convention on long-range transboundary air pollution. Twenty-three signatories have already ratified the Convention and the twenty-fourth ratification, after which the Convention will enter into force, is expected in the near future. In the meantime, an active programme on the evaluation of effects of sulfur compounds on man and the environment, on control rechnologies and cost-benefit analysis, is under way.

IIASA: In response to specific questions it was clarified that IIASA's research is merely done in-house, on the basis of the expertise and resources available at the institute. A detailed description was given on IIASA's mode of work by staff members and visiting scientists from collaborating institutions. In addition to the information given in the report, the planned study on scenario analysis of toxic deposition/acidification in Europe was briefly described, a summary of which was distributed to the participants. Interest in using IIASA's expertise for certain projects was expressed by UNEP and WMO.

WHO/EURO: In addition to the information given in the report, which was distributed ahead of the meeting, details were given on the epidemiological study on formaldehydes, now under preparation; a foreseen activity on integrated environmental surveillance; air pollution components in the study of health implications from biotechnology; and the use of alternative energy sources. Reference was also made to the latest publication by WHO, Geneva, of the environmental health criteria 19 on hydrogen sulfide.

CEC: Reference was made to a governmental request to study a problem of photochemical pollution in Athens.

8. The schedule of the meetings of the organizations represented was reviewed, thus giving various participants the opportunity to receive more details about meetings of particular interest to them. Questions were raised with respect to the ECE consolidated calender of meetings, which the participants have now missed for a long time. The ECE representative promised to check this matter.

IV. Meeting's report

9. It was agreed to retain the present format for reporting the various activities undertaken in the field of air pollution by the different organizations. The report of the meeting will be circulated among the Secretariats present as soon as possible.

V. Technical subject

10. The continuation of holding at every meeting a discussion on a specific technical subject, agreed upon in advance, was considered. It was agreed that, in principle, no such proposals should be registered anymore in advance. If there will be a need and/or wish for elaboration on a specific topic at any time, it should be raised at the beginning of each meeting, and included under the Agenda item "other business". However, as an exception, it was decided to request all the participants in the next meeting to be prepared to provide details on the policies, strategies, targets, objectives, etc., which serve as a basis of, and guide to the work of the respective organizations in relation to air pollution.

VI. Scope and purpose

11. Following a special request, the scope and purpose of the Intersecretariat meetings was reformulated as follows:

The scope and purpose of the meetings of the Intersecretariat on air pollution problems in Europe are to exchange information and provide details on completed, ongoing, and planned project reports published, and meetings scheduled for the forthcoming year or so, with the intention of strengthening coordination and lead, if possible and when appropriate, to close cooperation on specific activities between the organizations concerned. Toward this end, participants are expected to review at the meetings the work of their organizations in relation to the European situation, as well as provide information on any activity outside this Region which may reflect on European problems.

VII. Next meeting

The next, seventh meeting, will be convened by WHO/EURO either on Monday, 12 September 1983 in Copenhagen, prior to the International Conference on Air Pollution Modelling and Its Application (organized by the Belgian Environmental Services in cooperation with the Danish counterpart), or in conjunction with the fourth session of the ECE IEB on the Convention of Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution during the fourth quarter of 1983, or the first quarter of 1984.

List of Participants

Commission of the European Communities  
200, rue de la Loi  
1049 Brussels  
Belgium

MR F. MAGDONELLE  
Principal Administrator  
Directorate of General Environment  
Consumer Protection and Nuclear Safety

International Institute for Applied  
Systems Analysis  
Schloss Laxenburg  
2361 Laxenburg  
Austria

DR E. RUNCA  
Task Leader, Atmospheric Environment  
Resources and Environment Area

Organisation for Economic Co-operation  
and Development  
2, rue André Pascal  
75016 Paris  
France

MR P. LIEBEN  
Principal Administrator  
Environment Directorate

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe  
Palais des Nations  
1211 Geneva 10  
Switzerland

MR R. CHRAST  
Air Pollution Unit

United Nations Environment Programme  
Liaison Office for Europe  
Palais des Nations  
1211 Geneva 10  
Switzerland

MR B. IVANOV  
Programme and Liaison Officer

World Health Organization  
Regional Office for Europe  
8, Scherfigsvej  
2100 Copenhagen  
Denmark

DR M.J. SUESS  
Regional Officer for Environmental Hazards

World Meteorological Organization  
41, avenue Giuseppe Motta  
1211 Geneva 20  
Switzerland

DR V. SMAGUINL  
Environmental Division

Agenda

1. Opening of meeting
2. Election of Chairman
3. Adoption of agenda and introduction of participants
4. Presentation of the scope and purposes of the meeting
- 5.a. Exchange of information on projects completed and those in progress
- 5.b. Exchange of information on publications and/or documents published  
(including progress reports)
6. Exchange of information and comparison of calendars of meetings
7. Discussion on documentation to be presented in the future
8. Any other business - technical subject discussion, sending of invitations,  
scope and purpose, and title of meeting
9. Date and place of next Intersecretariat Meeting
10. Closure

STATEMENTS SUBMITTED BY THE SECRETARIATS

1. Commission of the European Communities (CEC)
2. International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA)
3. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
4. United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)
5. World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe (WHO/EURO)
6. World Meteorological Organization (WMO)