

PROJECT CONCEPT NOTE

Project Title	Trust Fund for the Financing of the Implementation of the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution. Sub-account for Voluntary Contributions Towards Funding of the effect-oriented activities under the Convention
Project Manager	Krzysztof Olendrzynski
Subprogramme	Environment
Implementing Entity	UNECE
Start Date	2002
End Date	Open-ended
Budget	In accordance with the periodic decisions of the Executive Body, the Working Group on Effects and the Steering Body to EMEP
Beneficiary Countries	Parties to the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution and the Protocols
Cooperating Entities within the UN System	
Other Implementing Partners	none

Background

Air pollution emissions and concentration have been reduced considerably in the UNECE region over the last decades, in part as a result of integrated air pollution management strategies that were developed jointly under the Convention and its protocols. However, the progress is still uneven across the region. In particular in Eastern, South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, the increase in energy production, industry growth and urban development is bound to raise emissions. In 2014, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared air pollution to be the single largest environmental health threat, responsible for about 7 million deaths annually; 600,000 alone in the WHO European region. The economic cost of premature death and disability from air pollution in Europe, calculated by the World Health Organization and OECD, is close to US\$ 1.6 trillion.

The trust fund project was established to support the Convention's effects oriented activities under the Working Group on Effects. In 2002, the Executive Body adopted the Decision 2002/1 on the financing of the core activities. Eight Designated International Centres were identified (see the Appendix I to the Decision) dealing with effects of air pollution on health, ecosystems, vegetation, crops and materials and with the integrated assessment modelling. The decision provided the framework for Parties' contributions to the trust fund and the subsequent payments to the designated centres. The contracts between the ECE and the centres (their home research and development institutions) are in the form of Memoranda of Understanding that were extended for another 5-year period in 2016. It is an open-ended project with no final date. The target group comprises the national environmental authorities, decision-makers responsible for development of policy related to air pollution abatement and technical experts involved in the scientific assessment of adverse effects of air pollutants.

In 2010, the Executive Body to the Convention adopted the updated Long-term Strategy, which outlines the priorities for the work under the Convention until 2020 (ECE/EB.AIR/106/Add.1). The project supports the implementation of the priorities outlined in the Long-term Strategy related to the scientific work under the Convention. In addition, the project is going to support the Parties to deliver on their voluntary commitments made under the Batumi Action for Cleaner Air, an initiative aimed at catalyzing action to improve air quality and thus reduce the negative impacts on health and ecosystems, which was adopted at the Eighth Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference in Batumi, Georgia (8-10 June 2016, ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/2/Add.1).

In implementation of the assignments, the Secretariat will endeavor to strengthen the participation of women in conformity with the UNECE Gender Action Plan, with concrete strategies designed to achieve equal participation of women in the activities.

Relationship to the Strategic Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals

The proposed project directly contributes to the implementation of the UNECE Strategic Framework for the period 2016-2017 and the proposed Strategic framework for the period 2018-2019, as it will advance the objective of the Environment subprogramme to improve environmental governance and performance throughout the region for safeguarding the environment and health. Specifically, the project contributes to the Expected Accomplishments (a) and (b) of both ECE strategic documents: (a) Improved response to environmental challenges by ECE constituencies, and (b) Strengthened implementation and increased geographical coverage of ECE multilateral environmental agreements.

The project supports target countries in their achievement of the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Most notably, the improved air quality management will help countries in: reducing the world's largest environmental health risk for non-communicable diseases (Goal 3 Good health and wellbeing, targets 3.4 and 3.9); tracing progress towards improving urban air quality (Goal 11 Sustainable cities and communities, target 11.6); and ensuring the environmentally sound management of chemicals throughout their life cycle and to reduce their release to air (Goal 12 responsible consumption and production, target 12.4).

Objective

To reduce air pollution and its negative impacts on human health and environment through implementation of the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution and its protocols.

Expected accomplishments

EA1. Implementation of Convention workplan with respect to effects oriented activities in accordance with the Long-term strategy for the Convention

EA2: Reporting on the effects oriented activities under the Working Group on Effects in accordance with the requirements of the Convention and its Protocols

Indicators of achievement

1.1 Number of reports submitted by the Centres under the Working Group on Effects in accordance with the requirements under the Convention and its Protocols

Main activities

Not applicable. The main activities are determined periodically by the Executive Body which adopts the biannual workplans (see ECE/EB.AIR/133/Add.1). In addition, broad directions for effects oriented activities are determined by the Long-term strategy (see ECE/EB.AIR/106/Add.1, Decision 2010/18). The key effects oriented activities include: estimation of adverse effects of air pollution on human health, ecosystems (forests, waters, and vegetation), agricultural crops and materials.

Assumptions and Risks

Assumptions—the factors or conditions that must exist for the project to succeed, but are beyond the control of project management—include:

- (a) Political stability in the UNECE region maintained with continued transboundary cooperation;
- (b) UNECE member State Governments remain committed to the financing of the implementation of the Convention, in particular, with respect to effects oriented activities.

Risks for the delivery of activities and for the achievement of expected accomplishments include:

- (a) Weakened country interest in and commitment to engage in workplan activities. The secretariat will work with the Executive Body Bureau to maintain interest in and commitment to the implementation of effects and related activities set out in the Convention workplans;
- (b) Financial contributions decline. The secretariat will work with the Bureau to ensure adequate financial and in-kind resources are made available to support the effects oriented activities.

Results-based work plan

Not applicable. The workplan is determined on a bi-annual basis by the Executive Body (for the 2016-2017 workplan see: ECE/EB.AIR/133/Add.1).

Budget

Not applicable. The budget is determined annually by the Executive Body (for the 2017 budget breakdown see: ECE/EB.AIR/2016/6).