

Decision 2019/18

Revised mandate for the International Cooperative Programme on Integrated Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects on Ecosystems

Recalling the relevant provisions of articles 7 and 8 of the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution,

Recalling also its decision 1999/2 concerning the structure and organization of work,

Recalling further the terms of reference for the International Cooperative Programme on Integrated Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects on Ecosystems (EB.AIR/WG.1/2000/4, annex VI), noted at its eighteenth session (ECE/EB.AIR/71, para. 58 (c)),

Recalling its decision 2002/1 on the financing of core activities, as amended by decision 2018/8,

Acknowledging the achievements of the International Cooperative Programme on Integrated Monitoring of Air Pollution on Ecosystems, including:

(a) Maintenance of a regionally extensive database on intensively monitored background sites in Europe, valuable for assessing both air pollution and climate change impacts and their interactions; publication of assessment results in high-class scientific journals;

(b) Documentation of long-term complex impacts and recovery of sulphur and nitrogen deposition on both chemical and biological variables;

(c) Assessment of long-term trends and fluxes of heavy metals in various ecosystem compartments;

(d) Provision of evidence of negative effects on plant species richness when nitrogen deposition exceeds the critical load;

(e) Setting-up of dynamic modelling systems that have enabled assessment of impacts of future nitrogen and sulphur emission/deposition scenarios;

(f) Validation of critical load concepts using both empirical data and modelling;

(g) Close cooperation with other international cooperative programmes and the Joint Expert Group on Dynamic Modelling on ecosystem impact assessment and dynamic modelling;

(h) Development and maintenance of European monitoring and research infrastructures together with the Integrated European Long-Term Ecosystem, Critical Zone and Socio-Ecological Research Infrastructure.

Recognizing the need to update the Programme's mandate to ensure its consistency with the provisions of the amended Protocols to the Convention and its strategic priorities, as set out in the following documents:

(a) The revised long-term strategy for the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (ECE/EB.AIR/142/Add.2);

(b) The 2016 scientific assessment of the Convention;¹

(c) The policy response to the 2016 scientific assessment of the Convention (ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/2017/3 and Corr.1 and ECE/EB.AIR/2017/4).

Noting with appreciation the hosting of the Programme Centre by the Finnish Environment Institute in Helsinki and the ongoing leadership of the Task Force by Sweden,

¹ See Rob Maas and Peringe Grennfelt, eds., *Towards Cleaner Air: Scientific Assessment Report 2016* (Oslo, 2016) and United States Environmental Protection Agency and Environment and Climate Change Canada, *Towards Cleaner Air: Scientific Assessment Report 2016 – North America* (2016).

1. *Adopts* the Programme's revised mandate as contained in the annex to the present decision, which includes the key objectives and functions of the Programme Task Force and the Programme Centre to be carried out on an ongoing basis, whereas additional activities and specific tasks and associated deliverables to be carried out in a shorter time frame will be included in the biennial workplans for the implementation of the Convention;

2. *Decides* that:

(a) The Programme Centre, in cooperation with the Chair of the Programme Task Force, is responsible for the detailed planning, coordination and evaluation of the Programme;

(b) The lead country or countries are responsible for leading and coordinating the Task Force's ongoing work and tasks, organizing its meetings, communicating with participating experts and other organizational arrangements, in accordance with the biennial workplan. Chairs of the Task Force are appointed by the lead country or countries to carry out these tasks;

(c) In the event that a lead country needs to discontinue its leadership role, it is encouraged to notify the secretariat, Co-Chairs, and other lead countries as soon as possible, but preferably no later than one year prior to the time it will need to cease its leadership activities. The withdrawing lead country will make every effort to ensure a smooth transition to the next leadership model, by ensuring that all data and any other information required for Task Force operations are provided to the appropriate country or person(s);

(d) The Programme Centre is responsible for maintaining the database, conducting and coordinating evaluations of the data and reporting and disseminating the Programme's results;

(e) The Programme Centre is responsible for coordinating the relevant activities under the Programme, including development of technical projects, provision of deliverables according to the workplan (including annual reports and access to all relevant information and data), participation in the relevant Task Force meetings, organizing technical workshops and training workshops, communicating with national experts and providing direct support to Parties, maintaining an up-to-date web page that includes information on the Programme and other organizational arrangements, in accordance with the biennial workplan;

(f) The Programme Centre and the Chair of the Task Force are responsible for carrying out the work assigned to them in the biennial workplans approved by the Executive Body, reporting thereon and keeping other relevant bodies apprised of their work.

Annex

Revised mandate for the International Cooperative Programme on Integrated Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects on Ecosystems

1. The International Cooperative Programme on Integrated Monitoring of Air Pollution Effects on Ecosystems will continue to monitor the state of ecosystems, their changes and effects of air pollutants and climate change from a long-term perspective, and to develop and validate models for the simulation of ecosystem responses.

2. The Programme Centre and the Chair of the Task Force report on their activities and deliverables to the Working Group on Effects.

3. The functions of the Programme Centre and the Task Force are to:

(a) Provide information on the state of ecosystems and their long-term changes, with respect to the regional variation and impact of selected air pollutants, including effects on biota, particularly to:

(i) Monitor the state of natural/semi-natural ecosystems and provide explanations for changes, in terms of causative environmental factors;

(ii) Develop and validate models for simulation of ecosystem effects and use these to estimate responses to actual or predicted changes in pollution stress;

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- (iii) Carry out biomonitoring for detecting changes and develop biota indicators identifying future alterations;
 - (iv) Develop further tools to guide users in interpreting the available data and their use in (effects) models.
 - (b) Prioritize and rationalize the Programme's network, monitoring activities and data reporting;
 - (c) Monitor and assess long-term trends, stores and fluxes of elements and compounds of priority interest to the Convention (for example, nitrogen and heavy metals), and other elements and parameters important for the evaluation of environmental effects (such as base cations, carbon and phosphorous) and for meeting relevant international data requirements;
 - (d) Develop dynamic models of biogeochemical effects and recovery, risk assessment and interactions with climate change, with emphasis on timescales of ecosystem effects;
 - (e) Develop biomonitoring and assessment of biological data, particularly on vegetation;
 - (f) Collaborate with ecosystem-oriented international cooperative programmes, the Centre for Dynamic Modelling and Cooperative Programme for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-range Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe centres on impact assessment using monitoring data and dynamic modelling;
 - (g) Collaborate with external partners, particularly European research infrastructures (European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures/Long-term Ecosystem in Europe Research Infrastructure and LifeWatch) on impact assessments and modelling and database infrastructures;
 - (h) Carry out other tasks assigned to them by the Working Group on Effects and the Executive Body.