



**World Health
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REGIONAL OFFICE FOR

Europe

**Report of the
fourth meeting
of the European
Environment and
Health Ministerial
Board (EHMB)**

Belgrade, Serbia

19 April 2013



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Abstract

At its fourth meeting, (Belgrade, Serbia, 19 April 2013), the European Environment and Health Ministerial Board (EHMB) discussed its report to the 63rd session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe and the 19th session of the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy; reviewed recent scientific evidence on air quality and health; expressed support for the revision of WHO air quality guidelines and the EU air quality policy, and decided to develop a statement urging all States to ratify and/or strengthen their implementation of MEAs in synergy with the Parma commitments and to promote the engagement of youth in national processes for environment and health. The EHMB agreed that its representatives would attend the ministerial segments of the Third Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health (Oslo, 25-27 November 2013) and the Fourth High Level Meeting on Transport, Environment and Health (Paris, 14-16 April 2014).

Keywords

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Acknowledgements

The fourth meeting of the European Environment and Health Ministerial Board was generously hosted by the Government of Serbia.

Opening of the meeting, adoption of the agenda

Introduction

1. The European Environment and Health Ministerial Board (EHMB) held its fourth meeting on 19 April 2013 in Belgrade, Serbia, at the kind invitation of the Government of Serbia. See Annex 1 for the scope and purpose of the meeting, Annex 2 for the programme of work, Annex 3 for the main points of discussion and decisions and Annex 4 for the list of participants.
2. Ms Zsuzsanna Jakab, WHO Regional Director for Europe, welcomed participants and thanked the Government of Serbia for its generous hospitality. She informed the meeting that new members had been appointed from Belgium, Israel, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, representing the environment sector. Ms Jakab also introduced the agenda of the meeting, proposing that item 3 should be deleted, and proposed the Chair and Co-Chair for the meeting.
3. The meeting agreed to delete item 3 of the provisional agenda (document EURO/EHMB4.2 Add.1). With that amendment, the agenda was adopted.
4. Professor Slavica Đukić Dejanović, Minister of Health of Serbia, was elected Chair and chaired the discussion of agenda items 1-5.
5. Professor Đukić Dejanović opened the meeting and welcomed participants to Serbia. Her country actively supported the work of the Ministerial Board and was committed to strengthening public health in accordance with WHO policy guidelines. The Government had recently set up a new coordinating body which would incorporate a health-in-all-policies approach into the work of all ministries. The main challenges facing it were environmental and geopolitical factors, social determinants of health and lifestyle factors.
6. The main objectives of the meeting were: (1) to review the strategic direction of the European environment and health process and its priorities and key milestones in 2013–2014, and review and adopt the final draft of the EHMB report to the WHO Regional Committee for Europe and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP); (2) to consider the latest evidence on the effects of air pollution on health in the context of the European Year of Air 2013, review developments in the revision of WHO guidelines and the European Union policy on air quality, and agree on the role that EHMB could play to further the commitments related to air pollution made at the Fifth Ministerial Conference (Parma, Italy, 10-12 March 2010); and (3) to discuss forthcoming meetings under multilateral environmental agreements and policy platforms relevant to the implementation of the Parma commitments, in order to maximize synergy between these processes and the European environment and health process.
7. Professor Zorana Mihajlović, Minister of Energy, Development and Environmental Protection of Serbia, addressed the meeting. As a candidate member of the European Union, Serbia was anxious to meet the Union's environmental standards, and it had participated in the preparation of the Global Plan of Action for Children's Health and

the Environment. However, considerable investment in infrastructure would be required before it could comply with European Union directives. Joint action by the environment and health sectors was essential to secure political support, implement relevant decisions and facilitate collaboration with the United Nations and European Union.

8. Ms Zsuzanna Jakab, WHO Regional Director for Europe, commended Board members on their active support for the agreed intersessional programme of work and, in particular, for their guidance on the preparation of the joint report to the Regional Committee and CEP. The current meeting was of great importance for the European environment and health process, since the joint report and draft resolution/decision would help to define activities in the area of environment and health until the Sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health in 2016 and the priorities thereafter.
9. The issue of air quality provides a prime example of the importance of making the best possible use of scientific developments and existing policy tools. In 2013, the European Year of Air, many EHMB Member States are engaged in the consultations accompanying the process of revision of European Union air quality policies. Air quality is a powerful example of the interactions and tensions between science and policy. Policy-makers must bear in mind the need to protect the public interest and, in particular, the interests of the most vulnerable population groups. Transboundary issues such as air quality cannot be addressed solely at the local or national level, but require international collaboration, solidarity and accountability. The Board can play a very useful role, particularly by supporting effective policies to address air quality issues and the resulting burden of disease, promoting the implementation of existing policy instruments, and advocating the implementation of policies that reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions and also deliver health benefits. The EHMB can also advocate and be a champion in the pursuit of relevant synergies with other processes and instruments and in promoting coordination with national efforts.

Agenda item 1: Election of a Co-Chair from among the Ministers of Environment

10. Mr Amir Peretz, Minister of Environmental Protection of Israel, was elected Co-Chair, representing the environment sector, and chaired the discussion of agenda items 6-8. He addressed the meeting, describing the serious injuries he had sustained while serving in the Israeli army, his long period of recovery during which he had vowed to work for peace, his subsequent rise to the posts of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, and his even wider responsibilities now as Minister of Environmental Protection, which covered not only land, sea and air but the areas above and below them, and required him to serve both Israel's national interests and its international obligations. He hoped to work with Israel's neighbours to safeguard the regional environment and promote peace and social and environmental justice.

Agenda item 2: Adoption of the report of the 3rd EHMB meeting

11. The report of the third EHMB meeting (document EURO/EHMB4.6) was adopted without amendment.

Agenda item 4: Follow-up to previous decisions

12. Dr Srdan Matic, Coordinator, Environment and Health, WHO Regional Office for Europe, likewise expressing his appreciation for the hospitality of the Government of Serbia and the excellent preparatory work done by officials from the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Energy, Development and Environmental Protection,

introduced the Secretariat report on the follow-up to the decisions taken at the third meeting (EURO/EHMB4.7). In respect of statutory affairs, four new EHMB members had been elected to represent the environment sector, and nominations had been invited for new health-sector members, to be elected at the sixty-third session of the WHO Regional Committee in September 2013. Two Serbian representatives of the European Environment and Health Youth Coalition, a permanent observer to the Board, were present at the meeting. All Board members had appointed alternates, who had held a fruitful meeting in Bonn, Germany in March 2013 (see document EURO/EHMB4.1). Ms Jakab had met representatives of the Directorate-General for the Environment of the European Commission, also in March 2013, to discuss the responsibility for environment and health issues within the Commission.

13. In respect of technical and strategic matters, the development of the Environment and Health Gateway and the setting of priorities for the environment and health process were both well under way; further guidance on those issues from EHMB members would be welcome. A meeting on the engagement of international financial mechanisms in the environment and health process would be held by the end of 2013. The working group on the health impact of climate change and the chemical safety network had both met in 2012. The economics of environmental health network would hold its first meeting soon.
14. The intersessional programme of work had proceeded well so far. As well as the meeting of EHMB alternates, a first informal round of talks had been held with non-Member-State stakeholders. However, the communications network which EHMB had called for at its third meeting was proving slow to get off the ground: only nine Member States had joined it so far. A meeting was planned for later in 2013.
15. Dr Tomaž Gantar, Minister of Health of Slovenia, recalled that, during his country's chairmanship of the Board, he had pointed to the need to encourage international financial institutions to invest in projects which had an impact on human health. He had prepared an overview of European Union financial instruments from which funding might be available in the period 2014-2020 if the necessary preparations were undertaken immediately. He called upon EHMB members to lobby actively for the Parma objectives to be taken into account in the preparation of European Union financial instruments over the next few months; to support the Secretariat in establishing high-level contacts within the European Commission, particularly with the Directorate-General for Enlargement and the Directorate-General for Development and Cooperation — EuropeAid; and to use their influence with other WHO Member States to promote the inclusion of priorities related to the Parma commitments in their national development strategies.
16. Mr Alexander Nies, Co-Chair of the European Environment and Health Task Force (EHTF), expressed concern that, at a point halfway between the Fifth Ministerial Conference, held in Parma, Italy in 2010, and the next, scheduled for 2016, there was still no consensus about the priorities to be pursued among the numerous commitments adopted at Parma. It had been suggested early on that the five time-bound commitments should be taken as priorities, but still no firm decision had been taken. He called upon the Board to make a final decision as soon as possible, and certainly before the mid-term review scheduled for 2014.
17. An intersessional programme of work for the Board was indispensable, since Ministers could only meet once a year at most. It must, however, be clearly defined, stating exactly what action was to be taken, by whom, and by what deadline, and

issued promptly, within two weeks of the meeting. This was of particular importance for the Task Force, whose members only rarely met in person.

18. He was concerned that the respective roles and responsibilities of the Board and the Task Force had still not been precisely defined. A clear, concise description, to be prepared by the Secretariat, was essential if the two bodies were to work effectively together.
19. Unfortunately, the late distribution of the documentation for the current meeting had made it very difficult to carry out the necessary internal consultations with other national ministries. He hoped that documentation would be distributed within the prescribed deadlines in future.
20. Dr Matic thanked Dr Gantar for his proactive approach to making contact with international financial mechanisms. The Board had no mandate to set priorities among the Parma commitments. The time-bound commitments were the only ones which might be considered as priorities: the others were all considered of equal importance, and the Board had no authority to renegotiate them. He would welcome guidance from the Board about the intersessional programme of work: for instance, would it prefer a one-year programme, (i.e. a programme of work between two consecutive sessions of the EHMB) or a three-year programme (i.e. a programme continuing until the sixth Ministerial Conference)? The respective roles of the Board and the Task Force were, he believed, clear in principle, from the institutional framework document issued at the Parma Conference (Conference document EUR/55934/7), but it was not yet clear how responsibilities would be divided up in practice.
21. Ms Jakab said that, in a meeting between herself and the Director-General for the Environment of the European Commission, the latter had stated that the Commission's priorities in the environment and health field were consistent with the Board's own. However, it was still not clear which Directorate-General was now responsible for activities in that field, which had previously been the responsibility of the Directorate-General for Health and Consumer Protection. Further follow-up with the Commission was required.
22. She suggested that the Chair and Co-Chair of the Board, as well as the Secretariat, should approach potential sources of funding, particularly those concerned with drinking-water and air quality and climate change. The Chair and Co-Chair could also represent the Board's interests in the financing dialogue which would take place within WHO in June and October 2013.
23. As she understood it, the Board had decided at its third meeting to leave the Parma priorities unchanged, but to draw up a new set of priorities for adoption by the Sixth Ministerial Conference. She had also understood that the intersessional programme of work was intended only to implement the decisions taken at Board meetings, and would therefore be a programme of work between two consecutive sessions of the Board.
24. She apologized for the late distribution of the documentation and said that every effort would be made to avoid delays in future.

Agenda item 5: Review and adoption of the report on the European Environment and Health Process 2010-2012 to the WHO Regional Committee and UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy

25. Dr Matic introduced the draft report to be submitted by the Board to the 63rd session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe in September 2013 and the 19th session

of the CEP in October 2013, and asked for members' comments. The same report would be submitted to both bodies. It was in two parts: a short report entitled *Strengthening the implementation of the Parma Declaration on environment and health: a forward looking pathway*, (document EURO/EHMB4.8a) and a longer information document (document EURO/EHMB4.8c). The information document provided more detail, although at present it dealt mostly with WHO Secretariat activities: he would welcome guidance about ways of reflecting the activities of other stakeholders.

26. He also invited the Board to consider a draft resolution/decision on implementation of the European environment and health process, to be submitted to the Regional Committee (document EURO/EHMB4.8b) and the proposed schedule of elections to the Board (Document EURO/EHMB4.8d). One-and-a-half hours had been set aside for consideration of the item on environment and health at the Regional Committee, with statements by the Chair and Co-Chair of the Board followed by a discussion among a panel of experts and policy-makers.
27. The short report summarized the implementation of the European environment and health process to date and the challenges facing it, described the implementation of the Parma commitments so far and considered future directions in environment and health. The challenges facing the process included ensuring equality of engagement by both the health and the environment sectors and increasing the involvement of non-Member-State stakeholders, promoting stronger implementation at the national level, ensuring that the respective roles of the Board and the Task Force were fully understood and ensuring sustainable and predictable funding. The final section of the report dealt with the proposed future work for the environment and health process, including the proposal to emphasize implementation of the time-bound Parma commitments and further discussion of priorities for the post-2016 period; the exploitation of synergies with existing policy frameworks and multilateral environmental agreements; the inclusion of safe and sustainable environments in national environmental and health policies; environmental issues in the health sector; and the provision of predictable and sustainable funding.
28. Mr Marco Keiner, Director, Environment Division, UNECE, welcomed the proposal that a joint report should be submitted to both the Regional Committee and CEP. Since the meetings of the two bodies were scheduled so close together, the EHMB Secretariat might wish to submit an oral, rather than a written, report to the CEP meeting on the outcome of deliberations at the Regional Committee. He called upon the Board members representing the environment sector to provide more information on environmental aspects for inclusion in the report.
29. Mr Nies noted two further challenges which should be included in the report: no date or venue had yet been fixed for the next meeting of the Task Force, and the post of Head of the WHO European Centre for Environment and Health in Bonn, Germany had been vacant since the departure of Dr Michal Krzyzanowski in August 2012. He noted further that a joint Conference of the Parties of three major multilateral environmental agreements, the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, was due to begin in Geneva on 28 April, which could provide a valuable opportunity for the Board to raise awareness of environment and health issues among the assembled ministers.
30. Dr Matic said that a meeting of the Task Force, whose membership was far larger than that of the Board, required considerable resources in terms of money, time and organization. The Secretariat, in consultation with the Chair and Co-Chair, had

considered a number of solutions, including smaller, informal meetings and an intersessional programme of work.

31. Ms Jakab invited UNECE to participate in the Regional Committee meeting, and said that she expected to appoint a new Head of the WHO European Centre for Environment and Health in the next few months. Dr Matic was acting Head in the meantime.

Agenda item 6: Air quality in Europe

32. Dr Elizabet Paunovic, Programme Manager, Environmental Exposures and Risks, WHO European Centre for Environment and Health, introduced the report on air quality in Europe (document EURO/EHMB4.9 and Annex 1). The Parma Declaration includes provisions related to air quality, and the report of the fifteenth meeting of the Joint Task Force on the Health Aspects of Air Pollution (UNECE document ECE/EB.AIR/WG.1/2012/11) indicates that levels of particulate matter (PM₁₀/PM_{2.5}¹) are still increasing, especially in eastern and south-eastern Europe. The Gothenburg Protocol to the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution was revised in 2012 to include emission reduction commitments for PM_{2.5}, with some flexibility allowed for countries in southern and eastern Europe, the Caucasus and central Asia. She called upon Board members to encourage as many Member States as possible to accede to the revised protocol.
33. As part of the Year of Air in 2013, the European Union is revising its air policies. WHO is contributing to the project through a systematic review of scientific evidence on air quality – the Review of Evidence on Health Aspects of Air Pollution (REVIHAAP) and Health Risks of Air Pollution in Europe (HRAPIE) projects. The research shows clear evidence of a link between PM_{2.5} levels and rates of cardiovascular disease, but also shows that even a slight reduction in PM_{2.5} levels reduces the health risks.
34. She called upon Board members to promote compliance with European Union directives, the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution and WHO standards; to lobby for the introduction/revision of air quality policies where they are inadequate; to support the European Union's air quality policies and the revised WHO air quality guidelines; to encourage Member States to accede to or ratify the Convention and its protocols; and to lobby other sectors to adapt their policies in a way which promotes air quality improvement.
35. Dr Michal Krzyzanowski, Temporary Adviser, introduced two information documents available on the WHO Web site: *Health effects of particulate matter: Policy implications for countries in eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia* and the first results of the REVIHAAP project. He gave details of a number of studies providing increasingly strong evidence of a connection between PM_{2.5} levels and increased rates of cardiovascular disease. The increase in life expectancy which would result from a reduction in PM_{2.5} levels to meet the WHO recommended guideline values was estimated at around nine months. Measures to reduce levels of common air pollutants such as methane and black carbon (a component of PM₁₀) would not only bring short-term health benefits, but would also help to mitigate the effects of climate change.
36. The evidence provides scientific arguments for decisive action to improve air quality and reduce the burden of disease associated with air pollution in Europe. He called

¹ i.e. PM less than 10 µm or 2.5 µm in diameter, respectively.

upon Board members to advocate stronger action to introduce and/or revise policies for air pollution control and monitoring of exposure; to promote measures to assure compliance with current European directives on air quality; and to support the current updating of European Union policies in line with the WHO air quality guidelines.

37. In the ensuing discussion, participants supported the call for all Member States to ratify the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution and its protocols and stressed the need for intersectoral collaboration. Member States should collaborate in the monitoring of air quality and its health impact, and harmonize their climate and energy policies. The representative of the Republic of Moldova noted that the air quality standards in force are often outdated and cumbersome: his country is seeking to achieve compliance with the European Union standards and has acceded to the Convention, but not the protocols as yet, as it lacks a cost-effective way to implement them and a countrywide, automated monitoring system. Mr Keiner noted the potential for collaboration with the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP) in the reduction of diesel exhaust emissions, which have already been identified as a carcinogen, but are now also associated with cardiovascular disease.
38. Dr Matic suggested that the Board might wish to draw up an agreed position statement or call to action on air quality and/or call upon non-European-Union Member States to accede to the Convention. It could also emphasize the long-term benefits of improvements in air quality in terms of mitigating climate change, in addition to the positive short-term benefits to health.

Agenda item 7: Multilateral environmental agreements as tools for implementation of Parma commitments – upcoming major events and meetings – THE PEP High Level meeting, Paris, 2014 and Water and Health Protocol Meeting of Parties, Oslo 2013

39. Ms Francesca Racioppi, Senior Policy and Programme Adviser, Environment and Health Governance and Partnerships, WHO Regional Office for Europe, gave details of two forthcoming meetings: the Third Meeting of the Parties of the Protocol on Water and Health to the 1992 Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Oslo, Norway, 25-27 November 2013) and the Fourth High Level Meeting on Transport, Health and Environment of THE PEP (Paris, France, 14-16 April 2014), on the theme “City in motion – people first!”. The Board might wish to participate in the high-level segments of both meetings; make suggestions about ways to increase the appeal of these meetings to a high-level political audience; encourage high-level political participation by other ministers; and call for the signature and ratification of the Protocol on Water and Health and the use of the protocol and THE PEP to further national implementation of the Parma Declaration.
40. Mr Nies said that the Board could make contact with the Parties to many other environmental agreements, such as the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, explaining how measures such as the inclusion of chrysotile asbestos on the list of hazardous substances covered by the Rotterdam Convention could contribute to the aims of the Parma Declaration.
41. Mr Peretz briefly suspended the meeting to allow EHMB members to deliberate informally on the best way to address the proposed call to action in relation to multilateral environmental agreements. The Board decided to request the Secretariat to draft, within one month, a statement on behalf of the Ministerial Board to

encourage Member States to consider promoting and advancing multilateral environmental agreements and policies of special relevance to the Parma commitments and to develop specific actions to engage youth organizations in their national programmes for environment and health. It also requested the Secretariat to report regularly on progress in this matter.

Agenda item 8: Any other business

42. A representative of the European Environment and Health Youth Coalition drew attention to the publication *Young and physically active: a blueprint for making physical activity appealing to youth* (available on the WHO Web site), which had been launched at the first meeting of the Coalition in Florence, Italy, in October 2012.

Closure of the session

43. Mr Peretz read out a summary of the main conclusions and decisions of the meeting. The Board adopted the conclusions and decisions, which are reproduced in Annex 3.
44. Ms Jakab, summing up the day's discussions, thanked the officers and participants of the meeting, and looked forward to close and fruitful collaboration with the Chair and Co-Chair in the intersessional period. The proactive approach of Board members would help to guarantee the sustainability of the Board beyond the next Ministerial Conference.
45. Mr Peretz declared the meeting closed at 15:55 on 19 April 2013.

Annex 1. Scope and purpose

The fourth meeting of the European Environment and Health Ministerial Board (EHMB) is being convened in consultation with the co-chairs of the EHMB, in accordance with Rule 5 of its Rules of Procedure.

At its third meeting in Baku, Azerbaijan, on 16 November 2012, the EHMB discussed setting priorities within the European Environment and Health Process. It also approved the structure of its draft report to the WHO Regional Committee for Europe (RC) and the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP), and decided to continue working on it in an intersessional process.

In line with the decisions adopted by the third meeting, EHMB members were invited to appoint alternates to support the implementation of the intersessional work, and make progress in the preparation of the sixty-third session of the WHO RC, to be held in Izmir, Turkey, on 16-19 September 2013, and of the nineteenth UNECE CEP, to be held in Geneva, Switzerland, on 22-25 October 2013. The first meeting of the EHMB alternates will take place in Bonn on 7 March, 2013, to finalize the draft EHMB report and prepare the fourth meeting of the EHMB.

The main purpose of the fourth EHMB meeting is to review the strategic direction of the European Environment and Health Process (EHP), its priorities and key milestones in 2013–2014 and as part of the review and adoption of the final draft of the EHMB Report to the WHO Regional Committee for Europe and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP). The meeting will include discussions on the organization of events on environment and health at the forthcoming sessions of the RC and CEP.

In addition, and with reference to the policy and communication initiatives that mark 2013 as the “European Year of Air”, the EHMB will be briefed on the latest evidence on the effects of air pollution on health, as well as on developments in the revision of WHO guidelines and the European Union policy on air quality, to identify and agree on the role that the EHMB could play in this context to further the Parma commitments related to air pollution.

Finally, the EHMB will also discuss forthcoming meetings under multilateral environmental agreements and policy platforms relevant to the implementation of the Parma Conference commitments, in order to maximize synergy between these processes and the European Environment and Health Process.

Annex 2. Programme of work

08:45-09:00

09:00-09:20

Registration

Opening of the meeting, adoption of the agenda, election of Co-Chairs

Relevant documents:

1. *Scope and purpose*
2. *Provisional agenda*
3. *Provisional programme*
4. *Provisional list of participants*
5. *Deleted*

09:20 – 10:00

Adoption of the report of the 3rd EHMB meeting, Baku, November 2012 and follow-up to previous decisions

Relevant documents:

6. *Draft report of the 3rd EHMB meeting, Baku, November 2012*
7. *Secretariat report on follow-up to previous decisions*

10:00-10:30

10:30-11:30

Coffee/tea break and press event

Draft report on the European environment and health process 2010-2013 to the WHO Regional Committee and UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy

Introduction by the Secretariat

Relevant documents:

8. EHMB and EHTF reporting to WHO and UNECE governing bodies
 - a. Final draft of the WHO RC63 working paper:

Strengthening the implementation of the Parma Declaration on Environment and Health: a forward looking pathway

- b. Final draft of the WHO RC63 working document:

RC63 Resolution/decision on Environment and Health

- c. Final draft of the WHO RC63 other document:

Report on the European Environment and Health Process (2010-2013) to the WHO Regional Committee and UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy

- d. Proposed schedule for EHMB elections

11:30 – 13:00

General discussion on the draft report on the European Environment and

	Health Process 2010-2013 to the WHO Regional Committee and UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:00	Environment and Health Policy Priorities in the WHO European Region: Air Quality <i>Relevant documents:</i> <i>9. Air quality in Europe</i>
15:00 – 15:30	Coffee/tea break
15:30 – 15:50	Multilateral Environment Agreements as Tools for Implementation of Parma commitments <i>Relevant documents:</i> <i>10. Forthcoming high level meetings of the Protocol on Water and Health and of the Transport, Environment and Health Pan- European Programme</i>
15:50 – 16:00	Any other business and closure of the meeting

Annex 3. Main points of discussion and decisions

The EHMB:

- Adopted the report of the 3rd EHMB Meeting;
- Welcomed the Slovenian proposal for the EHMB to play a role in ensuring that the Parma Commitments are included among the priorities selected for financial support by the EU through its financial instruments as part of the intersessional programme of work, and thanked Slovenia for preparing an overview of EC financial instruments that could be of particular relevance for infrastructural initiatives.
- Welcomed the RD proposal for the EHMB Co-Chairs to participate in the forthcoming financing dialogues that the WHO will organize to discuss priorities for funding (next one expected in October 2013);
- Decided to continue seeking clarification on the responsibility for the Environment and Health Process within the European Commission, and entrusted the RD with following up with DG SANCO and DG ENV;
- Agreed to implement the intersessional programme of work as a useful means to facilitate follow-up on decisions between two consecutive sessions of the EHMB;
- Welcomed the engagement of the European Environment and Health Youth Coalition as a permanent observer in the EHMB.

Regarding the reporting to the RC63 and CEP19, the EHMB:

- Decided to have the same documents for submission to both RC63 and CEP19, and to revise them in light of the perspectives of both WHO and UNECE Governing Bodies;
- Entrusted the WHO and UNECE Secretariat with reviewing the papers 4.8a “Strengthening the implementation of the Parma Declaration on environment and health: a forward looking pathway” and 4.8 c “Report on the European Environment and Health Process (2010-2013) to the WHO Regional Committee and UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy” to strengthen their relevance to the environment constituency and in view of their submission to the CEP;
- Decided to submit a report to the CEP (in writing and/or orally) on the outcomes of the RC63;
- Noted the proposals for amendments to the paper 4.8a submitted by the Environment Co-Chair of the EHTF;

Regarding the discussion on air quality and health, the EHMB:

- Noted with appreciation the presentation of the most recent and compelling scientific evidence of the important effects of air quality on the health of the European population, which uncovers an important gap between scientific knowledge and policy action;
- Supported the proposal for the EHMB to advocate the consideration of health protection in relevant policy fora, for example through EHMB statements delivered to relevant bodies/policy platforms;
- Emphasized in particular its support for:

- the WHO to initiate the revision of its 2005 air quality guidelines to reflect the evidence emerging from the recent research;
- compliance with existing EU regulations and for the EU air quality policy revision process;
- ratification of the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution even by countries that are not yet able to comply fully with the Convention;

Regarding the discussion on Multilateral Environment Agreements as tools for implementation of Parma commitments, the EHMB:

- Noted with appreciation the preparations for the third session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health (Oslo, 25-27 November 2013) and the fourth High Level Meeting on Transport, Environment and Health (Paris, 14-16 April 2014), respectively.
- Highlighted the importance of making use of tools that have been developed by these processes to support national action;
- Agreed that an EHMB representative should participate in the ministerial segments of these meetings;
- Requested the Secretariat to draft within a month a statement on behalf of the Ministerial Board to:
 - Encourage MS to consider promoting and advancing in particular the following multilateral environmental agreements and policies:
 - Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution;
 - Protocol on Water and Health
 - Rotterdam Convention, with respect to the proposal to include chrysotile asbestos in its Annex III
 - Minamata Convention on Mercury
 - Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme;
 - Call on all MSs to develop concrete actions to engage youth organizations in their national programmes for environment and health, and requests the Secretariat to report regularly on progress in this matter;
- Decided to engage the EHMB Co-Chairs in the drafting of agenda items for discussion at forthcoming EHMB meetings.

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**The WHO Regional
Office for Europe**

The World Health Organization (WHO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations created in 1948 with the primary responsibility for international health matters and public health. The WHO Regional Office for Europe is one of six regional offices throughout the world, each with its own programme geared to the particular health conditions of the countries it serves.

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