



**World Health  
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REGIONAL OFFICE FOR

**Europe**

2<sup>nd</sup> meeting of  
the European  
Environment and  
Health Ministerial  
Board (EHMB)

**Meeting report**

**Bonn, Germany**

**14 February 2012**



**World Health  
Organization**

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REGIONAL OFFICE FOR **Europe**

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

**Bonn, Germany  
14th February 2012**

## Abstract

The European Environment and Health Ministerial Board (EHMB) was created by the Fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health (Parma, Italy, March 2010) to provide leadership and guidance on refining the priorities for action identified in Parma and on monitoring work to ensure accountability with respect to the commitments made at the Conference. The first EHMB meeting was held in Paris in May 2011. At its second meeting in Bonn, February 2012, the EHMB adopted the EHMB report and took note of the EHTF 1<sup>st</sup> meeting report and agreed deadlines and mechanisms to address issues that have been identified both through the EHMB and the EHTF relating to: the roles, responsibilities and work of the EHMB and the EHTF; encouraging greater stakeholder engagement; improving communication; identifying priorities for implementation; amplifying the impact of Parma; and identifying mechanisms to ensure the sustainability of the EHP.

## Keywords

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# Agenda Item 1: Opening of the meeting, adoption of the Agenda

## Introduction

1. The European Environment and Health Ministerial Board (EHMB) held its first meeting in Paris on 4–5 May 2011. The second meeting was held on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2012 in Bonn Germany and was opened by the EHMB Co-chair, Laszlo Borbely, Minister of Environment and Forests of Romania . List of the meeting participants is presented in Annex 1.
2. Laszlo Borbely highlighted the main objectives for the meeting as primarily to review the progress of the European Environment and Health Process (EHP) in its first year, after the full constitution of the new governance structures following the first meeting of the European Environment and Health Task Force in October 2011.
3. First meetings of both bodies indicated that there is a need for further review and discussion of the relationship between the EHMB and EHTF, participation of all Member States and key stakeholders and partners in both the political and the technical dimensions of the EHP and the communication between different levels of governance and constituencies (EHMB, EHTF, Member States, partners and stakeholders, the EHP Secretariat, the governing bodies of WHO/Europe and UNECE, etc).
4. The specific objectives of the meeting are described in the Scope and Purpose in the Annex II.
5. The provisional agenda for the 2<sup>nd</sup> EHMB (see Annex III) was reviewed and adopted by the members of the EHMB with no objections.
6. Congratulations were presented for the appointment of Mr Krunoslav Capak and Mr Alexander Nies as Chair and co-chair of the EHTF. In addition, the EHMB welcomed them as ex officio members of the EHMB.
7. Dr Dorijan Marusic, the former Minister of Health of Slovenia and the Co-chair of EHMB has sent a letter to EHMB resigning from his position of EHMB Co-chair. Gratitude was expressed to Dr Marusic for his contribution to the European Environment and Health Process and the EHMB in his position as Co-chair of the EHMB, which he has vacated due to the elections and the formation of a new government in Slovenia.
8. The proposal for Slovenia to continue as Co-chair of the EHMB was adopted without objection.
9. In her introductory statement, Zsuzsanna Jakab, WHO Regional Director for Europe, reflected on the difficult few months for Health and Environment in WHO since the last meeting in relation to the reorganization of the unit, the need to close the Rome Office and relocation of the programmes formerly based in the Rome Office to Copenhagen and Bonn and thanked the German Government for ensuring the continuation of Health and Environment with the development of an expanded EH centre of excellence in Bonn. Emphasizing and echoing Laszlo Borbely's presentation of the key objectives of the meeting, the Regional Director highlighted the need to move forward in relation to Parma and for the EHMB to work with the Secretariat to develop priorities and to lead the development of a conceptual framework and tabled the suggestions for:
  - a. An additional EHMB meeting on 8-9th September 2012 immediately before the Regional Committee meeting in Malta;

- b. The development of small working groups to: develop strategic priorities and a conceptual framework for the environment and health agenda in Europe; and explore financing options for the EHP;
- c. Extend the mandate of the Board from 2 to 3 years.

## **Agenda Item 2: Adoption of the Report from the 1st European Environment and Health Ministerial Board (EHMB) Meeting**

10. The Report of the 1<sup>st</sup> EHMB meeting was adopted with no objections.

## **Agenda Item 3: Report from the 1st European Environment and Health Task Force (EHTF) Meeting**

11. The Task Force had its first meeting on the 27-28<sup>th</sup> of October in Bled, Slovenia. Besides the adoption of the Rules of Procedures the Task Force reviewed the developments since the Parma Conference and discussed the proposed areas of joint action within its scope of work.

12. Mr. Krunoslav Capak and Mr. Alexander Nies, the Co-chairs of the Task Force presented a thorough and concise review of the Draft Report of the Task Force meeting together with the conclusions by the Co-Chair, as well as the Rules of Procedure of the Task Force.

13. The EHMB thanked Mr Capak and Mr Nies for their report and noted the main conclusions from the meeting of the Task Force.

## **Agenda Item 4: General Discussion on the way forward**

### **Governance of EHP**

#### **Clarification and harmonisation of the roles, responsibilities and work of the EHMB and the EHTF**

13. The members of the EHMB discussed the general perception of roles, responsibilities and work of the EHMB and presented suggestions for the way forward including: timetables for the respective meetings of the EHMB and EHTF; inter-sessional work and the need for an internal and external communication strategy; practical description of tasks and roles of the EHTF and EHMB, respectively; development of a road map where clear achievement indicators were defined; specification and possibly narrowing of the meeting agendas. This was felt of particular importance for the EHTF meetings, for which the EHMB suggested focusing at each meeting on a few selected key issues that have arisen (new and emerging issues, asbestos, etc) and reviewing “what needs to be implemented for Parma”.

14. The members of the EHMB agreed that:

- The EHMB is a high level entity that is well placed to give strategic and political direction. While recognising that countries not represented in the EHMB might be concerned about strategic decisions taken by the Board, it recalls the mandate received from the WHO Regional Committee for Europe (WHO RC) and UNECE Commission on Environmental Policies (UNECE CEP), which describes the Board as the political face and driving force of international policies in the EH field for implementation of the commitments made by the EHP.
- It should be proposed to the WHO RC and UNECE CEP to extend the mandate of the EHMB from current two to three years and to invite Germany as permanent observer in EHMB.

15. The Secretariat committed to provide specific proposals to the EHMB regarding

- work plan for the EHTF and EHMB to promote inter sessional work;
- draft a paper on the specific roles of the EHMB and the EHTF.

## **Stakeholder engagement**

16. Members of the EHMB supported stronger engagement with stakeholders, particularly Youth and EC and backed the need to strengthen these relationships. The secretariat invited the EHMB to consider introducing a standing invitation to youth for the attendance at the EHMB. It also explained that while the EC is interested in the EHP, the question over whether the environment sector or the health sector would take the lead is not resolved.

17. The members of the EHMB agreed:

- That there is need greater support to youth engagement in the EHP, including their possible participation in the EHMB;
- To strengthen the links between the EHMB and the WHO RC and UNECE CEP, so that policy and strategic issues discussed by the EHMB would then be presented for validation by the two governing bodies;
- To work towards a clearer definition of the role to be played by the EHMB and the desired legacy to be left at the end of its mandate. This could include:
  - Guide the EHP in finding the right balance between the decisions taken in Parma and the new emerging priorities in EH;
  - Promote the establishment of intersectoral working groups in countries where these are not existing; and
  - Advocate the EHP in relevant high level fora
- To support the greater engagement of the European Commission in the EHP, including by providing information about the EHP and its value added to environment and health policy development in the European Union to the Council of Ministers of the EHP.

18. The Secretariat committed to provide specific proposals to the EHMB regarding youth involvement.

## **Communication between and among different levels of governance and constituencies**

19. Communication, whether through political, social, educational or youth sectors was understood to be a key aspect to developing political awareness and engagement and that these communications should not be limited to health and environment. The economic sector was recognised as a specific

focus. A clear communication strategy was essential to ensure people and institutions outside the specific fields of health and environment were made aware and that also covered such questions as “what is environment and health?” and how it can be integrated into initiatives such as Health 2020 and the promotion of the green economy.

20. The members of the EHMB agreed:

- on the need for the development of a clear communication strategy.

21. The Secretariat committed to provide a specific proposal to the EHMB regarding a Zero draft communication strategy which is to be developed together with the countries by the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of March 2012 for completion by June 2012. The Secretariat will follow up with members of the EHMB regarding identification of a Focal point in each country represented in the EHMB for the development and implementation of this strategy.

## **Governance and Strategic issues for the EHMB in 2012-13**

### **Identification of priorities for Implementation**

22. The EHMB acknowledged that there is a need for clarity on the conceptual level of EH issues and a clear set of priorities for countries to focus on. It was suggested that if priorities were identified, then countries would have a greater possibility of financial allocation towards those issues, but even then, some countries would need technical and financial assistance for the implementation. EC frameworks were emphasized and attempts should be made to work within those.

23. The secretariat highlighted the need for the EHP to provide a forum for discussing not only current priorities, but also new and emerging issues and consulted the EHMB on whether such a forum would be best provided by the EHTF or the EHMB. However, as the EHTF focuses on supporting the achievement of the targets that were adopted in Parma, it seems that the EHMB would provide a more appropriate platform for such a forum to be established.

24. The members of the EHMB agreed:

- to endorse the organization of a consultative meeting on the identification of priorities, as per the EHMB secretariat paper Number 7, the outcomes of which would then be presented for endorsement by the EHMB at the next meeting in September 2012.

25. The Secretariat committed to provide specific proposals to the EHMB regarding:

- A consultation meeting on the identification of the priorities, to be held in Bonn on 3-4 July 2012, and to be followed by a presentation of the results to representatives of the EHMB members, to be held in Bonn on 5-6 July 2012
- The preparation of a paper on Priority identification for next EHMB, which will be back to back with the Regional Committee in Malta on 10–13 September 2012.
- Specific issues paper on issues that need to be dealt with, particularly relating to advocating political support to address Asbestos, as well as the ratification of the Protocol on Water and Health by a greater number of countries.

### **Amplifying the impact of Parma**

26. Rio+20 - The Green economy was flagged as an entry point for the EHP in the global governance for environment. However it was understood that the “green economy” concept is still relatively



undefined and that in the zero draft outcome document of the Rio+20 Conference “The future we want” there is a lack of clarity on what the connection is with health. The EHMB agreed on the need for better highlighting the health dimension of sustainable development in the outcome document of the Rio\_+20 Conference. The co-chair requested the assistance of the secretariat to lobby the UN secretariat and the EU to that effect.

27. Millenium Development Goals (MDGs) – the MDGs were identified as an area to be explored further due to their relationship with EH and where EH could be reflected within the sustainable development goals.

28. The members of the EHMB:

- Agreed to develop a statement on health and Rio +20, as a common statement formally approved by the EHMB to be used for advocacy purposes in different fora. The Slovenian statement proposal submitted to the first meeting of the EHTF could be used as a basis. Endorsement should also be sought from the EU Presidency, both health and environment, and this statement could be utilised by the MSs to reflect their positions to the EC as part of the consultation on Rio +20 preparations.
- Welcomed the proposal of Mr Borbely to highlight the EHP and the common position of the EHMB with respect to Rio+ 20 on the occasion of the meeting of the Council Ministers of Environment under the Danish Presidency

## **Calendar of meeting for EHP**

29. An expert consultation meeting on the identification of priorities for environment and health, to be held in Bonn on 3-4 July;

30. Consultation meeting with representatives of the EHMB on the outcomes of the expert meeting of the 3-4 of July on the identification of the priorities, –5-6 July 2012, in Bonn;

31. 3rd EHMB meeting, 9<sup>th</sup> September 2012, back to back with the Regional Committee in Malta 10<sup>th</sup> -13<sup>th</sup> September 2012;

32. 2nd EHTF meeting to take place in late 2012 or very early in 2013, place to be decided;

33. The proposal of Azerbaijan to host one of the upcoming meetings of EHP in 2013 or second half of 2012 was welcomed.

## **Sustainability of the EHP**

34. The EHMB could consider inviting all Member States to make voluntary contributions to the core expenditures of EHP, with the target of mobilizing \$600.000 to cover the Core costs of the Secretariat for the biennium. Costs of Ministerial Board meetings stand at \$35,000, while costs of Task Force meetings are \$120-130,000. The co-chair suggested a greater need to formalise the mechanism and requested the secretariat to prepare a letter that can go to governments to explain the importance of this field and to gain their support.

35. The members of the EHMB agreed:

- On the development of a resource mobilization strategy;

36. The Secretariat committed to provide specific proposals to the EHMB regarding

- resource mobilization strategies, to be developed together with the co-chairs of the EHMB.

37. The Regional Director supported the development of a statement to be introduced to the EU Council of Ministers of environment and to also work with the EU presidency in developing a statement for Rio+20.

## **ANNEX I. – List of Participants**

### **AZERBAIJAN**

***Mr Hussein Bagirov, EHMB member***

Minister, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources

### **BELARUS**

***Mr Vladimir G. Tsalko, EHMB member***

Minister , Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection

Ms Marina Philipuyk, *Delegate*

Consultant, International Cooperation Department, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection

### **FRANCE**

***Dr Jean-Yves Grall, Alternate***

Director General for Health, Ministère du Travail, de l'emploi et de la santé

Mr Charles Saout, *Delegate*

Deputy Director, Subdirectorate of Prevention of risks linked to Environment and Food, Ministry of labour and health

### **MALTA**

***Dr Ray Busuttil, Alternate***

Superintendent of Public Health , Superintendence of Public Health

### **ROMANIA**

***Mr Lázló Borbély, EHMB Co-chair***

Minister , Ministry of Environment and Forests

Ms Petra Szavics, *Delegate*

Personal Adviser to the Minister , Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development

Ms Réka Incze, *Delegate*

Ministry of Environment and Forest

### **SERBIA**

***Professor Petar Bulat, Alternate***

Assistant Minister of Health, Ministry of Health of Serbia

## **SLOVENIA**

***Dr Marta Ciraj, Alternate***

Secretary, EU Affairs and International Relations Office , Ministry of Health

*Dr Pia Vracko, Delegate*

Physician , National Institute of Public Health

## **UNECE**

***Mr Marco Keiner, Alternate***

Director, Environment Division

## **UNEP**

***Mr Jan Dusik, EHMB Member a.i.***

Acting Director , UNEP/Regional Office for Europe , International Environment House

## **EHMB Ex-officio members**

### **CROATIA**

***Dr Krunoslav Capak, EHTF Chair***

Deputy Director, Croatian National Institute of Public Health

### **GERMANY**

***Mr Alexander Nies; EHTF Co-Chair***

Head of Directorate, Federal Ministry for the Environment,, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety

*Dr Ute Winkler, Delegate*

Bundesministerium für Gesundheit, Ministry of Health, G22, "Grundsatzfragen der Prävention, Eigenverantwortung, Selbsthilfe, Umweltbezogener Gesundheitsschutz"

*Dr Birgit Wolz, Delegate*

Head of Division IG II 2, Environment and Health, Federal Ministry for the Environment,, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety

## **WHO Regional Office for Europe**

***Ms Zsuzsanna Jakab, EHMB member***

Regional Director

*Dr Guénaél Rodier, Delegate*

Director, Division of Communicable Diseases, Health Security, & Environment

*Dr Srdan Matic, Delegate*

Coordinator, Environment and Health

Dr Elizabet Paunovic  
Temporary Adviser

Dr Michal Krzyzanowski  
Head, ECEH Bonn Office

Mr Roger Aertgeerts  
Scientist, Management of Natural Recourses and Health

Mr Matthias Braubach  
Technical Officer, Environment and Health

Dr Hilde Kruse  
Programme Manager, Food Safety

Dr Marco Martuzzi  
Programme Manager, Environment and Health Intelligence and Forecasting

Dr Bettina Menne  
Programme Manager, Climate Change, Sustainable Development and Green Health Services

Ms Francesca Racioppi  
Programme Manager, Environment and Health

Ms Cristiana Salvi  
Communication Officer, Regional Director's office

Ms Geraldine McWeeny  
Technical Officer, Belgrade, Serbia

Ms Marina Hansen,  
Programme Assistant, Environment and Health

Wendy Williams  
Programme Assistant, Environment and Health

## **ANNEX II. – Scope and Purpose of the Meeting**

This is the second meeting of the European Environment and Health Ministerial Board (EHMB), convened in consultation with the Co-chairs of the EHMB according to Rule 5 of the Rules of Procedure adopted at the First Meeting on 4 May 2011.

The meeting is convened primarily to review the progress of the European Environment and Health Process (EHP) in its first year after the full constitution of the new governance structures, which has been completed at the first meeting of the European Environment and Health Task Force meeting in October 2011. The Chair and the Co-chair of the EHTF will join EHMB as ex officio members.

First meetings of both bodies indicated that there is a need for further review and discussion of the relationship between the EHMB and EHTF, participation of all Member States and key stakeholders and partners in both the political and the technical dimensions of the EHP and the communication between different levels of governance and constituencies (EHMB, EHTF, Member States, partners and stakeholders, the EHP Secretariat, the governing bodies of WHO/Europe and UNECE, etc).

The specific objectives of the meeting are:

1. To review and discuss the outcomes of the First meeting of the European Environment and Health Task Force, held in Bled, Slovenia, in October 2011, and feedback from Member States on the experiences in the first year of the new EHP governance. In particular, discussions will focus on:
  - a. Clarification and harmonization of roles and responsibilities of EHMB and EHTF;
  - b. Harmonization of the work of the two structures;
  - c. Involvement of stakeholders and particularly collaboration with the European Commission;
  - d. Communication between and among different levels of governance and constituencies;
2. To review and discuss the following governance and strategic issues for EHMB in 2012-13:
  - e. priorities in the implementation of the commitments and the framework for monitoring the progress in the implementation of Parma commitments based on feedback received from EHTF;
  - f. amplifying the impact of the Parma follow-up by linking visibly to other regional (e.g. Environment for Europe process, Health2020) and global processes (Rio +20; NCD UN agenda, Millennium Development Goals);
  - g. calendar of meetings of EHMB and EHTF in 2012-13 and second round of elections of EHMB members;
3. To address organizational and sustainability aspects of the European Environment and Health Process.

## **ANNEX III. –Agenda of the Meeting**

- 08:30 – 09:00**            **Registration**
- 09:00 - 09:20**            **Opening of the meeting, adoption of the agenda**  
Laszlo Borbely, EHMB Co-chair  
Dorijan Marusic, EHMB Co-Chair  
Zsuzsanna Jakab, Regional Director, WHO/Europe  
*Relevant documents:*
1. *Scope and purpose*
  2. *Provisional Programme*
  3. *Provisional list of participants*
- 09:20 – 09:25**            **Adoption of the Report of the 1<sup>st</sup> EHMB Meeting**  
*Relevant documents:*
4. *Draft report of the 1<sup>st</sup> EHMB meeting*
- 09:25 – 10:30**            **Report from the 1<sup>st</sup> European Environment and Health Task Force (EHTF) Meeting**  
Introduction by Krunoslav Capak, EHTF Chair and Alexander Nies, EHTF Co-Chair  
*Relevant documents:*
5. *Draft report of the 1<sup>st</sup> European Environment and Health Task Force meeting*
  6. *Rules of Procedure of the EHTF*
  7. *Background note by the Secretariat: Governance of the European Environment and Health Process*
  8. *Managerial report of the EHP Secretariat for 2010-2011*
- 10:30 – 11:00**            **Coffee/Tea Break**
- 11:00 – 12:30**            **General Discussion on the way forward**  
*Relevant documents:*
9. *Concept note on priorities in Environment and Health in WHO European Region*
- 12:30-13:30**            **Lunch**
- 13:30 – 15:30**            **Opening of the renewed WHO European Centre on Environment and Health in Bonn**  
Event hosted by the German Federal Minister of Environment, Nature Protection and Nuclear Safety, German Federal Minister of Health and WHO Regional Director for Europe

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Office for Europe**

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