



Better Health. Better Environment. Sustainable Choices.

Report of the seventh meeting of the European Environment and Health Task Force

**Copenhagen, Denmark
10-11 April 2017**



**World Health
Organization**

REGIONAL OFFICE FOR **Europe**

**Seventh meeting of the
European Environment and
Health Task Force (EHTF)**

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Abstract

At its seventh meeting, the European Environment and Health Task Force (EHTF) agreed on final drafts of two of the three outcome documents to be submitted to the Sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health, to be held in Ostrava, Czech Republic on 13–15 June 2017, and asked its Ad Hoc Working Group to finalize the third. The EHTF attended the second on a series of three WHO briefings to promote the Conference to diplomats, and received updates on preparations for the Conference and on the reaction of the 22nd session of the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP), held in January 2017, to the EHTF's invitation to WHO and UNECE to consider establishing a joint secretariat for the European environment and health process.

Keywords

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Introduction

1. The WHO Regional Office for Europe convened the seventh meeting of the European Environment and Health Task Force (EHTF) to conclude the preparations for the Sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health, which would take place in Ostrava, Czech Republic, on 13–15 June 2017, by completing the drafting of the political outcome documents of the Conference. In addition, the EHTF received updates on other preparations for and the programme of the Conference, including the main outcomes of the 22nd session of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Committee on Environmental Policy, held in Geneva, Switzerland, in January 2017.
2. The EHTF comprised representatives of 36 Member States and nine other stakeholders in the European environment and health process (EHP): WHO, UNECE, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the European Environment Agency (EEA), the Regional Environmental Center (REC), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the European Environment and Health Youth Coalition (EEHYC), ECOFORUM and the Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL). The EHTF was welcomed by the WHO Regional Director for Europe, who summarized progress achieved in the negotiation of the political outcome documents for the Ministerial Conference. The EHTF adopted the agenda and programme of the meeting, and the report of its sixth meeting, held in Vienna on 29–30 November 2016. The meeting was chaired by Robert Thaler (Austria). A request was made for the nomination of a co-chair from the health sector. See Annex 1 for the scope and purpose of the meeting, Annex 2 for its agenda and Annex 3 for the list of participants.

Review and adoption of final draft outcome documents for the Sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health

3. The EHTF received new drafts of the three outcome documents for the Conference in Ostrava – the Conference declaration and annexes on action to implement it and institutional arrangements for the EHP – in two forms – one showing all the changes and comments made through the consultation process in February–March 2017 and the 10th meeting of the EHTF Ad Hoc Working Group, held in Frankfurt, Germany on 24 March, and the other a clean version with all changes incorporated. The EHTF expressed appreciation for the progress that had been made in the redrafting of the outcome documents. After a very lively and detailed discussion of the third draft of the declaration, the participants agreed on a fourth draft for presentation to the Conference.
4. In considering the third draft of Annex I, the EHTF decided to retain it as an annex to the declaration, and to rename it a compendium of possible actions that Member States could consider including in their national portfolios for action on environment and

health. The EHTF discussed the actions proposed and asked the Working Group to use its comments to finalize the compendium as soon as possible. The EHTF discussed Annex II, on institutional arrangements for the EHP, in detail and agreed on a third draft, which would be finalized for adoption at the Sixth Ministerial Conference. It also decided to hold a final open-ended meeting of the Working Group during the Ministerial Conference.

Progress in preparations for the Ministerial Conference

5. The EHTF received an update on progress in the preparation of the Ministerial Conference, including the form and content of the programme, which was intended to address the seven priority issues in a cross-cutting way. WHO had received 19 applications for the 14 programme slots for side events. The EHTF agreed that all 19 would be accepted and asked the Secretariat to determine how to combine some of the proposals, and to inform the organizers of these decisions as soon as possible.
6. To promote the Conference, WHO held the second of three briefings for diplomats during the EHTF meeting. The first had been held in Geneva, Switzerland in the previous week and the third would take place in Prague, Czech Republic in May. The second enabled the 21 ambassadors and their representatives attending it to meet with EHTF members at a working lunch. Chaired by the WHO Regional Director for Europe and with the participation of the Ambassador of the Czech Republic to Denmark, the Chair of the EHTF and representatives of the WHO Regional Office for Europe, UNECE and UNEP, the briefing described the preparations for the Conference; its priorities, frameworks and proposed political outcome documents; and UNECE's and UNEP's input to the Conference and priorities for EHP.

Any other business and closure of the meeting

7. In addition, the EHTF was informed of the main outcomes of the 22nd session of the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP), held in January 2017. At its meeting in November 2016, the Task Force had invited WHO and UNECE to consider establishing a joint secretariat for the EHP. In its January session, the CEP determined that funds from its regular budget could not be used for this purpose and decided to discuss the invitation further at its next session, on the basis of a background document that would assess the extrabudgetary resources that would be needed. Finally, the twenty-first meeting of the Working Group of the Parties to the Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters, held on 4–6 April 2017, had included a thematic discussion on the EHP.
8. The EHTF Chair thanked the participants for their active and constructive participation and the secretariat for the preparations: The WHO Regional Director thanked the Chair

of the EHTF for his highly effective chairmanship and all participants for their contributions, and the EHTF warmly thanked its Chair for his excellent chairmanship.

Annex 1. Scope and purpose

The seventh meeting of the European Environment and Health Task Force (EHTF) is convened to conclude the preparations of the Sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health, which will take place in Ostrava, Czech Republic, on 13–15 June 2017.

The main purpose of the meeting is to finalize the drafting of the political outcome documents of the Ministerial Conference.

In particular, the discussion will focus on the following main areas:

1. negotiating the outcome documents of the Sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health:

EHTF will review and finalize the draft outcome documents for the Ministerial Conference proposed by the Ad Hoc Working Group – the ministerial declaration and its two annexes – to be adopted in Ostrava;

to complement the background to the discussion on the outcomes of the Ministerial Conference, the Secretariat will present the outcomes from the online consultation on the draft outcome documents conducted in February–March 2017;

2. reporting and informing:

EHTF will be updated about the preparations for and the programme of the Sixth Ministerial Conference in 2017;

furthermore, EHTF will be informed about the main outcomes of the discussions held at the 22nd session of the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy (Geneva, Switzerland, 25–27 January 2017).

Annex 2. Agenda

Monday, 10 April 2017

Registration

Agenda items 1a and 1b: opening of the meeting and election of the EHTF co-chair

Agenda item 3b: report on the main outcomes of the discussions held at the 22nd session of the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy (Geneva, Switzerland, 25–27 January 2017)

Agenda item 2: review and adoption of the final draft outcome documents for the Sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health

Reception hosted by the Dr Zsuzsanna Jakab, WHO Regional Director for Europe

Tuesday, 11 April 2017

Agenda item 2 (continued): review and adoption of the final draft outcome documents for the Sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health

Briefing for the ambassadors of WHO European Member States on the Sixth ministerial Conference on Environment and Health

Agenda item 3a: update on the preparations of the Ministerial Conference

Agenda item 4: any other business and closure of the meeting

Annex 3. Participants

Member States

Albania

Eralda Mariani, Officer for Epidemiology, Ministry of Health, Tirana

Armenia

Anahit Aleksandryan, Head of Hazardous Substances and Waste Policy Division, Ministry of Nature Protection, Yerevan

Nune Bakunks, Deputy Director General, National Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Ministry of Health, Yerevan

Austria

Robert Thaler, Head of Division, Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management, Vienna

Sonja Spiegel, Deputy Head of Department, Federal Ministry of Health and Women's Affairs, Vienna

Azerbaijan

Emin Garabaghli, Head of International Cooperation Division, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, Baku

Belarus

Siarhei Sychyk, Director, National Coordinator within European Environment and Health Process, Republican Unitary Enterprise "Scientific Practical Centre of Hygiene", Minsk

Alena Drazdova, Head of Laboratory of Environmental Factors and Health Risk Assessment Technologies, Republican Unitary Enterprise "Scientific Practical Centre of Hygiene", Minsk

Belgium

Isabel De Boosere, Attaché, Federal Public Service Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment, Brussels

Fabrice Thielen, Chair of the National Cell Environment & Health, Federal Public Service Public Health

Croatia

Krunoslav Capak, Head, Croatian National Institute of Public Health, Zagreb

Sibila Žabica, Head of Independent Sector for European Affairs, International Cooperation and Protocol, Ministry of Health, Zagreb

Czech Republic

František Mudroňka, Department of International Affairs and the European Union, Ministry of Health, Prague

Lukas Pokorny, Head of International Organization Unit, Ministry of Environment, Prague

Vladimira Puklova, Senior Researcher, National Institute of Public Health, Prague

Denmark

Pernille Thygesen, Academic Employee, Danish Health Authority, Copenhagen

France

Caroline Paul, Head of the Unit EA1, Outdoor Environment and Chemicals, Directorate-General of Health, Ministry of Health, Paris

Emmanuelle Jouy, International Health Officer, Ministry of Health, Paris

Marie-Pierre Meganck, Head of International Unit, Ministry of the Environment, Energy and the Sea, La Defense

Germany

Karin Höppner, Senior Scientific Advisor, Federal Ministry of Health, Bonn

Birgit Wolz, Head of Division, Environment and Health, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety, Bonn

Barbara Werschkun, Consultant, Science Bureau, Berlin

Georgia

Nana Gabriadze, Head of Environmental Health Division, National Centre for Disease Control and Public Health, Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia, Tbilisi

Hungary

Tamas Pandics, Director-General, National Public Health Centre, Budapest

Ireland

Siobhán McEvoy, Chief Environmental Health Officer, Department of Health, Dublin

Italy

Aldo Di Benedetto, Medical Officer, Directorate-General of Health Prevention, Ministry of Health, Rome

Massimo Cozzone, Senior Officer, Ministry for the Environment Land and Sea, Rome

Kyrgyzstan

Asylbek Sydykanov, Deputy Director, Department of Disease and State Sanitary Epidemiological Surveillance, Ministry of Health, Bishkek

Lithuania

Romualdas Sabaliauskas, Director, Centre for Health Education and Disease Prevention, Vilnius

Olita Rusickaite, Public Health Specialist, Centre for Health Education and Disease Prevention, Vilnius

Malta

Karen Vincenti, Consultant, Public Health Medicine, Ministry for Health, Valletta

Monaco

Patrick Rampal, Co-Chair, EHTF Working Group on Climate Change and Health; President, Monaco Scientific Centre

Montenegro

Borko Bajić, Institute of Public Health, Environment; Health Focal Point, Ministry of Health, Podgorica

Netherlands

Joris Vandervoet, Deputy Director, Safety and Risks, Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment, The Hague

Brigitte Dessing, Policy Advisor, Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment, The Hague

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Norway

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Poland

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Evgeny Kovalevskiy, Leading Researcher, Research Institute of Occupational Health, Moscow

Serbia

Biljana Filipovic, Head of Unit for International Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture and Environmental Protection, Belgrade

Ljiljana Jovanovic, Head, Department of Health Technology in the Sector of Health Care, Ministry of Health, Belgrade

Slovakia

Katarína Halzlová, Expert Advisor, Public Health Authority of the Slovak Republic, Bratislava

Spain

Santiago Gonzalez Muñoz, Head of Service, Environmental Health Risk Assessment, Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality, Madrid

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Agneta Falk Filipsson, Head of Unit, Public Health Agency of Sweden, Solna

Marie-Louise Heikensten, Senior Adviser, Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, Stockholm

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Tajikistan

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Muzafar Salimov, Head of International Department, Committee of Environmental Protection under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan, Dushanbe

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Dragan Gjorgjev, Policy Adviser, Institute of Public Health, Skopje

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Ivana Savić, Executive Director, Centre for Human Rights and Development Studies (CHRDS), Belgrade, Serbia

European Environment Agency (EEA)

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Adriana Gheorghe, Project Manager Environment, Health and Well-being, Copenhagen, Denmark

European Environment and Health Youth Coalition (EEHYC)

Danilo Arsenijevic, Executive Board Member, Vilnius, Lithuania

Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL)

Roberta Savli, Deputy Director, Brussels, Belgium

Regional Environmental Center (REC)

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United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Lorea Coronado-Garcia, Sustainability Specialist, Istanbul Regional Hub, Turkey

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

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Virginia Fuse, Environmental Affairs Officer, Environment Division, Geneva, Switzerland

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Wondwosen Kibret Asnake, Programme Management Officer, Geneva, Switzerland

WHO Regional Office for Europe

Zsuzsanna Jakab, WHO Regional Director for Europe

Srdan Matic, Coordinator, Environment and Health

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