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ENVIRONMENT FOR EUROPE
UN ENVIRONNEMENT POUR L'EUROPE
ОКРУЖАЮЩАЯ СРЕДА ДЛЯ ЕВРОПЫ
ЕУРОПА ҮШІН ҚОРШАҒАН ОРТА

ASTANA, 21–23 September 2011



Seventh “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference

**Astana, Kazakhstan
21–23 September 2011**

Annotated provisional agenda for the Conference



Economic and Social Council

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Seventh “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference

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Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Opening of the Conference and adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the Conference

**To be held at the Independence Palace, Astana, starting at 10 a.m.
on Wednesday, 21 September 2011**

I. Provisional agenda

1. Opening of the Conference and adoption of the agenda.
2. The “Environment for Europe” process: 20 years of pan-European cooperation.
3. Sustainable management of water and water-related ecosystems.
4. Sustainable management of water and greening the economy.
5. Greening the economy: mainstreaming the environment into economic development.
6. Reporting on the outcomes of the discussion under the thematic segments.
7. Adoption of Conference outcomes.
8. Closure of the Conference.

II. Annotations to the provisional agenda

1. Opening of the Conference and adoption of the agenda

Plenary session, Wednesday, 21 September 2011, 2–4 p.m.

1. A high-level representative of Kazakhstan will open the Seventh “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference. Introductory remarks by the Chair of the Conference and welcoming speeches by high-level representatives of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), of the United Nations Environment Programme

(UNEP) and of the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific¹ (ESCAP) will follow. An opening event by the host country will be presented to the delegates.

2. The Conference will be invited to adopt its agenda.

Documents

Annotated provisional agenda for the Conference (ECE/ASTANA.CONF/2011/1)

Organization of work at the Conference (ECE/ASTANA.CONF/2011/7)

List of documents and materials for the Conference (ECE/ASTANA.CONF/2011/INF/1)

2. The “Environment for Europe” process: 20 years of pan-European cooperation

Plenary session, Wednesday, 21 September 2011, 4–6 p.m.

3. The segment on the “Environment for Europe” (EfE) process will open with introductory remarks by the Chair of the Conference. A representative from the Czech Republic will address the Conference on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the EfE process, which began in Dobříš, Czech Republic, in 1991.

4. A representative of Kazakhstan will present the “Green Bridge” Partnership Programme.

5. The Executive Director of the European Environment Agency will present the key findings of “Europe’s Environment Assessment of Assessments” (EEAoA) report.

6. A representative of Finland will present the findings of the Second Assessment of Transboundary Rivers, Lakes and Groundwaters in the UNECE region.

7. Following the presentations, the floor will be opened for discussion with an emphasis on the findings of EEAoA and the second transboundary waters assessment, as well as on the “Green Bridge” Partnership Programme.

Documents

Partnership Programme of the Astana “Green Bridge” Initiative² (ECE/ASTANA.CONF/2011/6)

Europe’s Environment Assessment of Assessments: summary (ECE/ASTANA.CONF/2011/8).

Second Assessment of Transboundary Rivers, Lakes and Groundwaters in the UNECE region (ECE/ASTANA.CONF/2011/9)

¹ To be confirmed.

² Astana “Green Bridge” Initiative: Europe-Asia-Pacific Partnership for the Implementation of “Green Growth” (E/ESCAP/MCED(6)/13).

3. Sustainable management of water and water-related ecosystems

Plenary session and round-table discussion, Thursday, 22 September 2011, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.

8. A one-hour plenary session will open with introductory remarks by the Chair of this thematic segment of the Conference. Keynote addresses will follow to kick-off the discussion.

9. Interested countries and organizations will be given the opportunity to briefly present initiatives and policy tools relevant to this item of the agenda. One such initiative is the Astana Water Action, which has been prepared under the leadership of the Chair of the UNECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes.

10. Following the plenary session, the meeting will break into three parallel sessions of a multi-stakeholder round table on sustainable management of water and water-related ecosystems. Each parallel session will address the same questions, although naturally bringing different perspectives. The questions are the following:

(a) Which policies proved to be effective to value and protect water-related ecosystems, including payment for ecosystem services? What are the main obstacles and gaps?

(b) What policies proved to be effective in addressing human health issues related to water quality and quantity? What are the main obstacles and gaps?

(c) What are the priorities/challenges in adapting management of water and water-related ecosystems to extreme weather events and to climate change?

(d) What are the experiences and lessons learned from the cooperation in transboundary basins to improve water quality, manage water quantity and protect ecosystems?

11. The consolidated results of discussions will be presented on the last day of the Conference and will serve as input into the Chair's Summary of the Conference.

Documents

Sustainable management of water and water-related ecosystems
(ECE/ASTANA.CONF/2011/3)

Astana Water Action (ECE/ASTANA.CONF/2011/5)

Second Assessment of Transboundary Rivers, Lakes and Groundwaters in the UNECE region (ECE/ASTANA.CONF/2011/9)

Europe's Environment Assessment of Assessments: summary
(ECE/ASTANA.CONF/2011/8)

4. Sustainable management of water and greening the economy

Plenary session and round-table discussion, Thursday, 22 September 2011, 3–6 p.m.

12. The afternoon one-hour plenary session on sustainable management of water and greening the economy will open with introductory remarks by the Chair of this interlinking thematic segment. Keynote addresses will follow to kick-off the discussion.

13. Interested countries and organizations will be given the opportunity to briefly present initiatives and policy tools relevant to this item of the agenda.

14. Following the plenary session, the meeting will break into three parallel sessions of a multi-stakeholder round table on sustainable management of water and greening the economy. Each parallel session will address the same questions, although naturally bringing different perspectives. The questions are the following:

(a) What policy mixes and practical tools, such as integrated water resources management (IWRM), pricing, standards and water users associations, can be most effective to improve water efficiency by different water users, especially in agriculture, households and industrial operations?

(b) How can we encourage investments to take into account the impacts on water quantity and water quality, energy and resource efficiency and vulnerable populations?

15. The consolidated results of discussions will be presented on the last day of the Conference and will serve as input into the Chair's Summary of the Conference.

Documents

Sustainable management of water and water-related ecosystems (ECE/ASTANA.CONF/2011/3)

Astana Water Action (ECE/ASTANA.CONF/2011/5)

Second Assessment of Transboundary Rivers, Lakes and Groundwaters in the UNECE region (ECE/ASTANA.CONF/2011/9)

Europe's Environment Assessment of Assessments: summary (ECE/ASTANA.CONF/2011/8)

5. Greening the economy: mainstreaming the environment into economic development

Plenary session and round-table discussion, Friday, 23 September 2011, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.

16. The Friday morning one-hour plenary session will open with introductory remarks by the Chair of this thematic segment on greening the economy. Keynote addresses will follow to kick-off the discussion.

17. Interested countries and organizations will be given the opportunity to briefly present initiatives and policy tools relevant to this item of the agenda. One such initiative is the "Green Bridge" Partnership Programme, prepared under the leadership of Kazakhstan.

18. Following the plenary session, the meeting will break into three parallel sessions of a multi-stakeholder round table on greening the economy: mainstreaming the environment into economic development. Each parallel session will address the same questions, although naturally bringing different perspectives. The questions are the following:

(a) What policy mixes have the potential to secure the achievement of a green, inclusive and competitive economy, through an integrated approach, including sectors such as transport, housing, energy, agriculture and education?

(b) How can resource efficiency improve sustainability and competitiveness in local, regional and global markets?

(c) How can research, innovation and investment help the transition towards a green economy?

(d) How could the "Environment for Europe" process contribute to outcomes on green economy in the context of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development 2012 (Rio+20)?

19. The consolidated results of discussions will be presented on the last day of the Conference and will serve as input into the Chair's Summary of the Conference.

Documents

Greening the economy: mainstreaming the environment into economic development (ECE/ASTANA.CONF/2011/4)

Europe's Environment Assessment of Assessments: summary (ECE/ASTANA.CONF/2011/8)

Partnership Programme of the Astana "Green Bridge" Initiative (ECE/ASTANA.CONF/2011/6)

6. Reporting on the outcomes of the discussions under the thematic segments

Plenary session, Friday, 23 September 2011, 3–4.30 p.m.

20. The Friday afternoon session will open with introductory remarks by the Chair of the Conference. On the basis of reports from the round-table discussions, the Chairs of the thematic segments will present summaries of the discussions under agenda items 3, 4 and 5.

21. Each presentation will be followed by comments from the floor on the main findings of the round-table discussions.

7. Adoption of Conference outcomes

Plenary session, Friday, 23 September 2011, 4.30–5.30 p.m.

22. This segment will open with introductory remarks by the Chair of the Conference presenting a draft of the agreed outcome (Ministerial Declaration).

23. The Conference will be invited to consider initiatives, agreements, pledges and policy tools by interested ministers and stakeholders on subjects related to the Conference themes that may have been submitted to the Conference.

24. The Conference will also be invited to consider its contribution to Rio+20.

25. The Conference will then be invited to adopt the Ministerial Declaration.

Document

Draft Ministerial Declaration (ECE/ASTANA.CONF/2011/L.1)

8. Closure of the Conference

Plenary session, Friday, 23 September 2011, 5.30–6 p.m.

26. The Chair of the Conference will present the results of the Conference and circulate them in the form of a Chair's summary.

27. The Conference will close at 6 p.m. on 23 September 2011.

Annex

Schedule and questions for discussions for the Seventh “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference

Astana, 21–23 September 2011

Wednesday, 21 September

Registration (9 a.m.–2 p.m.)

Greening-the-conference-related events for the Heads of Delegation organized by the host country, such as planting trees, riding bikes, etc. (11 a.m.–noon.)

Lunch break / side events:
noon–2 p.m.

1. Opening of the Conference

(plenary, 2–4 p.m.)

- Opening ceremony
- Adoption of the agenda

2. The EfE process: 20 years of pan-European cooperation

(plenary, 4–6 p.m.)

- History of the EfE process (20th anniversary)
- “Green Bridge” Partnership Programme
- EEAOA
- Second Assessment of Transboundary Waters

Official events / side events:
6–9 p.m.

Thursday, 22 September

3. Sustainable management of water and water-related ecosystems

(one-hour plenary followed by two-hour round-table discussions, organized in three parallel sessions, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.)

Questions for discussion:

- (a) Which policies proved to be effective to value and protect water-related ecosystems, including payment for ecosystem services? What are the main obstacles and gaps?
- (b) What policies proved to be effective in addressing human health issues related to water quality and quantity? What are the main obstacles and gaps?
- (c) What are the priorities/challenges in adapting management of water and water-related ecosystems to extreme weather events and to climate change?
- (d) What are the experiences and lessons learned from the cooperation in transboundary basins to improve water quality, manage water quantity and protect ecosystems?

Lunch break / side events: 1–3 p.m.

U4. Sustainable management of water and greening the economy

(one-hour plenary followed by two-hour round-table discussions, organized in three parallel sessions, 3–6 p.m.)

Questions for discussion:

- (a) What policy mixes and practical tools, such as IWRM, pricing, standards and water users associations, can be most effective to improve water efficiency by different water users, especially in agriculture, households and industrial operations?
- (b) How can we encourage investments to take into account the impacts on water quantity and water quality, energy and resource efficiency and vulnerable populations?

Official events / side events:
6–9 p.m.

Friday, 23 September

5. Greening the economy: mainstreaming the environment into economic development

(one-hour plenary followed by two-hour round-table discussions, organized in three parallel sessions, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.)

Questions for discussion:

- (a) What policy mixes have the potential to secure the achievement of a green, inclusive and competitive economy, through an integrated approach, including sectors such as transport, housing, energy, agriculture and education?
- (b) How can resource efficiency improve sustainability and competitiveness in local, regional and global markets?
- (c) How can research, innovation and investment help the transition towards a green economy?
- (d) How could the “Environment for Europe” process contribute to outcomes on green economy in the context of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development 2012 (Rio+20)?

Lunch break / side events: 1–3 p.m.

6. Reporting on the outcomes of the discussions under the thematic sessions

(plenary, 3–4.30 p.m.)

7. Adoption of Conference outcomes

(plenary, 4.30–5.30 p.m.)

8. Closure of the Conference

(plenary, 5.30–6 p.m.)

Official events / side events: 6–9 p.m.