

Brussels, 30 June 2025  
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#### INFORMATION NOTE

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| From:    | General Secretariat of the Council   |
| To:      | Delegations  |
| Subject: | Convention on Long Range Transboundary Air Pollution (CLRTAP): 63rd Session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review (WGSR 63) (Geneva, 26–28 May 2025)<br>- Statements by the EU and its Member States |

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Delegations will find in the Annex, for information purposes, a compilation of agreed statements as delivered at the abovementioned meeting on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

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**Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution (CLRTAP)  
63rd session of the Working Group on Strategies and Review (WGSR 63)  
(Geneva, 26-28 May 2025)**

**- Statements by the EU and its Member States –**

**Agenda item 2: Progress in the implementation of the 2024–2025 workplan**

*On progress reports*

We thank the TFTEI for its report on progress on its activities since WGSR62. We welcome the submission of Draft revised guidance document on stationary sources together with the Appendix and the Complementary document. We also welcome the ongoing work on the guidance document on mobile sources according to the timetable as agreed in the 2024-2025 Convention workplan. We consider a timely revision of both guidance documents (and the respective Annexes) necessary to be able to respect the agreed timetable for the revision of the Gothenburg Protocol, as the updated content of these guidance documents is linked to potential updates of the Technical Annexes.

The EU and its MS thank TFRN for the Report of the Task Force on Reactive Nitrogen progress in implementing its activities under the 2024-2025 Convention workplan, and in particular on the revision of the ammonia guidance document and the updated guidance for national nitrogen budgets.

On the issues for which TFRN seeks guidance, the EU and its MS believe it is crucial that the main work related to overall Gothenburg Protocol revision process is prioritised, with emphasis on the revision of the ammonia guidance document in conjunction with the revision of Annex IX. We are open to further discuss the modality of prioritisation.

We welcome the TFRN's plans of an ammonia workshop (Brussels, 23-25.06.2025) and we are happy to host it and encourage to a subsequent reporting to the Intersessional Heads of Delegations meeting (Helsingør, Denmark, 20-23.10.2025).

We fully acknowledge the activities outlined in the TFICAP report and welcome the active role that the Task Force plays within and beyond the UNECE region and other international and global initiatives including those lead by WHO, UNEA and CCAC. Through its work, TFICAP promotes the Convention and its various tools (e.g. various guidance documents) in other regions beyond UNECE.

We would like to acknowledge and thank Ms. Anna Engleryd (former Co-chair) who recently moved to another assignment. Anna Engleryd made significant contributions to the establishment of TFICAP and has co-led its work since 2021.

### *On the draft guidance documents*

#### Draft revised guidance document on control techniques for emissions of sulfur, nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds and particulate matter (including PM10, PM2.5 and black carbon) from stationary sources (ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/2025/2):

We thank TFTEI for the draft revised guidance document.

We regret that the wealth of technical information could only be uploaded as accompanying documents very late and we therefore reserve our opinion until we had adequate time to review them thoroughly.

We ask TFTEI to incorporate relevant information available for hydrogen and ammonia combustion to the informal documents, with appropriate disclaimers to reflect the scarce availability of data. Furthermore, the summary guidance could also mention relevant non-combustion alternatives (such as industrial-scale heat pumps, or electrification of industrial dryers) as means to eliminate or reduce both greenhouse gas and air pollutant emissions. It is our understanding that for most of the sectors covered, there could be great potential for non-combustion techniques during the coming decades.

The inclusion of new information requested should be submitted in time for the EB in December.

We note that new information on best available emission control techniques is reviewed and updated regularly via other channels, such as via the EU Industrial Emissions Directive or Ecodesign standards for small combustion sources. We therefore ask TFTEI to make this a “living document” with regular updates once the relevant information is available.

We agree with the original Canadian comments on the document, but as we said, we reserve the right to make further requests for changes during the EB.

#### Draft guidance document on non-technical measures (ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/2025/4):

We recognise the potential and necessity of non-technical measures in contributing to the long-term objectives of the present Gothenburg Protocol and reiterate their increased importance in addition to the available technical control measures, as also concluded in paragraph 90(g) of the Gothenburg Protocol review report.

Given the reduction potential and cost-effectiveness of non-technical measures in transport and residential heating, it would be equally useful to develop alternative ‘LOW’ scenarios for these two sectors, to be informed on how non-technical measures in these two sectors could contribute to achieving national emission reduction commitments and long-term objectives. It could provide useful information for the revision of article 3 of the Protocol and its Annexes.

We have proposed alternative text for paragraph 4 and some minor changes to paragraph 12a, 19, 24 and 30. In addition we propose to delete paragraph 56, since a reference to the revision process of the Gothenburg Protocol in this guidance document will soon be outdated. We have provided the relevant proposed text changes to the Secretariat this morning.

We agree with the original Canadian comments on the document.

Draft revised guidance document on national nitrogen budgets (ECE/EB.AIR/WG.5/2025/3):

The EU and its MS welcome the Draft revised Guidance Document on National Nitrogen Budgets and thank the expert panel for their hard work. The EU is favourable to adopting the guidance on NNB by the EB.

Given the available time at the WGSR63, and the fact that a policy brief on nitrogen is planned for distribution only in September 2025 (if funding is secured), we refrain at this time from specific comments on the draft guidance document as such.

We request that the call for data on NNB, as noted in the workplan 2024-2025 2.2.5 d), is strictly voluntary.

*On National Nitrogen Budgets Summary for policy makers*

The “NNB Summary for policy makers” explains NNBs and points to their benefits in a very concise and helpful way. We thank TFRN for this summary that provides very useful information also for the general public.

*On Ammonia as energy carrier in decarbonization strategies*

The EU and its Member States welcome the information provided by TRFN and notes the initiatives at IMO to promote carbon free fuels.

EU and its Member States welcomes initiatives to reach out to IMO to ensure better coordination and knowledge sharing between CLRTAP and IMO.

EU and its Member States support to follow up on this issue in the coming workplan 2026-2027 – item 2.2.7, which is subject to funding.

*On Clean air in cities*

The EU and its Member States welcome the work of EPCAC and TFIAM on the position paper on Clean Air in Cities, which provides useful information on sources of air pollution in cities and potential interventions to improve air quality in order to limit exposure where it matters most.

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### **Agenda item 3. Revision of the Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone, as amended in 2012.**

#### *On the policy brief*

The EU and its member states thank TFIAM and CIAM for their work in preparing the new version of the policy brief. As the updated policy brief was only uploaded on 15 May and then updated on 19 May, we did not yet have time to properly discuss and evaluate the new results.

We would also ask in the future that the Secretariat does not replace documents submitted for meetings, but adds a new version if needed. Otherwise, we do not understand that a new version was uploaded.

We note that the results for some scenarios with higher levels of ambition that we had requested were not yet included in the updated policy brief, although some results were presented during this WGSR session.

While we recognise the complexity of the modelling work and appreciate all the work that has been done so far, it would benefit our preparations if new information for sessions of the WGSR and EB reached us in time. This would also allow us to respect the agreed timing for negotiations on the GP revision.

We add that we have requested TFIAM to report and optimize until 2050 included, and report data in 5-year steps. Furthermore, we recall the request to consider adequately the situation of those Parties where air pollutant concentrations are already today close to WHO Air Quality Guidelines values.

#### *On the questions posed by TFIAM in the pre-meeting:*

- Should different regional ambition levels be considered for health and biodiversity risk reduction?

The preference of the EU and its MS is that TFIAM provides policy makers with both options, so an informed decision can be taken at a later stage.

- For biodiversity assessment, which CLempN data set (harmonised or NFC based) should be used for target setting and which for ex-post and sensitivity analysis?

In order to have a harmonised assessment only the harmonised data set is appropriate. This applies also to ex-post analysis. The NFC based data sets are useful as input to inform a harmonised data set and may be used for sensitivity analysis.

- How should the biodiversity goal be set:
  - a) at 50% reduction of AAE, which would mean excluding five ecosystem types covering a significant area, or
  - b) of 40%, which would mean excluding two ecosystem types covering a very small area,
  - c) or should it be a split solution (40% for grassland and 50% for the other ecosystem types)?

The EU and its MS suggest a pragmatic approach and would like to be informed on the split solution (c), as evidence suggest that the higher ambition is not achievable by all ecosystem types.

*On (b) potential revisions to technical annexes, including those related to their scope and level of ambition, in connection with item (f) new flexibilities, and other approaches to better facilitate ratification and subsequent implementation by current non-Parties to current Gothenburg Protocol.*

The EU supports the work of TFTEI on Technical Annexes. Belgium, Finland and the Commission nominated experts to assist TFTEI in response to the call issued by the UNECE secretariat following the 44th EB session.

The EU and its MS have no objection for the restructuring of the Annexes on stationary sources on a sector-based approach for the benefit of non-Parties.

We reserve the right to express our opinion on the final format and content of these updated Annexes.

The EU and its MS already have their own comprehensive legislation regulating emissions from the stationary sources covered in the Technical Annexes IV, V, VI and X and see little value in repeating our own legislation for us in Technical Annexes to the Gothenburg Protocol. The same holds for mobile sources.

The EU and its MS have debated the status of Technical Annexes but we did not manage to reach a conclusion on whether they are needed or not because there are various pros and cons. We therefore suggest that we keep to the EB decision that asked TFTEI to work on the technical annexes.

*On (d) whether and how to address methane emissions*

To prepare a coordinated EU position on this issue, the Commission organised an “Informal EU workshop on methane in the context of the revision of the Gothenburg Protocol” in Brussels on 10-11 March 2025.

On the basis of the material presented at the workshop and previous work during the review of the Protocol, the EU and its MS recognise the need to reduce methane to reduce tropospheric ozone in the UNECE region by reaffirming the global overarching goal to reduce methane that is in alignment with work under the Global Methane Pledge (GMP). We are open to whether this should be done via an EB decision or by appropriate changes to the Gothenburg Protocol. Appropriate reference should also be made to the need for international action (Batumi Action for Cleaner Air (BACA), Arctic Council, CCAC ...)

Appropriate changes should also be included in the Gothenburg Protocol. We therefore suggest including methane in Article 2 and Annex I of the Protocol to reaffirm the need to reduce methane emissions.

Furthermore, Articles 3 and 7 should be amended to add text regarding the monitoring and reporting of methane emissions to facilitate the assessment of methane trends in the UNECE region and to identify progress of UNECE region towards the GMP global goals, but without duplicating UNFCCC reporting requirements on methane in the Gothenburg Protocol.

Finally, in order to inform further on the issue, we request TFIAM to run dedicated scenarios on methane and inform us on the cost of inaction for each EU MS and the EU as a whole (total and sector wise) and we expect to review soon the results of CEIP work on methane emission reporting aligned with UNFCCC in order to prevent double reporting.

#### **Agenda item 4. Draft 2026–2027 workplan for the implementation of the Convention: policy-related aspects and elements.**

The EU and its Member States thank the Task Forces, including technical experts who contributed, for the elaboration of the draft workplan items relevant for WGSR. We also thank the WGSR Chair and the Vice-Chairs for their work on the draft workplan. Moreover, in an effort to reduce the word count of the new workplan, as part of addressing the UN liquidity crisis, we can agree to merge the second and third column of the workplan tables into one column, titled ‘Deliverable’.

The EU and its Member States have introduced comments and proposals for modifications to the draft 2026-2027 workplan as can be seen on the website. The suggested modifications aim to identify the deliverables that should as a minimum be made available, added a couple of items and ask to prioritise items that are necessary for the GP revision.

We also would like to note that if the current timing for the completion of the GP revision in 2026 is no longer considered realistic, a new timing for the “GP Revision Plan” should be agreed at the upcoming EB, and the timing for the 2026-2027 WGSR workplan items be adjusted accordingly.

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