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Economic Commission for Europe

Sixty-fifth session

Geneva, 9–11 April 2013

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the sixty-fifth session¹

To be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva
starting at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, 9 April 2013

I. Provisional agenda

1. Opening and adoption of the agenda.

A. High-level segment “Enabling the shift to a sustainable future”

2. Follow-up to Rio+20 and post-2015 development agenda:
 - (a) The future of sustainability: from transition to transformation;
 - (b) Sustainable development governance: regional implications and perspectives for the post-Rio+20 institutional set-up.
3. Economic developments and challenges in the ECE region: the role of innovation in creating a dynamic and competitive economy.

¹ All delegates are requested to complete the registration form available from the web page for the sixty-fifth session of the Commission (http://www.unece.org/commission/2013/65th_index.html) and to transmit it to the ECE secretariat, no later than two weeks before the session, either by e-mail (info.ece@unece.org) or by fax (+41 (0)22 917 0566). Prior to the session, delegates (with the exception of delegates from the Geneva-based Missions) are requested to present themselves with a valid identification card/passport at the Pass and Identification Unit of the UNOG Security and Safety Section, located at the Pregny Gate, Avenue de la Paix for the issuance of an identification badge (see map and other practical information available at <http://www.unece.org/meetings/practical.html>). In case of difficulty, please contact the ECE secretariat by telephone at +41 (0)22 917 1316.

B. General segment

4. Outcome of the review of the 2005 reform of ECE.
5. Other issues calling for decision by the Commission.
6. Report on activities of the Executive Committee.
7. Election of officers.
8. Other business.
9. Adoption of the main conclusions and decisions.

II. Annotations to the provisional agenda

1. Opening and adoption of the agenda

Documentation: E/ECE/1463

The Commission will adopt its agenda.

A. High-level segment

2. Follow-up to Rio+20 and post-2015 development agenda

Documentation: E/ECE/1465, E/ECE/1466

(a) The future of sustainability: from transition to transformation

The Rio+20 outcome document “The future we want” puts considerable emphasis on the importance of regional action in the implementation of sustainable development. Regional Commissions are asked specifically to strengthen their work in a number of cross-cutting areas, like capacity-building, development and implementation of regional agreements, and supporting the exchange of information, good practices and lessons learned on sustainable development. Governments in Rio also agreed on new policies and measures in a range of sectors that are crucial for a transition to more inclusive and sustainable development.

The Secretary-General in his five-year action agenda identifies progress on sustainable development as a top priority, with energy, food and nutrition, water and transport as key building blocks in a broader post-2015 sustainable development framework. Universal access to modern energy services, doubling the rate of improvement in energy efficiency and the share of renewables in the global energy mix by 2030 are among the ambitious goals of his Sustainable Energy for All initiative.

Against this background, the Commission may wish to discuss how and in which areas ECE can best contribute to the follow-up of the Rio+20 Conference and the Secretary-General’s five-year action agenda, including through enhancing its work across ECE subprogrammes.

(b) Sustainable development governance: regional implications and perspectives for the post-Rio+20 institutional set-up

The Rio+20 outcomes related to the “institutional framework for sustainable development” include the establishment of a universal intergovernmental high-level political forum, as a successor to the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), building on its strength,

experiences, resources and inclusive participation modalities. The high-level political forum will follow up on the implementation of sustainable development and avoid overlap with existing structures, bodies and entities in a cost-effective manner (A/RES/66/288, Annex, paras. 84–86).

In this regard, it was decided to launch an open, transparent and inclusive intergovernmental negotiation process under the General Assembly, to define the format and organizational aspects of the high-level forum with the aim of convening its first meeting at the beginning of the sixty-eighth session (2013) of the General Assembly. The Commission could consider regional implications related to the establishment of the high-level political forum with a view to providing an input to global-level discussions and the General Assembly negotiation process. In particular, the Commission could consider efficient ways to continue assessing the progress in sustainable development at the regional level and providing a regional input to the high-level political forum.

In this context, countries need to be able to assess the effectiveness of the policies and monitor the progress of their implementation. ECE in partnership with Eurostat and OECD has developed a common framework with a set of indicators for measuring sustainable development. The framework is planned for endorsement by the Conference of European Statisticians in June 2013. It might serve as a proposal from the region for the review of progress in the implementation of Rio+20 outcomes.

3. Economic developments and challenges in the ECE region: the role of innovation in creating a dynamic and competitive economy

Documentation: E/ECE/1467

In both advanced and transition economies, innovation has an important role in generating employment and enhancing productivity growth. This is of special importance for reviving economies in the context of the current financial and economic crisis.

Innovation will also be critical for increasing living standards in the decades to come, in providing decent high-wage jobs and full employment, in addressing the fiscal challenges posed by ageing populations and in improving the quality of life through better health. In the pan-European region, innovation is already a key driver of increased energy, carbon, water and material efficiency, and the improved performance of goods and services. It allows the region to address a variety of challenges in the transition to a greener economy and a more inclusive and sustainable development. While innovation will largely be driven by the private sector, public policy must establish the institutional and regulatory framework and must fund much of the infrastructure and education that will support it.

Furthermore, the broad-based use of information technologies will fundamentally alter the way we live and how governments operate. In sum, these technological changes will lead to societal transformation. New opportunities will open up in sector management, as well as in meeting the needs of the inhabitants. In the case of Intelligent Transport Systems, for example, a new business culture is already evolving. How much do we know about and understand these trends? How much are the ECE countries affected or how much are they in the lead? What role could ECE play in these processes? These are some of the questions the panel will look into.

The sectoral programmes of the ECE have recognized for some time that innovation is key to achieving many of their mandates and have therefore been increasingly focused on innovation. The ECOSOC's Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) theme for 2013 is "Science, technology and innovation, and the potential of culture, for promoting sustainable development and achieving the MDGs". The Regional Commissions have been asked to

provide input for the 2013 AMR on the specific priorities for each region pertaining to this theme.

The Commission may therefore wish to discuss how innovation can be further promoted in the region as a contribution to greener and more competitive economies and how the ECE's various programme activities can contribute to this end. The Commission may also wish to address opportunities of transfer of knowledge beyond the ECE region. At the same time, the results of this discussion will serve as the regional input to the 2013 AMR.

B. General segment

4. Outcome of the review of the 2005 reform of ECE

Documentation: E/ECE/1468

The Commission at its sixty-fourth session in 2011 mandated the Executive Committee (EXCOM) to undertake a review of the 2005 reform of ECE. The Executive Committee carried out the exercise from July 2011 through early 2013. The outcome of this review, as contained in document E/ECE/1468, is submitted for approval by the Commission.

5. Other issues calling for decision by the Commission

Documentation: E/ECE/1469

The Commission will be asked to approve the change of name of the Timber Committee to "Committee on Forest and Forest Industry" as recommended by the Timber Committee and endorsed by the Executive Committee.

6. Report on activities of the Executive Committee

Documentation: E/ECE/1470

Following the ECE reform, the Executive Committee was established in 2006 to act as the governing body of ECE during the intersessional period of the Commission. Member States will be provided with a report of the activities of EXCOM since the last Commission session and are invited to provide their views and comments on the functioning of EXCOM and any possible adjustments for the future.

7. Election of officers

Rule 12 of the Rules of Procedure of the Commission states: "The Commission shall, at each biennial session, elect a country from among its members to hold the chair for the period of the biennium. The representative of the elected country will be the Chairperson. The Commission will also, at the same meeting, elect two countries whose representatives will become the Vice-Chairpersons for the period of the biennium. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of the Commission will also serve as the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons of the Executive Committee for the period of the biennium." Accordingly, under this item, elections for the Chair and Vice-Chairs for a period of two years will be held.

8. Other business

9. Adoption of the main conclusions and decisions

III. Tentative timetable

<i>Time</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>
Tuesday, 9 April 2013	
10:00–10:30	Opening and adoption of the agenda Opening remarks by the Chairperson Opening remarks by Sven Alkalaj, Executive Secretary
High-level segment	
10:30–13:00	Item 2: Follow-up to Rio+20 and post-2015 development agenda
13:00–15:00	Lunch break
15:00–18:00	Item 2 (continued)
18:15	Reception
Wednesday, 10 April 2013	
High-level segment (continued)	
10:00–13:00	Item 3: Economic developments and challenges in the ECE region: the role of innovation in creating a dynamic and competitive economy
13:00–15:00	Lunch break
General segment	
15:00–17:00	Item 4: Outcome of the review of the 2005 reform of ECE
17:00–17:30	Item 5: Other issues calling for decision by the Commission
17:30–18:00	Item 6: Report on activities of the Executive Committee
Thursday, 11 April 2013	
10:00–10:30	Item 7: Election of officers Item 8: Other business Meeting suspension to finalize the conclusions and decisions
12:30–13:00	Item 9: Adoption of the main conclusions and decisions