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MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION
ON ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
IN A TRANSBOUNDARY CONTEXT

Implementation Committee

**REPORT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE ON ITS SIXTEENTH
SESSION, HELD FROM 10 TO 12 MARCH 2009 IN BERLIN**

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INTRODUCTION

1. The sixteenth session of the Implementation Committee was held from 10 to 12 March 2009 in Berlin at the invitation of the Government of Germany.
2. The following members of the Implementation Committee attended the session: Ms. Tatyana Javanshir, replacing Mr. Gahraman Khalilov (Azerbaijan); Ms. Nina Stoyanova (Bulgaria); Mr. Nenad Mikulic (Croatia); Mr. Matthias Sauer (Germany); Ms. Rakia Kalygulova, replacing Mr. Kubanychbek Noruzbaev (Kyrgyzstan); Mr. Jerzy Jendroska (Poland); Ms. Diana Olaru (Republic of Moldova); and Ms. Vesna Kolar-Planinsic (Slovenia).
3. No observers were present during the session.

I. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

4. The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed the members of the Committee to Berlin. The Committee adopted the agenda as set out in ECE/MP.EIA/IC/2009/1.
5. The Committee agreed that the decision of the Meeting of the Parties regarding financial assistance to representatives of countries with economies in transition (ECE/MP.EIA/10, decision IV/8, para. 4) applied to the funding of such representatives in relevant Committee sessions. However, the Committee considered that priority for funding would be accorded to members of the Committee, and that only if funds remained would requests for financial support for observers be considered; funding would then be considered on the merits of each request. The Committee considered that this matter should be taken up by the Bureau in the revision, for the fifth meeting of the Parties, of the decision on financial assistance.

II. FOLLOW-UP TO DECISION IV/2 REGARDING UKRAINE (PARAGRAPHS 7–14)

A. Independent review

6. Mr. Aleg Cherp, an independent consultant selected by the Committee (ECE/MP.EIA/IC/2008/2, para. 35), presented his draft review of Ukraine's legal, administrative and other measures to implement the provisions of the Convention, further to the decision of the Meeting of the Parties (ECE/MP.EIA/10, decision IV/2, para. 11). The Committee made a number of recommendations for improving the review.
7. Mr. Cherp presented a "vision" for Ukraine's implementation of the Convention and emphasized that Ukraine should develop its own mechanism for achieving that vision. The Committee highlighted the need for clearly defined provisions on the screening procedure, on the competent authority or authorities, and on the final decision. The Committee and Mr. Cherp agreed a timetable for finalization of the report, including a period for factual corrections by Ukraine. The finalized review would be sent to Ukraine by the end of May 2009, for the Government of Ukraine to use as the basis for its strategy to implement the Convention (decision IV/2, para. 12).

B. Strategy

8. The Committee considered it important that the strategy to be submitted by the Government of Ukraine should provide substance as well as planned actions, including a detailed description of provisions in planned legislation and of training and other planned actions (decision IV/2, para. 12), a precise time schedule and responsibilities for implementation. The provisions in planned legislation should react to the Committee's findings and recommendations (decision IV/2, annex I). The Committee agreed to request that the Government of Ukraine include in its strategy a point-by-point response to the independent review's recommendations, as well as details of how Ukraine is fulfilling paragraph 14 of decision IV/2 regarding negotiation of bilateral agreements or other arrangements. The Committee agreed to write to the Government of Ukraine to this effect by mid-April 2009.

C. Reports

9. The Committee then reviewed the report received from the Government of Ukraine, further to a request made by the Committee (ECE/MP.EIA/IC/2008/2, para. 32). The Committee noted the report and the progress reported therein in the application of the Convention to Phase II of the Bystroe Canal Project.

10. The Committee observed, however, that the report did not confirm that:

(a) Works, including operation and maintenance, on Phase I had stopped;

(b) Steps had been taken to apply the relevant provisions of the Convention to any further works related to Phase I of the Project.

11. On the contrary, section 2.3.1 of the report, together with a press release by the Ministry of Transport and Communications of Ukraine dated 7 February 2009¹, seemed to suggest that works under Phase I had continued on (a) dredging and (b) extension of the protective wall to a length of 1,040 metres (the length specified for Phase I).

12. In the understanding that the information in the press release was correct, **the Committee considered that this would be contrary to the requirements imposed by the Committee when deciding that the caution should not become effective** (ECE/MP.EIA/IC/2008/2, para. 31). Furthermore, **this would represent a continuing breach of the Convention**, as explained in paragraphs 69 (b) and 73 of the Committee's findings and recommendations (ECE/MP.EIA/10, decision IV/2, annex I).

13. Moreover, the Committee was concerned that the above-mentioned press release stated that works have been carried out under Phase II pertaining to the extension of the offshore protective wall from 1,040 to 1,600 metres in length, and that the report of the Government of Ukraine omitted mention of these Phase II works. **The Committee was of the opinion that this would represent a further breach of Ukraine's obligations under the Convention**, as the

¹ <http://www.mintrans.gov.ua/en/news/10584.html>, accessed on 10 March 2009.

transboundary environmental impact assessment (EIA) procedure for the “full-scale development” of the Project (Phases I and II) is ongoing and, as declared by the Government of Ukraine, no final decision on Phase II is in force.

14. The Committee was expecting the Government of Ukraine to provide the secretariat by 15 April 2009 with a written statement confirming clearly and unambiguously that the conditions imposed in the decision of the Meeting of the Parties have been met. In particular, the statement should:

(a) Demonstrate that all works, including operation and maintenance, on Phase I have stopped;

(b) Show, separately for Phase I and for Phase II, that the Convention is being applied fully to the Project.

15. After having received the written statement, the Committee will decide on the appropriate measures to be taken, in the light of paragraphs 8, 9 and 10 of decision IV/2 of the Meeting of the Parties.

16. In addition, the Government of Ukraine provided the Committee with a summary report on the assessment of the likely transboundary environmental impacts of the Project. The Committee was grateful for receiving the summary report but, on the basis of an initial review, was concerned by some of the conclusions contained therein, in particular with respect to fauna and flora. The Committee was concerned about the way in which the project was presented in the light of international obligations, especially with regard to the transboundary EIA procedure. The Committee was also of the opinion that the chapter entitled “8. Summary and findings” did not satisfy the requirements of the Convention as included in appendix II, item (i), namely that the non-technical summary should outline in non-technical language the findings included in each of the earlier chapters corresponding to items (a)–(h) of appendix II. The Committee also wished to remind the Government of Ukraine of paragraph 43 of the Committee’s findings and recommendations (decision IV/2, annex I).

17. The Committee agreed that the Chair of the Committee would report to the forthcoming meeting of the Working Group on EIA (11 to 13 May 2009), accordingly. The Committee expected that the Government of Ukraine would have an opportunity to provide further explanation directly to the Working Group.

18. The Committee decided to ask the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe to write to the Deputy Prime-Minister of Ukraine to the above effect.

19. Besides the written statement mentioned above, the Committee expected to receive a report from the Government of Ukraine for its seventeenth session, to be held in September 2009 (ECE/MP.EIA/IC/2008/2, para. 33).

D. General conclusions

20. The Committee, when reviewing the documents received in relation to the follow-up to decision IV/2 regarding Ukraine, noted that it still had no clear view of what decision in the Ukrainian legal framework should be considered the “final decision” in the meaning of the Convention. It also noted that the findings of the summary report on the assessment of the likely transboundary environmental impacts of the Project seemed to be focused on showing no actual impact. In this context, the Committee drew two more general conclusions regarding application of the Convention by Parties.

21. Firstly, **the Committee was of the opinion that if the conditions attached to a decision can be altered subsequently by other decisions, the former cannot be considered the “final decision” in the meaning of the Convention.**

22. Secondly, **the Committee wished to make it clear that the opinion of an inquiry commission that an activity is likely to have a significant adverse transboundary impact is final inasmuch as it decides that the transboundary EIA procedure foreseen in the Convention must be applied in full, beginning with the immediate notification of the affected Party. The procedure may be stopped only if either (a) the planned activity is abandoned or (b) the affected Party indicates that it does not wish to participate. Any subsequent studies or analyses, including findings of the EIA documentation prepared in accordance with article 4 and appendix II to the Convention, by no means have any effect on the validity of the respective opinion of the inquiry commission, even if they show no actual significant adverse transboundary impact of the activity in question.**

III. FOLLOW-UP TO DECISION IV/2 REGARDING ARMENIA (PARAGRAPHS 15–19)

23. The Committee considered progress vis-à-vis technical assistance in drafting the necessary legislation to support Armenia in ensuring its full implementation of the Convention (ECE/MP.EIA/10, decision IV/2, para. 17), further to the Committee’s agreement on a consultant at its previous session (ECE/MP.EIA/IC/2008/2, para. 37). The secretariat reported that the contract for the consultant was under preparation, further to consultations with Armenia. The Committee expressed its satisfaction with the preparations.

IV. SECOND REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION

A. General compliance issues

24. Ms. Stoyanova presented her findings regarding an examination of the implementation of article 5 of the Convention, as reported in the completed questionnaires for the period 2003–2005. She observed that the questions regarding article 5 had not been understood by all Parties. The responses did not differentiate between consultations at the beginning of the procedure, during the procedure and once the EIA documentation had been prepared. As a result, some responses identified problems, for instance the language of the documentation, the need for translation, and difficulties with the time frame, all of which should have been resolved before the consultations under article 5 took place. The observations led her to question the quality and

effectiveness of consultations, which depended on the completeness of the EIA documentation. To avoid these difficulties and to provide a clear understanding of consultations under article 5, **the Committee recommended that:**

(a) **If the concerned Parties do not have bilateral or multilateral agreements covering such issues, they should agree at the start of the transboundary EIA procedure, when sending or responding to the notification, on:**

(i) **The language or languages for correspondence and of the EIA documentation;**

(ii) **The timing of, and means for carrying out, consultations under article 5;**

(b) **Parties refer to the guidance on the practical application of the Convention (ECE/MP.EIA/8, section 2.9).**

25. The Committee concluded that there was often a misunderstanding about the meaning of “consultations” with respect to article 5. **The Committee underlined that article 5 provides for specific consultations after completion of the EIA documentation.** The Committee agreed to come back to this issue at a later session.

26. Mr. Sauer presented his findings further to an examination of the implementation of article 6 of the Convention, again as reported in completed questionnaires. He indicated that article 6 generally appeared to be implemented without difficulty. The Committee endorsed Mr. Sauer’s recommendations to the Parties on good practice:

(a) **Information about possibilities to appeal should be included by the Party of origin in the final decision, as suggested in the guidance on the practical application of the Convention. This is a legal requirement in many Parties;**

(b) **The concerned Parties should agree, at the latest during the EIA procedure, on the whether the final decision will be translated and, if so, whether the whole final decision or only specific parts;**

(c) **The final decision should always be submitted as a paper document but, if the affected Party so requests, the final decision should also be transmitted electronically.**

27. Further, in the light of article 3, paragraph 8, **the Committee came to the conclusion that there was an obligation to inform the public concerned in the affected Party of the final decision.** The Committee agreed to come back to this issue at a later session.

28. Ms. Javanshir and Ms. Kalygulova (examining implementation of article 4) and Ms. Kolar-Planinsic (examining cases) agreed to present the findings of their respective reviews at the Committee’s next session (ECE/MP.EIA/IC/2008/2, para. 11).

B. Specific compliance issues

29. The Committee examined the completed questionnaire on implementation of the Convention in the period from 2003 to 2005, received from the Government of Albania on 18 February 2009 in reply to the letter from the Chair dated 24 November 2008. The letter had been sent following a decision made the Committee at its previous session (ECE/MP.EIA/IC/2008/2, para. 13). The Committee requested the Chair to write again to the focal point for Albania, on behalf of the Committee, to seek clarification on, *inter alia*, the status of the legislation to implement the Convention, reportedly planned for 2008. The Committee also considered that Albania might have had experience in the application of the Convention to energy projects in the period covered by the questionnaire and, noting that Albania's completed questionnaire did not report on such activities, agreed to request clarification. The Committee agreed to discuss the reply at its next session and considered that it might then have further questions.

30. The Committee reviewed replies to the message sent by the secretariat on 12 November 2008 on behalf of the Committee to focal points in Parties that had no or little experience as a Party of origin in the reviewed period (ECE/MP.EIA/IC/2008/2, para. 14). As a result of this review, **the Committee agreed to remind all Parties to the Convention of two important provisions:**

(a) **Article 2, paragraph 5, of the Convention, which provides for the application of the Convention to activities not listed in appendix I but that are likely to cause a significant adverse transboundary impact;**

(b) **Article 1, item (v), which defines a "proposed activity" to mean "any activity or any *major change* to an activity..." (emphasis added), thus, for example, including the modernization of motorways and express roads.**

31. **The Committee agreed to inform the Working Group on EIA about the above and about the observation included in some replies that the thresholds in appendix I were sometimes high or absent.** The questionnaire on the implementation of the Convention in the period 2006–2009 would request information on this aspect.

32. In addition, the Committee noted that in several instances the replies indicated that the respective responses to the questionnaire had been incomplete. The Committee therefore decided to encourage Parties to report more precisely.

33. The Committee then examined the reply from the Government of Austria received on 24 November 2008. The Committee decided to write again to the focal point for Austria: (a) to express the Committee's thanks for the reply; (b) to inform the Government of Austria that the Committee was satisfied with the clarification provided; and (c) to ask whether the secretariat might publish the exchange of communications on the Convention's website.

34. The Committee examined the reply from the Government of Belgium received on 12 February 2009. The Committee decided to write again to the focal point for Belgium: (a) to express the Committee's thanks for the reply; (b) to seek clarification on the provision of the Convention under which the Convention had been applied to the two activities identified in

Belgium's reply; and (c) to ask whether the secretariat might publish the exchange of communications on the Convention's website.

35. The Committee examined the reply from the Government of Greece received on 27 February 2009. The Committee decided to write again to the focal point for Greece: (a) to express the Committee's thanks for the reply; (b) to seek clarification on the application of the Convention to works on a motorway close to the Bulgarian border (the Promachonas-Kulata border crossing), on whether the reply from Greece addressed both activities and major changes to activities, and on the experiences of Greece as an affected Party, including with respect to the Krumovgrad gold mine in Bulgaria; and (c) to ask whether the secretariat might publish the exchange of communications on the Convention's website.

36. The Committee examined the reply from the Government of Hungary received on 12 February 2009. The Committee decided to write again to the focal point for Hungary: (a) to express the Committee's thanks for the reply; (b) to inform the Government of Hungary that the Committee was satisfied with the clarification provided; and (c) to ask whether the secretariat might publish the exchange of communications on the Convention's website.

37. The Committee examined the reply from the Government of Slovenia received on 3 March 2009. The member of the Committee nominated by Slovenia (Ms. Kolar-Planinsic) left the room in accordance with rule 17 of the Committee's operating rules. The Committee decided to write again to the focal point for Slovenia: (a) to express the Committee's thanks for the reply; (b) to inform the Government of Slovenia that the Committee was satisfied with the clarification provided; and (c) to ask whether the secretariat might publish the exchange of communications on the Convention's website.

38. The Committee then turned to the replies received from Parties to letters from the Chair sent on behalf of the Committee, seeking clarification of information included in completed questionnaires.

39. The Committee examined the reply from the Government of Hungary received on 16 February 2009 to a letter from the Chair dated 24 November 2008 that had been sent following a decision by the Committee at its previous session (ECE/MP.EIA/IC/2008/2, para. 15). The Committee decided to write again to the focal point for Hungary, recalling that the Convention's provision requiring that the EIA documentation included a description, where appropriate, of reasonable alternatives (appendix II, item (b)) was mandatory for the legal implementation of the Convention by a Party. The letter should also indicate that the Committee understood Hungary's reply as demonstrating that Hungary provided for this (in articles 69(2) and 71(1) of the 1995 "Environment Act") and that the original response to the questionnaire was incorrect. Nonetheless, the Committee would welcome further clarification.

40. The Committee then examined the reply from the Government of Latvia received on 12 February 2009 to the letter from the Chair dated 24 November 2008 that had been sent following a decision by the Committee at its previous session (ECE/MP.EIA/IC/2008/2, para. 16). The Committee decided to write again to the focal point for Latvia: (a) to express the Committee's thanks for the reply; (b) to inform the Government of Latvia that the Committee was satisfied

with the clarification provided; and (c) to ask whether the secretariat might publish the exchange of communications on the Convention's website.

41. The Committee then examined the reply from the Government of Liechtenstein received on 21 January 2009 to a letter from the Chair dated 24 November 2008 that had been sent following a decision by the Committee at its previous session (ECE/MP.EIA/IC/2008/2, para. 17). The Committee decided to write again to the focal point for Liechtenstein: (a) to express the Committee's thanks for the reply; (b) to inform the Government of Liechtenstein that the Committee was satisfied with the clarification provided; and (c) to ask whether the secretariat might publish the exchange of communications on the Convention's website.

42. Ms. Javanshir (Azerbaijan) informed the Committee that the letter from the Chair dated 24 November 2008, sent following a decision by the Committee at its previous session (ECE/MP.EIA/IC/2008/2, para. 18), had not been received by the Minister of Environment of Azerbaijan either directly or through diplomatic channels. She informed the Committee that both the Convention's focal point for Azerbaijan and the head of international cooperation in the Ministry had recently changed. The Committee therefore decided to try sending the letter once again through the Permanent Mission in Geneva, copied to the new focal point. Ms. Javanshir agreed to provide updated contact details.

V. SUBMISSIONS

43. This agenda item was not open to observers according to rule 17, paragraph 1, of the Committee's operating rules.

44. Ms. Kolar-Planinsic (Slovenia) confirmed that a submission by Slovenia, expressing concerns about the compliance of Italy with its obligations under the Convention, was still expected.

45. The Committee took note of the submission by Ukraine expressing concerns about the compliance of Romania with its obligations under the Convention, that had been received by the secretariat on 6 March 2009. The Committee also took note of the message sent on the same day by the secretariat to the focal point of Romania, forwarding the submission in conformity with paragraph 5 (a) of the appendix to decision III/2 (ECE/MP.EIA/6, annex II). **The Committee decided to write to the Government of Ukraine asking for clarification on the activity or activities allegedly carried out without application of the Convention, and for which permitting or decision-making processes had been begun after the entry into force of the Convention in the two Parties.**

46. **The Committee also decided to write to the Government of Romania to ask for details and precise dates of any EIA procedures, whether transboundary or not, and of permitting or decision-making processes for the activities outlined in the submission by Ukraine.** The Committee agreed that Ms. Stoyanova would act as curator for the submission.

47. **The Committee agreed to invite the two Parties to its next session, where the Committee would begin its consideration of the submission.**

VI. COMMITTEE INITIATIVE

48. This agenda item was not open to observers according to rule 17 of the Committee's operating rules.

49. The Committee examined the reply from the Government of Romania received on 13 February 2009 to a letter from the Chair dated 24 November 2008 that had been sent following a decision by the Committee at its previous session (ECE/MP.EIA/IC/2008/2, para. 41). The Committee decided to write again to the focal point for Romania: (a) to express the Committee's thanks for the reply; (b) to inform the Government of Romania that the Committee was of the opinion that the ongoing procedure appeared to be in line with the Convention; and (c) to ask whether the secretariat might publish the exchange of communications on the Convention's website. The Committee asked the secretariat to write to the Ukrainian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that were the source of the information. The secretariat should indicate that unless the source had any specific complaints regarding the application of the Convention by Romania, the Committee considered the matter closed. The secretariat should also attach a copy of the letter to the Government of Romania.

50. The Committee reviewed information provided by a Dutch NGO regarding an activity in Belgium. The Committee agreed that it would gather further information on whether or not efforts had been made for proper public participation in the affected Party (Netherlands), e.g. by contacting the concerned Parties, copying the information received from the NGO, and seeking the Parties' observations. The Committee agreed that it would ask for information on: (a) the permitting or consent and EIA procedures; (b) whether there had been a notification; (c) whether the Netherlands had chosen to participate in the transboundary EIA; (d) what opportunities had been provided for public participation by Belgium and the Netherlands, with both Parties being responsible; and (e) whether there were any bilateral agreements governing the transboundary EIA procedure. The Committee agreed to discuss this information, if appropriate, at its next session, and considered that it might then have further questions.

51. The Committee reviewed information provided by the secretariat regarding an activity on a river in Ukraine upstream of the Republic of Moldova. The member of the Committee nominated by the Republic of Moldova (Ms. Olaru) left the room in accordance with rule 17 of the Committee's operating rules. The Committee agreed that it would gather further information by writing to Ukraine to seek information regarding the State expertise, permitting or consent, as well as EIA procedures (including in a transboundary context), particularly on the exact dates of the steps taken. The Committee also wished to know: (a) whether EIA documentation had been prepared; (b) whether such documentation addressed transboundary impact; and (c) whether a notification had been sent, and if not, why. The Committee agreed to discuss this information, if appropriate, at its next session, and considered that it might then have further questions.

52. The Committee reviewed information provided by the secretariat regarding activities in the Republic of Moldova, close to the borders with Romania and Ukraine. Ms. Olaru again left the room in accordance with rule 17 of the Committee's operating rules. The Committee agreed that it would gather further information by writing to the Republic of Moldova, Romania and Ukraine to seek concise procedural information regarding the activities, the State expertise, permitting or consent, and the transboundary EIA procedures, including notification, as well as

the exact dates of the steps taken. The Committee agreed to discuss this information, if appropriate, at its next session, and considered that it might then have further questions.

53. The Committee agreed to consider further information provided by the secretariat at its next session, time permitting.

VII. REVISED QUESTIONNAIRE

54. The Committee reviewed a draft questionnaire on the implementation of the Convention in the period 2006–2009 that had been prepared by Ms. Kolar-Planinsic and Mr. Mikulic on the basis of comments received from other members. The Committee asked the secretariat to prepare the draft questionnaire in English and Russian, with all changes relative to the questionnaire for the period 2003–2005 tracked, for consideration by the Working Group on EIA (ECE/MP.EIA/10, decision IV/1, para. 5), at its next meeting (ECE/MP.EIA/WG.1/2009/1, para. 9).

55. The Committee also reviewed a draft detailed timetable for the submission of the completed revised questionnaires as well as for the generation of the subsequent review of implementation, to be put before the Working Group (ECE/MP.EIA/10, decision IV/2, annex III, para. 53).

VIII. STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS AND OPERATING RULES

56. The Committee noted that it was expected to keep under review and, if necessary, develop its structure and functions as well as its operating rules, in the light of the experience it has gained (ECE/MP.EIA/10, decision IV/2, para. 6). The Committee decided that it might discuss this matter in its next session.

IX. OTHER BUSINESS

57. The secretariat presented a first draft of a leaflet briefly introducing the Committee and its role and presenting the possibility for bodies and individuals to provide information to the Committee, further to rule 15, paragraph 1 (b), of the Committee's operating rules (ECE/MP.EIA/IC/2008/2, para. 47). The Committee reviewed the draft leaflet and asked the secretariat to finalize the text, arrange for it to be edited, and then circulate the revised text by e-mail. The Committee decided that it could provide further comments on the revised text before the leaflet was published.

58. The Chair informed the Committee of items on the provisional agenda for the twelfth meeting of the Working Group on EIA (Geneva 11–13 May 2009) that related to the Committee.

59. In response to a request by the Committee (ECE/MP.EIA/IC/2008/2, para. 48), the secretariat had reported on provision of information under the Convention's compliance mechanism to a training course on the use by NGOs of the compliance mechanism under the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters. The course had been held from 16 to 19 December 2008 in Geneva. The Committee took note of this information.

60. Mr. Mikulic and Ms. Stoyanova elaborated on the proposal that they were expected to make to the Working Group on EIA on the interaction between the application of the Convention and of the European Union Birds and Habitats Directives² (ECE/MP.EIA/IC/2008/2, para. 49). They indicated that, so as to make it more relevant to all Parties, the proposal would also refer to the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

X. PRESENTATION OF THE MAIN DECISIONS TAKEN AND CLOSING OF THE MEETING

61. **The Committee decided to hold its next meeting from 14 to 18 September 2009 in Geneva. Subsequent sessions will be held from 23 to 25 March 2010, from 14 to 16 September 2010 and from 11 to 13 January 2011. If additional sessions are required, these might be held from 15 to 17 June 2010 and from 9 to 11 November 2010.**

62. **The Committee adopted the draft report of its session prepared by the Chair and the secretariat.** The Committee and the secretariat thanked the Chair for hosting the meeting. The Chair then closed the meeting.

² Council Directive 79/409/EEC of 2 April 1979 on the conservation of wild birds and Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.