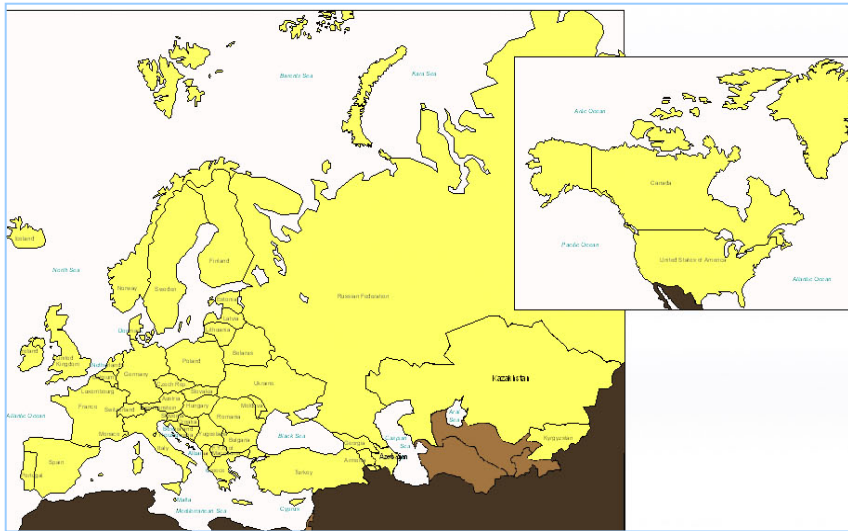# The UNECE Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution

Alina Novikova,
2020 EUFJE Conference

UNECE

UNECE Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (Air Convention)

- 1979: First international treaty to deal with air pollution on a broad regional basis

- 51 Parties in the UNECE region

- Framework Convention, has been extended by 8 protocols (the European Union is party to 7 protocols)
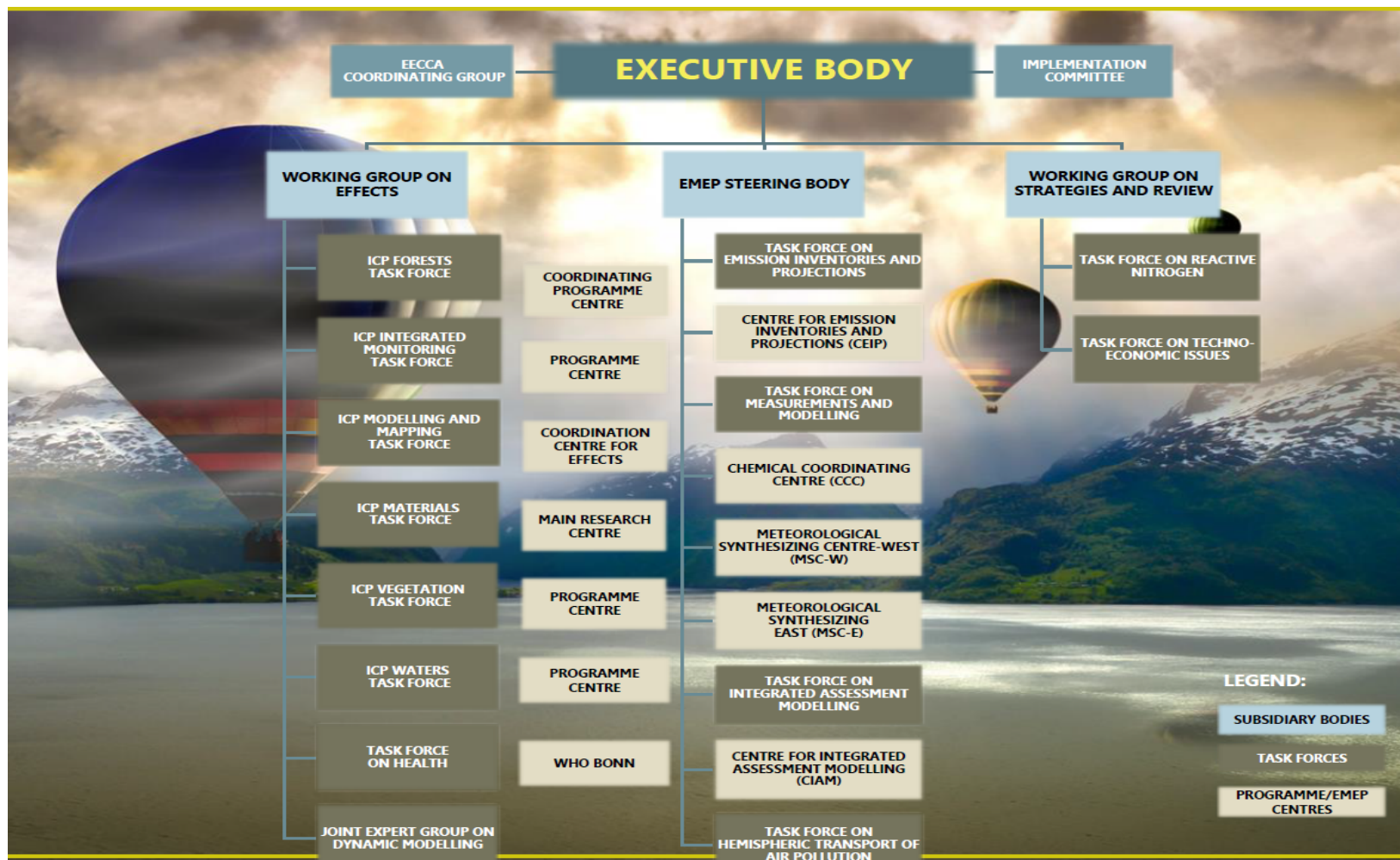
The Air Convention

Laying down the general principles of international cooperation for air pollution abatement

- Parties endeavor to limit and gradually reduce and prevent air pollution including long-range transboundary air pollution

- Parties, by means of exchanges of information, research and monitoring, develop their policies and strategies including air quality management system and, as part of them, control measures using the best available technology

- Exchange of emission data and information on control technologies, policies and strategies; data relating to the effects of long-range transboundary air pollution

The Air Convention

Setting up an institutional framework, which brings together research and policy

Protocols to the Air Convention

Protocol on EMEP (cost-sharing and funding of monitoring and evaluation work)
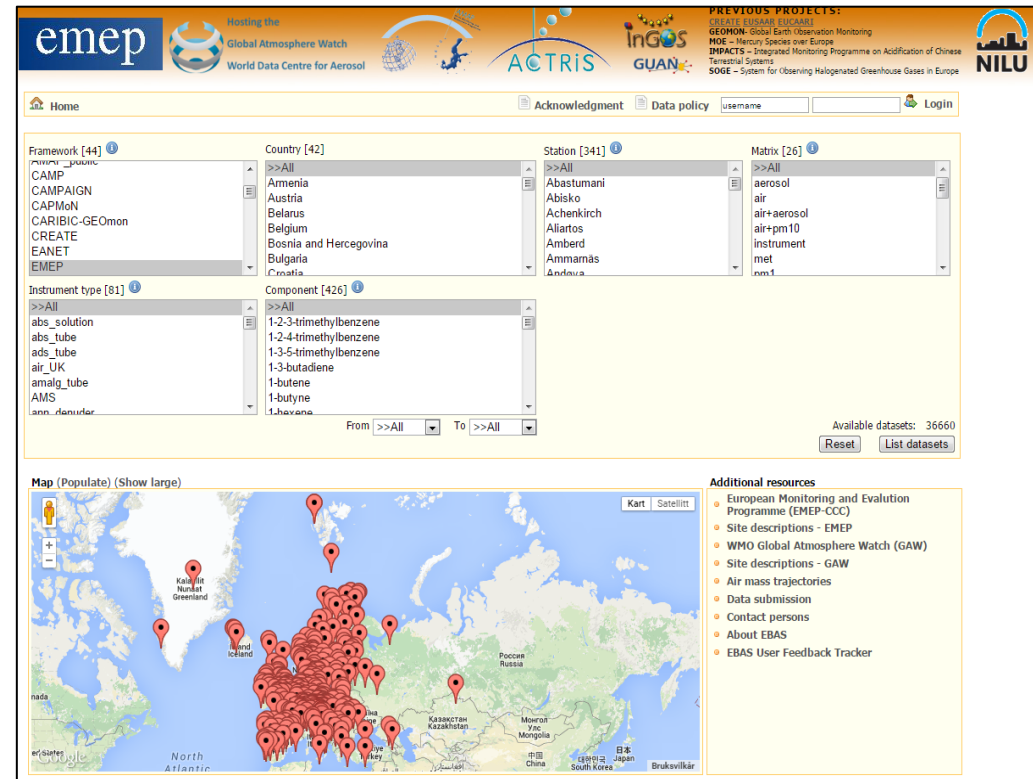
EMEP – Cooperative Programme for Monitoring and Evaluation of the Long-range Transmission of Air Pollutants in Europe:

Information on the emission, transport and deposition of air pollutants.
Informs policy developments under the Convention

Free access to EMEP data

→ http://www.emep.int

→ http://ebas.nilu.no

Protocols to the Air Convention

Binding obligations to reduce emissions of specific pollutants
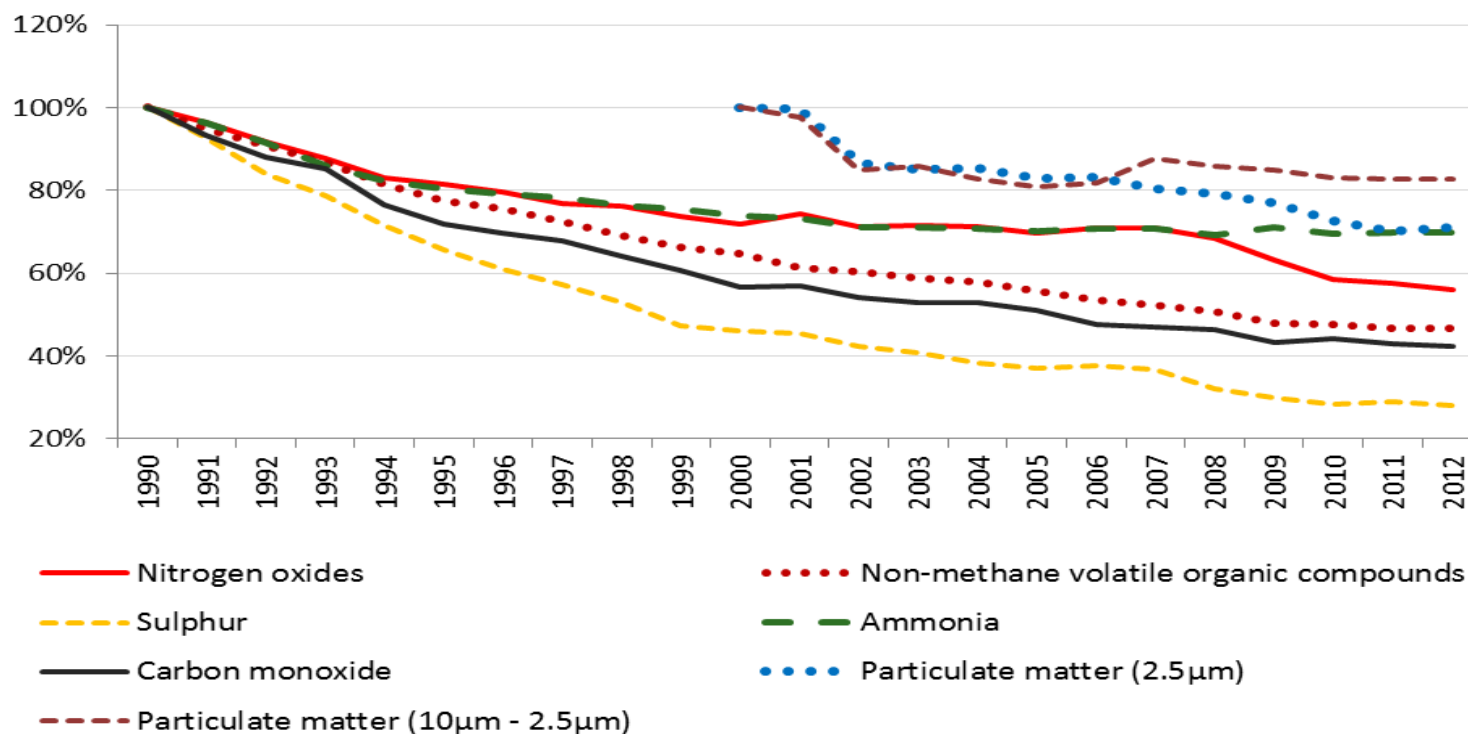
Old protocols still in force:

- **Protocol on Sulphur** (30% reduction of 1980 emissions by 1993)

- **Protocol on Nitrogen Oxides** (stabilization of 1987emission by 1994, BAT requirements)

- **Protocol on Volatile Organic Compounds** (30% reduction by 1999, optional base year, stabilization for low-emission areas, BAT requirements)

- **Protocol on Sulphur** (emission ceilings, mandatory emission limit values)

Protocols to the Air Convention

Recently amended protocols

- **Protocol to Abate Acidification, Eutrophication and Ground-level Ozone (Gothenburg Protocol):** emission reduction commitments for sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, ammonia, volatile organic compounds and particulate matter $PM_{2.5}$, limit values for SO_2, NOx and VOC from stationary sources, for mobile sources, for VOC content in the products, control measures for ammonia, BAT implementation

- **Protocol on Heavy Metals:** reduction of emissions of mercury, lead and cadmium from the level in the reference year, mandatory emission limit values and product control measures

- **Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants:** reduction of emissions of PAH, dioxin/furans, HCB and PCB, phase out 21 pesticides, restrictions for 2 industrial chemicals, limit values

Reduction of air pollutants emissions in the UNECE region (excluding Canada and the United States of America)

Under the Convention and its protocols:

➢National policies and strategies including air quality management system and control measures using the best available technology

➢Critical loads and levels

➢Emission limit values

➢Guidance documents

Guidance to support Parties in meeting the requirements under the protocols

(all documents are available on the website of the Convention)

The Gothenburg Protocol

- Guidelines for estimation and measurement of emissions of volatile organic compounds

- Guidance document on emission control techniques for mobile sources

- Guidance document on control techniques for emissions of Sulphur, NOx, VOC and particulate matter from stationary sources

- Guidance document on economic instruments to reduce emissions of regional air pollutants

- Guidance document on national nitrogen budgets

- Guidance document for preventing and abating ammonia emissions from agricultural sources

- Guidance document on health and environmental improvements using new knowledge, methods and data

- UNECE Framework Code for good agricultural practice for reducing ammonia emissions

- Code of good practice for wood burning and small combustion installations

Guidance to support Parties in meeting the requirements under the protocols

(all documents are available on the website of the Convention)

The Protocol on Heavy Metals

- Guidance document on BAT for controlling emissions of heavy metals and their compounds from the source categories listed in annex II to the Protocol

The Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants

- Guidance document on BAT to control emissions of POPs from major stationary sources

Long-term strategy for the Convention for 2020-2030 and beyond

Strategic priorities and tasks, including:

- To consider for the review of the Gothenburg Protocol: mandatory emissions reporting and reduction commitments for black carbon, further requirements for PM, acid rain and ozone precursors, strengthened ammonia abatement measures, including methane as ozone precursor, strengthened emissions standards based on BAT and energy efficiency requirements for residential burning;
- Focus on combustion-related POPs and consider additional measures that strengthen BAT;
- Act as a centre of expertise on reducing emissions of heavy metals;
- Further improve the scientific and technical basis;
- Improve cooperation with other countries, regions and organizations to advance efforts to address air pollution more broadly

Compliance review under the Convention

The Implementation Committee:

- Established in 1997

- Considers cases of possible non-compliance of a Party with any of its emission reduction obligations under a given protocol with a view to securing a constructive solution

- Reviews compliance with reporting obligations under the protocols

- Cases can be triggered by Parties or by the secretariat

The EMEP Centre on Emission Inventories and Projections (collects all reported emission data under the Convention):
→ http://www.ceip.at

Thank you

→ http://www.unece.org/env/lrtap/welcome.html.html