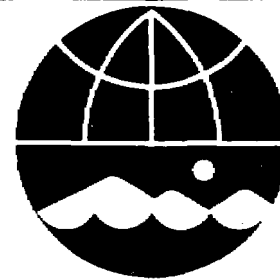


EPA and the Economic Commission for Europe



The Economic Commission for Europe is a United Nations agency. Its 34 members include both Eastern and Western European countries, the United States, Canada, and the Soviet Union. It is thus one of the principal forums in which eastern and western bloc nations meet on environmental matters. The environmental activities of the ECE are a significant part of the implementation of the Helsinki Final Act of 1975.

Environmental activities are coordinated by the Senior Advisors on Environmental Problems, a committee which meets annually, with the State Department and EPA representing the United States.

EPA is a participant in an ECE study on the long-range transport of air pollutants, particularly sulfur dioxide. This study was called for by the Helsinki Final Act, and will be a major topic of a Soviet-proposed High Level Meeting on the Environment, tentatively scheduled for November, 1979. EPA has participated in the negotiations for this meeting, where ECE members are expected to ratify the first international agreement on cross-border air pollution.

EPA has played a major role in ECE technical seminars. The Agency hosted a seminar on flue gas desulfurization, and took part in seminars on waste technology, nonferrous smelting, and environmental impact analysis.

EPA is involved in the ECE Group of Rapporteurs on Air Pollution from Automobiles. This group is working on international standards for vehicle emissions. American standards are generally more stringent than those of other countries. U.S. negotiators are using this forum to urge European acceptance of stiffer standards and testing procedures.

In the noise abatement field, where Europeans are generally ahead of the United States, EPA's Office of Noise Control Programs has recently begun to participate in the ECE's efforts at international harmonization of noise standards for vehicles.



United States
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