

National Policy Dialogues on Integrated Water Resources Management under the EU Water Initiative



The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), through the Secretariat of the Water Convention, is the strategic partner of the European Union to support the National Policy Dialogues on Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) within the Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia component of the EU Water Initiative. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) is the strategic partner for water supply and sanitation. The EU Water Initiative is an international initiative, not a financial mechanism, which was launched at the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable

Development in 2002. The Initiative takes a partnership approach with national governments, donors, the water industry, NGOs and other stakeholders. Through National Policy Dialogues as a main operational instrument, it aims to improve coordination and cooperation between sectors to improve water management and facilitate more effective development assistance in the water sector.

National Policy Dialogues (NPDs) support water sector reforms in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) through assistance to Governments in:

- Development and implementation of water strategies and legislation based on IWRM principles;
- Strengthening intersectoral cooperation to improve water and health and implement the UNECE/WHO-Europe Protocol on Water and Health, in particular by setting and implementing targets on the whole water cycle and on the water and health nexus;
- Development of national policies for the management of transboundary waters in accordance with the Water Convention and other international environmental instruments.

With support from the European Commission, European Union member States and other countries and international organizations, NPDs have been initiated in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

The main outcome of the NPDs are so-called “policy packages” such as legislative acts, strategies, ministerial orders and plans for implementation. Emphasis is also

placed on the implementation of already adopted policies. This is done through pilot projects or by facilitating the provision of technical assistance.

While NPDs follow a common methodology, the NPD process in each country is unique. The dynamics and content of the dialogue process depend on the existing objectives, the legislative and institutional frameworks, as well as the political and socio-economic situation in each country.

NPDs are based on consultations with relevant ministries, agencies and institutions (including science and academia), non-governmental organizations, parliamentary bodies and other national and international organizations. National Steering Committees are established to guide the dialogue process. Thematic expert groups and a working group address specific issues on the NPD agenda. In some countries, capacity building activities take place to improve the understanding of IWRM principles and share best practices in this field.



EXAMPLES OF POLICY PACKAGES

Examples of developed and implemented policy packages encompass a variety of measures:

- In the Kyrgyz Republic, the NPD facilitated the establishment of a river basin council for the Chu River. In addition, the country is preparing an action plan to achieve sustainable water management, a safe drinking water supply and sanitation in accordance with the UNECE/WHO-Europe Protocol on Water and Health;
- In the Republic of Moldova, the NPD facilitated the discussion on wastewater discharges among relevant governmental agencies and other stakeholders. As a result, the Government adopted an Order on Wastewater Discharges from Municipal Sources;
- In Armenia and the Republic of Moldova, targets were set to ensure sustainable water management and access to safe water and adequate sanitation;
- In Armenia, payment for ecosystem services schemes were developed for the Upper Hrazdan River Basin;
- In Ukraine, policies for sustainable flood management were elaborated.



More information can be found on:
www.unece.org/env/water/npd

The NPD for EECCA component newsletter can be requested from:
npd@unece.org