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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

**MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON
THE PROTECTION AND USE OF TRANSBOUNDARY
WATERCOURSES AND INTERNATIONAL LAKES**

Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment

Second meeting,
Vääksy (Finland), 5-8 September 2001
Items 3-10 of the provisional agenda

REPORT OF THE FIRST MEETING */

Introduction

1. The first meeting of the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment was held in Makkum (Netherlands) on 21 and 22 September 2000.
2. The Meeting was attended by representatives of the following countries: Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and United Kingdom.
3. It was also attended by the representatives of United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Health Organization's Collaborating Centre on Groundwater (i.e.

*/ This document has not been formally edited.

British Geological Survey), and the European Topic Center on Inland Waters (ETC/IW), established under the auspices of the European Environmental Agency.

4. Two representatives of the Peipsi Center for Transboundary Cooperation (formerly known as NGO Lake Pepsi), Estonia, also participated.
5. The meeting was chaired by Mr. W. Cofino (Netherlands), Chairman of the Working Group.

I. OPENING OF THE MEETING

6. Mr. C. de Villeneuve (Netherlands), Chairman of the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties, opened the meeting and made a statement on behalf of the host country. In his statement, he underlined the importance of the work of the former Task Force on Monitoring and Assessment and raised the expectation that the new Working Group would effectively contribute to the implementation of the work plan under the Convention.

7. Mr. A. Jagusiewicz, secretary of the Working Group, reported on relevant decisions taken by the Parties at their second meeting held in The Hague (Netherlands) from 23 to 25 March 2000. He mentioned in particular the adoption of the guidelines on monitoring and assessment of transboundary rivers and transboundary groundwaters, the decision to establish the International Water Assessment Centre (IWAC) as a collaborating center on monitoring and assessment in the Netherlands and the decision to organize the second international conference on management of transboundary waters in Poland in 2002.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

8. Mr. W. Cofino welcomed the participants and introduced the provisional agenda for the first meeting. The Working Group adopted its agenda as contained in document MP.WAT/WG.2/2000/1, on the understanding that it would elect its officers under agenda item 11.

III. MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT OF LAKES

9. Mr. P. Heinonen (Finland), Chairman of the Core Group on Lakes, reported on the ongoing activities of the Core Group. In particular, he informed the Working Group on the outcome of the first meeting of the Core Group held in Helsinki on 18-19 May 2000 and introduced a draft version of the technical guidelines on monitoring and assessment of international lakes (working paper WGMA/2000/1) ^{1/} and a background document on monitoring of selected international lakes (WGMA/2000/2). He also suggested to focus the discussion on the structure of the technical guidelines, and invited the participants to contribute to the description of different measurement methods.

10. In the ensuing discussion, the participants underlined the necessity to include some strategic aspects in the technical guidelines related exclusively to international lakes in order to harmonize, as far as possible, the first version of the lake guidelines with the structure and content of the existing guidelines on monitoring and assessing transboundary rivers and groundwaters. Participants also suggested that a clear distinction should be made between approaches to monitoring lakes and approaches to monitoring reservoirs.

11. The representative of the European Topic Centre on Inland Waters informed the Working Group that his organization collects data on lakes and reservoirs, but does not compile other information linked to monitoring of lakes. Therefore, information compiled in the background reports on lake monitoring would also be complementary to the work of the Topic Centre.

12. The Working Group expressed its appreciation to the Core Group for the progress achieved and invited it to finalize work by the next meeting of the Working Group. In consultation with the Chairman of the Core Group, the Working Group invited the participants to contribute to the drafting of the guidelines by the end of January 2001 and agreed to prepare the document in two volumes: (i) a technical part with selected strategic aspects related to lakes and reservoirs; and (ii) a background document that contains information on international lakes and describes monitoring activities.

IV. LABORATORY QUALITY MANAGEMENT

13. The Chairman of the former Task Force on Laboratory Quality Management and Accreditation, Mr. P. Literathy (Hungary), reported on the activities carried out until mid-2000 (WGMA/2000/3), and introduced the draft version of guidelines on laboratory quality management for water/environmental laboratories, which were available in print and on CD-ROM.

14. With respect to accreditation, Mr. Literathy said that there was little progress in developing joint accreditation procedures, and an expert group on accreditation was not yet set up. In his view, the further work should only focus on laboratory quality management issues.

15. Mr. Literathy will finalize the draft guidelines. He suggested that these draft guidelines should at least be tested by the laboratories that are involved in the pilot projects on transboundary rivers. He also informed the Working Group about his project concept paper drawn up to receive support for quality assurance activities through the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The main objective of the proposed project was to establish a sustainable quality assurance system for assessing the quality and pollution of the environment and for water-quality management in the Danube river basin to assist countries in transition bordering the Danube and its tributaries.

16. The delegation of Poland informed the Working Group that the sampling methods recommended in the draft guidelines have already been tested by ten laboratories in Belarus, Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine that are involved in the two pilot projects for the rivers Bug and Latorica/Uzh.

17. The delegation of the Netherlands suggested that the experience gained by other laboratories with the application of the draft guidelines should be studied and incorporated in the revised draft version. Particularly laboratories in Finland, Netherlands and Poland, involved in the pilot projects, are expected to provide their experience. The Netherlands also offered to prepare a document on quality assurance of ecological assessments for examination by the Working Group at its second meeting.

18. The Working Group:

(a) Invited more comments and specific proposals for amendments of the draft guidelines to be mailed to the lead country, Hungary (contact person Mr. P. Literathy), by the end of January 2001;

(b) Requested the lead country, Hungary, to finalize the second draft version of the guidelines, including a section on accreditation for review at the second meeting of the Working Group;

(c) Welcomed the offer of the Netherlands to prepare a document on quality assurance of ecological assessments;

(d) Decided not to establish an expert group on accreditation for the time being.

V. MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT OF RIVERS

19. Mr. M. Adriaanse (Netherlands) introduced the Guidelines on Monitoring and Assessment of Transboundary Rivers, adopted by the Parties at their second meeting (WGMA/2000/4). He stressed that the experience gained with the implementation of the former (1996) guidelines in a series of pilot projects in European river basins played an important role in the production of the revised and updated version.

20. Mr. Adriaanse also evaluated the progress made in the pilot project programme on monitoring and assessment of transboundary rivers as part of the 1997-2000 work plan under the Water Convention (WGMA/2000/5). He appreciated the work done and the financial and human resources allocated by the countries and donors to the pilot programme. He raised concern, however, about insufficient involvement of some countries' experts despite the fact that senior officials of these countries fully supported the pilot programme at the second meeting of the Parties.

21. Concerning future activities under the pilot project programme, Mr. Adriaanse suggested that two groups of projects should be considered: The first group should consist of five pilot projects (i.e. rivers Ipoly, Morava, Mures, Latorica/Uzh and Bug) which should: (i) be fully managed by the riparian countries provided that financial and human resources are available; (ii) cover the Preparatory Phase only (i.e. ending with recommendations for

improvement on the basis of the work already done); and (iii) be supported by an intensive hands-on workshop on specification of information needs (with the Netherlands as lead country).

22. The second group of projects, composed of the rivers Kura, Severski Donets and Tobol, are expected to start mid-2001, funded by EU/TACIS and other contributions. These projects would only be considered as pilot projects under the Conventions' work programme if the full commitment of all riparian countries was given and thorough arrangements were made by the countries themselves for project organization.

23. In the ensuing discussion:

(a) The delegations of Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia welcomed the thorough assessment of the pilot project and agreed with the evaluation of the joint work. They underlined the fact that the programme was both beneficial for their transboundary and internal waters;

(b) Hungary and Slovakia said that they are ready to continue the implementation phase of the programme and harmonize the joint activities with those to be carried out under the EC Directive establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy (EC Water Framework Directive);

(c) Poland pointed out that the funding of the project on the Bug river by the riparian countries was not available at the same time so that Poland will be more advanced in project implementation than Belarus and Ukraine;

(d) Romania reported that due to linguistic barriers all key players (i.e. joint bodies) were still not involved in project implementation;

(e) The Working Group participants furthermore stressed that a workshop, offered to be prepared by IWAC, on the drafting of the Reports on Information Needs would be crucial for further programme implementation, and should therefore be thoroughly prepared. It was also emphasized that another workshop should be held prior to the drafting of the Reports on Recommendations for Improvement;

(f) The delegations of Azerbaijan and Georgia voiced the need for support by the Chairman of the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties, Mr. de Villeneuve, and the Chairman of the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment to involve Armenia in activities on the River Kura. The representative of the Russian Federation invited the Chairmen to consider ways and means to facilitate the involvement of Kazakh representative in the River Tobol pilot project.

24. The delegation of Belarus, noting that its activities to the joint project on the River Bug will start later, fully committed itself to the project implementation.

25. The secretariat reported on its recent efforts to include Armenia in the cooperation between Azerbaijan and Georgia on the River Kura. It suggested steps to be taken for an active involvement of Ukraine in the pilot projects on the rivers Bug and Severski Donets.

26. The Working Group:

(a) Approved the evaluation report on the pilot projects on transboundary rivers as presented by the lead country, and noted with appreciation the commitments by the riparian countries, present at the meeting, for further action. It agreed on the continuation of the programme for the rivers Ipoly, Mures, Morava, Latorica/Uzh and Bug, limited to the Preparatory Phase, and requested the participating countries to submit at the end of the project a consolidated report on "Recommendations for improvement";

(b) Agreed that the Implementation Phase of the pilot projects should be considered as separate follow up projects;

(c) Welcomed the offer of the Netherlands to organize in late November 2000 a workshop on information needs and in 2001 a workshop on recommendations for improvement to finalize the Preparatory Phase, and invited the countries' project leaders to finalize their draft reports on information needs as input to the first workshop;

(d) Welcomed the commitment of Belarus to accelerate the implementation of the preparatory phase of the pilot project on the river Bug and its offer to cooperate closely with Poland;

(e) Invited the secretariat to take steps for an active involvement of Ukraine in the pilot projects on the rivers Bug and Severski Donets;

(f) Invited the riparian countries of the rivers Kura, Severski Donets and Tobol to meet the conditions for the start of their pilot projects related, inter alia, to project organization and reporting as contained in document WGMA/2000/5, item 5 d, and report to the next session of the Working Group on progress;

(g) Thanked the lead country for printing the guidelines on monitoring and assessment of transboundary rivers.

VI. MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT OF TRANSBOUNDARY GROUNDWATERS

27. Mr. G. Arnold (Netherlands) introduced the guidelines on Monitoring and Assessment of Transboundary Groundwaters, adopted by the Parties at their second meeting (WGMA/2000/6). He reported on preparations for testing the guidelines in a pilot project in the catchment area of the River Cetina (shared by Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina). Mr. Arnold also reported on activities undertaken by the lead country, together with the secretariat, to get funding for the pilot project from the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

28. Several delegations informed the Working Group about their intentions to set up pilot projects on transboundary groundwaters shared by Bulgaria and Romania; Hungary

and Slovakia; and Belarus, Poland and Ukraine, respectively. The Netherlands will study the feasibility of two pilot projects: one on groundwaters shared with Belgium, the other on groundwaters shared with Germany.

29. The delegations of Hungary and Spain underlined legal aspects of sharing groundwater resources and the need for developing policy guidelines on groundwater-use rights in riparian countries following the example of a similar project on inter-state distribution of surface water resources under the 2000-2003 work-plan under the Convention. Mr. de Villeneuve (Netherlands), Chairman of the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties, will discuss this issue at the next Bureau meeting (19-20 February 2001) noting also the possibility of using the Advisory Service on Legal Instruments, set up under the Convention, on a case-by-case basis.

30. The Working Group:

(a) Welcomed the proposals for the pilot project programme on transboundary waters and invited the lead country and Parties concerned to report on progress at its next meeting;

(b) Recommended to use the Advisory Service on Legal Instruments on issues linked to the sharing of transboundary groundwaters, unless the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties decides on an extended coverage of the programme element 2.6 of the 2000-2003 work-plan under the Convention (Interstate distribution and rational use of water resources of transboundary rivers in water-deficient regions) to deal both with surface waters and groundwaters;

(c) Thanked the lead country for the printing the guidelines on monitoring and assessment of transboundary groundwaters.

VII. TRANSBOUNDARY AQUIFER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT (TARM): COOPERATION BETWEEN UN/ECE, FAO AND UNESCO

31. Ms. A. Aureli, UNESCO, introduced the TARM programme, supported by FAO, UNESCO and the International Association on Hydrology (IAH), and prepared in consultation with UN/ECE (WGMA/2000/7). TARM is a joint and multi-disciplinary programme aiming to improve the understanding of the scientific, socio-economic, legal, institutional and environmental aspects of regional groundwater resources management.

32. With respect to the TARM objective, Ms. A. Aureli invited the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment and the International Water Assessment Centre (IWAC), established under the Convention, to assist UNECE, UNESCO, FAO, IAH, the Economic Commissions for Africa (ECA) and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). This includes the implementation of the guidelines on monitoring and assessment of transboundary groundwaters in other regions of the world, the setting up of training courses and the exchange of information with other regional economic commissions and organizations/institutions, particularly in Latin America (e.g. the Economic Commission

for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)), and the dissemination of information on existing legislation, treaties and agreements.

33. The secretariat, recalling the terms of reference of the Working Group and IWAC, supported UNESCO's initiative, and informed the Working Group about other international activities, particularly the preparations for the Rio +10 Conference, where contributions from UNESCO, the Working Group and IWAC should be sought.

34. The Working Group:

(a) Welcomed the TARM programme and expressed its readiness to provide inputs to this joint initiative of UN bodies and other organizations/institutions;

(b) Noted that the existing institutional networks (e.g. regional economic commissions, IAH network) and data collection systems (e.g. the Global Environment Monitoring System (GEMS)) should be used as far as possible to avoid duplication of activities;

(c) Invited the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties to examine the possible contributions of the other Working Groups established under the Convention as well as IWAC.

VIII. SAMPLING: MORE THAN TECHNICAL ASPECTS

35. Mr. P. Heinonen (Finland) introduced a working document on sampling and its essential role in investigating and monitoring the status of the various environmental compartments (WGMA/2000/8). He suggested that sampling should be considered as an entity, carried out by certified sampling personnel, and should become part of the quality assurance system. He stressed the need for a special, separate technical guidebook for fieldwork, including sampling.

36. The Working Group members fully recognized the importance of sampling (including joint sampling in transboundary waters), and discussed whether further detailed guidance on this issue should become part of the existing guidelines on monitoring and assessment of transboundary waters and the forthcoming guidelines on laboratory quality management, or be prepared as a separate guidance document.

37. Working Group members also voiced the need for guidance on "sampling" linked to water-quantity characteristics of transboundary waters (e.g. water levels, run-off) as well as for guidance on assessing sampling costs because these costs should be taken into account when applying for funding. In drawing up guidance on sampling, the specific needs of target groups should be considered, particularly those of joint bodies.

38. The Working Group:

(a) Took note of the document on sampling and thanked the Finnish delegation for its preparation;

(b) Invited the International Water Assessment Centre (IWAC) to act as clearing-house on sampling and prepare a technical note on sampling, including sampling for water-quantity characteristics in relation to monitoring of transboundary waters for consideration at its next meeting.

IX. CHARACTER OF GUIDELINES: STRATEGIC AND/OR TECHNICAL

39. Mr. P. Heinonen (Finland) introduced a proposal for splitting the guidelines on monitoring and assessment of transboundary waters into two parts: a strategic part for politicians, managers and financial institutions and a technical part for the other users dealing with monitoring and assessment. He referred to document WGMA/2000/10 as an example of strategic guidelines on monitoring and assessment prepared as a follow-up to the outcome of the meeting of the Core Group on Lakes.

40. Mr. Heinonen also stressed that the implementation of the EC Water Framework Directive would require technical guidance on how to obtain data/information to classify waters or assess their biological and ecological conditions. Therefore, there was also a need for harmonizing technical approaches related to monitoring and assessment under both the Water Convention and the EC Water Framework Directive as soon as possible.

41. Several delegations recalled an earlier decision of the former task force on monitoring and assessment: (a) to prepare a set of guidelines for transboundary waters (rivers, groundwaters, lakes, estuaries) that have a strategic rather than a technical character; and (b) harmonize these guidelines taking into account the specificity of the various types of water bodies. Therefore, they hold the view that these guidelines, once tested in a series of pilot projects, could - after a period of 3 to 4 years - be revised, further elaborated and eventually (following Mr. Heinonen's proposal) divided into strategic and technical parts.

42. Delegations agreed that Mr. Heinonen's proposal is future-oriented and should be given further consideration, although for the time being work should focus on the finalization of guidelines for the still missing types of water bodies.

43. The secretariat informed the Working Group that Romania was not in a position to act as the lead country for drafting guidelines on monitoring and assessment of estuaries.

44. The Working Group:

(a) Invited the Core Group on Lakes to add a strategic part to the draft version of the Technical Guidelines on Monitoring and Assessment of International Lakes and agreed

to finalize the guidelines in two volumes, as proposed by the Chairman of the Core Group, for consideration at its next meeting;

(b) Agreed to reconsider the structure of the “second generation” of guidelines, once the guidelines on lakes would be ready;

(c) Invited the Polish delegation to consider preparing a draft version of guidelines on monitoring and assessment of estuaries and report on progress at the next meeting.

X. WORK PLAN OF THE WORKING GROUP AND ACTIVITIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL WATER ASSESSMENT CENTRE (IWAC)

45. Mr. W. Cofino, Chairman of the Working Group, introduced programme area III on monitoring and assessment of the 2000-2003 work plan adopted by the Parties at their second meeting. Referring to the terms of reference of the working groups, he suggested the updating of the work-plan on the basis of the discussion held and decisions already taken. He noted that these amendments would need the final approval by the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties (Bureau meeting on 19-20 February 2001). He also referred to the terms of reference of the International Water Assessment Centre (IWAC) and developed possible topics to be dealt with, including the core activities that were already included in document WGMA/2000/9.

46. In the ensuing discussion, proposals were made on how - through IWAC's activities - scientists and water managers could be brought together and set up a proper network. Proposals include target-oriented and high-level workshops organized by IWAC or any Party with IWAC's assistance. Topics of such workshops could cover: specific aspects of implementing the EC Water Framework Directive, assessment methods for transboundary waters, sampling, and classification systems.

47. The delegation of Poland invited IWAC to act as co-organizer of the International Conference on Sustainable Management of Transboundary Waters in Europe 2/ to mark the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention.

48. Working Group members also suggested that the proposed network should be open-ended as it should be the case with the list of topics for possible workshops organized under the auspices of IWAC.

49. The Working Group:

(a) Noted its terms of reference as included in the report of the second meeting of the Parties (ECE/MP.WAT/5, annex VI);

(b) Noted the terms of reference of the International Water Assessment Centre (IWAC) as contained in document ECE/MP.WAT/5, annex V, and agreed on IWAC's core

activities, including a series of workshop proposals and requested the head of IWAC, Mr. W. Cofino, to include them into IWAC's work-plan;

(c) Agreed on the updates of the Working Group's work-plan (annex) and invited the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties to approve it accordingly.

XI. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

50. The Working Group elected unanimously its officers: Mr. W. Cofino (Netherlands) as Chairman and Ms. Zs. Buzas (Hungary) as Vice-Chairperson.

XII. OTHER BUSINESS

51. The Chairman of the Working Group invited the Working Group to adopt the minutes of the seventh meeting of the former Task Force on Monitoring and Assessment held in Bled (Slovenia) from 4 to 6 November 1999. The Working Group adopted the minutes as contained in document TF 7.13.

52. The Working Group noted that the Parties to the Convention at their second meeting requested "Riparian Parties to report jointly, preferably through their joint bodies, to the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment and to the third meeting of the Parties in 2003 on their experience with the implementation of the guidelines on monitoring and assessment of transboundary rivers and transboundary groundwaters" (ECE/MP.WAT/5, paragraph 37 (e)).

53. The delegation of the Netherlands proposed the following procedure for reporting. First, the lead country will circulate a reporting format, thereafter Parties to the Convention and non-Parties will be invited to submit their reports, preferably through their joint bodies, and afterwards the lead country will compile a preliminary draft paper and submit it to the Working Group for consideration and follow-up decision at its second meeting in September 2001.

54. The secretariat informed the Working Group on the progress of the pilot project on rapid environmental and health risk assessment, with Italy as lead country, and supported by the Regional Office for Europe of the World Health Organization (WHO/ECE) and UNECE. The secretariat raised the expectation that this project may become part of activities to be carried out under the Protocol on Water and Health.

55. Delegations and the secretariat informed the Working Group about a series of workshops related to the implementation of the EC Water Framework Directive and will orally report on the outcome of these events at the next meeting of the Working Group.

56. Following the proposal by the delegation of Hungary, the Working Group agreed to invite the Chairman of the Working Group on Water and Health to examine at the

September 2001 meeting of the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment possible joint activities.

XI. CLOSING OF THE MEETING

57. The delegation of Finland invited the Working Group to hold its second meeting in September 2001 in Finland.

58. The Chairman, on behalf of the Working Group, thanked the Finnish delegation for the invitation and closed the first meeting of the Working Group.

Notes

1/ Working papers, e.g. those with the symbol WGMA or TF, are internal meeting documents for restricted access by the participants of the meeting.

2/ The International Conference on Sustainable Management of Transboundary Waters in Europe will take place in Miedzyzdroje, Poland, 21-24 April 2002.

3/ Approved by the Bureau at its meeting in Geneva on 19-20 February 2001.

4/ The Signatories to the Protocol on Water and Health agreed at their first meeting (Budapest, 2-3 November 2000) to do so.

Annex

UPDATE OF PROGRAMME AREA III OF THE 2000-2003 WORK-PLAN UNDER THE CONVENTION a/

PROGRAMME AREA III: MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT

Responsible body:

Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment with the Netherlands as lead Party. The collaborative centre on monitoring and assessment, the International Water Assessment Centre (IWAC) at the Netherlands Institute for Inland Water Management and Waste Water Treatment, will assist in the implementation of the programme area.

Rationale:

Programme area III will help Parties bordering the same transboundary waters to establish and implement joint programmes for monitoring the conditions of transboundary waters, including floods and ice drifts, as well as transboundary impact; agree upon pollution parameters and pollutants whose concentrations in transboundary waters shall be regularly monitored; carry out joint or coordinated assessments of the conditions of transboundary waters and the effectiveness of measures taken to prevent, control and reduce transboundary impact; exchange reasonably available data on environmental conditions of transboundary waters, including monitoring data; inform each other about any critical situation that may have a transboundary impact; and make available to the public the results of water and effluent sampling, together with the results of the verification of compliance with water-quality objectives and permit conditions.

3.1 Strategies for monitoring and assessing transboundary waters

Objectives:

Guidelines, studies and reports on monitoring and assessing transboundary waters will be drawn up or revised. They will provide a framework for problem identification, specification of information needs, the use of applicable tools and the setting-up of monitoring and assessment systems for transboundary waters. Guidance will also be provided, as appropriate, on issues related to human health and safety. The guidelines will include recommendations to Governments and regional/local authorities and/or institutions of riparian countries.

Work accomplished:

Guidelines on monitoring and assessment of transboundary groundwaters (MP.WAT/2000/9), and Guidelines on monitoring and assessing of transboundary rivers (MP.WAT/2000/10).

Main partners:

UNEP, World Meteorological Organization (WMO), World Health Organization (WHO), *United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)*, European

Environment Agency (EEA) and its relevant topic centres, and joint bodies set up under transboundary water agreements in Europe.

3.1.1 Monitoring and assessment of international lakes

Work to be undertaken:

Prepare draft guidelines on monitoring and assessment of international lakes, including background documentation, for consideration and follow up by the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment at its meeting in September 2000. *Preparatory meetings of the Core Group on Lakes will be convened (the first took place in Helsinki on 18-20 May 2000, the second will be in spring 2001).*

Lead Party: Finland.

3.1.2 Monitoring and assessment of transboundary estuaries

Work to be undertaken:

Prepare elements for draft guidelines on monitoring and assessment of transboundary estuaries, including background documentation, for consideration and follow up by the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment at its meetings in September 2000 and in 2001. A preparatory meeting will be held in Romania in September 2000.

Lead Party: *Poland will draw up a proposal in cooperation with Germany.*

3.1.3 Updating of the Guidelines on monitoring and assessment of transboundary waters

Work to be undertaken:

The Guidelines on monitoring and assessing transboundary rivers and groundwaters will be updated, if need be, in the light of experience gained with pilot projects (see programme element 3.2), technological advances, economic and social factors as well as changes in scientific knowledge and understanding.

Lead Party: Netherlands.

3.2 Pilot programmes on monitoring and assessment

Objectives:

Through pilot programmes, the Meeting of the Parties will provide assistance to countries to implement the Guidelines on monitoring and assessment of transboundary waters in a number of catchment areas to illustrate the application of the Guidelines, and to make possible adjustments/improvements to them. The implementation of the Guidelines through the pilot programmes will be supported by an advisory service, training and workshops (if

necessary). As far as possible, the implementation will also cover issues related to human health and safety as stipulated in the Protocol on Water and Health.

Main partners: Donor countries (Parties and non-Parties) and donor organizations/institutions; joint bodies set up under transboundary water agreements in Europe.

3.2.1 Pilot programme on transboundary rivers

Ongoing work:

Pilot programme on eight transboundary rivers including the rivers Bug (Belarus, Poland, Ukraine), Ipoly (Hungary, Slovakia), Kura (Azerbaijan, Georgia), Latoritca/Uzh (Slovakia, Ukraine), Maros (Hungary, Romania), Morava (Czech Republic, Slovakia), Serverski Donets (Russian Federation, Ukraine) and Tobol (Kazakhstan, Russian Federation).

Work to be undertaken:

Overall supervision and project management by the Core Group on Pilot Projects.

Evaluation of the pilot projects on transboundary rivers at the next meeting of the Working Group.

Lead Party: Netherlands.

Work-sharing arrangements:

Memorandums of understanding or other arrangements have been made among the riparian countries participating in the various projects.

3.2.2 Pilot programme on transboundary groundwaters

Work accomplished:

Guidelines on monitoring and assessment of transboundary groundwaters (MP.WAT/2000/9). *Preparation of the first pilot project on the river Cetina started in November 1999.*

Work to be undertaken:

Overall supervision and project management. *Continuation of the pilot project on the river Cetina and start-up of new pilot projects. Participation of designated institutions/experts in the TARM programme.*

Lead Party: Netherlands.

Main partners: UNESCO, IAH and regional commissions of the UN system.

3.2.3 Pilot programme on international lakes

Work accomplished:

See the objectives and work to be undertaken in programme element 3.1.1.

Work to be undertaken:

Given that the pilot programme could start in 2001/2002, project preparation, overall supervision and project management will be carried out after the completion of programme element 3.1.1.

Lead Party: Finland.

3.3 Laboratory quality management

Objectives:

Following the overall objective of the programme element (see work plan 1997-2000 in ECE/MP.WAT/2, annex II), an expert group with Hungary as lead country started its activities on laboratory quality management and accreditation. Based on the outcome of the meeting of this group on 20 and 21 December 1999, the Meeting of the Parties invited the core group to finalize the draft guidelines on laboratory quality management presented to it at its second meeting as background information for the forthcoming meeting of the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment.

Work accomplished:

Preliminary draft guidelines on laboratory quality management.

Work to be undertaken:

Finalize draft guidelines at further meetings of the expert group before the first meeting of Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment (Makkum, Netherlands, 21 to 23 September 2000). *Finalization of the guidelines for consideration by the Working Group at its second meeting in September 2001 on the basis of, inter-alia, comments to be sent to the lead Party by end of January 2001.*

Lead Party: Hungary.

Note

a/ Amendments are given in bold-face italics. The updated programme was approved by the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties at their meeting in Geneva on 19-20 February 2001.