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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

**WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR EUROPE**

**MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION
ON THE PROTECTION AND USE OF TRANSBOUNDARY
WATERCOURSES AND INTERNATIONAL LAKES
and
MEETING OF THE SIGNATORIES TO THE PROTOCOL
ON WATER AND HEALTH**

Working Group on Water and Health

First meeting,
Budapest, 14-15 May 2001

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE FIRST MEETING */

to be held at the National Institute of Environmental Health, Budapest,
starting at 9:30 a.m. on Monday, 14 May 2001

*/ Prepared by the joint secretariat in consultation with the Chairman of the Working Group on Water and Health. This document has not been formally edited.

1. Opening statements.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Progress in the implementation of the Protocol (MP.WAT/AC.2/2000/2 – EUR/ICP/5021651/2):
 - (a) Surveillance, early-warning and notification systems;
 - (b) Assessing health risks;
 - (c) Arrangements for preparing an evidence base and a reporting scheme under the Protocol;
 - (d) Arrangements for a compliance review regime;
 - (e) Workshop on sustainable water management and health;
 - (f) Guidance on modalities for the participation of competent international non-governmental organizations;
 - (g) Facilitating access to sources of finance.
4. Links to other activities and programmes:
 - (a) Follow up to, and participation in, other activities under the Convention;
 - (b) Follow up to the meetings of the European Environment and Health Committee (EEHC);
 - (c) Assessment of achievements under chapter 18 of Agenda 21;
 - (d) Links to the 1988 Aarhus Protocol on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POP's) and the forthcoming global convention on POP's.
5. Work-plan (MP.WAT/AC.2/2000/2 – EUR/ICP/5021651/2, annex).
6. Election of officers.
7. Other business.
8. Closure.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

The first meeting of the Working Group on Water and Health will be held in Budapest at the invitation of the Government of Hungary. It will start on 14 May 2001 at 9:30 a.m. and close on 15 May 2001 at 4 p.m. The meeting will be chaired by Mr. Alan Pinter, Hungary, Chairman of the Working Group on Water and Health.

The working language of the meeting will be English. For further information on organizational matters, delegations are invited to contact the host authorities at the address given in the annex.

Item 1: Opening statements

A representative of Hungary will make an opening statement on behalf of the host country. The representatives of the UN/ECE and WHO/EURO secretariats, which carry out the secretariat functions for the Protocol, will also address the Working Group.

Item 2: Adoption of the agenda

The Meeting is expected to adopt its agenda as set out in the present document.

Item 3: Progress in the implementation of the Protocol

(see the report of the first meeting of the Signatories to the Protocol on Water and Health, MP.WAT/AC.2/2000/2 – EUR/ICP/5021651/2, held in Budapest on 2-3 November 2000 and the annex to the report with the work plan)

(a) Surveillance, early-warning and notification systems

The Signatories to the Protocol agreed at their first meeting on the drawing-up of guidelines on surveillance, early-warning and notification systems (programme element 4.1.1). Based on the information by the lead country (Hungary), the Meeting will examine the progress and make arrangements for follow up;

(b) Assessing health risks

The Signatories to the Protocol agreed at their first meeting on the drawing-up of guidelines on assessing health risks (programme element 4.1.2). Based on: (a) the information by the lead country (Italy); (b) health risk assessments by Canada using exposure models; and (c) an assessment of the needs for health risk assessment carried under the Caspian Environmental Programme, the Meeting will examine the progress and make arrangements for follow up;

(c) Arrangements for preparing an evidence base and a reporting regime under the Protocol

The Meeting will be informed by the joint secretariat about recent activities of WHO/EURO for preparing an evidence base under the Protocol, and possible steps to be taken under the Protocol for a systematic collection of data on water-related diseases. A note by WHO/EURO will provide information on the results of a pilot programme on the collection and management of data on water-related diseases in Bulgaria, Georgia, the Russian Federation and the European Union.

Based on information provided by the lead country (United Kingdom), the Meeting will also make further arrangements to draw up a draft guidance document on reporting following the relevant provisions of the Protocol, particularly those of articles 6 and 7 (programme element 4.2.2). These arrangements should be based on the understanding of the Signatories to the Protocol (see paragraph 40 (d) of the report) that the setting-up of an appropriate reporting system required careful consideration of the information needs at intergovernmental level (e.g. Meeting of the Parties) and other levels (e.g. national, local, transboundary), and the consideration of the most appropriate means of reporting (e.g. access to homepages of national and local authorities; design of indicators against which progress could be measured);

(d) Arrangements for a compliance review regime

Following programme element 4.2.1, the Meeting will make arrangements to assist the lead country (Hungary) in the drawing up of the first element of a compliance review regime, i.e. the establishment of a baseline and system for review. It will also make arrangements with the Working Group on Legal and Administrative Aspects, established under the Convention, for jointly developing the second and third elements of the regime (i.e. establishing the compliance review procedure, and establishing the institutional mechanism) as proposed by the Working Group on Legal and Administrative Aspects at its first meeting in January 2001;

(e) Workshop on sustainable water management and health

Based on the information by the lead country (Russian Federation), the Meeting will make arrangements to assist the lead country and the joint secretariat in the further preparations for the workshop to be held on the occasion of the ECWATECH-2002 Conference in Moscow in May/June 2002 (see programme element 4.1.4);

(f) Guidance on modalities for the participation of competent international non-governmental organizations

The Meeting may wish to provide its advice to the joint secretariat on the issues to be considered when drawing up a guidance document on modalities for the participation of competent international governmental and non-governmental organizations, to be submitted to the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (programme element 4.2.3 (b)). It may also provide its advice on modalities for inviting/participation of donor countries and organizations;

- (g) Facilitating access to sources of finance

The Meeting will be informed about the preparation of guidance materials for the ranking of hotspots and the preparation of pre-investment studies, undertaken under WHO's Mediterranean Programme.

The Meeting will provide its advise to the joint secretariat on ways and means of accessing and disseminating information on sources of finance, and make arrangements for the setting up of an ad hoc expert group (programme element 4.1.3).

Item 4: Links to other activities and programmes

- (a) Follow up to, and participation in, other relevant activities under the Convention

The joint secretariat will inform the Meeting about the other relevant activities undertaken under the Convention. The Meeting may wish to make arrangements for participation as appropriate;

- (b) Follow up to the meetings of the European Environment and Health Committee (EEHC)

The joint secretariat will inform the Meeting about relevant activities undertaken under the auspices of the EEHC, including the implementation of the precautionary principle as a possible topic of the European Environment and Health process. The Meeting may wish to consider preparing a contribution on the precautionary principle based on specific cases in the context of water-related diseases as proposed by the EEHC.

The joint secretariat will inform the Meeting about the draft brochure on the Protocol on Water and Health, prepared in response to the decision of the third meeting of the EEHC (Dublin, 30 November – 1 December 2000) on the topic "Communication Strategy for the EEHC". The Meeting will provide its input to finalize the brochure for submission to the fourth meeting of the EEHC (14-15 June 2002);

(c) Assessment of achievements under chapter 18 of Agenda 21

The joint secretariat will inform the Meeting on steps taken by UN/ECE, UNEP (regional Office for Europe) and WHO/EURO to prepare the European input into the assessment of achievements since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, 1992), as well as on the International Conference on Freshwater (Bonn 3-7 December 2001). The Meeting may wish to make arrangements for participation as appropriate.

(d) Links to the 1988 Aarhus Protocol on Persistent Organic Substances (POP's) and the forthcoming global convention on POP's

The Meeting may wish to note the relevance of both international instruments for activities under the Protocol due to the fact that information gathered by the International Water Assessment Centre (IWAC), established under the Convention, on uncontrolled pesticide disposal along many transboundary rivers is a matter of particular concern. The Meeting may wish to initiate a possible new programme activity on this issue that would add value to activities under the governing bodies for the above-mentioned instruments and EEHC activities to be undertaken in the preparations for the 2004 Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health.

Item 5: Work plan

The Meeting will consider the work plan (MP.WAT/AC.2/2000/2 – EUR/ICP/5021651/2, annex), and update it, if need be. Amendments to the work plan are subject to approval by the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention.

Item 6: Election of officers

The Meeting will elect a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman who will act as officers of the Working Group until the end of its second meeting in 2002.

Item 7: Other business

At the time of writing, the joint secretariat had no points to propose under this item.

Item 8: Closure

A representative of Hungary will close the first meeting of Working Group on 15 May 2001 at 4 p.m.

Annex

VENUE, FOCAL POINTS AND SECRETARIAT

I. VENUE

The first meeting of the Working Group on Water and Health will take place at the National Institute of Environmental Health, H-1097 Budapest, Gyáli út 2-6.

**II. FOCAL POINTS OF THE HOST COUNTRY TO BE CONTACTED
ON ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS**

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