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

Third meeting,

Madrid, Spain, 26-28 November 2003

Items 2 to 11 of the provisional agenda

DRAFT WORK PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 2004-2006

Addendum

DRAFT WORK PLAN ON MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT

Prepared by the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment
with the assistance of the secretariat

1. This addendum presents the draft work plan for programme area III: Monitoring and Assessment as agreed by the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment at its fourth meeting on 12-13 September 2003. For the draft decisions by the Meeting of the Parties, delegations may wish to refer to document MP.WAT/2003/6.

Annex

**DRAFT WORK PLAN FOR PROGRAMME AREA III:
MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT**

Responsible body: Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment, with [country name] 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.

Work accomplished: See document MP.WAT/2003/5, annex, programme area III.

3.1 Strategies for monitoring and assessing transboundary waters – new generation of guidelines

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. Guidance will include recommendations to Governments and regional/local authorities and/or institutions of riparian countries.

The Guidelines on Monitoring and Assessment of Transboundary Groundwaters (MP.WAT/2000/9), the Guidelines on Monitoring and Assessment of Transboundary Rivers (MP.WAT/2000/10), and the guidelines on monitoring and assessment of transboundary and international lakes (MP.WAT/2003/10), already developed by the Working Group will provide a basis for this activity.

The revised guidance documents will separate strategic and technical aspects of monitoring, which were discussed and presented together in the previous monitoring guidelines, as the experience gained with the pilot projects highlighted the need to develop an overall monitoring and assessment strategy for transboundary waters as well as the need for practical examples.

Main partners: United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), World Meteorological Organization (WMO), World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), European Commission, European Environment Agency (EEA) and its relevant topic centres, as well as joint bodies set up under transboundary water agreements in Europe.

3.1.1 Strategic guidance for monitoring and assessment of transboundary waters

Work to be undertaken: Prepare draft strategic guidelines for the monitoring and assessment of transboundary waters (rivers, groundwaters, lakes) to be adopted by the Parties at their fourth meeting. The strategic guidelines should allow a step-by-step approach, take into account the requirements of the EU Water Framework Directive, put more emphasis on institutional arrangements, have an integrated basin approach embracing rivers, lakes, groundwaters, transitional and coastal waters, and cover extreme events and climate change effects, as well as human health requirements. Due account should be taken of the rivers' pilot projects evaluation (MP.WAT/2003/11) and of the experience with the implementation of the guidelines on monitoring and assessment of transboundary rivers and groundwaters (MP.WAT/2003/9).

Lead Party: Finland.

Participating Parties: Belarus, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Ukraine, [to be completed at the third meeting of the Parties].

Main partners: The World Health Organization's Collaborating Centre for Groundwater Quality Assessment and Protection (British Geological Survey) expressed its wish to participate. Cooperation will also be sought with UNEP, the Global Water Partnership, EEA, [to be completed at the third meeting of the Parties].

3.1.2 Technical guidance and tools for monitoring and assessment of waters

Work to be undertaken: Prepare an inventory of existing technical guidance, tools and examples of implementation practices of monitoring and assessment, developed within other frameworks (e.g. United Nations organizations, EU Water Framework Directive), including a short description of the contents and scope, as well as an expert judgement, if possible, to be published on the IWAC web site.

Lead Party: [To be completed at the third meeting of the Parties]. IWAC will have a coordinating role.

Participating Parties: Hungary, Netherlands, Slovakia, [to be completed at the third meeting of the Parties].

Main partners: Cooperation will be sought with EEA, UNEP, UNESCO, WHO, WMO, [to be completed at the third meeting of the Parties].

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, in order 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 Implementation of the projects on transboundary rivers

Work to be undertaken: As the work programme for the rivers' pilot projects, which started in 1997, completed the analysis of monitoring and assessment needs and the development of recommendations (see documents MP.WAT/2003/5 and MP.WAT/2003/11), support will be provided to the implementation phase of the rivers' pilot projects.

The Core Group on Pilot Projects will advise and review the implementation of the pilot projects' recommendations, as part of the national monitoring programmes, provide a liaison mechanism between the pilot projects, and record lessons learned and experience.

The Working Group will help in ensuring political support to the projects, in order to guarantee the necessary funding. To this end the Working Group will organize evaluation meetings with the authorities of the countries where the pilot projects have taken place to discuss the recommendations and the measures needed for their implementation.

Lead Party: [To be completed at the third meeting of the Parties]. IWAC will have a coordinating role.

Participating Parties: Azerbaijan, Belarus, Czech Republic, Finland, Georgia, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Russian Federation and Ukraine.

Other partners: Cooperation will be sought with the relevant joint bodies and with the European Union's Tacis programme.

3.2.2 Pilot programme on transboundary groundwaters

Work to be undertaken: Overall supervision and project management by the Core Group on Groundwaters of the implementation of the groundwaters guidelines, including the development of preparatory studies and working programmes, starting up new pilots, and participation in the Internationally Shared Aquifer Resources Management Programme.

Lead Party: Netherlands.

Participating Parties: Belarus, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Ukraine.

Other partners: UNESCO, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the International Association of Hydrogeologists (IAH) under the Internationally Shared Aquifer Resources Management (ISARM) Programme.

3.2.3 Pilot programme on international lakes

Work to be undertaken: Implementation of two pilot projects to test the guidelines on monitoring and assessment of transboundary and international lakes, one focusing on Lake Peipsi (Estonia-Russian Federation) and the other on Lake Pyhäjärvi (Finland-Russian Federation). Preliminary preparations for the two coordinated pilot projects have been already undertaken. Implementation will start with an inception meeting in late 2003, and the monitoring activities will be carried out during 2004-2005. The results will be published in late 2005.

Lead Party: Finland.

Participating Parties: Estonia, Finland and the Russian Federation.

Other partners: Finnish-Russian Joint Commission, Estonian-Russian Transboundary Water Commission.

3.3 Assessment and reporting

Work to be undertaken: Preparation of assessments of European transboundary water bodies (rivers, groundwaters and lakes) as a contribution to the fourth assessment report of the state of environment for the Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” in 2006 (or 2007) and to the second World Water Development Report.

A project plan will be prepared together with the European Environment Agency to define the contribution of the Working Group. IWAC will take care of the modalities for contributing to the World Water Development Report.

The work already accomplished under the Working Group will be a basis for this activity: the “10 Transboundary Rivers in Europe – Assessment Practices and Environmental Status”, the

different reports of the rivers pilot projects, the groundwaters inventory, the “Background paper for the Guidelines on Monitoring and Assessment of Transboundary and International Lakes - General properties and monitoring practices of selected transboundary/international lakes” and IWAC contribution to the Lake Peipsi case study in the first World Water Development Report.

Lead Party: Finland.

Participating Parties: Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Hungary, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Ukraine, [to be completed at the third meeting of the Parties]. IWAC will coordinate the contribution to the World Water Development Report.

Main partners: Cooperation will be sought with joint bodies, EEA, the UNECE Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and other entities that are responsible for the preparation of the fourth assessment report of the state of environment for the Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” in 2006 (or 2007), as well as with the World Water Assessment Programme.

3.4 Support to monitoring and assessment activities

Work to be undertaken: Training and capacity-building activities, in particular related to the Partnership on water for sustainable development (see programme element 2.7), the implementation of the Water Framework Directive (see programme element 2.6), including development of new implementation projects in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Establishment of twinning arrangements with joint bodies in the UNECE region, to exchange experience and transfer knowledge.

Furthermore, the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment will, upon request, provide assistance to other bodies under the Convention, in particular to the Working Group on Water and Health and the Joint ad hoc expert group on water and industrial accidents.

Lead Party: [To be completed at the third meeting of the Parties].

Participating Parties: Finland, [to be completed at the third meeting of the Parties].

Main partners: Cooperation will be sought with the joint bodies established in the UNECE region, [to be completed at the third meeting of the Parties].

3.5 Raising the visibility of the Convention and of the Working Groups’ activities

Work to be undertaken: As the results from the questionnaires to evaluate the experience with the guidelines on monitoring and assessment clearly underlined the lack of visibility of the Convention and related activities, the commitment and action from focal points will be increased, links with joint bodies will be strengthened, and more efforts will be devoted to

promoting the Convention and its success in all possible frameworks, including meetings and workshops organized under the work plan. [To be completed at the third meeting of the Parties].

Lead Party: The secretariat will be responsible for the periodical revision of the list of focal points to ensure that the appointed focal points are carrying out their functions. [To be completed at the third meeting of the Parties].

Participating Parties: [All parties to the Convention].