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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

Fifth meeting

St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, 30 September - 1 October 2004

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE FIFTH MEETING

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Adoption of the report of the fourth meeting (MP.WAT/WG.2/2003/2).
3. Strategies for monitoring and assessment of transboundary waters:
 - (a) Strategic guidelines for monitoring and assessment of transboundary waters;
 - (b) Technical guidance for monitoring and assessment of transboundary waters.
4. Pilot programme on monitoring and assessment:
 - (a) Pilot projects on transboundary rivers;
 - (b) Pilot projects on transboundary groundwaters;
 - (c) Pilot projects on transboundary/international lakes.
5. Assessment of the status of transboundary waters and international lakes in the UNECE region.

6. International Water Assessment Centre.
7. Partners in cooperation:
 - (a) Workshops and other meetings under the Convention's work plan;
 - (b) World Water Development Report and World Water Assessment Programme;
 - (c) Partnership on Water for Sustainable Development.
8. Work plan.
9. Election of officers.
10. Date and venue of the sixth meeting of the Working Group.
11. Other business.
12. Closing.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

At the invitation of the Government of Finland, the fifth meeting of the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment will be held at the Vocational Training Centre of St. Petersburg Vodokanal, Shpalernaya Ul. 56, St. Petersburg. It will start on 30 September 2004 at 9.30 a.m. and close on 1 October at 1.30 p.m.

The official language of the Working Group is English. Interpretation from and into Russian will also be provided.

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The UNECE secretariat will send the working papers to the pre-registered participants. The documents of the Working Group and the unofficial working papers for the fifth meeting can be downloaded from the Convention's web site at <http://www.unece.org/env/water/meetings/documents.htm>

Item 1: Adoption of the agenda

Ms. Lea Kauppi (Finland), Chairperson of the Working Group, will open the meeting and make a statement on behalf of Finland. A representative of the Russian Federation will also address the Working Group.

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

Item 2: Adoption of the report of the fourth meeting

The Working Group is expected to adopt the report of its fourth meeting (MP.WAT/WG.2/2003/2).

Item 3: Strategies for monitoring and assessment of transboundary waters

(a) Strategic guidelines for monitoring and assessment of transboundary waters

On the basis of a draft strategy document prepared by Finland, the Working Group will discuss the progress in the preparation of strategic guidelines for monitoring and assessment of transboundary waters, examine the outcome of the first meeting of the Task Force on the Strategic Guidelines for Monitoring and Assessment of Transboundary Waters (St. Petersburg, 29 September 2004) and advise on future work.

(b) Technical guidance for monitoring and assessment of transboundary waters

The Working Group will decide how to proceed with the preparation of the inventory of existing technical guidance, tools and examples of monitoring and assessment practices, 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 web site of the International Water Assessment Centre (IWAC).

Item 4: Pilot programme on monitoring and assessment

(a) Pilot projects on transboundary rivers

On the basis of a working paper prepared by Slovakia, lead Party for this programme element, the Working Group will discuss future initiatives to support the implementation phase of the rivers' pilot projects and the steps needed to support the development of a pilot project on the Sava River.

(b) Pilot projects on transboundary groundwaters

The Working Group will examine the progress made and the planned future activities related to: (i) the preparation/implementation of pilot projects on groundwater monitoring and assessment; (ii) the activities undertaken or planned in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the International Association of Hydrogeologists (IAH) under the Internationally Shared (Transboundary) Aquifer Resource Management (ISARM) project, including the contribution to the ISARM - Mediterranean Consultative Meeting on key issues for sustainable management of transboundary aquifers in the Mediterranean and in South-Eastern Europe (Thessaloniki, Greece, 21-23 October 2004).

(c) Pilot projects on transboundary/international lakes

On the basis of a working paper prepared by the Chairman of the core group on lakes, Mr. Pertti Heinonen (Finland), the Working Group will examine the progress made in the preparation/implementation of pilot projects on lake monitoring and assessment.

Item 5: Assessment of the status of transboundary waters and international lakes in the UNECE region

The Working Group will discuss the progress in the preparation of the first report on the state of transboundary water bodies in the UNECE region, as a possible contribution to the fourth assessment report of the state of the environment for the Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" in 2007. It will examine the outline prepared by Finland and provide guidance to the Task Force on the Assessment of the Status of Transboundary Waters and International Lakes, which will meet during the afternoon of 1 October 2004.

Item 6: International Water Assessment Centre

The Working Group will discuss the role of IWAC under the Convention, its planned activities and its proposed priorities, on the basis of the outcome of the meeting of the International Core Group that acts as its steering committee (21-22 April 2004, Lelystad, Netherlands).

Item 7: Partners in cooperation

(a) Workshops and other meetings under the Convention's work plan

The Working Group will be informed by the secretariat of planned workshops, including tentative programmes and other arrangements. These include: (i) the workshop on the development of an inventory of internationally shared surface waters in South-Eastern Europe organized by UNESCO and the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (Thessaloniki, 18-20 October 2004); (ii) the workshops planned for 2004-2005 under the project "Capacity for Water Cooperation" in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, to facilitate the exchange of experience among the river basins and the countries in that subregion, and with other parts of the UNECE region, on the themes: "The legal basis for cooperation" (Kiev, November 2004); "Access to and exchange of information, and public participation" (June 2005); and "Joint monitoring and assessments of shared water basins, including early warning and alarm systems (autumn 2005).

The members of the Working Group who are not already involved in the preparations for these events may wish to make suggestions regarding their inputs into these activities.

(b) World Water Development Report and World Water Assessment Programme

The Working Group will be informed of relevant activities under the World Water Assessment Programme in preparation of the second World Water Development Report (e.g. indicators development) and the discussion within UN-Water on the preparation of regional water development reports.

(c) Partnership on Water for Sustainable Development

The Working Group will be informed of the outcome of the second High-level Meeting under the Strategic Partnership (Moscow, 26-27 February 2004) and of the meeting of its Working Group (Stockholm, 18 August 2004) and will discuss future activities related to monitoring and assessment of water resources in the framework of the Partnership.

Item 8: Work plan

The Working Group will consider its work plan (ECE/MP.WAT/15/Add.2, programme area III) as adopted by the Parties at their third meeting, 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 9: Election of officers

The Working Group will elect a chairperson and a vice-chairperson from among the participants.

Item 10: Date and venue of the sixth meeting of the Working Group

The Working Group will set indicative dates and venue for its sixth meeting.

Item 11: Other business

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

Item 12: Closing

A representative of Finland will close the meeting of the Working Group on Friday 1 October at 1.30 p.m.