



**Economic and Social  
Council**

Distr.  
GENERAL

MP.WAT/WG.2/2004/3  
25 August 2004

ENGLISH ONLY

---

**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

**STRATEGY FOR MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT OF  
TRANSBOUNDARY WATERCOURSES AND INTERNATIONAL LAKES \***

Submitted by Finland

1. The annex to this document contains a draft outline of the strategy for monitoring and assessment of transboundary watercourses and international lakes, prepared by Finland, lead Party for this activity, with inputs from some countries and organizations.
2. An open-ended Task Force on the Strategy for Monitoring and Assessment of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes was established to prepare the strategy and the draft outline will be examined and further developed during the first Task Force meeting (St. Petersburg, 29 September 2004).

---

\* This document has not been formally edited.

Annex

**DRAFT OUTLINE OF THE STRATEGY FOR MONITORING AND  
ASSESSMENT OF TRANSBOUNDARY WATERCOURSES AND  
INTERNATIONAL LAKES**

according to the UNECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary  
Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention)

**Chapter 1: Introduction**

In this chapter, the following themes should be discussed:

- The common role and importance of monitoring and assessment in water (environmental) management;
- The principal parts of the basic monitoring cycle [DPSIR (driving forces, pressures, states, impacts, responses) framework];
- The character of monitoring as a continuous, long-term, and iterative process, in which also temporary monitoring activities are needed;
- Division of monitoring activity by nature [background monitoring/specific monitoring (GEMS), surveillance monitoring/operational monitoring (EU Water Framework Directive – EU WFD)];
- The need and possibilities for harmonization, standardization and international cooperation in monitoring and assessment activities.

**Chapter 2: Legal grounds (basics) for monitoring**

In this chapter, the following themes should be discussed:

- Role of UNECE and different environmental conventions (especially the Water Convention) concerning the monitoring and assessment of different environmental sectors;
- Relevant provisions of the Water Convention in detail;
- Bilateral agreements on cooperation on transboundary waters;
- Multilateral agreements on the protection of river basins (e.g. Daugava, Danube, Elbe, Meuse, Oder, Rhine, Scheldt);
- Role of different Working Groups (Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment, Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management, Working Group on Environmental Monitoring);
- EU-legislation (especially the water-related directives and the monitoring obligations of the EU for Member States)
- National legislation on monitoring obligations in non-EU countries, particularly those which border EU Member States;
- Other documents (regulations, rules, codes of conduct, etc.), on which monitoring is set up.

### **Chapter 3: The establishment of the administrative framework for monitoring and assessment programmes of transboundary waters**

In this chapter, the following themes should be discussed:

- Role of joint bodies (e.g. International Commissions);
- Role of International River Basin Districts (EU WFD), taking also into account transboundary aquifers, which often do not coincide with international river basins;
- Other experiences in organizing the administration on transboundary waters.

### **Chapter 4: The principles of funding the monitoring activities**

In this chapter, the following themes should be discussed:

- All States cover their own costs for monitoring on their own territory;
- Main principle of sources of finance: funding from State budget;
- Principles to fund jointly specific tasks.

### **Chapter 5: The practical implementation of monitoring programmes**

In this chapter, the following themes should be discussed (some of the topics mentioned in the following list could be attached as annexes or published as background papers):

- Agreement on the common monitoring programme by all the partners;
- Observation and sampling sites and frequencies of observation and sampling;
- Overview of measured variables in different countries (including the state of art in monitoring of priority substances listed in EU WFD, as well as the other harmful substances);
- The role of Common Implementation Strategy Guidance Documents prepared in the context of the implementation of the EU WFD;
- The role of the UNECE guidelines on monitoring of transboundary waters (rivers, lakes, groundwaters);
- Possible need of any supplementary protocols;
- Standardization of sampling procedures and analytical methods;
- The demand for accuracy;
- "Step-by-step"-approach;
- Analysis of pressures and impacts and use of indicators;
- Early warning systems;
- Links between early warning systems (Water Convention) and industrial accidents notification systems (Industrial Accidents Convention);
- Quantity questions (e.g. minimum quantity, floods and droughts);
- Quality questions (e.g. pollution impact, natural variability, background concentrations);

- Groundwater-surface water interactions from both a quantity and quality point of view;
- Sediment monitoring;
- Ecological assessment.

#### **Chapter 6: The assessment and reporting of monitoring results**

In this chapter, the following themes should be discussed:

- Common methodology or accepted practices on assessing transboundary impact (or discussed elsewhere as a separate guidance);
- Assessments for joint bodies;
- Assessments in the context of the EU WFD;
- Contributions to the European-wide assessment of transboundary waters.

#### **Chapter 7: The monitoring period and the revision of programmes**

In this chapter, the following themes should be discussed:

- The monitoring period should be the same in all the riparian States;
- A minimum monitoring period of three years [However, the difference in the duration of background (surveillance) and specific (operational) monitoring programmes should be respected];
- Monitoring period should respond to information requirements, for example, it should fit to reporting obligations under a given bilateral/multilateral agreement and other international obligations;
- Need for updating/revision of monitoring programmes.

#### **Chapter 8: Links with other monitoring and assessment activities in the UNECE area**

In this chapter, the following themes should be discussed:

- The monitoring and reporting requirements of EU-legislation:
  - Water Framework Directive, especially in International River Basin Districts;
  - Bathing Water Directive;
  - Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive;
  - Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Directives;
  - Nitrate Directive;
  - Directives on hazardous substances;
  - NATURA;
- The activities of European Environment Agency (EEA)
  - EIONET monitoring networks, especially EUROWATERNET;
  - Publishing activities;
- Global Environmental Monitoring System (GEMS);
- The Joint Questionnaires of EUROSTAT/OECD;

- International Commission for the Danube River Protection (as an example on organized official cooperation and coordination);
- Others.

### **Chapter 9: The use of pilot projects in developing trans boundary monitoring**

In this chapter, the following themes should be discussed:

- Role of pilots;
- Advantages of pilot projects;
- Practical framework for pilot projects;
- The share of costs of pilot projects;
- Potential areas, in which the establishment of pilot project is important at the moment.

### **Chapter 10: Reflections on future (long-term) development of transboundary monitoring**

In this chapter, the following themes should be presented (keeping, for example, in mind that in the forthcoming 10 years - in 2015 - more countries will have joined the EU and that the reporting system of EU Environment should be in full operation):

- The EU-legislation/Transboundary Commissions;
- Reporting activities as a whole in Europe; possible changes of roles of institutions and programmes;
- Cooperation possibilities in the future.