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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 Integrated Water Resources Management

Second meeting
Geneva, 26–27 June 2006
Item 13 of the provisional agenda

**WORKPLAN FOR 2007–2009 AND BEYOND
ON THE PROMOTION OF THE CONVENTION AND ITS ACTIVITIES
AND ADVISORY SERVICE AND ON INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT
OF WATER AND RELATED ECOSYSTEMS**

Prepared by the Chairperson of the Working Group
with the assistance of the secretariat*

1. The proposed draft workplan (see annexes I and II) is based on the outcome of the discussion at the previous meeting of the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management and at workshops and seminars organized under the Working Group's auspices, including the workshops under the Convention's project "Capacity for Water Cooperation". The proposal also includes possible follow-up activities to the ongoing work.
2. The draft workplan includes activities under programme area I on the promotion of the Convention and its activities and advisory service (annex I) and under programme area II on the integrated management of water and related ecosystems (annex II) to be implemented by the Working Group.

* This document is being issued on the above date owing to a lack of human resources in the secretariat.

3. The Working Group may wish to:

(a) Examine the proposals contained in annexes I and II, and further elaborate those elements which should become part of the draft workplan, including, whenever possible, information on the method of work and the time frame;

(b) Draw up additional elements for the workplan, following proposals by Parties and non-Parties, including, whenever possible, information on the method of work and the time frame;

(c) Consider, on the basis of the agreed workplan, the need to revise the rationale for programme areas I and II;

(d) Inform regarding the willingness of Parties and non-Parties to lead or participate in the implementation of the various workplan elements;

(e) Entrust the secretariat with the task of estimating the costs involved in workplan implementation, including travel assistance to eligible participants; and

(f) Agree on future steps for finalizing, with the assistance of the secretariat, the draft workplan for submission to the fourth meeting of the Parties (Bonn, 20–22 November 2006).

Annex I

**PROGRAMME AREA I: PROMOTION OF THE CONVENTION
AND ITS ACTIVITIES AND ADVISORY SERVICE**

Responsible body: The Bureau with the assistance of all other Parties and the secretariat.

Rationale: The focus of programme area I is the promotion of the Convention and its achievements in order to encourage new Parties to ratify it and Parties to ratify its amendment to articles 25 and 26 to open the Convention to countries outside the UNECE region. Activities in this programme area also aim to develop new partnerships and synergies. Furthermore, the advisory service will provide legal and technical advice to countries to help them comply with the provisions of the Convention.

1. Promotion and dissemination of information

Objectives: The Meeting of the Parties will disseminate information on activities carried out under the Convention or related to it, raise the profile of the Convention and its protocols, and provide Parties and non-Parties with information to help them implement the Convention. Efforts will be devoted to promoting the Convention and its success in all possible contexts, including meetings and workshops organized under the workplan. Activities will also support compliance with Decision III/1 on the amendment to the Water Convention and promote the Convention's achievements outside the UNECE region.

Work to be undertaken: Activities will include:

(a) Presentations of the Convention and its achievements at high-level meetings in UNECE countries and at international meetings. In particular, special events will be organized at the sixth Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" (Belgrade, October 2007) focusing on important activities under the Convention, such as the Code of conduct on the payments for ecosystems services in integrated water resources management and/or the Protocol on Civil Liability. The Convention and its achievements will also be promoted in the water segment of the sixteenth session of Commission on Sustainable Development and at the Expo Zaragoza 2008 on Water and Sustainable Development; and

(b) Development of a communication plan and relevant tools to raise the profile of the Convention (e.g. informative leaflets, CD-ROMs, website).

Lead Party: None; to be implemented by the Bureau, with the assistance of all other Parties and the secretariat.

Main partners: To be defined.

2. Advisory service

Objectives: The Meeting of the Parties will assist Parties to the Convention and non-Parties, at their request, in drawing up new agreements or adapting existing ones on transboundary waters in line with article 9, paragraph 1, as well as other relevant articles of the Convention. Assistance will also be provided in drawing up, revising and/or adapting national laws and regulations on water management. The Meeting will provide guidance to joint bodies in the region to strengthen their capability in integrated river basin management and water protection in line with article 9, paragraph 2, and other relevant articles of the Convention.

Work to be undertaken: The Bureau will make ad hoc arrangements – at the request of the Meeting of the Parties, its Working Groups and/or UNECE countries – following the terms of reference of the Advisory Service. To assist the Bureau, the Parties to the Convention will nominate experts to form a network to provide assistance on request to countries and joint bodies.

In the period 2007–2009, the Meeting of the Parties will help countries in South-Eastern Europe to improve transboundary water cooperation by defining priority needs, strengthening the legal framework for bilateral and multilateral cooperation, and supporting the implementation of the identified activities to address the main water management issues in the shared water basins.

In particular, the Meeting of the Parties will help Serbia and Montenegro to ratify and implement the Water Convention, including the drawing up of new agreements or adaptation of existing ones on transboundary waters with Bulgaria, Croatia, Romania and Hungary. Any needed revision and improvement of national water legislation will also be considered.

In the period 2007–2009, the Meeting of the Parties will also support regional cooperation on transboundary waters in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, through a number of projects supporting the implementation of the Convention's provisions (e.g. dam safety, environmental impact assessment (EIA) in the Chu Talas basin).

Lead Party: To be defined. Italy and Sweden have expressed interest in work in South-Eastern Europe. Finland supports the dam safety project in Central Asia; Norway the EIA project on the Chu Talas.

Main partners: Cooperation will be sought with the UNECE Regional Advisors, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).

Annex II**PROGRAMME AREA II: INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT OF WATER
AND RELATED ECOSYSTEMS**

Responsible body: Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management, with _____ as lead Party, assisted by the joint ad hoc expert group on water and industrial accidents established under the Water Convention and the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (Industrial Accidents Convention), with _____ and _____ as lead countries.

Rationale: The focus of this programme area is on intersectoral activities to support integrated management of transboundary water resources. Activities aim to prevent damage to the environment; promote the ecosystem approach in the framework of integrated water resources management (IWRM); ensure conservation and, where necessary, restoration of water-related ecosystems; promote the concept of payments for ecosystem services; prevent damage by water, including floods and droughts; and facilitate the work of joint bodies.

Thus the programme area supports the implementation of the Convention with regard to IWRM. It also supports capacity-building and the ability of Parties and non-Parties to deal with emerging issues.

Work under this programme area will in particular assist countries in South-Eastern Europe (SEE) and in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) and thereby contribute to the implementation of the EECCA Environment Strategy and to the EU Water Initiative.

1. Implementation of the Convention**1.1 Strategic guidance on integrated management of transboundary water resources**

Work to be undertaken: The Meeting of the Parties will develop strategic guidance on integrated management of transboundary water resources which takes into account the results and recommendations reached under previous activities, focuses on EECCA and SEE, and reflects the experience in the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive.

Lead Party: Switzerland.

Possible partners: Global Water Partnership and others to be defined. The Legal Board will be involved in the legal issues

1.2 Ecosystem services and payments for such services in integrated water resources management

Work to be undertaken: The Meeting of the Parties will support the implementation of the code of conduct on payments for ecosystem services in integrated water resources management through: (i) the development of capacity-building and awareness-raising activities; (ii) the

development/use of technical guidance on specific aspects of the code of conduct; (iii) the development of pilot projects for the implementation of the code of conduct in transboundary river basins in the region. (Serbia and Montenegro has expressed its interest in the implementation of a pilot project on the Kolubara River.)

The code of conduct on payments for ecosystem services in integrated water resources management will be updated, if need be, in the light of experience gained with pilot projects, technological advances, economic and social factors as well as changes in scientific knowledge and understanding.

Lead Party: Switzerland.

Possible partners: The Ramsar Convention secretariat, the UNECE Timber Committee, the World Conservation Union (IUCN), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), UNEP, the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE), the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and private-sector organizations.

1.3 Flood protection, prevention and mitigation

Work to be undertaken: To be defined by the task force on flood prevention.

Lead Party: Germany.

Possible partners: The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the Regional Office for Europe of the World Health Organization (WHO/EURO), UNESCO and the European Commission.

1.4 Management of transboundary groundwaters in the UNECE region

Work to be undertaken: To be defined by the Core Group on Groundwater.

Lead Party: Slovakia.

Possible partners: UNESCO and in particular its International Hydrological Programme (IHP), the International Association of Hydrogeologists (IAH) and the International Groundwater Resources Assessment Centre (IGRAC).

1.5 EU Water Initiative – National Policy Dialogues

Work to be undertaken: The Meeting of the Parties will support the development of integrated water resources management in EECCA countries at the national and transboundary levels. Work under this programme element will aim to develop joint activities related to IWRM to improve the regulatory and administrative framework, priority setting and project identification, and development of capacity in the EECCA region through a dialogue that will involve, among others, public authorities and representatives of civil society, thereby contributing to the development of road maps to the water-related Millennium Development Goals and IWRM

targets in the EECCA region. To this end, Steering Groups will be set up in the concerned EECCA countries and will include stakeholders of key importance in the development of IWRM. The UNECE secretariat will facilitate the development of the National Policy Dialogues in these Steering Groups. The output of the National Policy Dialogues will be the definition and tiered implementation of policy packages addressing issues of importance for IWRM. In the period 2007–2009, activities will focus on the establishment of National Policy Dialogues in two or three EECCA countries. The National Policy Dialogues will be presented at the sixth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe”.

Lead Party: European Commission.

Possible partners: To be defined.

1.6 Water and industrial accidents

1.6.1 Protocol on Civil Liability

Work to be undertaken: The Meeting of the Parties will organize, jointly with the Conference of the Parties to the Industrial Accident Convention, a Seminar on the Protocol on Civil Liability to share information on the implementation of the Protocol in the UNECE region, to investigate obstacles to the Protocol’s ratification, and to propose solutions. The outcome of the seminar will be presented at the sixth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe”.

Lead Party: To be defined.

Possible partners: Basel Convention secretariat and organizations from the industrial and insurance sectors.

1.6.2 Joint ad hoc expert group on water and industrial accidents

Work to be undertaken: To be defined by the Joint Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents.

Lead Parties: Germany and Hungary.

Possible partners: UNEP.

2. Capacity-building

2.1 Integrated management of transboundary waters in EECCA

Work to be undertaken: Within the framework of the UNECE project “Capacity for Water Cooperation” (CWC), this programme element aims to strengthen the capacity of transboundary water management in EECCA. The objective is to create a framework which enables cross-fertilization and exchange of experience between river basins and countries regarding regulatory, institutional, methodological and other aspects of integrated management of transboundary

waters and, at the same time, bring in valuable experience from other parts of the UNECE region. CWC also aims to establish a network of EECCA experts involved in transboundary water management who are used to cooperating and sharing knowledge. In the period 2007–2009, yearly CWC workshops will be organized on specific aspects of transboundary water management, such as water and health issues or the development of river basin management plans.

Lead Parties: None. To be implemented by the secretariat.

Possible partners: UNEP, OSCE, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and others to be defined.

2.2 Synergies between the Water Convention and the EU Water Framework Directive

Work to be undertaken: This programme element aims to introduce the concepts and principles of the EU Water Framework Directive into the water management of non-EU countries, particularly those on the fringe of the enlarged EU. The activities will particularly seek to (i) provide training on guidance documents developed in the framework of the EU Common Implementation Strategy; (ii) transfer early experience on ways of better integrating water management issues into other sectoral policies; and (iii) disseminate the results of the EU pilot projects on transboundary water basins under the Common Implementation Strategy.

In the period 2007–2009: To be defined.

Lead Party: To be defined.

Possible partners: Joint bodies in the region, such as the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR).

2.3 Third International Conference on Sustainable Management of Transboundary Waters in the UNECE Region

Work to be undertaken: A programme committee led by Poland will be responsible for the preparations for the Conference, scheduled for 2007.

Lead Party: Poland in cooperation with Finland.

Possible partners: UNEP, WHO/EURO, the European Commission, joint bodies in the region and relevant NGOs.

3. Emerging issues

3.1 River basin management plans

Work to be undertaken: This programme element aims to support the development of river basins management plans. Activities will focus particularly on land management and the

development of tools to deal with conflicting water uses (navigation/environment, hydropower/irrigation).

In the period 2007–2009: To be defined.

Lead Party: To be defined.

Possible partners: UNECE Transport Division, OSCE, joint bodies in the region, relevant government entities responsible for spatial planning, energy, navigation, etc.

3.2 Assistance to Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health on reporting progress under the Protocol

Work to be undertaken: An expert group will assist Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health to review and assess their progress towards the achievement of the targets established under article 6, paragraph 2 of the Protocol, and to prepare guidelines for harmonized reporting, in particular in relation to water management targets.

Lead Party: to be defined.

Partners: Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment and Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health.