



**Economic and Social  
Council**

Distr.  
GENERAL

ECE/MP.WAT/WG.4/2006/7  
EUR/06/5059736/7

26 May 2006

ENGLISH ONLY

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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 to the Convention

Working Group on Water and Health

Sixth meeting  
Geneva, 31 May – 2 June 2006  
Item 5 of the provisional agenda

**DRAFT PROGRAMME OF WORK 2007–2009 UNDER THE PROTOCOL**

Prepared by the secretariat \*

1. At its fifth meeting, the Working Group entrusted an ad hoc group with the preparation of the draft programme of work for 2007-2009 under the Protocol. The WHO Collaborating Centre for Health Promoting Water Management and Risk Communication kindly hosted a meeting of the ad hoc group on 6-7 March 2006 in Bonn.

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\* This document was submitted on the above date owing to a lack of human resources in the secretariat.

2. The meeting was attended by representatives from the Governments of Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Republic of Moldova, the Netherlands, Norway, Serbia and Montenegro, Switzerland and Ukraine.
3. Representatives of the WHO Collaborating Centre for Health Promoting Water Management and Risk Communication and of the European ECO-Forum also attended the meeting. Mr. Rainer Enderlein participated at the invitation of the secretariat. The Government of France did not attend the meeting but submitted a written proposal for a future activity.
4. The ad hoc group meeting in Bonn was followed by a Consultation on Waterborne Disease Surveillance at the invitation of the National Institute of Environmental Health of Hungary (9-10 May 2006, Budapest). The Consultation was attended by participants from Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Sweden, United Kingdom and the United States, and by representatives from the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control and the European Joint Research Centre.
5. The proposed programme of work (see annex) is based on the outcome of the discussions of the ad hoc group meeting in Bonn. Additional proposals from the Consultation on Waterborne Disease Surveillance and by WHO/EURO are also included in brackets. Indicative cost estimates are based on a rough assessment and need to be revised once the activities have been clearly defined.
6. The Working Group may wish to:
  - (a) Examine the proposals contained in the annex and further elaborate those elements which should become part of the draft programme of work including, whenever possible, information on the method of work and the time frame;
  - (b) Draw up additional elements for the programme of work, following proposals by Parties and non-Parties, including, whenever possible, information on the method of work and the time frame;
  - (c) Inform on the willingness of Parties and non-Parties to lead or participate in the implementation of the various elements of the programme of work;
  - (d) Entrust the secretariat with the task of estimating the costs involved in implementing the programme of work, including travel assistance to eligible participants; and
  - (e) Agree on future steps for finalizing, with the assistance of the secretariat, the draft programme of work for submission to the first meeting of the Parties.

Annex

**DRAFT PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2007-2009  
UNDER THE PROTOCOL ON WATER AND HEALTH**

Rationale: The objective of the Protocol is to promote at all appropriate levels, nationally as well as in transboundary and international contexts, the protection of human health and well-being, both individual and collective, within a framework of sustainable development, through improving water management, including the protection of water ecosystems, and through preventing, controlling and reducing water-related disease.

The rationale of the work programme elements is to assist Parties in the implementation of the provisions of the Protocol. The programme of work includes activities to assist Parties in the development of early warning and response systems, to promote the setting of targets and indicators, and to establish systems for monitoring and reporting progress towards these targets on disease burden and causative factors. Furthermore, the work programme includes activities to strengthen the capacity of Parties and non-Parties with regard to specific provisions of the Protocol.

The programme of work also includes an assistance mechanism with a special focus on countries in South-Eastern Europe (SEE) and in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA).

Bodies to implement the work plan: The Working Group on Water and Health, assisted by the joint secretariat, will be responsible for the overall implementation of the programme of work. It will review progress, adapt the work programme to changing conditions and report to the Meeting of the Parties. Under the Working Group, specific bodies will be established, as needed, to carry out the different programme elements. It is proposed to create

- (a) A Task Force on Surveillance;
- (b) A Task Force on Indicators;
- (c) A Task Force on Reporting;
- [(d) A Task Force on Extreme Weather Events.]

The Compliance Committee will be responsible for the review of compliance by the Parties with their obligations under the Protocol.

The Clearing House Facility, assisted by a Facilitator, will evaluate project proposals from countries with economies in transition in order to facilitate access to sources of finance, in accordance with article 14 of the Protocol.<sup>1</sup>

In accordance with article 16, the Meeting of the Parties will establish close cooperation and develop joint activities together with the Meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention and relevant international governmental and non-governmental organizations, in particular the WHO Collaborating Centres.

## I. IMPLEMENTATION

Rationale: Activities in this programme area will support Parties and non-Parties in implementing the Protocol's provisions, in particular the obligations deriving from article 8 (response systems), article 10 (public information) and articles 11 to 14 on international cooperation.

### 1.1 Surveillance and early-warning systems, contingency plans and response capacities

Work accomplished:

- (a) Consultation on the assessment of the evidence base and development of a reporting system (25-26 October 2001, Bonn, Germany);
- (b) Consultation on waterborne disease surveillance: goals and strategies (29-30 November 2001, Budapest);
- (c) Document on surveillance of water related diseases submitted to the fifth meeting of the Working Group on Water and Health (MP.WAT/WG.4/2005/5 – EUR/05/5047554/5);
- (d) Consultation on Waterborne Disease Surveillance (Budapest, 9-10 May 2006).

Objective and expected outcome: Provide assistance to Parties in establishing and or strengthening [outbreak detection and] response systems, including assessment and improvement of national and/or local surveillance, [outbreak detection] and early warning systems, contingency plans and capacity response. Guidelines will be prepared on basic requirements for surveillance, [outbreak detection] and response, and in-country missions to support their implementation will be carried out.

Lead Party: to be defined.

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<sup>1</sup> The proposal of the Clearing House Facility for improved formulation and selection of possible projects for international support (see programme element 1.2) has been submitted by Norway. Some suggestions to amend the proposal were received from Germany and the Netherlands.

Main partners: WHO Centralised Information System on Infectious Disease (CISID) and Health for All database, European Centre for Disease Surveillance and Control, WHO Programme on Epidemic and Pandemic Alert system.

Method of work:

- (a) Meetings of the Task Force on Surveillance to prepare guidelines;
- [(b) Drafting, editing, translation, publication and distribution of the guidelines;]
- (c) In-country implementation based on guidelines and annex to MP.WAT/WG.4/2005/5 – EUR/05/5047554/5.

Time frame: Guidelines to be ready by end of 2007. Six country missions will be organized in 2008-2009.

Estimated costs:

Staff time: 0.8/ [1] staff time per year.

Travel of eligible experts to meetings and organization of six country missions: 90,000 – 120,000 USD.

[Assessment of current surveillance systems in line with WHO guidelines: 20,000 USD per country.]

[Editing and translation of the guidelines into Russian: 20,000 USD.]

[Printing and distribution: 15,000 USD.]

## **1.2 Clearing House Facility for improved formulation and selection of possible projects for international support**

Work accomplished: On 28-29 September 2004, the Government of Norway hosted the Oslo Roundtable on Water and Health in Europe where representatives of countries from SEE and EECCA presented proposals for cooperation to strengthen the capacity of the public health sector in surveying and reducing water-related diseases, in the context of the Protocol on Water and Health (see MP.WAT/WG.4/2004/8 - EUR/5047016/2004/8). At its fourth meeting, the Working Group agreed to examine further the possibility of establishing a structure through which Parties and non-Parties, international organizations and financial institutions could continue an effective dialogue with countries in EECCA and SEE (see MP.WAT/WG.4/2004/5 - EUR/5047016/2004/5).

The Working Group also agreed to continue work, initiated during the Roundtable, to identify priority areas of non-infrastructure intervention in water resources management, safe drinking-water supply and sanitation, reduction of childhood morbidity and mortality, meeting the water needs of vulnerable group, and gender issues related to water supply and sanitation.

Objective and expected outcome:

***Facilitator***

To achieve the above objectives, follow up the Oslo Roundtable and support the work of the Compliance Committee, a Facilitator will be affiliated to the joint secretariat to assess project requests identified as priority needs in countries. The Facilitator will coordinate these project requests and present them to the Clearing House Facility for further analysis.

The Facilitator will prepare an annual review of donor policy and country needs in water and health for submission to the Clearing House Facility for expert analysis, before presentation to the Working Group and finally to the Meeting of the Parties for its consideration.

***Clearing House Facility***

A Clearing House Facility, made up of experts from Parties, non-Parties and other stakeholders, will be responsible for the assessment of project proposals from countries with economies in transition. Based upon these assessments the Clearing House Facility will prepare the presentation of various projects of need for international support to the Working Group and will make suggestions for matching donors assistance for consideration by the Parties of the Protocol.<sup>2</sup>

Lead Party: to be defined.

Main partners: to be defined.

Time frame: Ongoing.

Estimated costs:

Staff time for the Facilitator: 1 staff per year.

[Operational costs of the Clearing House: 20,000 USD per year.]

### **1.3 Support to ratification and implementation**

Objective and expected outcome: Upon request, assistance will be provided to Parties and non-Parties in the practical implementation of the Protocol provisions through country assistance programme. In particular, Parties to the Protocol, with the assistance of the joint secretariat, will offer support in, among others, target setting, through guidance on hazard identification and risk management as components of water safety plans.

Lead Party: to be defined.

Main partners: to be defined.

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<sup>2</sup> Draft terms of reference for the Clearing House will be developed for submission to the first meeting of the Parties.

Method of work: Analysis of country priorities needs, dedicated meetings (e.g. on microbial and chemical parameters), country missions including site visit, capacity building activities, etc.

Time frame: Ongoing.

Estimated costs:

Staff time: 0.4 staff per year per country assistance programme.

Sub-contracts, country mission, organization of meetings and other costs: 40,000 – 70,000 USD, per assistance programme.

## **II. ACTIVITIES TO SUPPORT COMPLIANCE WITH THE PROTOCOL**

Rationale: Activities in this programme area will support Parties' compliance with articles 6 (targets and target dates), 7 (review and assessment of progress), 12 (joint and coordinated international action) and 15 (review of compliance).

### **2.1 Development of targets and indicators**

Work accomplished:

(a) Agreed and field-tested set of indicators for targets under article 6, paras. 2 (a) to (e) (MP.WAT/WG.4/2005/4 - EUR/05/5047554/4);

(b) Study on complementarity and overlap between the reporting obligations under EU directives on water (Water Framework Directive, Drinking Water Directive, and Bathing Water Directive) and the Protocol.

Objective and expected outcome: The Working Group on Water and Health will provide assistance to Parties in setting targets and target dates as stipulated in articles 6, for which cooperation in international action is promoted under article 12. This includes assistance in the further development of a set of indicators in accordance with articles 7 in order to show how far progress towards the achievement of the targets referred to in article 6 has contributed towards preventing, controlling or reducing water-related disease. Focus will be on indicators for targets under article 6, paras. 2 (f) to (n). Consideration will also be given to appropriate time frames for achieving targets.

Activities will take into account existing reporting mechanisms, including the European Commission Decision on Exchange of Information and reporting systems in the European Union, the monitoring and reporting under the EU Water Initiative, the Water Information System for Europe (WISE), and EUROSTAT, and at the same time allow the needed flexibility to reflect differences between countries. This activity will be closely linked to programme element 2.2 Development of guidelines for reporting.

Lead Party: to be defined.

Main partners: The Convention's Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management and Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment established under the Water Convention<sup>3</sup>, UN WATER, the Environment for Europe process, the series of Ministerial Conferences on Environment and Health and the Environment and Health Action Plan for Europe (CEHAPE).

Method of work:

- (a) Preparation of a background paper on available indicators for targets under article 6, para 2 (f) to (n);
- (b) Meetings of the Task Force on Indicators to agree on missing indicators;
- (c) Meeting to share experience on target sets by Parties.

Time frame:

- (a) The background paper will be ready by early 2007, based on a draft concept submitted for consideration by the Parties at their first meeting;
- (b) Meetings of the Task Force on Indicators in 2007;
- (c) Meeting to share experience on targets in early 2008.

Estimated costs:

Staff time: 0.2 staff per year.

Sub-contract, travel of eligible experts to meetings, translation: 70,000 – 100,000 USD.

## **2.2 Reporting including development of guidelines**

Work accomplished:

- (a) Agreed set of indicators for targets on access to safe water supply and sanitation according to article 6, paras. 2 (a), (c), (d) and (e) (see MP.WAT/WG.4/2005/4 - EUR/05/5047554/4);
- (b) Agreed set of indicators for targets on reduction of endemic disease burden of priority water-related diseases, and inclusion of these diseases in the WHO Centralized Information System on Infectious Diseases (CISID) and Health for All database;

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<sup>3</sup> Both the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management and the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment have included in their draft work plan, to be adopted at the fourth meeting of the Parties, a programme element to assist the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health on reporting progress under the Protocol (see ECE/MP.WAT/WG.1/2006/4 and ECE/MP.WAT/WG.2/2006/5)



(c) Report on results of trial reporting items for the targets under article 6, paras. 2 (a) to (e);

(d) Study on complementarity and overlap between the reporting obligations under EU directives on water (Water Framework Directive, Drinking Water Directive, Bathing Water Directive) and the Protocol.

Objective and expected outcome:

(a) By the second meeting of the Parties, prepare draft guidelines for reporting according to agreed targets under article 6, para. 2;

(b) By early 2009, report according to the guidelines for reporting on water supply and sanitation issue (targets under article 6, paras. 2 (a) to (e)).

Lead Party: to be defined.

Main partners: WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme, OECD.

Method of work:

(a) Preparation of a background paper for the guidelines on reporting for targets under article 6, paras. 2 (f) to (n);

(b) Meetings of the Task Force on Reporting;

(c) In-country assistance programmes to support reporting;

[(d) Strengthening of the data gathering and exchange capacity between the common Secretariat and the focal points of the Parties, particularly through electronic means;]

(e) Process and assessment of Parties reports;

(f) Preparation of a report on drinking-water and health in the European region for submission to the second meeting of the Parties;

Time frame:

(a) Background paper for the meeting of the Parties by mid 2008;

(b) Meetings of the Task Force on Reporting by autumn 2008;

(c) In-country assistance programmes to support reporting in 2007-2008;

(d) Process and assessment of Parties reports: early 2009.

Estimated costs:

Staff: 0.8 staff per year

Sub-contract, travel of eligible experts to meetings, translation, electronic data acquisition and data treatment, mapping of results and other costs: 105,000 – 130,000 USD.

### **2.3 Compliance procedure**

Objective and expected outcome: The Compliance Committee, with the assistance of the joint secretariat, will perform its activities as laid down in document MP.WAT/WG.4/2005/3-EUR/05/5047554/3, monitor and facilitate implementation of and compliance with the Protocol. The Compliance Committee, in consultation with the Bureau of the Meeting of the Protocol Parties will evaluate the experience gained under the Compliance Procedure (see MP.WAT/WG.4/2005/3, annex) in order to enable the Parties at their second meeting to review the compliance procedure with special regard to the provisions of chapter VI on communications from the public.

Work undertaken: Compliance procedure (MP.WAT/WG.4/2005/3-EUR/05/5047554/3).

Method of work: Committee meetings.

Time frame: Ongoing.

Estimated costs:

Staff time: 0.5 staff per year.

Travel of nine committee members, translation, database development, expert missions, other costs: 80,000 – 110,000 USD.

## **III. SHARING OF EXPERIENCE**

Rationale: Activities in this programme area will support exchange between Parties, and non-Parties, on the progress achieved in the implementation of the Protocol, to promote a common approach and sharing of problems and identified solutions, at the regional and sub-regional levels, including the preparation and implementation of guidelines and good practice documents.

### **3.1 Access to water supply and sanitation for all**

Objective and expected outcome: To promote the implementation of the Protocol in relation to facilitating access to water and sanitation for poor, vulnerable, and socially excluded people through information exchange on relevant experience in UNECE countries related to: a) targeted measures to overcome water affordability issues, and b) solidarity measures to improve access to water and sanitation in rural areas. Examples of such measures include solidarity or social funds; rural development funds; solidarity taxes or charges on water; cross-subsidies; equitable tariffs; cost sharing arrangements, reduced pricing for certain categories of users; water arrears funds;

procedures to avoid water disconnections; water standpipes; reduced flow devices; water facilities for travellers, homeless people, etc. The information to be collected is linked to existing measures to improve social and territorial cohesion in relation to water services, corresponding legal texts, levels of unaffordability, details of existing tariffs and financing systems, proportion of beneficiaries, size of transfers in favour of beneficiaries, and extent of non-payment and its causes.

On the basis of the collected information, a document on good practices to enhance solidarity will be prepared for consideration by the Parties at their second meeting.

Method of work: A group of experts will elaborate a questionnaire on existing solidarity mechanisms for water in relation to both urban and rural areas to collect experience in the UNECE region. At its second meeting, the group of experts will analyse and compare such mechanisms, and prepare a draft good practices document for consideration by the Parties at their second meeting.

Lead Party: France (with support from Belgium and Switzerland, to be confirmed).

Main partners: Académie de l'eau, OECD, pSeau, Solidarité Europe, representatives of local authorities and large cities.

Time frame:

- (a) Preparation of a draft of the questionnaire by main partners and examination of this questionnaire at a meeting of experts in 2007;
- (b) Collection of replies, second meeting of experts to examine the data collected and to discuss first draft of a good practices document in 2008;
- (c) Presentation of the good practices document to the second meeting of the Parties in 2009.

Estimated costs

Staff time: 0.1 staff per year.

Other costs: to be defined.

### **3.2 Good practice on the operation and management of water supply and sanitation systems in condition of extreme cold / [Water supply and sanitation under extreme weather conditions]**

Objective and expected outcome:

- (a) Review current utility performance in cold weather regions;
- (b) Determine specific recurrent problems in operation and maintenance;

(c) Identify relevant experience that could be shared regionally;

(d) Prepare guidelines for the operation and management of water and wastewater utilities under conditions of extreme cold.

[Method of work: The work on water supply and sanitation under extreme weather conditions will be guided by a Task Force on Extreme Weather Events, which will guide the work of expert groups on droughts, floods, and extreme cold.]

Lead Party: to be defined.

Main partners: to be defined.

Time frame:

[(a) Convene a meeting of the Task Force as soon as possible prior to the first Meeting of the Parties;]

(b) Collection of information on a national basis on current management techniques and recurrent operation and maintenance issues in 2007;

(c) Preparation of a draft guidance document by a drafting group (up to three meetings) in 2008;

(d) English-language editing, translation into Russian and French, printing and publication in 2009.

Estimated costs:

Staff time: 0.5 / [1] staff per year.

Meetings of the drafting group, editing, translation, printing and distribution: 105,000 USD.

[Meeting of the task force (semi-annual): 50,000 USD]

[Editing and translation of the guidelines into Russian: 20,000USD.]

[Printing and distribution 15,000USD.]

### **3.3 Integrated management of small water supply and sanitation systems**

Objective and expected output: To assess problems and health related risks linked to small water supply and sanitation systems in the UNECE region taking into account social and economic aspects. Identify good management practice and best available technologies.

Method of work:

[(a) Inventory of very small supply systems (<10 persons served) and small (<5000 persons served);

(b) Implementation of rapid assessment of drinking water quality in order to have a representative dataset on the current situation and scale of the problems of polluted water supplies in very small, including private wells, and small supplies;

(c) Development of Guidelines for the use of very small and small supplies towards the public as well as towards managers and operators of such systems;

(d) Development of a Water Safety Plan (WSP) approach appropriate for very small and small-scale supplies.]

Lead Party: to be defined.

Main partners: WHO Water Supply, Sanitation and Health Network of Rural Water Supply.

Time frame:

[(a) Translation, editing, publication, and distribution of the WHO Guideline on Rapid Assessment of Drinking Water Quality 2003 in Russian;

(b) Local implementation of representative sampling programmes;

(c) Preparation of three final documents, one a status description with threshold indicators for regulatory action for use by local and regional authorities, one a guidance document on the implementation of water safety plan for very small and small supplies, and one awareness raising document destined at the general public.]

Estimated costs:

[Editing and translation of the guidelines into Russian: 20,000 USD.

Printing and distribution: 15,000 USD

Local implementation of a representative sampling programme: 75,000-100,000 USD per country.

Preparation of final documents including two preparatory meetings, editing, translation, printing and distribution of the final documents: 80,000 USD.]

### **3.4 Regional and subregional workshops**

Objective and expected outcome: To promote the awareness and exchange of experience and good practices through a series of workshop on specific aspects of the Protocol (e.g. man made recreational waters, impact of floods and droughts on the environment, human health and safety, drinking water quality standards, protection of groundwater as a source of drinking water<sup>4</sup>, water safety plans, health risk from chemical in drinking water).

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<sup>4</sup> The Water Convention's Core Group on Groundwater proposed to develop activities in this area under its work plan 2007-2009 in cooperation with the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol.

Method of work: Two regional and sub-regional workshops per year will be organized, including preparation of background papers and workshop recommendations.

[It is proposed that one workshop per year be allocated to initiate work on recreational waters in line with article 6 para 2 (k) which requests Parties to “apply recognized good practice to the management of enclosed waters generally available for bathing”.]

Lead Party: to be defined.

Main partners: to be defined.

Time frame: 2007-2009.

Estimated costs:

Staff time: 0.2 staff per workshop.

Sub-contracts, travel, organization of events, printing, translation and other costs: 50,000 – 70,000 USD per workshop.

[Data collection on the numbers of inland bathing sites, current targets, proportion of bathing sites reaching quality standards, procedure to deal with quality failure, details of surveillance and policy programmes. Subcontract of approximately 50,000 USD per year.]

#### **IV. PROMOTION OF THE PROTOCOL AND ADVOCACY**

Rationale: The aim of this programme area is to promote the Protocol and its achievements, disseminate information in order to increase its visibility and political support, and encourage new Parties to ratify it. Activities in this programme area are also aimed to develop new partnerships and synergies.

Objective and expected output: The Meeting of the Parties will disseminate information on activities carried out under the Protocol or related to it, raise the profile of the Protocol, and provide Parties and non-Parties with information to help them implement it. Efforts will be devoted to promoting the Protocol in all possible contexts, including meetings and workshops organized under the programme of work. Information sessions will be organized for national/local authorities, NGOs and the general public.

Work accomplished: Two brochures on the Protocol (2000 and 2006), development of UNECE and WHO-EURO websites.

Method of work: On the basis of a communication strategy for the Protocol, develop advocacy tools such as booklets, media material, newsletters, to raise the Protocol’s profile. Promote the Protocol at high-level meetings in the region and at international meetings.

Lead Party:

To be implemented by the joint secretariat, the Bureau and all focal points. The Parties will inform the joint secretariat about any changes of the coordinates of the national focal points.

Main partners: To be defined.

Time frame: Ongoing.

Estimated costs:

Staff time: 0.2 staff per year.

Development of the communication strategy and its products, travel, other costs: 24,000 USD.