



**Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary  
Watercourses and International Lakes**

**MEETING OF THE PARTIES**

**Working Group on Integrated Water  
Resources Management**

**Seventh meeting\***

Geneva, 3 and 4 July 2012

**Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment**

**Thirteenth meeting\***

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ECE/MP.WAT/WG.1/2012/INF.3  
–ECE/MP.WAT/WG.2/2012/INF.3

**PROGRESS REPORT ON THE PROJECT  
TO STRENGTHEN CAPACITY FOR DATA ADMINISTRATION AND EXCHANGE FOR  
MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT OF TRANSBOUNDARY WATER RESOURCES IN  
EASTERN EUROPE, CAUCASUS AND CENTRAL ASIA**

Prepared by the International Water Assessment Centre  
with the support of the International Office for Water (France)

1. Upon request of the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment, the International Office for Water presented a proposal on the establishment of a UNECE metadata database of the water sector in the countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) during the Working Group's tenth meeting (Bratislava, June 2009). Its main objectives included facilitation of the identification of data needed for monitoring and assessment of transboundary waters and providing access to such data and information.
2. The Working Group invited then the International Office for Water to continue to lead this activity on behalf of France, to approach donors and to report on progress made at the Working Group's next meeting (see report of the meeting ECE/MP.WAT/WG.2/2009/2).
3. As a first result, the proposal submitted for approval by the French "Ministry of Ecology, Energy, Sustainable Development and the Sea" to the "French Global Environment Fund" (FFEM) was accepted in July 2009, and, in accordance with the FFEM procedures, a tender was launched to finalize its feasibility study.
4. During this feasibility study the project proposal was presented by the French Ministry of Ecology, Energy, Sustainable Development and the Sea at the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties (10-12 November 2009) to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes which supported this project (see

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\* Joint meeting of the two Working Groups.

report of the meeting ECE/MP.WAT/29) and the project was also included in the Workplan for 2010–2012 under the Convention (ECE/MP.WAT/29/Add.1).

5. The feasibility study was finalised in February 2010 and was approved for financing by the FFEM Steering Committee in April 2010 and the contracts necessary to launch the project were signed on 16 November 2010 which constituted the official start of the project.
6. Since this date, this project, implemented by the International Water Assessment Centre (IWAC) with the support of the International Office of Water (OIEau), has launched its first activities on the two pilot basin areas with the understanding that :
  - (a) The Dniester component is developed in close cooperation with the Dniester III project<sup>1</sup> at regional level and, at national level with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Moldova and the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources of Ukraine; and
  - (b) On its part, the Aral Sea basin component is registered in the Aral Sea Basin Program 3<sup>2</sup> (ASBP-3) and is developed in close coordination with the Executive Committee of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (EC-IFAS).
7. The action plan on the two pilots area includes three main phases:
  1. Diagnostic of the present situation
  2. Definition of an action plan
  3. Support to the implementation of the action plan

The diagnostic of the present situation consists, in its part, of:

- (a) Identifying the main stakeholders to involve and developing a database of institutions involved in water management at national and regional level
  - (b) Making an inventory of the existing water data sources, with identification and description by the partners into a online metadata catalogue of the main existing information systems (Databases and geographic information systems, websites, etc.) and of the main existing paper and digitized datasets (tables, maps, documents with data, etc.)
  - (c) Analyzing the regular data flow (data exchanges) existing between actors in the various processes related to data collection, bulletin production.
  - (d) Analyzing the needs of the main regional, national and local water related authorities, in terms of access to data, services, tools, equipment and training, that might facilitate the production of information necessary for their activities and decision making.
8. The main activities implemented within the FFEM project, by end of June 2012 include:
    - At basin level
      - On the Aral Sea basin
        - (a) Validation with the main EC/IFAS representatives of the main actions planned for the Aral Sea Basin area and registering the project within the ASBP-3;

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<sup>1</sup> The project “Transboundary cooperation and sustainable management in the Dniester River basin: Phase III – Implementation of the Action Programme” (Dniester-III), aimed at improving cooperation between the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, started in 2009 with the support of the Swedish and Finnish governments. It is implemented by the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), UNECE and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in close collaboration with authorities and NGOs from the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. The project is part of the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC).

<sup>2</sup> ASBP-3 for the period 2011-2015 is aimed at improving the living conditions of the people in the Aral Sea region, reflects the priorities of the Central Asian States and is coordinated by EC-IFAS.

- (b) Development of the diagnostic phase, in collaboration with national authorities in three countries (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan), with: (i) legislative analysis development of a database of institutions, (ii) the metadata catalogue and the diagrams of dataflow, (iii) production of the diagrams of data flows, (iv) first analysis of needs. It has to be noted that, for each of these countries, the process started with the organisation of a national workshop related to data management.
  - (c) Presentation of the project progress during the 7<sup>th</sup> Ministerial conference “Environment for Europe” in Astana (September 2011), and presentation of the mid-term project results during a specific workshop in Almaty in December 2011;
  - (d) Exchanges with EC-IFAS and The United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA) in order to support the process for developing Early warning bulletin on transboundary water problem in Central Asia
  - (e) Support to the production, by EC-IFAS, of a first prototype hydrological bulletin on the Syr Darya
  - (f) Support for preparing the production of complementary bulletins
- On the Dniester basin
    - (a) Validation with the Moldova and Ukrainian national authorities of the main actions planned in relation with the Dniester basin;
    - (b) Development of the diagnostic phase, in collaboration with national authorities in the two countries (Republic of Moldova Ukraine), with: (i) legislative analysis development of a database of institutions, (ii) the metadata catalogue and the diagrams of dataflow, (iii) production of the diagrams of dataflows, (iv) first analysis of needs. It has to be noted that, for each of these countries, the process started with the organisation of a national workshop related to data management.
    - (c) Presentation of the project progress during the 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Dniester III project (Kiev, December 2011);
    - (d) Identification and exchanges with national and regional authorities on two proposals of actions related to the Dniester transboundary water data management, that could be developed with the support of the FFEM project:
      - (i) Developing tools and procedures for regular dissemination on line of maps presenting the surface water quality classes at monitoring points on the Dniester basin
      - (ii) Developing basic “eWater web services” useful for the Dniester basin water management
  - At regional level
    - The creation of a project Website <http://www.aquacoope.org/ffem-eecca/> giving access to general information and to the main results of the project (online metadata catalogue, data flow diagrams, on line web mapping tools etc.)
    - The development and online implementation of an English/Russian version of the metadata catalogue, possibly accessible online from the project website
    - Production of a project leaflet
    - Production and dissemination on-line of a questionnaire on needs related to: the access to data, the internal capacity for development of water related information system, the access to external capacities for data processing, training of human resources related to water data management
    - The organisation of three steering committee meetings of the project

9. During the last Project steering committee (May 2012), the principle of a prolongation of the project up to the end of July 2013 was approved.

10. The following actions are planned in the coming months:
- At basin level
    - On the Aral Sea basin
      - (a) Finalizing definition of the action plan to be supported by the project
      - (b) Development of the diagnosis in Tajikistan with support to the national authorities in preparing the terms of references related to the development of their “Concept of national information system and data base in the sector of water”
      - (c) Support to a feasibility study for the development of an Information-Analytical Center in Aral - Syr Darya basin inspection, as a component of a project aiming to implement Integrated Water Resource Management Systems in the Kazakh Aral Sea Basin (initiative of OSCE Centre in Astana and the IFAS Executive Directorate in the Republic of Kazakhstan)
      - (d) Validating future actions to be supported by the project with the future team of EC-IFAS in particular in relation with the potential continuation of the support to bulletin production
    - On the Dniester basin
      - (a) Finalizing definition of the action plan to be supported by the project
      - (b) Developing the two proposal of actions related to the Dniester transboundary water data management:
        - (i) Developing tools and procedures for regular dissemination on line of maps presenting the surface water quality classes at monitoring points on the Dniester basin geoportal implemented by the Dniester III project
        - (ii) Developing basic “eWater web services” useful for the Dniester basin water management to be used by the Dniester III project and others users
  - At regional level
    - Continuation of the on-line metadata catalogue and transfer of the catalogue and tools on a server hosted by IWAC
    - Production of guidance presenting methodology and results developed for the two transboundary basins
    - Dissemination of project results during international meetings, in particular during the sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (28-30 November 2012)
    - Organisation of two additional steering committee meetings of the project
11. All results produced by the project are available in English and Russian on the project web site at the address <http://www.aquacoope.org/ffem-eccca/>.
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