



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

**Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management**

**Eleventh meeting**

Geneva, 18 and 19 October 2016

Item 12 of the provisional agenda

**International Water Assessment Centre**

**DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE  
OF THE INTERNATIONAL WATER ASSESSMENT CENTRE (IWAC)  
under the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary  
Watercourses and International Lakes**

**Submitted by Kazakhstan in cooperation with the secretariat**

The International Water Assessment Centre (IWAC) is the collaborative centre of the Water Convention. IWAC was hosted from 2000 to 2008 in the Netherlands and from 2009 to 2012 in Slovakia.

At the seventh session (Budapest, 17-19 November 2015), the Meeting of the Parties welcomed the kind offer of Kazakhstan to host IWAC as of 2017 and entrusted Kazakhstan and the Bureau, with the support of the secretariat, to closely cooperate to define future arrangements concerning the Centre, including its terms of reference and its programme of work, and to report to the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management at its next meeting and to the Meeting of the Parties at its eighth session.

The Working Group is invited to review and discuss the draft terms of reference.

**Introduction**

1. The Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Helsinki, 1992) aims to protect and ensure the quantity, quality and sustainable use of transboundary water resources by facilitating cooperation.
2. The Convention was originally negotiated as a regional instrument for the region of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) but was amended in 2003 to allow accession to all United Nations Member States. As of 1st March 2016, all United Nations Member States can accede to the Convention.
3. The Meeting of the Parties is the main governing body of the Convention. Its mandate is to keep under continuous review the implementation of the Convention and to take the necessary measures required to achieve the purposes of the Convention.
4. At its second session (The Hague, Netherlands, 23-25 March 2000), the Meeting of the Parties decided to establish the International Water Assessment Centre (IWAC) as the Convention's collaborating centre.
5. IWAC was hosted from 2000 to 2008 in the Netherlands and from 2009 to 2012 in Slovakia.
6. At the seventh session (Budapest, 17-19 November 2015), the Meeting of the Parties welcomed the kind offer of Kazakhstan to host IWAC as of 2017.

**Overall objective**

7. As the Water Convention's collaborative centre, the overall objective of the International Water Assessment Centre shall be to support implementation of the Convention and, as relevant, its Protocol on Water and Health, and their programmes of work adopted by the respective Meeting of the Parties.
8. In carrying out its activities, IWAC shall abide with the principles of neutrality and cooperation, in the best interests of the Convention, in order to safeguard credibility, independence and objectivity.
9. IWAC will have a special focus on Kazakhstan's neighbouring countries, other Central Asian countries and, as appropriate, other countries inside and outside the UNECE region.

**Main activities**

10. IWAC will:

1. Provide support to countries to implement or accede to the Convention and, as relevant, its Protocol on Water and Health.
2. Support the implementation of soft law tools, such as guidelines and recommendations, developed under the Convention and, as relevant, under the Protocol on Water and Health, including through pilot projects and other projects on the ground.
3. Organize training courses, workshops and seminars, and/or render assistance to countries and joint bodies in conducting such events to improve the sustainable management of transboundary water resources and, as relevant, under the Protocol on Water and Health.
4. Assist the Convention secretariat, as appropriate, in carrying out its mandated work and the activities in the Convention's and, as relevant, Protocol's programme of work.
5. Promote the exchange of expertise and good practices related to the work under the Convention and, as relevant, the Protocol.
6. Gather and disseminate information related to the Convention and, as relevant, the Protocol.
7. Upon request, carry out and/or coordinate studies related to the work under the Convention and, as relevant, the Protocol.
8. Upon request, collect, process, analyse, publish and disseminate data and information related to the management of transboundary water resources and, as relevant, water and health.
9. Participate in and contribute to the activities under the Convention and, as relevant, under the Protocol.
10. Draw-up project proposals to support the implementation of the Convention and, as relevant the Protocol, in its area of expertise and in consultation with the Bureau and the secretariat, and ensure their effective implementation.

**Method of work**

11. IWAC will have 6 staff members, selected on a competitive basis. The appointment of the competitively selected Head of IWAC and its deputy will be made in consultation with the Convention secretariat.
12. The programme of work of the IWAC, including specific timelines of activities and the amount and sources of funding, will be developed, elaborated and amended as necessary in consultation with the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Bureau of the Water Convention and UNECE, and will be aligned with the programmes of work adopted by the Meetings of the Parties to the Water Convention and, as relevant, the Protocol on Water and Health.

13. In the implementation of activities, IWAC will ensure a proper coordination and harmonization with other relevant activities in the Convention's, and as relevant Protocol's, programme of work, in particular the activities implemented by the Convention secretariat.
14. The IWAC will establish effective coordination of its activities with relevant organizations working at the regional and global levels.
15. The IWAC will implement its programme of work in a timely manner and to the highest possible standards of quality, and will bring to the attention of the Bureau and the Convention secretariat any issue that can delay the implementation of the programme of work.
16. IWAC will regularly report on its activities to the Meeting of the Parties of the Convention, and, as relevant, to the Protocol's Meeting of the Parties and to their working groups, and will be guided by the recommendations of these bodies in its further work.