

Workshop on transboundary flood risk management

Geneva, 22-23 April 2009

Organisers



United Nations Economic
Commission for Europe



Ministry of Transport,
Public Works and Water
Management of the
Netherlands



Federal Ministry for the
Environment, Nature Conservation
and Nuclear Safety



World
Meteorological
Organization

Objectives

- to exchange experience and to support the transfer of results from research projects and other recent activities concerning flood management in the European Union to non-EU countries
- to provide a platform for exchange of both positive and negative experience and of lessons learned taking into account the trans-boundary context
- to analyse flood management problems in trans-boundary basins – based on case studies – and to provide recommendations for improving trans-boundary cooperation regarding flood management

Participation

The workshop was attended by experts from:

- Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Czech Republic, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, the Republic of Moldova, the Netherlands, Serbia, Slovakia, Switzerland, Turkey

as well as by delegates from

- WMO and the EU Joint Research Centre

Programme

Introductory presentations on WMO's work, EU Flood Risk Management Directive and related EU activities, work under the Water Convention

Three sessions on

- Joint flood forecasting and early warning/
exchange of data
- Joint flood risk management, planning and
implementation
- Institutional and legal arrangements for
cooperation

Discussions were based on ten case studies and a preparatory input document

Findings/Recommendations

- A lot of guidelines, best practice, tools is available which could be useful for non-EU countries if accessibility would be improved.
- Trans-boundary communication, joint monitoring and exchange of data could help to overcome differences in problem perception between riparian countries. Despite many good examples insufficient communication and data exchange is still a major obstacle for cooperation.

Findings/Recommendations

- Importance of co-operation but also deficits in legal framework, lack of capacity and resources, lack of public awareness and participation and political support were highlighted.
- Information of the public, awareness raising and public participation are crucial for preparedness

Findings/Recommendations

- Flood management should be part of basin wide IWRM
- Flood risk management should follow all steps of the risk management cycle. Learning processes need to be enabled through regular documentation, assessment and joint evaluation of lessons learned.
- Frameworks for co-operation need to be flexible to allow for adapting to new developments (climate change impacts)

Findings/Recommendations

- Technical co-operation often ahead of institutional and political co-operation, this helps to build trust but political support – including providing sufficient funding – essential for establishing an efficient sustainable long term cooperation.
- A stepwise approach for developing trans-boundary cooperation and legal/institutional frameworks was suggested, starting with joint monitoring, forecasting and early warning.

Findings/Recommendations

- First steps could be based on single MoUs but more comprehensive legal and institutional arrangements – including setting up of joint bodies – should be strived for.
- UNECE Water Convention provides an important and helpful framework to foster trans-boundary co-operation in flood risk management. Compliance checking mechanisms might be helpful.

Proposed Future Activities

- Regional Workshops and Training (both for technical and decision making level)
- Inventory of knowledge gaps and technical needs
- Pilot Projects
(as part of pilots for testing guidance on adaptation to climate change)

Workshop Report

- Draft Version 29 June
- Comments until 27 July
- Submission to the 5th Meeting of the Parties in November
- to be published in English and Russian

All presentations and workshop documents
are available on:

http://www.unece.org/env/water/meetings/transboundary_flood_workshop.htm

Many Thanks

to all

**who contributed to the workshop as
co-organisers, presenters of case
studies, active participants or in any
other role!**