

Republic Of Montenegro
Ministry of Health

1st meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health, Geneva, 17-19 January 2007

The Republic of Montenegro has signed neither the convention on the protection and use of transboundary watercourses and international lakes from 1992 nor the Protocol on water and health.

Montenegro is a new country in Europe since May 2006, we have a better health for everyone policy. Montenegro is democratic, social and ecological state, but there are many challenges and lot of laws and strategies to put in place. Despite the fact that the hydrological situations varies significantly from the areas without water, with no springs or surface water flows, to areas where there is plenty of water, Montenegro as a whole belongs to the group of countries that are rich in water of good quality and for which improving the water supply of rural areas is a key task. Owing to the large quantity of rainfall and relatively good protection of water resources, Montenegro has quality waters, an abundance of underground and surface waters (unlike most of the Mediterranean region, where there is a big problem with the lack of water). Richness and quality of water resources represent one of the most comparative advantages of Montenegro. Average consumption in Montenegro is extremely high, and that it is almost twice as high as the consumption in Western Europe (average 150 liters per capita per day). Big consumption of water in Montenegro (apart from the climate change) is also affected by the unnecessary use of water (especially in the house holds, but with other consumers, as well), as well as the unrealistically high losses in the water supply system. Apart from the irrational use, which is partially caused by the low prices of water and low collection rate, other problems in the water supply system relate to the lack of water, especially in the coastal region and during the summer, and the insufficient level of coverage of the rural areas with public water supply systems (with we all water quality control for the waters from country side water supply systems and other sources). Over $\frac{3}{4}$ of the households use water from the public water supply system, in urban areas over 95 % of the population is supplied with water from public water supply system. The Ministry of Tourism and Environmental protection is preparing a plan of reform for water supply and wastewater treatment with help of USAID and consulting experts from sigura.

Indicator for improved sanitation facility in 2005 was 99 %, and indicator for improved sources for drinking water (MDG 30) for the same year was 98,3 %. In 2004 the quantity of water used was 4666205 (in thousands of m³); industrial quantities 4834, and for sanitary needs 1753. Quality of drinking water is regulatory monitored for the public water supply systems in laboratories of institute health of Montenegro, and it is defined in accordance with WHO and EU standards.

In the year 2005 the percentage of samples that did not comply with regulations regarding physical and chemical correctness was 16,44 %, mostly as a result of insufficient chlorination. 19,51 % of samples were microbiologically incorrect. Our chemical laboratory also analyses water samples on content of Fe, Mn, NO₃, NO₂ etc. (As not analysed because we do not have proper equipment- hydride technique). Our way of reporting could be changed with no problem to satisfy the demands of the Protocol (for chemical and microbiological parameters that we can analyse). Discharge of communal and industrial waste waters into natural recipients is done with almost no processing (the exceptions are some industrial plants and part of the communal waste waters in Podgorica). An additional problem is the lack of pre-treatment of industrial wastewater

that is discharged into the public sewage systems, and a low number of connections of the population to the sewage systems.

It is necessary to mention that according to the previous examinations of the water quality, it was not discovered the presence of pesticides and other persistent carcinogenic, mutagens and teratogens substances in fresh and salty waters. Protection of quality and integrity of water resources is a significant challenge, especially having in mind the fact that the pollution of waters and inadequate caption of water in karstic regions, such as Montenegro, can cause permanent and severe consequences. A special challenge was the harmonization with the requirements of the EU water framework directive 2000 and creation of preconditions for its implementation in Montenegro. Water law has already been established and accepted in parliament of Montenegro. The law is harmonized with WFD and it has been written by the financing help of the World Bank.

In a period 2007-2009 it is planned as a mid-term measures:

- A) Implementation of the new law in waters;
- B) Adoption of the law on financing of water management and relevant by laws;
- C) Capacity building for the implementation of horizontal and vertical coordination between various segments of administration;
- D) Preparation and implementations of projects for integrated management of basins of the Tara River and the Lim River and of the Eco-system of the Skadar Lake (2006-2009 and onwards)
- E) Implementation of master plans for waste waters (2006-2009 and onwards):
 - Reconstruction and construction of priority sewage systems;
 - Reconstruction of pumping stations;
 - Constructions of priority plants for waste water treatment;
 - Connection of big producers of wastewater to the sewage network and ensuring adequate pre-treatment in industry.
- F) Consistent implementation of IPPC law (2008-2009 and onwards);
- G) Consistent implementation of the monitoring of the quality of waters in accordance with EU regulations included in WFD; secure adequate funds for implementation of the monitoring program (2006-2009 and onwards).

Short-term measures involved:

- A) More comprehensive protection and adequately control springs for water supply in cities: prevent devastation of forests in the zones of springs water supply (2006-2009 and onwards);
- B) Find new water springs of potable water and their adequate protection (2006-2009 and onwards);
- C) Preparation of plans for provision of potable water in rural areas (2007-2009 and onwards);
- D) Reduction of losses in water supply systems by 20 % by 2008 and cessation of use of potable water for other purposes in order to bring the use of potable water close to EU standards (2006-2009);
- E) Investment maintenance of city water supply systems in order to secure quality of potable water: definition of entities responsible for management of countryside water

supply systems and improvement of management over these systems (2006-2009 and on wards);

F) Construction of regional water supply system for the costal region (2007-2009);

G) Program of use of potential springs for implementation of projects for water bottling.

Until June 2007 new food safety law has to be prepared (draft version). This law treats water as a basic food. After adoption of this law many regulations concerning drinking water quality, mineral water and bottled water will have to be created and harmonized with EU directives. Information and results of assessments testing sanitary quality of drinking water and water-related diseases as a part of infections diseases are published annually in yearbook of the Institute of Public health of Montenegro.

Focal Point: Ms. Dijana Durovic.

Sources of information:

National Strategy of Sustainable Development of Montenegro (Final Draft may 2006).

Personal as a member of working groups:

1) For making plan of reform of water supply system and waste water treatment in Montenegro;

2) Preparing food safety law and head of water department in Institute of Public Health.