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Programme of work and the Terms of Reference of the Working Party on Inland Water Transport

Review of the Terms of Reference of the Working Party on Inland Water Transport

Note by the secretariat

I. Mandate

1. This document is submitted in line with the Proposed Programme Budget for 2021, part V, Regional cooperation for development, section 20, Economic Development in Europe. Programme 17, Economic Development in Europe (A/75/6 (Sect.20), para. 20.51).
2. The guidelines for the establishment and functioning of Working Parties within the Economic Commission for Europe stipulate that each Working Party prepares its terms of reference which must be adopted by its parent Sectoral Committee (ECE/EX/1, para. 3 (a)).
3. In accordance with this request, the current Terms of Reference were adopted by the Working Party on Inland Water Transport (SC.3) at its sixtieth session on 4 November 2016 and approved by ITC at its seventy-eighth session on 24 February 2017 (ECE/TRANS/SC.3/203, para. 32; ECE/TRANS/270, para. 84). They are based on the SC.3 work plan for 2016–2020 and the main expected accomplishment and indicators of achievement for 2016–2017, as adopted by the fifty-ninth session of SC.3 in November 2015.
4. SC.3 may wish to review its current terms of reference to bring them in line with the Strategy of the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) until 2030, new activities and tasks arising from the Ministerial declaration “Inland Navigation in a Global Setting” adopted at the International Conference in Wroclaw (Poland) on 18 April 2018, the White Paper on the Progress, Accomplishments and Future of Sustainable Inland Water Transport and its programme of work for 2022–2023. The amendment proposal prepared by the secretariat is contained in the annex.

Annex

Proposal for the reviewed Terms of Reference of the Working Party on Inland Water Transport*

1. The Working Party on Inland Water Transport (SC.3) and its subsidiary body, i. e. the Working Party on the Standardization of Technical and Safety Requirements in Inland Navigation (SC.3/WP.3), act within the framework of the policies of the United Nations and the Economic Commission for Europe (hereafter ~~UNECE~~), under the general supervision of the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) and in conformity with the Terms of Reference (ToR) of ~~UNECE~~ **the Economic Commission for Europe** (E/ECE/778/Rev.5).

2. SC.3 will operate in accordance with the “UNECE Guidelines for the establishment and functioning of Working Parties within UNECE” as approved by the ~~UNECE~~ Executive Committee at its fourth meeting on 14 July 2006 (ECE/EX/1). These guidelines refer to its status and characteristics, including the review of its mandate and extension every five years, its membership and officers, its methods of work and its secretariat provided by the ~~UNECE~~ Sustainable Transport Division.

3. **In support of** ~~In line with~~ the objective of the ~~UNECE~~ transport subprogramme to facilitate the international movement of persons and goods by inland transport modes and improve safety, environmental protection, energy efficiency and security in the transport sector to levels that contribute effectively to sustainable transport, SC.3, assisted, where appropriate by SC.3/WP.3, will carry out ~~the following~~ activities **aimed at making inland water transport more sustainable, green and resilient to climate change. These activities also aim to support the implementation of the ITC Strategy until 2030, in particular, related to tasks such as (a) servicing and administering legal instruments related to inland water transport, (b) fostering and supporting the introduction of new technologies and innovations in inland water transport, (c) promoting sustainable regional and interregional inland transport connectivity and mobility and (d) supporting capacity building activities on legal instruments under the ITC purview and resolutions relevant to IWT.**

Given this general context, more specifically SC.3 will carry out the following activities:

1. **Organize a pan-European policy dialogue on the inland water transport issues**
 - (a) Provide an inclusive and representative forum for exchange of experiences and best practices and providing guidance on how to address challenges in ~~Inland W~~water ~~T~~transport (IWT) development;
 - (b) Prepare studies on the situation and trends in inland navigation in order to provide Governments with up-to-date basic information and data concerning the inland water transport mode;
 - (c) Regularly publish updates of its strategy and policy papers (white papers, inventories of obstacles, etc.) on IWT **to ensure sustainability of IWT and its coordinated development, enhance the visibility and availability of ~~UNECE~~ documents relevant to IWT.**
2. **Promote a coordinated development of ~~inland waterway infrastructure modern,~~ sustainable and resilient E waterway network**
 - (a) Monitor, **review and update** ~~the implementation of~~ the European Agreement on Main Inland Waterways of International Importance (AGN), adopt amendments to the lists of inland waterways and ports ~~and their parameters, as contained in the annexes to AGN, and elaborate proposals on further development of~~ **and facilitate accession to the agreement;**
 - (b) **Further strengthen the monitoring mechanism to review and update the development of the E waterway network, in particular, by Mmaintaining and updating**

* Note by the secretariat: the text proposed for deletion is strikethrough, newly added text is bold in the main text and underlined in the titles.

the Inventory of Main Standards and Parameters of the E Waterway Network (“the Blue Book”), the **GIS**¹ database of the E Waterway Network (the Blue Book database), **classification of waterways (resolution No. 30)** and other relevant SC.3 resolutions, ~~and~~ **maps and databases** which provides regularly updated information on standards and parameters of E waterways and ports in Europe, based upon **the** relevant existing work;

(c) ~~Prepare~~ **Maintain the list inventory of most important** bottlenecks and missing links on particular E waterways crossing the territory of more than one ~~State~~ **Contracting Party to AGN**, based upon **the** relevant existing work;

(d) **Monitor and support the ongoing infrastructure projects on European waterways of international importance and** ~~provide a forum for ad hoc committees; and expert groups or round tables to further coordinate and monitor the development of the E waterway network.~~

3. Address safety and operational requirements in inland navigation and encourage modernization and greening of fleet and infrastructure

(a) Organize exchanges of views on selected aspects of new and improved techniques in IWT with a view to their harmonization with the aim of facilitating and promoting international water transport in Europe;

(b) Harmonize and maintain the rules for inland navigation in Europe with a view to ensuring homogeneous and internationally acceptable standards of navigation safety throughout the European network of inland waterways taking into account standards of other international organizations;

(c) Harmonize technical requirements for inland navigation vessels **and river-sea vessels** with a view to ensuring the high-level of navigation safety and bring the added value throughout the European network of inland waterways;

(d) Coordinate and support measures ~~to modernize~~ **aimed at modernization and greening** of the inland water fleet at the pan-European level;

(e) Keep member States informed about developments in mutual recognition of boatmasters’ certificates and other issues related to the professional qualifications in the area of inland navigation;

(f) Promote the use of intelligent communication and transport systems in inland navigation including River Information Services (RIS) and ~~providing~~ **provide** a forum for information exchange on developments and best practice, ~~as well as~~ facilitate and promote harmonization and cooperation in this area at a pan-European level;

(g) Promote the development and safety of recreational navigation, water tourism and related issues, maintain the database of models of the International Certificate for Operator of Pleasure Craft.

4. Promote integration of IWT in multimodal transport chains, automation, digitalization and other innovations

(a) ~~Prepare proposals~~ **Support activities** on the development of river-sea routes in the context of AGN;

(b) Continue work on aligning **annexes to the AGTC-Protocol on Combined Transport on Inland Waterways to the European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations** with **annexes to AGN** and contribute to the development of Euro-Asian transport links;

(c) Provide a representative forum for exchanges of experience and best practices; ~~and for providing guidance~~ on how to promote integration of IWT in multimodal transport chains;

¹ Geographic Information System.

(d) **Forge international cooperation towards an international legislative basis for automation in inland navigation;**

(e) **Provide a representative forum for exchanging best practices on recent developments in automation, digitalization and other innovations in IWT.**

5. **Contribute to the Prevention of pollution from vessels and resilience of the sector to climate changes**

(a) ~~Harmonize~~ **Promote the development of a harmonized pan-European legal framework for the management of waste generated as a result of operation of vessels, maintain** technical rules on the prevention of pollution by inland vessels taking into account the standards of other international organizations **and the list of reception facilities for transfer of waste from vessels available on the E waterway network;**

(b) **Exchange best practices and support programmes, pilot projects and measures aimed at modernization and greening of the fleet, new and enhanced vessel types, low and zero emission propulsion systems and monitor their implementation** ~~Assist member States with environmental challenges and the IWT carbon footprint by revising the technical regulations of the sector. Provide IWT related statistics necessary for the development of ForFITS tool;~~

(c) Provide a representative forum for exchange of information and best practices on the implication of climate changes on IWT, and assist member States in their activities aimed at enhancing the resilience of IWT to climate changes;

~~(e)~~ **d) Promote introducing the circular economy principles on inland waterways and provide a representative forum for exchange of experience and best practices in this field.**

6. **Contribute to the harmonization of the international legal framework for ~~international~~ IWT**

(a) Promote the ~~implementation~~ of existing United Nations Conventions pertaining to inland navigation, **monitor their implementation** and discuss measures on how to make them more efficient **and attractive to other UNECE member States as well as United Nations Member States;**

(b) Undertake other activities aimed at further harmonizing and simplifying the international legal framework for IWT operations.

7. **Undertake other activities related to regional and international cooperation or requested by the UNECE Inland Transport Committee**

(a) Cooperate with the ~~European Commission~~ **regional economic integration organizations, River Commissions;** intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other United Nations regional commissions and ~~organizations or bodies of the United Nations system~~ **invite their representatives to participate in its meetings in consultative capacity in consideration of any matter of particular concern to them;**

(b) Carry out other ~~measures~~ **actions** aimed at facilitating the use of IWT, as recommended by the UNECE White Paper **on the Progress, Accomplishments and Future of Sustainable Inland Water Transport** ~~on Efficient and Sustainable Inland Water Transport in Europe (ECE/TRANS/SC.3/189 ECE/TRANS/279);~~

(c) Develop working contacts with River Commissions and basin administrations and, upon their request, facilitate the understanding of international conventions **and agreements** ~~serviced by UNECE under the ITC purview~~ **which are relevant to IWT;**

(d) **Take measures to ensure that the necessary liaison is maintained with other bodies of the United Nations, in particular sister Regional Commissions, and the specialized agencies;**

~~(e)~~ Collaborate closely with other subsidiary bodies of ITC and other UNECE bodies on matters of common interest;

(f) Organize workshops, roundtables and other capacity building events in the area of its expertise and in support of its specific activities;

(e-g) Support ITC in addressing cross-sectorial issues, such as inland transport and security, and inland transport and environment, automation and digitalization etc.
