

Session 7

National Policy Dialogues (NPDs): support to implementation of the Protocol on Water and Health

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Sixth Session of the
Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health

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National Policy Dialogues: overview

- **National Policy Dialogues** on Integrated Water Resources Management and Water Supply and Sanitation (NPDs) - intersectoral multistakeholder platforms to drive water policy reforms
- EU Water Initiative (EUWI) National Policy Dialogues started in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, facilitated jointly by UNECE and OECD, **since 2006**
- NPDs currently ongoing in **11 countries**, including **5 countries in Central Asia** (Uzbekistan launched NPD process in September 2022)
- High-level **intersectoral Steering Committee** meetings provide platform for discussions on key aspects of water policy reforms
- **Diverse stakeholders**: all relevant government entities, NGOs, academia, donor agencies, IFIs, local and basin authorities, etc.
- **Funded and supported by**: European Union, Finland, Switzerland, Romania, Norway and by partners (WB, SDC, OSCE, CAREC, IFAS bodies, UNDP, UNESCO,...)



Goals and settings of the NPDs programme

Goals:

- To improve overall policy and strategies on water and health in countries.
- To contribute to achievement of SDG 6.
- To contribute to achievement of obligations under Association Agreements with the EU (where applicable, establishing links with EU directives).

With substantive support of the **Joint UNECE-WHO/Europe Protocol secretariat**.

Strong links with the **Protocol's Programme of Work** (target setting, equitable access).

NPDs are supported through **EUWI+** programme (2016-2020) and **EU4Environment Water and Data** programme (2022-2024) in Eastern Partnership countries , and through **EU WECOOP programme** in Central Asia (2019-2022)



Support to the Protocol on Water and Health through the NPDs

Targets setting/revision and support for reporting

- *Belarus*: official adoption of revised targets in April 2021
- *Republic of Moldova*: draft revisions to the National Programme for the Protocol on Water and Health implementation completed and submitted for adoption
- *Ukraine*: revision of targets under the Protocol completed, SEA process planned; support for the last reporting cycle
- *Armenia*: revised national targets in the context of the Protocol and analysis of legislative barriers to ensure equitable access to water and sanitation finalized and submitted for adoption

Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA)

- Health considerations integrated through SEA processes in Belarus (Water Strategy) and Georgia (Alazani-Iori RBMP)

Accession process

- Overall support to accession and promotion of Protocol's benefits in particular to *Kazakhstan* and *Uzbekistan* within the NPD CA project



Support to the Protocol on Water and Health through the NPDs

Equitable access

- Equitable access to water and sanitation covered in dedicated studies or as part of target setting process in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine
- Regional meetings of the Expert Group on Equitable Access to Water and Sanitation
- *Republic of Moldova*: report on proposals for legislative changes to ensure equitable access to water and sanitation finalised

Capacity development

- Workshops and Public Consultations on the Protocol on Water and Health and equitable access to water and sanitation
- Meetings of the regional Task Force and the Working Group on Water and Health
- Meetings with senior officials
- Workshop on Water/Health Nexus and Gender Equality for Effective Water Management in Central Asia and Afghanistan in a post-COVID World, organized by UNRCCA and the Government of Canada, (15-16 March 2021)



EU4Environment: Water and Data: new project as a continuation of EUWI+ and SEIS II for the Eastern Partnership countries

Output 1.3 objective: the implementation of water for health agenda advances

Activities & planned results:

- Promotion of the implementation of **water and health goals, with emphasis on COVID-19** challenges & international commitments
 - Assist countries to revise relevant policies in view of COVID-19 considerations (incl. implementation of national targets under the PWH)
 - Policy recommendations on how equitable access to water and sanitation can be improved & application of the PWH scorecard
- Provide **recommendations for post-pandemic recovery measures** related to sustainable water-management
- **Technical advice and capacity building** for implementation of policy recommendations related to water & health



EU4Environment: Water and Data

Output 1.4 objective: Novel approaches to water monitoring are further promoted

Activities & planned results:

- Refreshment of **monitoring competences** by new **surveys**: *groundwater, surface water* (chemical and biological), *coastal* (AZ, GE) and *investigative (chemical)*
- **Transboundary surveys** on surface and groundwater (**AM-GE; AZ-GE, ?UA-MD**)
- Review of the existing **monitoring designs**
- Trainings: **interpretation** of monitoring data

- **Water laboratories**: further **trainings** on analytical equipment and methodologies;
Further support for (re-)**accreditation** and **quality management**

EU4Environment: Water and Data

Act. 1.4.2 objective: Introduce SARS-COV2 monitoring in wastewater

- Assessment of status with Ministries of Health resp. national health agencies
- Missions to do **pilot testing** with at local WWTP and health laboratories in 2022
- Adapted approach in **Ukraine**: close coordination with a similar USAID project via NGO PATH: 2x/week monitoring in 4 pilot regions since 6 October 2022
- Support of a **collaborative design** for a WW-based Covid-19 epidemiological sentinel **surveillance system** for **practical implementation** in 2023 and 2024



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Lessons learnt for future work

- Continuous interest and support need from countries in **Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia**
- NPDs are a tool to increase **ownership** by countries but needs to **monitor progress**
- Key to sustainability of NPDs: engage **local partners** at all levels
- Important to continue **exploiting NPDs on strategic and implementation levels**
- Need to **secure funding for NPD programme**, especially in Central Asia
- NPDs are part of the Programme of work under the Water Convention for 2022-2024 and proposed **Programme of work for 2023–2025** under the Protocol on Water and Health
- **COVID-19** pandemic highlighted the importance of cooperation between Water & Health sectors; stronger monitoring capabilities for strategic decision-making and the relevance of such tools for the EU WFD and MEAs

Thank you



EU4Environment
Water and Data in Eastern Partner Countries



Implementing partners



Co-funded by



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For more information:

<https://www.unece.org/euwi-npds>

<https://www.euwipluseast.eu>

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