



Avropa İttifaqı
tərəfindən maliyyələşdirilir



Azərbaycan Respublikası
Ekologiya və Təbii Sərvətlər
Nazirliyi

10th Meeting of the Inter-ministerial Steering Committee of the National Policy Dialogue on Integrated Water Resources Management in Azerbaijan followed by thematic workshop on Nature Based Solutions

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| Date: 5-6 April 2023 | Venue: Excelsior Hotel 2 Heydar Aliyev Ave, Baku 1154 | Time: 5 April – 09:00-18:00 6 April: 09:00-13:00 6 April (pm): Optional site visit (registration required) |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|

AGENDA

| DAY 1 | | |
|--|--|--|
| 10TH MEETING OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL POLICY DIALOGUE | | |
| Local Time | Item | Speaker |
| 09:00-09:30 | Registration and welcome coffee | |
| 09:30-09:50 | Opening and welcoming statements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction • Adoption of Agenda | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Representative from Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources - Peter Michalko, Ambassador of the European Union in Azerbaijan - A. Zinke, EU4Environment Water and Data Programme |
| 9:50-11:10 | <p>Thematic Session 1: Dialogue on water resources management in the framework of the EU4Environment Water Resources and Environmental Data Programme</p> <p>Session to include progress on River Basin Management Planning, Water Monitoring including COVID monitoring, Economic Instruments, Mobilizing Finance, Water and Health, Legislative developments and Transboundary cooperation</p> <p>The discussion will build around key policy questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the priorities to advance IWRM / WFD implementation? • What are the current challenges for implementation? • How can transboundary cooperation on water be advanced? | <p>Moderator: OECD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UBA - IOW - UNECE - OECD |

Implementing partners



Co-funded by



| | | |
|-------------|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the commitments and key take aways for Azerbaijan from the UN Water Conference? | |
| 11:10-11:30 | Coffee Break | |
| 11:30-12:10 | <p>Thematic Session 2: Dialogue on Azerbaijan’s draft Water Strategy and other ongoing developments in Water Management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Strategy of Azerbaijan and associated activities • Water use in agriculture • Melioration and irrigation in Azerbaijan • Other ongoing and planned activities <p>Q&A and discussion</p> | <p>Moderator: Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources - Firidun Taghiyev, Head of Soil Control Division, Ministry of Agriculture - Mirmovsum Dadashov, Director of Amelioration Scientific Research Institute |
| 12:10-13:10 | <p>Thematic Session 3: Dialogue on environmental statistics and open data in the framework of the EU4Environment Water Resources and Environmental Data Programme</p> <p>Session to include progress on environmental data and open data issues, including water accounts, environmental data, air quality, waste, land cover mapping and international co-operation.</p> <p>Q&A and discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the key priorities for inter-ministerial cooperation and access to environmental statistics and open data? • What are the challenges for implementation? | <p>Moderator: UBA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UBA - IOW - UNECE |
| 13:10-14:30 | Lunch | |
| 14:30-15:30 | <p>Thematic Session 4: Donor coordination Part 1 on challenges and opportunities for water sector.</p> <p>Presentations and exchanges on relevant projects and donors active on water in Azerbaijan. To discuss ongoing activities and principles, achievements, challenges and future opportunities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Twinning project “Strengthening hydrometeorological and climate services in Azerbaijan” • Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Irrigation project • EU4Environment Green Economy • Asian Development Bank | <p>Moderator: Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ljubov Joanna Liman, Finnish Meteorological Institute (FMI) - Aynur Seidyusif, FAO - Kamran Rzayev, EU4Environment Green Economy - Faraj Huseynbeyov, ADB |

| | | |
|-------------|--|--|
| | Q&A and discussion | |
| 15:30-16:00 | Coffee Break | |
| 16:00-17:00 | <p>Thematic session 4: Donor coordination Part 2 on challenges and opportunities for water sector financing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNDP climate change national adaptation project • EU4Climate adaptation project • UNICEF Climate Resilient Water Safety Plan • International Organization for Migration (IOM) water projects • World Bank IWRM capacity building project (TBC) <p>Q&A and discussion</p> | <p>Moderator: Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chingiz Mammadov, UNDP - TBC - Rashad Huseynov, UNICEF - Vladimir Giorgiev, IOM - World Bank (TBC) |
| 17:00-18:00 | <p>Closing discussion and meeting summary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair to provide closing statement, key messages, decisions, next steps, and an introductory overview of Day 2 • Open discussion and reflection by participants | <p>Representative from Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources</p> <p>all participants</p> |
| 18:00-19:30 | Networking Cocktail | |

DAY 2

THEMATIC WORKSHOP ON POTENTIAL OF NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE RIVER BASIN MANAGEMENT IN AZERBAIJAN

| Time | Item | Speaker |
|-------------|--|--|
| 08:30-09:00 | Registration & Welcome coffee/tea | |
| 09:00-09:15 | Opening remarks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources - Karin Zaunberger, EC DG Environment (via video) - Belokurov, EU4Environment Water and Data Programme |
| 09:15-09:30 | Scene-setting presentation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - James Dalton, IUCN |
| 09:30-10:15 | <p>Experience from Azerbaijan</p> <p>Speakers in this session will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources - Efficiency use of scarce water resources in Azerbaijan, Riad Akhundzadeh, Amelioration JSC - Azersu JSC - Kahrizs (Qanats) in Azerbaijan and their efficiency use perspectives, Alovzat Guliyev, Ministry of Science and Education - Research of geomorphological changes in the Kura river delta using aerospace methods, Turkan Mamishova Ecology Institute, National Aerospace Agency of Azerbaijan <p>Following the presentations, there will be a Q&A.</p> | Moderator: Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources |
| 10:15-10:40 | Coffee Break | |
| 10:40-11:30 | <p>Experience from outside Azerbaijan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Managed aquifer recharge (new EU guidance) - Joint management of floods between upstream and downstream areas - Creation of buffer zones between water and agriculture - Payment for forest management to reduce soil erosion and sedimentation in reservoirs. - A mechanism by development co-operation partners to support NbS | <p>Moderator: OECD</p> <p>UBA IUCN IOW</p> |
| 11:30-12:00 | <p>Moderated discussion</p> <p>Guiding questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are existing and potential Nature-based Solutions (NbS) for river basin management in Azerbaijan? - How have existing NbS in the country been identified, developed and implemented? - What are challenges to promoting and scaling up to NbS in Azerbaijan? | <p>Moderator: UNECE</p> <p>All participants</p> |

| | | |
|-------------|--|--|
| | - What can the EU4Environment programme, together with development cooperation partners, do to support Azerbaijan? | |
| 12:00-12:15 | Closing remarks and next steps - Possibly to highlight/agree on key priorities (e.g. types of NbS, regions, landscape) that can be included in the “roadmap” to be developed under the EU4Environment Project. | Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources Representative of EU4Environment Water and Data Programme |
| 12:15-13:15 | Lunch | |
| 13:15-17:00 | Field trip to Khojahasan Lake NbS site <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greening and Landscape Open JSC (who manage the project under the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources) will provide a guided tour of the site, with information on previous status, impacts of the Nature-based Solution, and expected long-term outcomes. | |

Background

This is the 10th meeting of the Steering Committee of the National Policy Dialogue on Water Resources Management in Azerbaijan. NPD facilitates policy discussions where stakeholders meet to advance water policy reforms. NPDs are driven by the demand from the host countries and are usually chaired by heads of respective government agencies. A variety of stakeholders participate in the meetings, such as ministries and government agencies and institutions, as well as non-governmental organisations, the business community, parliamentary bodies, academia. Participants typically include international organisations and EU Member States active in water policy reforms in each country. Under the EU-funded EU4Environment Water Resources and Environmental Data Programme, NPDs are supported in the five Eastern Partner countries.

Meeting objectives, expected outputs and outcomes

- to provide and update on recent developments in the area of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) and policy development;
- to discuss progress and next steps in implementing the EU4Environment – Water and Data programme in Azerbaijan and to receive feedback from the national stakeholders;
- to provide a platform for coordination of donor activities in the water sector in Azerbaijan and to enhance the international cooperation with partner organisations;
- to open dialogue on Nature Based Solutions (NbS) and potential application and benefits in Azerbaijan;
- to discuss remaining challenges in the area of IWRM and next steps

Participants

The meeting will gather over 40 participants from ministries, agencies, donors and international projects with an interest in water management in Azerbaijan.

About EU4Environment – Water Resources and Environmental Data

This programme aims at improving people’s wellbeing in EU’s Eastern Partner Countries and enabling their green transformation in line with the European Green Deal and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The programme’s activities are clustered around two specific objectives: 1) support a more sustainable use of water resources and 2) improve the use of sound environmental data and their availability for policy-makers and citizens. It ensures continuity of the Shared Environmental Information System Phase II and the EU Water Initiative Plus for Eastern Partnership programmes.

The programme is implemented by five Partner organisations: Environment Agency Austria (UBA), Austrian Development Agency (ADA), International Office for Water (OiEau) (France), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). The action is principally funded by the European Union, and co-funded by the Austrian Development Cooperation and the French Artois-Picardie Water Agency based on a budget of EUR 12,75 million (EUR 12 million EU contribution). The implementation period is 2021-2024.

Draft background notes on the NbS thematic workshop

Background

There is an increasing interest in Nature-based Solutions (NbS) across the world, as an approach to contribute to multiple sustainability objectives, including water resource management, climate change adaptation and mitigation, food security and land use management. While recognising that there is a variety of definitions, the term NbS can be used here as “solutions that are inspired and supported by nature, which are cost-effective, simultaneously provide environmental, social and economic benefits and help build resilience. Such solutions bring more, and more diverse, nature and natural features and processes into cities, landscapes and seascapes, through locally adapted, resource-efficient and systemic interventions. (European Commission, 2021)”. In so doing, NbS will contribute to protecting, sustainably managing or restoring nature, with the goal of maintaining or enhancing ecosystem services to address a variety of social, environmental and economic challenges (OECD 2020).

NbS align with the overall objectives of the EU4Environment – Water Resources and Environmental Data programme, the different mandates and expertise of the implementing partners. NbS have a great potential to have a positive impact on water quality and quantity in Azerbaijan, slowing down runoff and increasing infiltration, favouring natural retention and clean up and creating or improving habitats, supporting biodiversity. However, there remains several gaps in Azerbaijan to fully recognising the potential and applicability of NbS, implementing and financing them and evaluating their effectiveness.

Meeting objectives, expected outputs and outcomes

This session aims to:

- Provide explanation (including criteria and standards), overview and benefits of what are different types of NbS compared to other water management solutions in river basins
- Exchange experience and views among stakeholders and development partners on:
 - What existing and potential Nature-based Solutions (NbS) for river basin management exist in Azerbaijan.

- How existing NbS in the country have been developed and implemented.
- Enhance understanding of definition, benefits and challenges of NbS for Azerbaijan’s climate and biodiversity related targets and sustainable river basin management in terms of:
 - How NbS can be further scaled up.
 - What the challenges to scaling up are.
- Identify key priorities (e.g. types of NbS, regions, landscape) that can potentially be included in the “roadmap” to be developed under the EU4Environment Project.