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Exchange of information on measures aimed at promoting transport by inland waterway

Measures aimed at promoting transport by inland waterway taken by the river commissions

Note by the secretariat

I. Introduction

1. In order to promote the work of the river commissions in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) region and facilitate coordination and cooperation between the commissions and the Working Party on Inland Water Transport (SC.3), the secretariat is presenting below a succinct report on the work and objectives achieved by the river commissions, as presented at their last plenary sessions in 2010.

2. This report was prepared in close cooperation with the secretariats of the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR), the Danube Commission, the Moselle Commission and the International Sava River Basin Commission (Sava Commission).

II. Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine

3. CCNR held its last plenary session on 2 June 2010. Under the chairmanship of the Belgian delegation, CCNR considered questions relating to improving navigation conditions on the Rhine and, in particular, the economic situation of Rhine navigation, the introduction of the Inland Automatic Identification System (AIS) on the Rhine and the International Safety Guide for Inland Navigation Tank-barges and Terminals (ISGINTT). The plenary session also adopted the 2008–2009 CCNR biennial report, which presented progress made in a number of areas, such as climate protection and climate change, protection of the environment, continuing adaptation of requirements for navigation on the

Rhine, strengthening of international cooperation and the improvement of communication between CCNR and its counterparts. Relevant CCNR activities are described in the following paragraphs.

4. In the regulatory field, CCNR continued work on reorganizing its regulations with the introduction of a two-yearly cycle for amending them, and decided in future to group them in four categories (requirements for vessels, provisions relating to personnel, traffic regulations and transport of dangerous goods). CCNR also continued working for European harmonization with a view to enhancing conformity between the Rhine regulations and those produced by other bodies:

(a) With regard to technical requirements for vessels, the period 2008–2009 saw the adoption of the resolution recognizing Community certificates and the extension to non-member States of the European Union of mechanisms to monitor the application of such requirements. The requirements were administered by a Joint Working Group of the European Commission and CCNR (JWG);

(b) Regarding rules concerning the carriage of dangerous goods by inland waterway, CCNR decided in 2009 to replace, as from 1 January 2011, the Regulations for the Carriage of Dangerous Goods on the Rhine (ADNR) by the European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterways (ADN), subject to some changes. However, CCNR would remain involved in that area since its secretariat played an important role in the work of the ADN secretariat and in the administration of the Agreement. The relevant CCNR committee would continue to coordinate the action of CCNR member States in that area;

(c) With respect to the Police Regulations for the Navigation of the Rhine (RPNR), over the last two years CCNR was involved in revising the European Code for Inland Waterways (CEVNI) with a view to making it a common document for all European navigable waterways. The resulting new text of CEVNI should be seen merely as a step forward. Efforts would have to continue to further harmonize police regulations and thereafter to decide on a formal document that could be applied by the relevant authorities on all navigable waterways.

5. Substantial progress was made in harmonizing regulations concerning inland navigation personnel. CCNR adopted new regulations relating to personnel, which would enter into force on 1 July 2011. The Regulations concerning Navigation Personnel on the Rhine (RPN) incorporated all existing Rhine regulations relating to navigation personnel, hitherto contained in three sets of regulations, namely the Rhine Licensing Regulations, the Regulations relating to Safety Personnel for Passenger Vessels and chapter 23 of the Rhine Vessels Inspection Regulations. Most of the rules, however, remained unchanged, since the new regulations only reorganized the Rhine rules in order to make them easier to read. CCNR and its secretariat were also involved within the framework of the PLATINA project in European Union efforts to analyse the necessary qualifications required for inland navigation and ways to acquire them. In addition, national boatmasters' certificates of a number of States (Belgium, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Netherlands, Romania) were recognized as valid for the Rhine. The review process would continue with a view to extending reciprocal recognition of boatmasters' certificates. A similar approach was adopted with regard to service records in 2008–2009.

6. CCNR also continued to update and simplify its regulations, including those relating to technical requirements for inland navigation vessels, dangerous goods, police measures and river information services. It continued its efforts to reduce administrative burdens, in particular by establishing clear and simple rules for implementation of the safeguard clause provided for in chapter 24 of the Rhine Vessels Inspection Regulations. Consideration was

also given to other ways of reducing certain requirements deemed to be excessively bureaucratic.

7. With regard to the protection of the environment and climate change, the CCNR Congress held in June 2009 on the theme “Navigation on the Rhine and climate change – A challenge and an opportunity” provided policymakers, scientific experts, stakeholders and administrators with a forum for discussion. CCNR was also involved in deliberations on the future limit values of boat engines, which took place in the context of the revision of the relevant directive of the European Union. With regard to management of waste produced during inland navigation, 2008–2009 marked the final stage of a process that led on 1 November 2009 to the entry into force of the 1996 Convention on Collection, Storage and Disposal of Waste Generated during Navigation on the Rhine and Other Inland Waterways. CCNR was also committed to reducing the sulphur content of fuels used in inland navigation, and addressed the issue of pollution of the Rhine by chemical products (MTBE). Lastly, several environmental initiatives were planned by CCNR with respect to navigation infrastructure. CCNR also took part in European Commission working groups seeking to reconcile environmental protection and inland navigation.

8. Economically, according to the CCNR report, the 2008–2009 biennium was marked by the onset of the crisis in 2009, coming after a still remarkably good 2008. CCNR monitoring of fleet development revealed a risk of long-term structural imbalance between supply and demand as a result of the commissioning and delivery of too many new vessels. During this two-year period, CCNR also entered into a second triennial agreement with the European Commission with a view to developing a market observation instrument. Thanks to the resulting pooling of resources, the instrument was refined and its use extended to new areas of observation. In particular, the work addressed issues such as analysing changes in operating costs, the inland navigation labour market, the question of vessels of small size and trends in logistics. The analytical and forecasting work thus carried out made it possible to take stock of the situation in autumn 2009 and make forecasts for 2010 that provided the European Commission and the industry with data to describe the economic situation, with a view to possible future implementation of regulatory instruments and mechanisms.

9. In 2008, CCNR took note of measures taken to improve navigation conditions. They included the following: updating of bridge clearance tables, preparation of a report on parking areas, development and introduction of an international warning and communication system in the event of severe accidents, a round table organized jointly with the International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine (ICPR) on good practices in the area of works on inland transport infrastructure, a meeting on the use and availability of locks on the Upper Rhine, monitoring of the implementation of the Water Framework Directive of the European Union with regard to those aspects which might affect navigation, preparation of a report cataloguing and analysing navigation restrictions caused by various events (festivities, accidents, etc.) and the updating of minimum requirements and recommendations for the engineering design of structures on the Rhine.

10. In the legal field, in 2008–2009 work focused on two areas in particular: revision of the 1988 Strasbourg Convention on the Limitation of Liability of Owners of Inland Navigation Vessels (CLNI) and a draft crewmembers’ certificate. With respect to the revision of CLNI, several meetings took place with the participation of various observer States in preparation for a diplomatic conference to be held in 2011. Several meetings were also devoted to the creation of a crewmembers’ certificate to facilitate cross-border work for persons not nationals of European Union countries employed in inland navigation.

11. With regard to river information services (RIS), after a number of challenges, the requirements for electronic reporting established under resolution 2007-II-20 finally came into force on 1 January 2010. A handbook for vessel tracking and tracing in inland navigation was prepared and published in September 2009. Existing guides for the

electronic chart display and information system for inland navigation (Inland ECDIS), notices to skippers and electronic ship reporting in inland navigation were also updated. In 2008–2009 intensive work continued with the aim of drawing up a good practice guide on handling petroleum and chemical products at the ship/shore interface (ISGINTT).

12. In the area of international cooperation, CCNR continued intensive contacts with the European Commission aimed at enhancing cooperation. Institutional cooperation of that kind began for market observation and the monitoring of technical requirements for vessels (with the Joint Working Group). Discussions continued with a view to prolonging the cooperation and extending it to new areas. CCNR continued to support ECE initiatives. It was heavily involved in the revision of CEVNI. The Central Commission also concluded an administrative arrangement with the Moselle Commission, granting it observer organization status. CCNR continued its customary exchanges with the Danube Commission. In the area of waste management, CCNR supported a project known as “Waste Management for Inland Navigation on the Danube” (WANDA), managed by via donau and aimed at establishing a waste collection network along the Danube. CCNR also maintained and strengthened its cooperation with ICPR, the World Association for Waterborne Transport Infrastructure (PIANC) and the PLATINA platform, and also with Luxembourg, which was granted observer State status. CCNR worked closely with several other non-member States as part of the process to recognize boatmasters’ certificates issued by those States (Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia).

II. Danube Commission

13. The latest (seventy-fourth) plenary session of the Danube Commission was held from 8 to 9 June 2010.

14. The Director-General’s report on the implementation of the Commission’s Work Plan for the period from 29 May 2009 until its seventy-fourth session in May 2010 highlighted a number of the Commission’s activities of particular interest to SC.3.

15. With respect to shipping policy issues, the Danube Commission approved at its seventy-fourth session a number of proposals to be forwarded to the European Commission on the preparation of the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region. The proposals included, inter alia, sections dealing with the development of the market, infrastructure, the fleet, environmental protection, major trends in shipping policy on the Danube and the plan for interaction between the Danube Commission and the European Commission in designing a European Union strategy for the Danube region. By decision CD/SES 74/21, the Danube Commission also granted full powers to its Chairman to sign on its behalf a memorandum of understanding on sectoral partnership between the Danube Commission and the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization.

16. With respect to shipping issues:

(a) The Danube Commission was actively involved in efforts to harmonize navigation rules on European waterways that resulted in the revised edition of CEVNI in 2009. The Commission would continue to participate in the ECE informal group set up to respond quickly to possible new changes in European navigation rules;

(b) The Commission established a drafting group to bring the Basic Rules of Navigation on the Danube (DFND) into line with the fourth revised edition of CEVNI. In April 2010, the Commission’s working group on technical issues approved the content and form of chapters 1 to 10 of the new DFND prepared by the drafting group. The drafting group would meet for a second time in September 2010 to check the final text of draft chapters 1 to 10 and the draft annexes to DFNA;

(c) The Commission approved the draft text of “Rules for River Surveillance on the Danube” (decision CD/SES 73/18);

(d) The Commission approved a draft kilometre-by-kilometre guide to the Danube (decision CD/SES 73/18);

(e) The Commission approved a draft “General Chart of the Danube River”, which was subsequently published in 2009 (decision CD/SES 72/9);

(f) The Commission adopted a decision to improve work related to the river information services (decision CD/SES 73/9);

(g) The Commission approved a quality standard for digital data recording used during Danube river bed surveys (decision CD/SES 73/18);

(h) The Commission also considered at its seventy-fourth plenary session a draft recommendation on the organization of vocational training for boatmasters and a draft recommendation on boatmasters’ licences for inland waterway craft on the Danube.

17. With respect to technical issues, including radio communication:

(a) The Commission approved (decision CD/SES 73/18) the new text of the Recommendations on Technical Requirements for Inland Navigation Vessels, adding appendix 2, a model certificate for inland navigation vessels. The session tasked the working group on technical issues with finalizing section 2-7, “Unique European Identification Number”, taking into account the relevant International Maritime Organization regulations;

(b) The Commission approved the new version of the model service record as appendix 5 to the Recommendations on Technical Requirements for Inland Navigation Vessels (decision CD/SES 74/14);

(c) The Commission adopted instructions for issuing service records to crew members of inland navigation vessels and for their use (decision CD/SES 74/15);

(d) The Commission approved the updated version of the document “Terminology and definitions used by the Danube Commission in data collection and processing” (decision CD/SES 74/19).

18. The Commission’s working group on technical issues was currently considering a number of matters related to the use and ecology of the Danube, including:

(a) Implementation of the European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterways (ADN) and amendments to ADN;

(b) The updating of the catalogue of questions and models for the experts’ examination in ECE;

(c) The participation of relevant Danube countries in the WANDA project to establish a waste collection network along the Danube;

(d) The issue of the influence of inland navigation on climate change and air pollution.

19. As for economic and statistical matters, the Commission’s secretariat prepared a report on the economic situation of navigation on the Danube in 2007 and another presenting information on cargo flows on the Rhine, Main, Main-Danube canal, Danube and Danube-Black Sea Canal in 2007 on the basis of statistics from member countries, publications of international organizations, the media and Internet. Work on a report on the economic situation of navigation on the Danube in 2008, based on statistical data from member countries, with the exception of Romania, was nearing completion.

III. Moselle Commission

20. The last plenary session of the Moselle Commission took place on 8 June 2010 under the chairmanship of the Luxembourg delegation. In accordance with the Commission's mandate, the session covered the Commission's activities aimed at promoting the interests of navigation on the international stretch of the Moselle between Koblenz and Thionville and maintaining the highest possible levels of performance.

21. In 2009, the Commission introduced amendments to the Police Regulations for Navigation on the Moselle (RPNM) so as to take account of new conditions and aspects of inland navigation and thereby provide the best conditions for vessel traffic. One of the most significant changes was that, as from 1 January 2010, navigation for vessels up to 135 metres long was possible on the Moselle without special authorization. In addition, RPNM was amended to ensure closer compatibility with the regulations in force on the Rhine (notably the references to European standards and regulations for radar apparatus), to clarify the text of some regulations (relating to crossing and passing on defined stretches and the signals to use when crossing or passing) and to add new distinguishing signs and home port markings for new European Union member States. In addition, given that from 2011 the Regulations for the Carriage of Dangerous Goods on the Rhine would be replaced by the European Agreement concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Inland Waterways (ADN), the Commission decided to apply ADN rules on the Moselle as from 1 January 2011.

22. On the basis of its experience in regulating inland navigation, the Moselle Commission, in cooperation with CCNR, contributed significantly to the revision of CEVNI. Experts from CCNR and the Moselle Commission held several meetings to compare their positions and produce a joint opinion on the amendments put forward by the ECE Working Party on the Standardization of Technical and Safety Requirements in Inland Navigation. A significant number of the joint proposals made by CCNR and the Moselle Commission were accepted by the ECE Working Party and were included in the fourth revised edition of CEVNI, which was approved by SC.3 at its fifty-third session in November 2009. In 2010–2011, the relevant committees of CCNR and the Moselle Commission would meet again to determine the impact of the revision of CEVNI on the police regulations applied on the Rhine and the Moselle. Since the aim of revising CEVNI was to harmonize the various existing police regulations on waterways, consideration would have to be given to bringing RPNM and RPNR into line with CEVNI's numbering and regulations.

23. In accordance with its terms of reference, the Moselle Commission also fixed the periods of lock closure in 2009 (periods of interruption of traffic) to enable the relevant national administrations to inspect and, if necessary, repair locks on the Moselle usually open to navigation round the clock. The periods of closure were now fixed until 2019 and were posted on the Commission's website and available on request from its secretariat.

24. In order to ensure safe navigation, the Commission's secretariat also collected from the navigation services in France, Germany and Luxembourg all notices to skippers concerning the Moselle and transmitted them to the Moselle bodies that had not issued the original notices. Since April 2010 such notices had been available in French and German on the Commission's website. On the basis of the notices, the secretariat drew up a list of restrictions to navigation caused by repair work or accidents, etc., and which occurred outside the official periods of interruption of traffic fixed by the Commission.

25. As it was responsible for setting tariffs on the Moselle, the Commission carried out a direct comparison between average rates charged by class of goods on the Neckar, the Main and the Main-Danube canal and those applied on the Moselle in order to assess whether the

tariffs on the Moselle should be modified. Given the results of the study, and taking into account the current economic situation, the Commission decided not to change the rates on the Moselle in 2009 and 2010.

26. With regard to the navigability of the Moselle, an administrative arrangement on issues related to works to maintain, renew and use the jetty and wall on the right bank near the Apach barrage was adopted, supplementing the decision taken by the Commission in 2008. Management of the jetty and wall, situated in the border area between France, Germany and Luxembourg, was dealt with through that administrative arrangement, and not by a decision of the Commission, for reasons of State sovereignty and because of the particular geographical situation of the jetty and wall in relation to the rest of the structure.

27. The Commission's secretariat also collected Moselle traffic data supplied at the national level by the three Moselle riparian States. The most recent information was included in the Commission's annual report, which highlighted the negative impact of the economic crisis and the adverse climatic conditions on cargo traffic in 2009. The report noted, however, a slight improvement in the last quarter of 2009. The increase continued into the early months of 2010.

28. In the field of international cooperation, the Commission signed a cooperation agreement with CCNR in September 2008, whereby both institutions granted each other observer status. The Moselle Commission had in fact already participated in various CCNR activities, including the above-mentioned revision of CEVNI, preparation of publications on the observation of the European Union inland navigation market and work on a new boatmasters' document to address issues related to the movement of crews on the Rhine. The Commission also took part in events organized by CCNR on the environment, such as the June 2009 Congress entitled "Navigation on the Rhine and climate change – A challenge and an opportunity" and an international symposium on clean inland navigation as an environmentally-friendly means of transport. In 2009, the Commission also signed a cooperation agreement with the International Commissions for the Protection of the Moselle and Saar (CIPMS).

29. The Commission was also represented in relevant European Union programmes. It was a member of the PLATINA Steering Committee tasked with analysing and commenting on project proposals presented as part of the Programme of Action for the Promotion of Inland Waterway Transport in Europe (NAIADES). The Commission planned to broaden its participation in the project in 2010–2011.

30. All the documents referred to — addressing lock closures, the amended version of RPNM and tariffs for the Moselle — were posted on the Commission's website under "Publications: Reference Documents". The annual report of the secretariat, which included information on the Commission's activities and Moselle traffic figures for 2009 and the first quarter of 2010, was also available on its Internet page.

IV. International Sava River Basin Commission

31. The general tasks of the International Sava River Basin Commission (Sava Commission) are set out in annex I of the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin (FASRB).

32. The latest progress report, covering the period 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010, highlighted a further intensification of Sava Commission activities and progress made in the main areas of its work, including:

- Establishment of an international regime of navigation on the Sava river and its navigable tributaries

- Establishment of sustainable water management
- Prevention and limitation of the adverse consequences of floods, drought, ice and accidents

33. As the establishment of an international regime of navigation is an area of particular interest to SC.3, detailed information on this aspect of the Sava Commission's work is provided in the following paragraphs. Information on the two other areas of work is available in the Sava Commission Annual Report for the period 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010.

34. Sava Commission efforts in the field of navigation focused mainly on the rehabilitation and development of navigation on the Sava. At the same time, the Commission continued to implement its regulations on rules of navigation, technical requirements for vessels and the transport of dangerous goods.

35. In the field of navigation safety, the Commission's activities focused on unifying rules for navigation at the European level and upgrading the Navigation Rules on the Sava River Basin, adopted by decision No. 30/07. Work on the unification of navigation rules at a European level, carried out by representatives of ECE, CCNR, the Danube Commission and the Austrian Government, resulted in the adoption of the new text of CEVNI. Some requirements included in the Navigation Rules on the Sava River Basin were introduced into the new CEVNI. In addition, a permanent expert group from the Sava Commission worked on amendments to navigation rules and on a special chapter on specific rules for the Belgrade and Upper Sava sections, in cooperation with the ports of Belgrade and Sisak. The amendments to the regulations should enter into force in 2010. Other instruments to ensure navigation safety included the handbook on the radiotelephone service in the Sava River Basin, rules for definition of winter ports and shelters, electronic navigation charts, the boatmasters' manual and the album of bridges on the Sava.

36. With respect to technical standards, the secretariat prepared draft technical requirements for vessels on the Sava and rules for implementing ADN. The draft texts were being translated into the official languages of the Commission and would later be submitted to the Governments for their consideration. Adoption of the rules was especially important because of the very high average age of the Sava fleet and the increasing transport of dangerous goods.

37. A special protocol on the prevention of water pollution caused by inland navigation was signed by the parties to FASRB in 2009. The Sava Commission was also involved in the WANDA project on waste management for inland navigation on the Danube.

38. In the field of waterway infrastructure, the Commission developed and adopted a marking plan for the Sava and its navigable tributaries and published a report on its implementation by member States. In the period from April 2009 to March 2010, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia fully marked the Sava for the first time in 20 years, the first step towards modernization and improvement of navigation on the river. Regular maintenance work was planned but had not started yet, except for some urgent work on the most critical sections. After completing the feasibility study on rehabilitation work, the Commission continued to develop detailed plans and necessary documentation and adopted decisions on the classification of future waterways and action plans with timetables for implementation.

39. With respect to river information services (RIS), the Commission adopted decision No. 12/09 on the development of a project on detailed technical specifications and a prototype installation for RIS on the Sava, which started in September 2009.

40. The Commission was also involved in a number of activities and studies to promote inland navigation, such as a study on the rehabilitation and development of navigation on

the Sava, an initiative on the guiding principles for the development of inland navigation and environmental protection in the Danube river basin, a master plan and atlas for the development of nautical tourism and participation in the Network of Danube Waterway Administrations (NEWADA).

41. All those activities had already had a positive impact on the development of traffic on the Sava and transport of goods in the basin. Examples included the opening of the Brod/Bosanski Brod section to the transport of petroleum products, the first cruise vessel navigating up to Županja and the improvement of inland ports in Serbia.
