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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

**MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON
THE PROTECTION AND USE OF TRANSBOUNDARY
WATERCOURSES AND INTERNATIONAL LAKES**

Working Group on Water Management

Third meeting,
The Hague (Netherlands), 17 and 19 September 2001

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE THIRD MEETING */

to be held at the Atlantic Hotel in The Hague - Kijkduin
starting at 10 a.m. on Monday, 17 September 2001

1. Opening statements.
2. Adoption of the agenda.

*/ Prepared by the secretariat in consultation with the Chairman of the Working Group on Water Management and the Chairperson of the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties.

3. Integrated management of water and related ecosystems:
 - (a) Joint bodies and bilateral and multilateral cooperation (ECE/MP.WAT/5 and MP.WAT/2000/2);
 - (b) Water and industrial accidents (ECE/MP.WAT/5; ECE/CP.TEIA/2; MP.WAT/WG.1/2001/2 and 3);
 - (c) Ecosystem approach in water management (MP.WAT/WG.1/2001/4);
 - (d) Groundwater management (MP.WAT/WG.1/2001/5);
 - (e) International Conference on Sustainable Management of Transboundary Waters (MP.WAT/WG.1/2001/6);
 - (f) Management and sustainable development of international lakes;
 - (g) Interstate distribution and rational use of water resources of transboundary rivers in water-deficient regions;
 - (h) Best agricultural practice (ECE/MP.WAT/2; ECE/MP.WAT/5; MP.WAT/2000/8);
 - (i) Public participation in water management (MP.WAT/WG.1/2001/7; MP.WAT/2000/4, 6 and Add.1).
4. Partners in cooperation:
 - (a) International Conference on Freshwater;
 - (b) Kiev Ministerial Conference;
 - (c) Cooperation with the governing bodies of other UNECE environmental conventions;
 - (d) World Water Development Report.
5. Work-plan.
6. Election of officers.
7. Other business.
8. Closure.

Tentative time schedule

Monday, 17 September 2001

Morning session: Items 1, 2 and 3 (a) – (i)
Afternoon session: Item 4

Tuesday, 18 September 2001

Workshop on public participation in water management.

Wednesday, 19 September 2001

Morning session: Items 3 (h) – (g)
Afternoon session: Items 3 (i), 5, 6, 7 and 8.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

The third meeting of the Working Group on Water Management will be held in The Hague – Kijrduin (see annex I) at the invitation of the Government of the Netherlands (and not in Rotterdam, as previously announced). The meeting will be chaired by Mr. Milan Matushka (Slovakia). The working languages will be English, French and Russian. Further information on organizational matters, may be obtained from the host authorities (see annex I). Meeting documents are also available on the Water Convention's home page at www.unece.org/env/water

On 18 September, a workshop on public participation in water management will be held at the same venue. Its preliminary agenda will be circulated as a separate document.

Item 1: Opening statements

A representative of the Netherlands and the Chairman of the Working Group will make opening statements. A representative of the secretariat will also address the Working Group.

Item 2: Adoption of the agenda

The Working Group is expected to adopt its agenda as set out in the present document.

Item 3: Integrated management of water and related ecosystems

(a) Joint bodies and bilateral and multilateral cooperation

The Working Group will consider any information provided by Parties and non-Parties on bilateral and multilateral cooperation under the Convention (see ECE/MP.WAT/5, para. 18 (d) and annex II, programme element 2.2, and MP.WAT/2000/2). Following the objectives of this programme element, the Working Group will also make arrangements to examine at its fourth meeting in 2002 a report on difficulties encountered when implementing the Convention, arising from differences in administrative practice, in management and protection responsibilities or in water-use rights in riparian countries. Furthermore, the Working Group will be informed by the secretariat about work undertaken, or planned, to update and extend the Convention's home page (www.unece.org/env/water). The Working Group will be invited to provide comments and suggestions.

The Working Group will examine ways to strengthen cooperation with joint bodies for the protection of the marine environment, taking into account that the Parties at their second meeting welcomed the proposal by the delegation of the Netherlands to explore the possibility of organizing a workshop on cooperation with joint bodies established for the protection of the marine environment and noted the readiness of the delegation of Finland to assist in the further work (ECE/MP.WAT/5, para. 47 (d)). The Working Group will make the necessary arrangements to assist both these Parties.

(b) Water and industrial accidents

The secretariat will inform the Working Group about the outcome of the joint special session of the Parties to the Conventions on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) and on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (Industrial Accidents Convention) to be held at Geneva on 2-3 July 2001 to draw up an appropriate regime on civil liability in the UNECE region for transboundary damage caused by hazardous activities.

The Working Group will be informed by the secretariat about: (i) the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Industrial Accidents Convention (see annex II below) and in particular its decisions on joint activities with the Meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention regarding the prevention of accidental water pollution (see also ECE/MP.WAT/5, annex II, programme element 2.8.1); (ii) the endorsement of these decisions by the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention at its session in February 2001.

The Working Group will make arrangements for the implementation of this programme, including the designation of experts for the joint ad hoc group by Parties and non-Parties, if they have not already done so, , noting that Germany offered to host the first meeting in Berlin on 18-19 October 2001, and Hungary the second meeting in the course of 2002.

The Working Group will also consider the tentative programme of the international workshop and exercise on industrial safety and water protection in transboundary river basins (MP.WAT/WG.1/2001/2 and 3), which will take place in Tiszaújváros on 3-5 October 2001 at the invitation of the Government of Hungary. The Working Group will assist the lead Party (Hungary) in the further preparations for, and follow-up to, the workshop and exercise.

(c) Ecosystem approach in water management

The Working Group will examine the tentative programme for the joint German-Slovak workshop on "Approaches and tools for river basin management: experience drawn from the implementation of the EC Water Framework Directive" (MP.WAT/WG.1/2001/4) scheduled to be held in Bratislava on 15-16 October 2001 at the invitation of the Governments of Germany and Slovakia.

The lead Parties (Germany and Slovakia) will inform the Working Group about the further preparations made for the workshop and the expected outcome. The Working Group

will advise the lead Parties about the possible need to revise the 1993 Guidelines on the ecosystems approach in water management.

(d) Groundwater management

The Working Group will examine the tentative programme for the workshop on the protection of groundwaters used as a source of drinking-water supply (MP.WAT/WG.1/2001/5) scheduled to be held in Budapest on 8-10 November 2001 at the invitation of the Government of Hungary, and assist the lead Party (Hungary) in the further preparations for, and the follow-up to, the workshop.

(e) International Conference on Sustainable Management of Transboundary Waters

Under the leadership of Poland, and supported by Finland, Germany and the Netherlands, arrangements have been made to hold the second International Conference on Sustainable Management of Transboundary Waters in Miedzyzdroje (Poland) on 21-24 April 2002 to mark the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the Water Convention. The Working Group will examine the tentative programme for the Conference (MP.WAT/WG.1/2001/6) and assist the lead Parties (Poland, Finland, Germany, Netherlands) in the further preparations for the Conference.

(f) Management and sustainable development of international lakes

The lead Party (Switzerland) has informed the secretariat that it will not be in a position to lead this activity. The Working Group is expected to make other arrangements for the implementation of programme element 2.7 of the work-plan.

(g) Interstate distribution and rational use of water resources of transboundary rivers in water-deficient regions

The lead Party (Russian Federation) will inform the Working Group about its activities to examine the experience and best practice of countries and joint bodies to share water between riparian countries. The Working Group will provide its assistance to the lead Party to draw up draft guidelines and prepare the workshop in 2002 as laid down in programme element 2.6 of the work-plan.

(h) Best agricultural practice

The Meeting of the Parties, when adopting its agenda for its second meeting (see ECE/MP.WAT/5, para.10), decided to entrust the Working Group on Water Management with considering at its meeting in 2001 the outcome of the activity on best agricultural practice (ECE/MP.WAT/2, annex II, element 4.2 of the 1997-2000 work-plan) including the secretariat note on this subject (MP.WAT/2000/8). In order to facilitate the discussion, and following the decision of the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties in February 2001, the secretariat will circulate copies of the consultant's report on which the above note was based.

(i) Public participation in water management

The Working Group will examine the outcome of the workshop on public participation in water management scheduled to take place in The Hague on 18 September 2001, at the invitation of the Government of the Netherlands and in conjunction with the meeting of the Working Group (see tentative workshop programme in MP.WAT/WG.1/2001/7). The Working Group will make arrangements for the drawing-up of policy guidelines taking into account: (i) the workshop's results; (ii) relevant provisions of the 1998 Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters and the 1991 Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context; and (iii) the documents on public participation in water management submitted to the Parties and considered at their second meeting (MP.WAT/2000/4, 6 and Add.1).

Item 4: Partners in cooperation

(a) International Conference on Freshwater

With their declaration, the Parties at their second meeting committed themselves to contributing to the periodical review of the implementation of chapter 18 of Agenda 21 on freshwater resources, using appropriate forums, including the International Conference on Freshwater (Bonn, Germany, 3-7 December 2001) and the Rio+10 assessment. The delegation of Germany, host country of the Conference, will inform the Working Group about the preparations for the Conference, and the time schedule for the submission of contributions. Information about the Conference can be downloaded from the Web (www.water-2001.de).

The Working Group will prepare its conference contribution aimed at sharing experience with other regions in the world to help them find and implement practical solutions to avoid a water crisis, to contribute to meeting of the Millennium Declaration target, and to identify the remaining obstacles in the implementation of Agenda 21 (chapter 18). In doing so, the Working Group will take note of documents drawn up under the auspices of the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy regarding the regional input into the "Assessment of progress in sustainable development since Rio 1992 for Member States of the United Nations" (see www.unece.org/env/rio+10/welcome.html).

(b) Kiev Ministerial Conference

The Working Group will take note of the preparatory process for the Kiev Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" (21-23 May 2003). It will, in particular, be informed by the secretariat about the activities of the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy to prepare assessments of Europe's environment, and the possible contributions from the International Water Assessment Centre (IWAC), established under the Water Convention.

The secretariat will inform the Working Group about other water-related activities of the preparatory process for the Kiev Ministerial Conference to which the Working Group could contribute.

(c) Cooperation with the governing bodies of other UNECE environmental conventions

The Working Group will be informed of the relevant work done and planned under the other UNECE environmental conventions. To facilitate the discussion on possible joint activities, the Chairman of the Meeting of the Parties will inform the Working Group about the outcome of recent meetings, organized under the auspices of the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy, on cooperation among the governing bodies of the UNECE environmental conventions.

(d) World Water Development Report

The Working Group will be informed by the secretariat about the activities of United Nations organizations to draw up the World Water Development Report for consideration at the Third World Water Forum (Tokyo, spring 2003). It will also be informed by the secretariat and IWAC about the regional input into the Report.

Item 5: Work-plan

The Working Group will consider its work-plan (ECE/MP.WAT/5, annex II, programme area II), and update it, if need be, taking also into account information by the Chairpersons of the three other working groups (Working Groups on Legal and Administrative Aspects, Monitoring and Assessment, and Water and Health) and the secretariat regarding activities of relevance to its work-plan. Amendments to the work-plan are subject to approval by the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention.

Item 6: Election of officers

The Working Group will elect a chairman and a vice-chairman.

Item 7: Other business

At the time of writing, the secretariat had no points to propose under this item.

Item 8: Closure

A representative of the host country will close the third meeting of the Working Group on 19 September 2001 at 5 p.m.

Annex I

VENUE AND HOST COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVES

I. VENUE

The meeting will take place at:

The Atlantic Hotel
Deltaplein 200
NL-2554 EJ
The Hague – Kijkduin
Netherlands

II. HOST AUTHORITIES

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Annex II

**EXCERPT FROM THE REPORT OF THE FIRST MEETING OF THE
CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS
CONVENTION (ECE/CP.TEIA/2)**

“4. Prevention of accidental water pollution

30. The Conference of the Parties, taking into account the results of the work done so far on the prevention of accidental water pollution (see also paras. 24-25), agreed that further work should be undertaken together with the Meeting of the Parties to the UN/ECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes.

31. In this connection, the Conference of the Parties adopted decision 2000/5 on the prevention of accidental water pollution (annex VI below). It endorsed the report of the Seminar on the Prevention of Chemical Accidents and Limitation of their Impact on Transboundary Waters (Hamburg, 4-6 October 1999) and its conclusions and recommendations as contained in CEP/WG.4/SEM.1/1999/3. Furthermore, the Conference of the Parties extended the mandate of the joint ad hoc expert group on water and industrial accidents and agreed on specific tasks to be carried out by the group.

32. Mr. Carel De Villeneuve, Chairperson of the Meeting of the Parties to the UN/ECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, congratulated the Parties on the occasion of the constitution and first meeting of their governing body. He recalled that both Conventions were adopted and signed at the same place and time and referred to them as sister conventions. He stated that the Meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention attached great importance to the work on the prevention of accidental water pollution and looked forward to cooperating within the joint ad hoc expert group. Referring to the specific tasks in the work plan for the group, he made a reservation concerning the drawing-up of safety guidelines/best practices for the navigation of ships, which did not fall within the scope of the Water Convention (see para. 7 (c) of decision 2000/5 on the prevention of accidental water pollution contained in annex VI to this report).”

**DECISION 2000/5
ON THE PREVENTION OF ACCIDENTAL WATER POLLUTION**

The Conference of the Parties,

Stressing that major industrial accidents may cause far-reaching transboundary effects and may lead to accidental water pollution,

Recalling the decision of the Signatories to the UN/ECE Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents and the Parties to the UN/ECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes to cooperate closely on issues related to the prevention of accidental pollution of transboundary waters,

Acknowledging the work already done, in particular the outcome of the workshop and the Seminar on the prevention of chemical accidents and limitation of their impact on transboundary waters 1/ held in Berlin (7-9 May 1998) and in Hamburg, Germany (4-6 October 1999), respectively, as well as the results of two meetings of a joint ad hoc expert group on water and industrial accidents,

1. Endorses the conclusions and recommendations of the Seminar in Hamburg (CEP/WG.4/SEM.1/1999/3, annex I); 2/
2. Requests the Parties and encourages other UN/ECE member countries to implement these recommendations;
3. Extends the mandate of the joint ad hoc expert group on water and industrial accidents 3/ to support and provide guidance in the implementation of the above recommendations; 4/
4. Welcomes the nominations of experts from the following Parties to the Convention: Finland, Germany, Hungary, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation and Switzerland, and from the following other UN/ECE member countries: France, Italy, Netherlands and Poland, to participate in the work of this group and invites experts from other UN/ECE countries to participate as well;
5. Decides that the joint ad hoc expert group will be co-chaired by experts representing the two Conventions 5/ and that the frequency of its meetings will be decided by the two Chairpersons, in consultation with the Bureaux of the governing bodies;
6. Entrusts the Bureau to schedule the next meeting of the joint ad hoc expert group in conjunction with the Bureau of the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes;
7. Agrees on the following elements, proposed at a consultative meeting held in Budapest on 6-7 April 2000, 6/ as the work programme for the joint ad hoc expert group on water and industrial accidents:
 - (a) Drawing up an inventory of already existing safety guidelines/best practices for the prevention of accidental transboundary water pollution and making these guidelines/best practices available to the competent authorities and focal points designated under this Convention;

(b) Assisting in the adaptation of these guidelines/best practices to the specific needs and circumstances of river basins in the UN/ECE region;

(c) Drawing up safety guidelines/best practices concerning installations or activities for which they are not available so far, such as: tailing dams, pipelines and the navigation of ships on rivers, to be used by UN/ECE member countries and/or joint bodies;

(d) Facilitating the exchange of information on the functioning of existing alarm and notification systems at national, regional and local levels within the framework of this Convention and the international river commissions (Rhine, Elbe and Danube) through joint consultations of points of contact and river alarm experts;

(e) Initiating an international response exercise within the framework of this Convention and one of the international river commissions;

(f) Drawing up guidelines for establishing model cross-border contingency plans and disseminating them widely among UN/ECE member countries. This work will be based on experience gained with the pilot study to draw up a joint contingency plan for the Samos river shared between Hungary and Romania;

(g) Drawing up guidelines to identify dangerous facilities handling smaller amounts of hazardous substances than specified in annex I to the Convention.

Notes

1/ These events were organized under the joint auspices of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes and the Meeting of the Signatories to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents.

2/ At their second meeting (The Hague, Netherlands, 23-25 March 2000), the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes adopted the report of the Hamburg Seminar (CEP/WG.4/SEM.1/1999/3), including its conclusions and recommendations. It underlined the importance for the Parties to both Conventions and, when applicable, joint bodies to implement the recommendations.

3/ The joint expert group will report to the Parties to both Conventions.

4/ It was suggested by the Meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention that a joint reporting scheme should be drawn up by the Parties to both Conventions. This would be a task for the joint ad hoc expert group on water and industrial accidents.

5/ The joint ad hoc expert group will elect the two chairpersons at its next meeting.

6/ Consultative meeting of the joint ad hoc expert group on water and industrial accidents, organized on the initiative of the secretariats of both Conventions.”