



**Economic and Social
Council**

Distr.
GENERAL

MP.WAT/WG.1/2003/1

5 March 2003
ENGLISH ONLY

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

Fourth meeting

Helsinki, 28-29 April 2003

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE FOURTH MEETING

to be held at the Finnish Environment Institute
starting on Monday, 28 April 2003, at 9.30 a.m.

1. Opening statements.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Adoption of the report of the third meeting.
4. Recent and new initiatives under the current workplan:
 - (a) Strengthening the capability of joint bodies to comply with the obligations under the Convention (programme element 2.2);
 - (b) Interstate distribution and rational use of water resources of transboundary rivers in water-deficient regions (programme element 2.6);
 - (c) Sustainable flood prevention.
5. Partners in cooperation:
 - (a) Joint work of UNECE with the Global Water Partnership (GWP) on integrated water resources management (IWRM);
 - (b) Follow up to the third World Water Forum (Japan, 17-23 March 2003);
 - (c) Kiev Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” (21-23 May 2003).
6. Strategy on water management until 2006 and beyond.
7. Workshop on extreme floods and dam safety.
8. Other business.
9. Closing.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

The provisional agenda was prepared by the secretariat in consultation with the Chairperson of the Working Group on Water Management, Mr. Milan Matushka (Slovakia), and representatives of the host country.

The meeting will be held in English, simultaneous interpretation into Russian will be provided by the host country.

Documents of the Working Group and unofficial working papers for the fourth meeting can be downloaded from the Convention's web site at
<http://www.unece.org/env/water/meetings/documents.htm>

Item 1: Opening statements

A representative of Finland and the Chairman of the Working Group will make opening statements.

Item 2: Adoption of the agenda

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

Item 3: Adoption of the report of the third meeting

The Working Group is expected to adopt the report of its third meeting (MP.WAT/WG.1/2001/9).

Item 4: Recent and new initiatives under the current workplan

- (a) Strengthening the capability of joint bodies to comply with the obligations under the Convention (programme element 2.2)

The secretariat organized, together with UNEP, the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, the Russian Ministry of Natural Resources and the NGO Ecoterra (Moscow), a workshop in Moscow (31 March – 1 April 2003) to analyze experience gained in East European, Caucasian and Central Asian (EECCA) countries in concluding and implementing international legal instruments on the protection and use of waters and examine difficulties encountered when implementing the Convention.

The Working Group will examine the outcome of the workshop and make arrangements, as appropriate, for the future work plan (see also item 6 of the provisional agenda).

- (b) Interstate distribution and rational use of water resources of transboundary rivers in water-deficient regions (programme element 2.6)

The Working Group will examine two working papers prepared by the Russian Federation with the assistance of the secretariat about: (a) the draft Recommendations on issues of interstate distribution of water resources of transboundary watercourses and their rational use with due regard for water quality aspects, and (b) the outcome of the workshop “Problems of the interstate distribution of water resources of international rivers” (Yekaterinburg, Russian Federation, 4-6 December 2002) and make arrangements, as appropriate, for the completion of the work until the third meeting of the Parties. It will also consider the proposal made by the workshop participants for a follow up activity (see also item 6 of the provisional agenda).

- (c) Sustainable flood prevention

The delegation of Germany will invite the Working Group to evaluate the implementation of the Guidelines on sustainable flood prevention, adopted by the Parties at their second meeting, and to continue work on the subject. Further work will include the preparations for a Conference on flood prevention and flood protection, which Germany kindly offered to host in the second half of 2004.

Item 5: Partners in cooperation

- (a) Joint work of UNECE with the Global Water Partnership (GWP) on integrated water resources management (IWRM)

The Working Group will examine two working papers by the secretariat about: (a) the joint work with GWP on IWRM including transboundary issues as part of environment strategy for East European, Caucasian and Central Asian (EECCA) countries and the EECCA component of the EU Water Initiative; and (b) the outcome of a high-level meeting of EECCA representatives (Moscow, 5-6 March 2003) on the implementation of water-related project proposals. The Working Group will consider its involvement in the implementation phase and make arrangements, as appropriate, for the future work plan (see also item 6 of the provisional agenda).

- (b) Follow up to the third World Water Forum (Japan, 17-23 March 2003)

The Working Group will examine its possible contribution to the implementation of the relevant parts of the forthcoming Ministerial Declaration, and take note of proposals by the secretariat on cooperative arrangements that could be made, for example, with UN bodies, for the achievement of the purposes of the Convention. The Working Group will make arrangements, as appropriate for the future work plan (see also item 6 of the provisional agenda).

(c) Kiev Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” (21-23 May 2003)

The Working Group will be informed by the secretariat about preparations for the second joint special session of the governing bodies of the Conventions on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes and on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents. The Working Group will make arrangements, as appropriate, for participation of its members in the Conference.

Item 6: Strategy on water management until 2006 and beyond

The Working Group will examine a working paper by the Chairperson, Mr. Milan Matushka, in which he will inform the Working Group on the outcome of informal discussions with the friends of the Chair on a mid-term (until 2006) and long-term (beyond 2006) strategy under the Convention related to the management of transboundary waters.

The Working Group will also examine the reports of recent meetings, which set out a number of recommendations that fall under the responsibility of the Working Group, particularly:

(a) The workshop on approaches and tools for river basin management: experience drawn from the implementation of the EC Water Framework Directive (Bratislava, 15-16 October 2001, see document MP.WAT/WG.1/2001/8);

(b) The workshop on the protection of groundwaters used as a source of drinking-water supply (Budapest, 8-10 November 2001, see the web site at <http://www.unece.org/env/water/meetings/groundwater01/conclusions.pdf>);

(c) The Second International Conference on Sustainable Management of Transboundary Waters in Europe (Miedzyzdroje, Poland, 21-24 April 2002, see document ECE/MP.WAT/8); and

(d) The second meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (see paragraphs 37-41 of document ECE/CP.TEIA/7 at <http://www.unece.org/env/documents/2002/ece/teia/ece.teia.2002.7.e.pdf>)

(e) The workshop on public participation in water management (The Hague, Netherlands, 18 September 2001, see the web site <http://www.unece.org/env/water/documents/pubpart2001.pdf>)

The Working Group will establish a priority list of possible activities including lead countries. It will make work-sharing arrangements with a view to finalize a draft work plan on integrated water resources management for the period 2003-2006 well in advance of the third meeting of the Parties.

The participants will also consider the need for re-establishing the Working Group or for other appropriate bodies that could be established to implement the work plan for 2003-2006.

Item 7: Workshop on extreme floods and dam safety

The Workshop is expected to provide input for the preparations of the UNECE Conference on flood prevention and flood protection, which will be kindly hosted by Germany in the second half of 2004. The first part of the workshop will be used to identify issues to be included in the conference programme. Therefore, the participants are kindly requested to provide information on the lessons learned from the disastrous floods in 2002 and how they affected the plans to mitigate flood risks. The second part will deal with dam safety issues.

The workshop programme will be issued as a working paper.

Item 8: Other business

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

Item 9: Closing

The Chairman will close the meeting on 29 April 2003 at 18.00 hours.

Annex

MEETING VENUE AND HOST COUNTRY'S ADDRESSES

The meeting takes place at the Finnish Environment Institute, located at:

Mechelininkatu 34a
FIN-00260 Helsinki
Tel.: +3589 403 000
Fax: +3589 4030 0190

Representatives of the host country can also be contacted through:

Ms. Tuula Liljander
Finnish Environment Institute
Tel.: +358 9 4030 0700,
Fax: +358 9 4030 0789
E-mail: Tuula.Liljander@ymparisto.fi