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

Fifth session
Geneva, 10–12 November 2009

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES ON ITS FIFTH SESSION

Addendum

**Part Three: Chair's summary of the High-level Segment and other documents adopted by
the Meeting of the Parties**

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I. CHAIR'S SUMMARY OF THE HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT ON TRANSBOUNDARY WATER COOPERATION IN CENTRAL ASIA AND THE ROLE OF THE CONVENTION ON THE PROTECTION AND USE OF TRANSBOUNDARY WATERCOURSES AND INTERNATIONAL LAKES

A. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

1. A High-level Segment on transboundary water cooperation in Central Asia and the role of the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) was organized during the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties, on 12 November 2009. The segment was chaired by Ms. Hannele Pokka, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of the Environment of Finland.
2. In light of the increasing challenges for transboundary water cooperation in Central Asia, the growing involvement of the international community — including the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the Water Convention — in the subregional discussion on water and related energy issues, the High-level Segment aimed to discuss the needs of Central Asian countries with regard to transboundary water cooperation and sustainable management of water and the role that permanent cooperation under the Convention could play in meeting those needs.
3. In particular, the High-level Segment pursued the following objectives:
 - To clarify the major principles and provisions of the Convention and to emphasize its value for both upstream and downstream countries, and its role in preventing conflicts and disputes.
 - To highlight the benefits of participating in the institutional setting under the Convention in the implementation and progressive development of the provisions of the Convention through guidelines and recommendations, as well as in the mechanisms of the Convention (establishment of joint bodies, exchange of information, consultations, etc.).
 - To strengthen the dialogue between all Parties to the Convention — not only those coming from Central Asia — and non-Parties, and to illustrate the experience gained under the Convention.
 - To underline the role of partnership in the implementation of the Convention, with a view to fostering some new partnerships and projects for improved transboundary water cooperation in Central Asia.
 - To stress the role of the Convention in the protection of the environment, conservation of ecosystems and implementation of integrated water resources management.
 - To discuss how the foreseen negative impacts of climate change on water resources in the subregion could be more efficiently tackled through transboundary water cooperation.
4. The segment was divided into two sessions. The first session discussed options for institutional arrangements for transboundary water cooperation and possibilities for future

developments in Central Asia, building on the experience of Parties to the Convention in other parts of the UNECE region. The second focused on emerging issues in Central Asia: links between water management and environmental aspects, and climate change.

5. The full programme of the High-level Segment and the text of most of the interventions are available at http://www.unece.org/env/water/mop5/mop5_hls.htm.

B. SESSION 1: INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRANSBOUNDARY WATER COOPERATION

6. Session 1 was opened with a key-note address on “Strengthening regional water cooperation: the role of the Executive Committee of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea”, by Mr. Sagit Ibatullin, Chair of the Executive Committee of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea.

7. The session continued with a discussion among the following panellists:

- H.E. Mr. Saidi Yoqubzod, Minister of Melioration and Water Resources, Tajikistan;
- H.E. Mr. Gheorghe Salaru, Minister of Environment, Republic of Moldova;
- Mr. Shavkat Khamraev, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources, Uzbekistan;
- Mr. Gyula Hollo, Ministry of Environment, on behalf of Mr. Laszlo Kothay, State Secretary for Water, Hungary;
- Ms. Marina Seliverstova, Head, Federal Agency of Water Resources, Russian Federation;
- Mr. Chyngyz Uzakbaev, Deputy Director General of the Water Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Water Management and Processing Industries, Kyrgyzstan;

The discussion was followed by interventions from the floor.

8. During the session, many interventions stressed that Central Asia was a unique subregion which, despite the complexity of the situation characterized by differences in economic potential and social and economic development, as well as the growing impacts of climate change, had nevertheless managed to create a system for permanent subregional cooperation supported by political will and the commitment of the Heads of Central Asian States. Participants from Central Asian States stressed that their countries provided financial and technical support and made efforts to ensure a proper information basis for the existing institutions (the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (IFAS), its Executive Committee (EC-IFAS), the Interstate Commission for Water Coordination (ICWC), the Interstate Commission for Sustainable Development

(ICSD) and others). However, strengthening legal and institutional cooperation was recognized as an important task that could greatly contribute to sustainable and effective transboundary cooperation in the subregion.

9. The key-note speaker as well as several panellists stressed the role of IFAS in strengthening water cooperation in Central Asia. The activities of IFAS and Central Asian States at the time of the meeting were focused on implementation of the Joint Declaration of the IFAS Summit (Almaty, 28 April 2009). In that Joint Declaration, the Heads of Central Asian States committed to further improving the institutional set-up and legal frameworks of IFAS. Heads of States also mandated the EC-IFAS to develop the third Aral Sea Basin Programme for 2011–2015 (ASBP-3), together with ICWC and ICSD, and with the involvement of national experts and donors.

10. The improvement of the legal and institutional frameworks was ongoing under the umbrella of the EC-IFAS, facilitated by the UNECE project “Regional Dialogue and Cooperation on Water Resources Management”, with support from the Government of Germany. The EC-IFAS coordinated over 60 national and international experts, who prepared proposals on strengthening institutional and legal frameworks for cooperation in the subregion, to be further submitted to the Board of IFAS. The major directions of the ASBP-3 had already been drafted by EC-IFAS and were under discussion by Central Asian countries, donors and the international community.

11. As stressed by most panellists, efforts to reconcile competing national interests in developing hydropower, expanding irrigation and ensuring adequate and stable water and energy supply, as well as the activities to strengthen the legal and institutional frameworks for cooperation in the subregion, should be based on international law and on a clear understanding of the rights and obligations of all riparian countries. The UNECE Water Convention and the United Nations Convention on the Law of Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses were important instruments in that field. As noted by some panellists, cooperation in the framework of the UNECE Water Convention should become an important contribution to conflict prevention, thereby enhancing peace and security in the subregion. The Guide to Implementing the Water Convention should furthermore assist in the promotion and application of the Convention’s provisions.

12. In addition to emphasizing the role of the Water Convention, participants also stressed the value of the Protocol on Water and Health for Central Asia.

13. Participants also underlined the significant role that environmental impact assessment in a transboundary context for planned activities and projects in transboundary waters should play in enhancing transboundary water cooperation in Central Asia.

14. The need to strengthen institutional mechanisms and legal frameworks entailed also the need to empower institutions with adequate mandates to implement integrated water resource management (IWRM) and to make IWRM part of national legislation and regional agreements. The need to promote basin-wide cooperation and to overcome poor representation of all key sectors in transboundary water cooperation — such as environment, water, health, agriculture and energy — was underlined. It was considered equally important to enforce decisions and

strengthen coordination, including at the national level. Those problems were relevant for Central Asia as much as in other parts of the UNECE region. The UNECE Water Convention and its guidance documents could be of use to promote and implement the principles of IWRM.

15. Some speakers stressed that in addition to improving the formal institutional structures, the strengthening of institutional frameworks might include: (a) improving methodological frameworks for transboundary water cooperation; (b) development and implementation of bilateral and multilateral programmes and projects on transboundary waters; (c) harmonization or approximation of methodologies to assess water quality; (d) strengthening joint research and improving access to information; (e) coordinated regulation of hydrological regimes; and (f) improving the mechanisms for early warning in critical situations.

16. Participants of the High-level Segment highly appreciated that Parties to the Convention from outside Central Asia had shared their experience with Central Asian countries. As stressed by Hungary, transboundary cooperation was not just essential and beneficial for downstream countries: for instance, Hungary provided support to its upstream riparian, Ukraine, to strengthen its flood defence system and upgrade water quality monitoring. Another non-Central Asian panellist from the Republic of Moldova emphasized the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in transboundary water cooperation.

17. Participants stressed that water cooperation in Central Asia had garnered increasing attention in the international arena. That interest had been accompanied by the development of several new initiatives (e.g., the European Union Central Asia Strategy, the Berlin Water Unites Process, and the Wider Europe Initiative of Finland). The need for stronger cooperation between international organizations and donors active in the subregion, in particular through the development of the new Aral Sea Basin Program-3, was emphasized. The important role of international organizations, such as UNECE, the European Union (EU), the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Asian Development Bank, the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the United Nations Development Programme (in particular, through the Central Asia Water Sector Coordination Initiative (CAWSCSI)) was highlighted in several statements.

18. The experience of the Chu-Talas Commission was considered by several participants as a successful example of institutional cooperation in Central Asia. In 2000, the “Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic on the Use of Water Management Facilities of Intergovernmental Status on the Chu-Talas” was concluded with the objective of further developing mutually beneficial cooperation on a sound legal basis. That Agreement included a commitment by Kazakhstan to refund part of Kyrgyzstan’s expenses for the maintenance and reparation of canals, dams and water storage basins which supplied water to both countries. The Chu-Talas Commission had been inaugurated in July 2006 with the aim of coordinating activities related to the implementation of the 2000 Agreement. At the Commission’s meeting in October 2009, the countries had decided to expand their cooperation to several additional installations, as well as to make arrangements for joint funding of the secretariat.

19. Cooperation on dam safety in Central Asia, under a UNECE project supported by Finland and pursued jointly with EC-IFAS, was highlighted as another platform for substantive efforts in the subregion to improve national legislation and its implementation, and regional cooperation on dam safety, including the establishment of early warning systems.

20. A number of participants emphasized the importance of ensuring the involvement of China, Afghanistan and the Russian Federation in transboundary water cooperation in Central Asia. The representative of Afghanistan reiterated the need to involve his country in the dialogue on transboundary waters in Central Asia.

C. SESSION 2: WATER MANAGEMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRANSBOUNDARY WATER COOPERATION

21. Session 2 focused on emerging issues in Central Asia: links between water management and environmental aspects, and climate change, including challenges and opportunities. A discussion between the following panellists opened the session:

- H.E. Mr. Saidi Yoqubzod, Minister of Melioration and Water Resources, Tajikistan;
- Mr. Dan Cârlan, State Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, Romania;
- Mr. Nariman Umarov, Chairman, State Committee for Nature Protection, Uzbekistan;
- Mr. Mukhtar Tultabayev, Deputy Director, Department of Ecology, Policy and Sustainable Development, Ministry of Environmental Protection, Kazakhstan;
- Ms. Taisia Neronova, Deputy Chief of Department, State Agency for Environmental Protection and Forestry, Kyrgyzstan;
- Mr. Victor Dukhovny, Director, Scientific Information Centre, Interstate Commission for Water Coordination of Central Asia;
- Mr. Yusup Kamalov, Coordinator of the Energy and Climate Issue Group, European ECO-Forum; Chairman, Union for the Defence of the Aral Sea and Amu Darya.

22. Participants recognized that climate change issues should be a priority area for transboundary water cooperation in Central Asia since climate change had and would continue to have significant impacts on water resources. According to some speakers, the degradation of glaciers was among the most pressing issues.

23. Adaptation of the water sector in the context of the general trend of increased water consumption might be achieved through raising water efficiency together with adequate

measures to protect water resources. Participants stressed that countries with economies in transition were more vulnerable to the consequences of climate change and therefore substantial financial support would be required for adapting to climate change in the region. Coordinated action by Central Asian States was considered important in order not to aggravate the current situation. Special attention should be paid to adaptation measures in transboundary basins.

24. Central Asian countries had taken important actions to mitigate climate change. For example, in Kyrgyzstan, there were ongoing projects dealing with energy saving and energy efficiency, waste management, and promoting renewable energy sources in the remote parts of the country. The challenges included the need to build national capacity to use the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), as well as insufficient funding for CDM projects.

25. Participants called for urgent action to save Lake Balkhash, which was facing declining water levels and salinization due to current water management practices in Kazakhstan and China. The need to prevent Lake Balkhash from repeating the disaster of the Aral Sea was underscored.

26. Also highlighted were the important contributions to information exchange in the subregion made by the Central Asia Regional Water Information Base (CAREWIB) project, implemented by the Scientific-Information Center of the ICWC in cooperation with UNECE and the Global Resource Information Database in Arendal, Norway (GRID-Arendal), with support from Switzerland. The portal provided data and analytical materials on the current water management situation and included a rich electronic library on water and environment.

27. The role of NGOs in fostering transboundary water cooperation in Central Asia was emphasized. NGOs such as Eco-Forum-Kazakhstan and Eco-Forum-Uzbekistan contributed to the introduction of IWRM principles and to the establishment of basin councils and water users' associations. The Public Board in the framework of the Interstate Commission for Sustainable Development might serve as a good example for institutionalizing public participation in the water and environment discussion in Central Asia. The importance of synergies and closer cooperation between the Water Convention and the Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters was also highlighted.

D. CONCLUSIONS

28. The High-level Segment strengthened the dialogue between all Parties to the Convention — not only those coming from Central Asia — and non-Parties, and illustrated experience gained under the Convention. All participating representatives from Central Asia recognized the importance of transboundary water cooperation and reiterated a firm commitment to cooperate.

29. The role that the Water Convention could play in the subregion for facilitating transboundary cooperation was emphasized by many speakers. It was shown that the Convention provided equal ground for cooperation for both upstream and downstream countries, and has a potential to prevent conflicts and disputes. Successful stories of transboundary water cooperation both within (i.e., the Chu-Talas Commission) and outside Central Asia were important to build on. The Guide to Implementing the Convention would help to advance the practical work. The

Water Convention and its Protocol on Water and Health could be important instruments to implement IWRM in the subregion.

30. Various international initiatives taking place in the subregion should be coordinated and used in the most effective and beneficial way for Central Asian countries. In that regard, both donor and recipient countries had the responsibility to ensure such coordination.

31. Water quality and its links to environmental protection, which had been neglected in the past, was increasingly recognized as being of high relevance for subregional cooperation in Central Asia. The unique ecosystems of Lake Balkhash and the Aral Sea were still endangered and required increased cooperation that would bring together not only Central Asian countries, but also the Russian Federation, China and Afghanistan, in sharing those basins.

32. Central Asia was one of the subregions most vulnerable to climate change. Only united efforts of all countries in the subregion and effective transboundary water cooperation could make adaptation effective and eventually beneficial for the environment, as well as for social and economic development.

33. “Sustainable Management of Water and Water-related Ecosystems” was selected as one of the two major themes for the next “Environment for Europe” Ministerial Conference, to be held in Astana, Kazakhstan, in 2011. That would be an opportunity to track progress achieved in strengthening transboundary water cooperation in Central Asia.

II. STRATEGY FOR THE JOINT AD HOC EXPERT GROUP ON WATER AND INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS

(adopted by the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes at its fifth session (Geneva, 10–12 November 2009))

A. MISSION

1. The mission of the Joint Ad Hoc Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents (Joint Expert Group) is to assist Parties to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (Industrial Accidents Convention) and to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) in drawing up and implementing measures aimed at strengthening prevention and preparedness regarding accidental water pollution in the transboundary context.
2. In carrying out its mission, the Joint Expert Group may:
 - (a) Provide assistance in organizing exercises, workshops and seminars;
 - (b) Draw up methodological training materials;
 - (c) Draft booklets of good practices;
 - (d) Develop or review specific guidelines and recommendations.

B. AREAS OF WORK

3. The areas of interest for the Joint Expert Group are identified by the two Conventions:
 - (a) Measures for prevention, control and reduction of transboundary accidental water pollution (article 6 of the Industrial Accidents Convention and article 3 of the Water Convention);
 - (b) Effective transboundary contingency planning, including warning and alert systems (articles 8 and 10 of the Industrial Accidents Convention, and articles 3 and 9 of the Water Convention);
 - (c) Exchange of information and experience, particularly through joint training programmes and the organization of relevant seminars and meetings (article 16 of the Industrial Accidents Convention and article 13 of the Water Convention).

C. WORK ARRANGEMENTS

4. The Joint Expert Group delivers products as demanded by the Parties to either Convention. The demands are clearly specified by the Parties.

Step 1

5. To identify the demands, the Bureaux:

- (a) Examine outcomes of the meetings of the working groups and task forces, as well as workshops, seminars and exercises under either Convention;
- (b) Perform simple surveys on specific subjects, as needed, and examine those surveys.

Step 2

6. On the basis of the examination, the Bureaux decide whether to activate the Joint Expert Group to work on delivering specific demand-driven product(s). The basis for activating the Joint Expert Group is that:

- (a) The two Conventions are the appropriate international forums for undertaking the activity(ies);
- (b) Duplication of efforts is avoided and synergies ensured, as appropriate, with other activities of the Conventions;
- (c) Practical results can be expected.

7. The Bureaux agree on:

- (a) The kind of product to be delivered by the Joint Expert Group;
- (b) The format of work (e.g., a drafting group, workshop or training session);
- (c) The time frame, including the tentative number of meetings of the Joint Expert Group and other relevant events, as appropriate;
- (d) Budgets and fund-raising (e.g., available and required funding).

Step 3

8. Following their decision, the Bureaux, with the support of the co-Chairs of the Joint Expert Group, as appropriate, and the secretariat, prepare a detailed proposal on an activity, which will include the above elements ((a)–(d)). For the Water Convention, this proposal is submitted to the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management for discussion and comments. If the Working Group's comments entail a redefinition of the activity, the Bureau of the Water Convention communicates such information to the Bureau of the Industrial Accidents Convention for a joint decision. Based on the joint decision, the Bureaux include this specific activity in the workplans of both Conventions.

Step 4

9. The Bureaux steer the follow-up to these decisions. The Joint Expert Group, once activated on a specific subject, performs its task(s) in accordance with the approved detailed proposals of the Bureaux and their additional instructions, as needed. Progress in implementing the task(s) is reported to the Bureaux and through them to the meetings of both Conventions' governing bodies. For the Water Convention, progress is also reported to the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management for discussion and comments.

D. COMPOSITION

10. The Joint Expert Group is open to Parties to either Convention. Non-Parties and stakeholders may also participate in the work of the Joint Expert Group.

11. Depending on the task for which the Joint Expert Group is being activated, the Parties are invited to nominate their experts in the specific subject. To facilitate the nomination of experts, the Parties receive a profile with expertise needed.

E. CHAIRMANSHIP

12. The Joint Expert Group is led by two co-Chairs, representing the Water Convention and the Industrial Accidents Convention.

13. Parties with interest and expertise in the subject that the Joint Expert Group is tasked with working on may offer to chair the Joint Expert Group in dealing with that subject.

14. The Bureaux can decide to appoint the co-Chairs at their first meetings following, respectively, meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the Industrial Accidents Convention or sessions of the Meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention.

15. The co-Chairs are eligible for re-election.

16. In the case that the elected co-Chair is not a Bureau member, each Bureau ensures that he/she is invited to participate in those Bureau meetings at which the Group's tasks are on the agenda.

17. The co-Chairs, with the support of the appointed members of the Bureaux (see section F below), as appropriate, have the responsibility to facilitate the work of the Bureaux regarding the examination of Parties' needs/demands in the Group's areas of interest. To this end, they provide the Bureaux at their relevant meetings with:

(a) Information on the outcome/conclusions of workshop(s)/seminar(s) relating to the Joint Expert Group's areas of interest;

(b) Suggestions regarding the Joint Expert Group's involvement and the profiles of experts to be nominated by Parties;

(c) Proposals for surveys.

F. COORDINATION BETWEEN THE BUREAUX

18. The Bureaux work separately and therefore need to coordinate their decisions related to the Joint Expert Group. To this end, at its meetings each Bureau makes only recommendations for decisions regarding the work of the Joint Expert Group that are to be reciprocally accepted by the other Bureau.

19. Each Bureau shall also decide to appoint one of its members to support and promote the work of the Joint Expert Group, as well as facilitate communication and reporting during and between the Bureaux meetings.

20. The Chairs of the Bureaux, assisted by the members of the Bureaux appointed to support the Joint Expert Group, ensure effective communication between both bodies with the aim of working out common decisions. If needed, the Chairs can call for a joint meeting or other format of joint consultation (e.g., teleconference, e-mail consultation) of the Bureaux.

G. SECRETARIAT

21. The secretariats to the Water Convention and the Industrial Accidents Convention provide support to the work of the Joint Expert Group, taking into consideration the availability of resources.

III. STRATEGY FOR THE INTERNATIONAL WATER ASSESSMENT CENTRE

(adopted by the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, at its fifth session (Geneva, 10–12 November 2009))

A. BACKGROUND

1. The International Water Assessment Centre (IWAC) was established as the collaborative centre of the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, under the leadership of the Netherlands, at the second session of the Meeting of the Parties (The Hague, 23–25 March 2000). Since then, IWAC has proven to be an effective operational arm of the Convention and its Protocols, and has helped transform these instruments' obligations into concrete actions on the ground.

2. At the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties (Bonn, Germany, 20–22 November 2006), the Government of Slovakia offered to host IWAC at the Slovak Hydrometeorological Institute. Following this offer, IWAC was formally inaugurated on 7 April 2009, and a Memorandum of Understanding on IWAC between the Slovak Government and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) was signed on the same date.

B. OBJECTIVES

3. The core objective of this Strategy is to provide a general framework for the functioning of IWAC. The Strategy is intended to assist Parties and non-Parties to the Convention and other potential IWAC partners in developing a long-term plan to pursue practical implementation of the Convention and its Protocols. On the basis of the Strategy, Parties, non-Parties and IWAC partners are invited: (a) to define and implement needs-driven activities; (b) to seek synergies among different projects; and (c) to explore possibility of raising funds for the activities.

C. RESPONSIBILITIES

4. The growing need to consider monitoring and assessment within the wider context of integrated water resources management calls for broadening the original focus of IWAC on monitoring and assessment.

5. On the basis of the decisions by the Meeting of the Parties on the areas of work under the Convention and the experience gained since the establishment of IWAC, responsibilities of IWAC will include:

(a) Initiating and/or assisting in developing and implementing pilot projects on priority issues defined by the Parties to the Convention;

(b) Assisting in preparation of periodic assessments of transboundary rivers, lakes and groundwaters;

- (c) Organizing training courses and workshops, and/or rendering assistance to UNECE countries and joint bodies in conducting such events;
- (d) Providing advice on integrated water resources management upon request by countries in the UNECE region and in other regions as appropriate;
- (e) Acting as a clearing house for issues dealt with under the Convention and its Protocols, including the collection and dissemination of relevant materials;
- (f) Acting as a coordinator between its Core Group members and other partners, to promote: (i) joint action, including the implementation of projects and related fund-raising activities; (ii) the exchange of concepts and findings of scientific research; and (iii) dialogue between scientists and policymakers, to help facilitate the translation of scientific results and technical know-how into policy;
- (g) Assisting joint bodies within the terms of article 9, paragraph 2, of the Convention in carrying out their obligations under the Convention.

6. IWAC shall ensure that all its tasks and main activities are properly coordinated and harmonized, to the extent feasible, with pertinent legislation and policies of the European Union, activities of the European Environment Agency and its relevant topic centres, and the activities of joint bodies under the Convention.

7. Activities should be needs-driven and can be organized at the UNECE region-wide level, at the subregional level (in the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia, South-Eastern Europe, and European Union and other Western European countries), or at the national level.

8. Specific workplans for the intersessional period of three years between sessions of the Meeting of the Parties will be developed to pursue implementation of priority activities, and will be submitted for adoption to the respective session of the Meeting of the Parties.¹

D. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

9. The Meeting of Parties to the Convention will consider progress achieved in IWAC activities and decide on strategic directions for its further work.

10. Subsidiary bodies under the Convention will define specific areas of work, including through identification of activities such as pilot projects.

11. The Convention secretariat will ensure communication between the Convention's bodies and the IWAC secretariat, and will assist with implementing activities, as appropriate.

¹ The IWAC workplan for 2010–2012 is presented in chapter IV of the present document.

12. A Core Group of IWAC, comprised of representatives of leading institutions dealing with water-related issues, will:

(a) Prepare, review and update, in consultation with the IWAC and UNECE secretariats, future strategies and workplans for IWAC activities for consideration by the Meeting of the Parties and other subsidiary bodies, as appropriate;

(b) Decide upon and support implementation of activities, including fund-raising, as appropriate. The composition of the Core Group will take into account the expertise required for activities in the respective IWAC workplan.

13. IWAC secretariat will take the lead in initiating and implementing the activities defined in the IWAC workplan.

E. RESOURCES

14. The IWAC secretariat will be located at the Slovak Hydrometeorological Institute in Bratislava until November 2012. IWAC will use the Institute's resources as needed for its activities. Slovakia will provide the necessary financial and human resources as well as technical means to ensure the smooth and effective functioning of IWAC.

15. The following sources of financial support to IWAC activities are foreseen: (a) the budget of the Slovak Hydrometeorological Institute; and (b) the budget of the Slovak Ministry of Foreign Affairs (priority subregions are the Caucasus, Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe). IWAC will also consider raising funds from the European Commission and other donors, as needed.

IV. WORKPLAN OF THE INTERNATIONAL WATER ASSESSMENT CENTRE FOR 2010–2012

(adopted by the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, at its fifth session (Geneva, 10–12 November 2009))

1. The 2010–2012 workplan of the International Water Assessment Centre (IWAC) includes activities in which IWAC will play a role or which it will lead. The workplan should be read together with the overall Convention workplan, presented in part two of this report (see ECE/MP.WAT/29/Add.1).
2. The implementation of the 2010–2012 workplan will depend on the commitment of partner countries and institutions and on the availability of resources for the activities foreseen.

A. ACTIVITIES

1. Projects

1.1 New pilot projects on transboundary rivers, lakes and groundwaters

3. New pilot projects in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia as well as in South-Eastern Europe will be defined, including through the preparatory process of the second Assessment of transboundary rivers, lakes and groundwaters. The need to consider monitoring and assessment in the broader context of integrated water resources management (IWRM) also calls for widening the original focus on pilot projects on monitoring and assessment. Furthermore, the scope of pilot projects should as much as possible become basin-wide, rather than be limited to a single component of the basin, such as a river, lake or groundwater. The scope and objectives of new pilot projects should build on different activities under the Convention.
4. In particular, the programme will have three main focus areas:²
 - (a) Adaptation to climate change in the transboundary context, including management of floods and droughts;
 - (b) Joint monitoring and assessment of transboundary waters, including data management and information exchange;
 - (c) Implementation of payments for ecosystem services to support integrated water resources management.
5. IWAC, in cooperation with interested partners, will assist in the development of, fund-raising for, and implementation of the projects.

² More information on the objectives, focus and other issues related to pilot projects is contained in document ECE/MP.WAT/2009/5.

1.2 Ongoing projects carried out by other organizations

6. To develop synergies and cross-fertilization of different projects supporting implementation of the Convention, IWAC will also facilitate interlinkages between the most relevant initiatives on transboundary waters in the UNECE region.

2. Second Assessment of transboundary rivers, lakes and groundwaters

7. IWAC, in close cooperation with Global Water Partnership for Central and Eastern Europe (GWP-CEE) and other partners, will contribute to the preparation of the Assessment through: (a) supporting completion of the datasheets and coordinating inputs related to the waters shared by European Union (EU) countries; (b) facilitating communication with experts; (c) helping to prepare the substantive contributions; and (d) organizing or supporting the organization of meetings, in particular a subregional meeting for non-EU countries in Eastern Europe and neighbouring EU countries and a subregional meeting for EU and other Western European countries.

3. Sharing of experience and capacity-building

3.1 Training sessions

8. IWAC will facilitate organization of thematic training sessions that will respond to countries' needs. The training sessions should promote the implementation of the set of guidelines developed under the Convention.

3.2 Internet site

9. A more active maintenance of the IWAC website is anticipated, possibly with the exchange of knowledge and sharing of information and opinions via a "discussion forum".

10. To improve the dissemination of information about the Convention through the IWAC website, also using progress in implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive, references and documents will be included.

11. Based on the experience gained in the first round of preparation of river basin management plans in accordance with the EU Water Framework Directive³ in EU Member States in 2009, IWAC will support:

(a) The exchange of information between member countries, including on several "difficult" themes such as intercalibration, water assessment, exemptions and priority substances;

(b) The exchange of experience with respect to the implementation of the EU Flood Directive,⁴ as well as drought management;

³ Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy.

(c) Addressing gaps related to climate change in river management planning;

(d) The dissemination of experience with respect to implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive to countries with economies in transition, in particular countries sharing the Danube River basin and countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe.

3.3 Newsletter

12. It is proposed to produce a digital newsletter on a regular basis.

B. Resources

13. As a formal unit of the Slovak Hydrometeorological Institute, IWAC functions under the supervision of the Director-General of the Institute. The Institute has about 500 employees and its portfolio covers nearly all thematic fields of IWAC work. IWAC will use the Institute's resources, as needed, for its activities.

14. Financial resources are allocated by the Slovak Government yearly (starting from 2008) to cover personnel costs, office costs and co-financing of IWAC activities.

1. Personnel

15. Permanent secretariat (part-time — 80 per cent):

- (a) Director: Mr. Boris Minarik;
- (b) Deputy Director: Ms. Andrea Majovska;
- (c) Communication and administration: Ms. Marta Palkova, Ms. Anna Klinovska;
- (d) Financial manager: Ms. Gabriela Mokranova.

16. Permanent experts (part-time, as required by activities):

- (a) Integrated management: Mr. Jan Kucharcik;
- (b) Cooperation with other international organizations: Ms. Maria Mirtova;
- (c) Hydrology: Ms. Jana Poorova;
- (d) Surface water monitoring and assessment: Ms. Lea Mrafkova;
- (e) Groundwater monitoring and assessment: Mr. Eugen Kullman;
- (f) Operational hydrology and flood protection: Ms. Danica Leskova;
- (g) Information systems and GIS:⁵ Mr. Ivan Frano;
- (h) Databases: Ms. Daniela Durkovicova.

18. Additional experts: ad hoc thematic working groups, also including experts in other fields as needed, will be established, as required by activities.

⁴ Directive 2007/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2007 on the assessment and management of flood risks.

⁵ Geographic information systems.

2. Information technology resources

19. The Institute's information technology (IT) system includes several Internet servers and about 500 personal computers connected to a local area network (LAN). The system ensures processing and online screening of data on monitoring and assessment of the waters and air of Slovakia. Information is received from national hydrological and meteorological stations and satellite, radar, lightning and other observation networks. Cooperation with other countries and international organizations is also taking place.
