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Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on
the Protection and Use of Transboundary
Watercourses and International Lakes

Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management

Tenth meeting

Geneva, 24 and 25 June 2015

Item 4 (d) of the provisional agenda

**Support to implementation and accession: consideration
of the need for reporting under the Convention**

Proposal for a reporting mechanism by the core group on reporting

Note by the core group on reporting

Summary

At its sixth session (Rome, 28–30 November 2012), the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes mandated the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management, in consultation with the Implementation Committee, to carry out an analysis on the needs for reporting under the Convention. At its ninth meeting (Geneva, 25–26 June 2014), the Working Group decided to create a core group on reporting in order to elaborate a proposal for a possible reporting mechanism.

The present document contains the core group's proposal for a reporting mechanism under the Convention, and includes a draft template for reporting in an annex.

The Working Group is expected to consider the proposal and the template annexed to it. If, following its consideration of the matter, the Working Group is of the opinion that a reporting mechanism should be introduced, it might also consider whether or not a pilot reporting exercise should be carried out, the frequency of reporting, the time schedule for the different steps of a first reporting exercise and the use to be made of completed national reports.

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I. Background

1. At its sixth session (Rome, 28–30 November 2012), the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) mandated the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management, in consultation with the Implementation Committee, to carry out an analysis on the needs for reporting under the Convention (ECE/MP.WAT/37, para. 24 (d), and ECE/MP.WAT/37/Add.1, work area 1.4). The Working Group was to take into account the capacity of countries and other relevant reporting mechanisms. Such an analysis was to serve as the basis for the possible elaboration of the scope and modalities of a reporting mechanism to be submitted for consideration and possible adoption by the Meeting of the Parties at its seventh session in November 2015. A questionnaire was sent to all focal points in autumn 2013 and the results were summarized in a “draft analysis on the needs for reporting under the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes” (ECE/MP.WAT/WG.1/2014/3).

2. At its ninth meeting (Geneva, 25–26 June 2014), the Working Group reviewed the questionnaire results and decided to establish a core group to develop a proposal for a reporting mechanism for consideration at its tenth meeting. Such a reporting mechanism was to be simple, “smart” and based, to the extent possible, on already existing reporting requirements under European Union (EU) directives and other relevant multilateral environmental agreements. All focal points were invited to nominate members for the core group.

3. The core group held its first meeting in Geneva on 15 and 16 December 2014. A draft template for reporting under the Water Convention was developed based on the discussions at the first meeting and sent to core group members and the Bureau for comments. The comments received were integrated in a second version of the draft template for reporting. Parties and other States were then invited to comment on the second version. Based on these comments, the core group elaborated a revised version that is included in an annex to the present document. It also proposed a number of elements for inclusion in a possible decision on reporting, as set out in the following section.

II. Elements for a possible decision on reporting

A. Purposes of the reporting

4. In introducing a reporting mechanism under the Convention, the objective is to:
- (a) Provide data and information on the implementation of provisions of the Convention;
 - (b) Accumulate lessons learned, good practices and experiences to enhance implementation of the Convention;
 - (c) Identify emerging issues and difficulties in the implementation of the Convention with a view to informing the development of the Convention’s programmes of work and providing information to the Implementation Committee, among other things;
 - (d) Provide a means to enhance basin-specific cooperation and respond to the specific characteristics of each basin;
 - (e) Support national implementation of the Convention;
 - (f) Provide information to support the mobilization of resources for capacity-development and technical assistance activities.

B. Introduction of reporting

5. The core group recommends carrying out a pilot reporting exercise in 2016 and 2017, in order to allow sufficient time for: (a) preparing a draft decision for the Meeting of the Parties in 2018; (b) analysing the possible need for revising the reporting template; and (c) allowing input to the preparation of a concept for the third comprehensive assessment of transboundary waters under the Convention.

C. Frequency of reporting

6. The core group suggests reporting every three years. However, every second cycle would involve only updates in case of significant changes and the reporting template would not, therefore, be revised in those cycles.

Annex

Template for a possible reporting mechanism

I. Transboundary water management at the national level

In this first section, you are requested to provide general information on transboundary water management at the national level. Information on the management of specific transboundary waters, basins and agreements should be presented in section II and not repeated here.

Please answer open questions very briefly, and in less than 200 words, using bullet points as appropriate.

1. (a) Does your country's national legislation refer to measures to prevent, control and reduce any transboundary impact (art. 2 of the Convention)?

Yes / No

If yes, list the main national legislation:

- (b) Do your country's national policies, action plans and strategies refer to measures to prevent, control and reduce any transboundary impact?

Yes / No

If yes, list the main national policies, action plans and strategies:

- (c) Does your country's legislation provide for the following principles?

Precautionary principle Yes / No

Polluter-pays principle Yes / No

Sustainable development Yes / No

- (d) Does your country have a national licensing or permitting system for wastewater discharges and other point source pollution (art. 3, para. 1 (b)) (e.g., in industry, mining, energy, municipal, wastewater management, other sectors) ?

Yes / No

If yes, for which sectors? (please list):

If not, please explain why not (giving the most important reasons) or provide information if there are plans to introduce a licensing or permitting system:

If your country has a licensing system does the system provide for setting emission limits based on best available technology?

Yes / No

(e) Are the authorized discharges monitored and controlled (art. 3, para. 1 (b))?

Yes / No

If yes, how?

Monitoring of discharges

Monitoring of physical and chemical impacts on water

Monitoring of ecological impacts on water

Conditions on permits

Inspectorate

Other means (*please list*):

If your country does not have a discharge monitoring system, please explain why not or provide information if there are plans to introduce a discharge monitoring system:

(f) What are the main measures which your country takes to reduce diffuse sources of water pollution on transboundary waters (art. 3, para. 1) (*e.g. from agriculture, transport, forestry or aquaculture; examples below relate to agriculture, but other sectors may be more significant*)?

• **Legislative measures**

Norm for uses of fertilizers

Norms for uses of manure

Bans on or norms for use of pesticides

Others (*please list*):

• **Economic and financial measures**

Monetary incentives

Environmental support systems

Environmental taxes (such as fertilizer taxes)

Others (*please list*):

• **On-farm advice and extension services**

• **Technical measures**

• *Source control measures*

Crop rotation

Tillage control

Winter cover crops

Others (*please list*):

• “End of pipe” measures

- Buffer/filter strips
- Wetland reconstruction
- Sedimentation traps
- Chemical measures
- Others (*please list*):

Other types of measures (*please list*):

(g) Does your country apply the ecosystems approach (art. 3, para. 1 (i), and art. 2, para. 1 (d))?

Yes / No

If yes, please describe how:

(h) Does your country take specific measures to prevent the pollution of groundwaters (art. 3, para. 1 (k))?

Yes / No

If yes, please list the most important measures:

2. Does your country have a regulatory system regarding water abstraction?

Yes / No

Are abstractions monitored and controlled?

Yes / No

3. Does your country require transboundary environmental impact assessment (EIA)?

Yes / No

Does your country have procedures for transboundary EIA?

Yes / No

If yes, please make reference to the legislative basis (please insert the name and section of the relevant laws) (NB: If your country is a Party to the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context, you may refer to your country's report under that Convention.):

4. Does your country have transboundary agreements for protection and/or management of transboundary waters, whether bilateral, multilateral and/or at basin level?

Yes / No

If yes, list the bilateral, multilateral and basin agreements (listing for each the countries concerned):

II. Questions for each transboundary basin, river, lake or aquifer

You are kindly requested to complete this second section for each transboundary basin or aquifer, or group of basins covered by the same agreement and where conditions are similar.¹

In some instances, you may provide information on both a basin and one or more of its sub-basins, for example where you have agreements² on both the basin and its sub-basin. You may coordinate your responses with other States with which your country shares the basin or aquifer or even prepare a joint report for shared basins. General information on transboundary water management at the national level should be provided in section I and not repeated here.

Name of the transboundary basin, river, lake or aquifer, or group thereof, and list of the riparian States (*please insert*):

1. Is there one or more transboundary (bilateral or multilateral) agreements on this basin (art. 9)?

One or more agreements exist and are in force

Agreement developed but not in force

Agreement developed, not in force for all parties

Please insert the name of the agreement or agreements:

Agreement is under development

No agreement

If there is no agreement or it is not in force, please explain briefly why not and provide information on any plans to address the situation:

If there are other relevant arrangements for transboundary cooperation, please describe the scope of each:

If there is no agreement and no joint body for the basin, then jump to question 4. →

¹ An instruction will be given here, depending on how the template is distributed (i.e., electronic file or online template), to clarify how to proceed in filling out the template for additional basins.

² In section II, "agreement" covers all kinds of treaties, conventions and agreements ensuring cooperation in the field of transboundary waters. Section II can also be completed for other types of arrangements, such as memorandums of understanding.

Questions 2 and 3 to be completed for each bilateral or multilateral agreement in force in the basin/group of basins

2. (a) Does this agreement specify the basin area subject to cooperation?

Yes / No

If yes, does it cover the entire basin, or group of basins, and all riparian States?

Yes / No

Or, if the agreement relates to a sub-basin, does it cover the entire sub-basin?

Yes / No

Which States (including your own) are bound by the agreement? (*please list*):

(b) Are connected aquifers (or groundwater bodies) covered by the agreement?

Yes / No

(c) What is the sectoral scope of the agreement?

All water uses

Several water uses or sectors (*please list below*)

A single water use or sector

Water uses or sectors

Industry

Agriculture

Transport (e.g., navigation)

Urban development

Energy: hydropower and other energy types

Tourism

Nature protection

Other (*please list*):

(d) What topics or subjects of cooperation are included in the agreement (art. 9)?

Procedural and institutional issues

Dispute and conflict prevention and resolution

Institutional cooperation (joint bodies)

Consultation on planned measures

Mutual assistance (art. 15)

Topics of cooperation

Joint vision and management objectives

Joint significant water management issues

Navigation

- Environmental protection (ecosystem)
- Water quality
- Water quantity or allocation
- Cooperation in addressing floods
- Cooperation in addressing droughts
- Climate change adaptation

Monitoring and exchange

- Joint assessments
- Data collection and exchange (art. 13)
- Joint monitoring (art. 11)
- Maintenance of joint pollution inventories
- Elaboration of joint water quality objectives
- Common early warning and alarm procedures (art. 14)
- Exchange of experience between riparian States
- Exchange of information on planned measures

Joint planning and management

- Development of joint regulations on specific topics
- Development of international or joint river basin management or action plans
- Management of shared infrastructure
- Development of shared infrastructure
- Other (*please list*):

(e) What are the main difficulties and challenges that your country faces with the agreement and its implementation, if any (*please describe, if applicable*):

(f) Please attach a copy of the agreement or provide the web address of the document (*please attach document or insert web address, if applicable*):

3. Is your country a member of an operational joint body or joint bodies for this basin or agreement (art. 9)?

Yes / No

If no, why not? (please explain):

Where there is a joint body (or bodies)

- (a) If there is a joint body, which kind of joint body (*please tick one*)?
- Plenipotentiaries
- Basin or similar commission
- Other (*please describe*):
-
- (b) Does the joint body have any of the following features (*please tick the ones applicable*)?
- A secretariat
- If the secretariat is a permanent one, is it a joint secretariat or does each country host its own secretariat? (please describe):*
-
- A subsidiary body or bodies
- Please list (e.g., working groups on specific topics):*
-
- Other features (*please list*):
-
- (c) What are the tasks and activities of this joint body (art. 9, para. 2)?³
- Identification of pollution sources
- Data collection and exchange
- Joint monitoring
- Maintenance of joint pollution inventories
- Setting emission limits
- Elaboration of joint water quality objectives
- Management and prevention of flood or drought risks
- Preparedness for extreme events, e.g., common early warning and alarm procedures
- Water allocation (flow regulation)
- Policy development
- Control of implementation
- Exchange of experience between riparian States
- Exchange of information on existing and planned uses of water and related installations
- Settling of differences and conflicts

³ This may include tasks according to the agreement or tasks added by the joint body, or its subsidiaries. Often joint bodies coordinate, rather than taking measures in practical terms.

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| Consultations on planned measures | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Exchange of information on best available technology | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Participation in transboundary EIA | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Development of river basin management or action plans | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Management of shared infrastructure | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Addressing hydromorphological alterations | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Climate change adaptation | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Joint communication strategy | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Basin-wide or joint public participation and consultation of,
for example, basin management plans | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Joint resources to support transboundary cooperation | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Capacity-development | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Any other tasks (<i>please list</i>): | |

(d) What are the main difficulties and challenges that your country faces with the operation of the joint body, if any?

Governance issues

Please describe, if any:

Unexpected planning delays

Please describe, if any:

Lack of resources

Please describe, if true:

Lack of mechanism for implementing measures

Please describe, if true:

Lack of effective measures

Please describe, if true:

Unexpected extreme events

Please describe, if any:

Others (*please list and describe, as appropriate*):

(e) If not all riparian States are members of the joint body how does the body cooperate with them?

No cooperation

They have observer status

Other (*please describe*):

(f) Are representatives of international organizations invited to the meetings of the joint body (or bodies) as observers?

Yes / No

(g) Did the joint body ever invite a coastal State to cooperate (art. 9, paras. 3 and 4)?

Yes / No

If yes, please give details. If no, why not?:

4. Does the basin have an action plan or strategy specifically to improve the status of the transboundary basin or aquifer (art. 9, para. 2 (f)) ?

Yes / No

5. How is the transboundary basin protected and how is sustainable and rational water use ensured, including the protection of ecosystems (art. 2, para. 2 (b), and art. 3, para. 1 (i)) ?

Afforestation

Restoration of ecosystems

Environmental flow norms

Other measures (*please list*):

6. (a) Does your country exchange information and data with other riparian States in the basin (art. 13)?

Yes / No

(b) If yes, on what subjects are information and data exchanged?

Environmental conditions (art. 13, para. (1) (a))

Research activities and application of best available techniques (arts. 5, 12 and 13, para. 1 (b))

Emission monitoring data (art. 13, para. 1 (c))

Planned measures taken to prevent, control or reduce transboundary impacts (art. 13, para. 1 (d))

Point-source pollution sources

Diffuse pollution sources

Existing hydromorphological alterations (dams, etc.)

- Discharges
- Water abstractions
- Future planned measures with transboundary impacts, such as infrastructure development
- Other subjects (*please list*):

(c) Is there a shared database or information platform?

Yes / No

If yes, and if the database or platform is public, please provide the web address:

(e) What are the main difficulties and challenges to data exchange, if applicable? (*please describe*):

(f) What are the main benefits of data exchange in the basin? (*please describe*):

7. Do the riparian States carry out joint monitoring in the transboundary basin (art. 11, para. 1)?

Yes / No

(a) What does the joint monitoring cover?

	Covered?	Hydrological	Ecological	Chemical
Border surface waters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Surface waters in the entire basin	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Surface waters on the main watercourse	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Connected (transboundary) aquifers (or groundwaters)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(b) If joint monitoring is carried out, how is this done?

- National monitoring stations connected through a network or common stations
- Joint and agreed methodologies
- Joint sampling
- Common monitoring network
- Common agreed parameters

(c) Please describe the main achievements regarding joint monitoring, if any:

(d) Please describe any difficulties experienced with joint monitoring:

8. Do the riparian States carry out joint assessment of the transboundary river or lake basin or aquifer (art. 11)?

Yes / No

If yes, please provide the date of the last or only assessment, the frequency and scope (e.g., surface waters or groundwaters only, pollution sources, etc.) of the assessment:

9. Have the riparian States agreed to use joint water quality standards?

Yes / No

If yes, is the basis an international or regional standard (please specify which) or has it been adapted from the national standards of the riparian States?:

10. What are the measures implemented to prevent or limit the transboundary impact of accidental pollution (art. 14)?

Notification and communication

Coordinated/joint alarm system for accidental water pollution

Other (*please list*):

No measures

If not, which difficulties does your country face?

11. What are the measures implemented to prevent or limit the transboundary impact of extreme weather events (art. 14)?

Notification and communication

Coordinated or joint alarm system for floods

Coordinated or joint alarm system for droughts

Joint climate change adaptation strategy

Joint disaster risk reduction strategy

Other (*please list*):

No measures

If not, which difficulties does your country face?

12. Are procedures in place for mutual assistance in case of a critical situation (art. 15)?

Yes / No

If yes, please provide a brief summary:

13. Are the public or relevant stakeholders involved in transboundary water management in the basin (art. 16)?

Yes / No

If yes, how? (please tick one or more boxes):

Stakeholders have observer status in a joint body

If yes, please specify the stakeholders for each joint body:

Availability of information to the public

Consultation on planned measures or river basin management plans

Public involvement

Other *(please specify)*:

Notes:

Please remember to complete section II for each of the transboundary basins and aquifers.

Please also remember to attach copies of agreements, if any.

III. Final questions

1. What are the main challenges your country faces to implement the Convention? *(please describe)*:
2. What are the main achievements in implementing the Convention? What were the keys to achieving that success? *(please describe concrete examples)*:
3. Contact details of the person who filled out the questionnaire *(please insert)*:
4. Please include any additional information on the process of preparing the report (e.g., whether there was an exchange/consultation within the joint body/with riparian countries), in particular which institutions have been consulted *(please describe)*:
5. If you have any other comments please add them here *(insert comments)*:

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this report.