Joint Ad Hoc Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents

Progress achieved in the last 20 years

Péter Kovács
Ministry of Interior of Hungary/Co-chair of the JEG
Industrial Accidents and water
UNECE Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents

- Adopted in 17 March 1992 (Helsinki, Finland)
- Entered into force in 19 April 2000
- Now has 41 Parties, including EU, Russia, Caucasus and Central Asia
JEG was established under the “Water”- and the “Industrial Accidents”- Conventions to work on issues related to the prevention of accidental water pollution which is of interest to both Conventions in 1998.

Co-Chairmanship
“Water” Convention + ”Industrial Accident“ Convention
The Joint Expert Group (JEG)

- Cooperation between the Water and IA Conventions on issues related to accidental water pollution
- 7-9 May 1998 – Workshop on the prevention of IA and limitation of their impact on transboundary waters
- 13-15 May 1998 – 7th Meeting of the Signatories to the Industrial Accidents Convention; proposal to establish a joint ad hoc expert group on water and industrial accidents under both Conventions
- Sep 1998 – Endorsement of the proposal by the 1st Meeting of the Water Convention’s Working Group on Water Management
Why JEG is important?

→ Lessons learnt

- Toxic Emissions over the Air-Path can have dramatic consequences for Man and Environment, however the effects are mainly on a **local or regional scale**

- Even small amounts of dangerous substances released into **waters**, can cause huge environmental damages, as the impact is **far-reaching and often transboundary**

→ Water and IAs Conventions provide a legal framework for addressing the risk of transboundary water pollution
Participating countries in JEG

Co-chairs:
Hungary-Switzerland,
Hungary-Germany,
Hungary-Romania,
Hungary-Germany

Experts:
Armenia
Austria
Azerbaijan
Belarus
Croatia
Czech Republic
Denmark
Finland
Georgia
Germany
Hungary
Italy
Kazakhstan
Kyrgyzstan
Macedonia
Republic of Moldova
The Netherlands
Poland
Romania
Russian Federation
Serbia
Slovakia
Sweden
Ukraine
Secretariat’s
ICPDR,
JEG meetings

2001. Berlin
2002. Budapest
2003. Geneva
2003. Kaliningrad
2004. Budapest
2005. Geneva
2006. Geneva
2007. Yerevan
2008. Geneva
2011. Geneva
2011. Geneva
2014. Budapest
2015. Kiev
2016. Stockholm
2016. Dnipro
2017. Dnipro
2017. Slubice
2018. Tsaghkadzor
JEG meetings
Basis for JEG activities

• Mission of JEG
  ➢ assistance in organising exercises, workshops, seminars and conferences
  ➢ drawing up training materials
  ➢ drafting specific guidelines on good practices and recommendations
    eg. the implementation of the conclusions and recommendations of the
    Hamburg, Sandosz seminar, pipeline safety, tailing management facilities
    (TMFs), checklist methodology, trainings, joint exercises

• Strategy for the JEG
  ➢ prepared by the co-chairs of the JEG in consultation with the Bureaux of
    the Water Convention and of the Industrial Accidents Convention
  ➢ endorsed by the Meeting of the Parties in 2009
JEG activities in the past (1/3)

- support to the Working Group on Civil Liability in its drafting of the Protocol on Civil Liability
- reviewing the location criterion related to the water path contained in the guidelines to facilitate the identification of hazardous activities for the purposes of the Industrial Accidents Convention
- developing an inventory of existing safety guidelines and good practices for the prevention of accidental transboundary water pollution
JEG activities in the past (2/3)

• promoting international response exercises, including an international seminar on cooperation to prevent and respond to transboundary effects of industrial accidents

• developing safety guidelines for (off-site) pipelines -- which resulted in adopted guidelines and included a workshop on the prevention of water pollution due to pipeline accidents (Berlin, 2005) and a workshop on the prevention of accidents of gas transmission pipelines (The Hague, Netherlands, 2006)
JEG activities in the past (2/3)

• drawing up guidelines and good practices for tailing dams -- which resulted in adopted guidelines and included a workshop on the safety of tailing management facilities (Yerevan, 2007)

• facilitating the exchange of information on the functioning of alarm and notification systems

• developing safety guidelines and good practices for crisis management on transboundary waters

• drafting guidelines for establishing model cross-border contingency plans
Семинар БЭК ООН — Интеграция имеющихся станций мониторинга в системы раннего предупреждения

Dr. Rainer E. Enderlein
UNECE secretariat

Райнер Э. Эндерлин
Секретариат БЭК ООН
Other activities with JEG participation

- Cooperation with Universities „Raising the knowledge to the Safety of TMF“ (2017)
- Safety of TMF in the Caucasian Region. On-site Trainings (TMF) and Analysis of Legal Deficiencies (Caucasus Region (authorities and operators)) ongoing
- JEG Cooperation with the International Commissions for the Protection of the Odra and Danube River
- Crisis management part of the Danube Delta Project (RO, MD, UA)
- Table Top and Response Exercise in the Danube Delta (2015)
- Training Programme for Inspectors (UA 2008)
- Safety Of Tailing Management Facilities (2007)
- Transboundary Risk Management at the Dniester River Basin (2006-09)
- Transboundary Cooperation for Hazard Prevention at the Kura – River Catchment
- JEG Cooperation with UNECE – WG Monitoring and Assessment
- UNECE-Seminar (2006)
Pilot Project: TMF in Ukraine

Results:
- Checklist for TMF
- Tailing Hazard Index (THI)
Tailings (the waste resulting from the ore processing) usually discharged into an artificial pond (tailing pond). It is a common method for managing and disposing of this type of waste.
HISTORICAL ACCIDENTS
(http://www.tailings.info/knowledge/accidents.htm)

CAUSES OF ACCIDENTS
• Inadequate management
• Lack of control of hydrological system
• Errors in site selection and investigation
• Unsatisfactory foundation, lack of stability of downstream slope
• Seepage
• Overtopping
• Earthquakes and landslides

MAIN ROOT CAUSE:
RISK ANALYSIS AND RISK MANAGEMENT NEGLECTED
International response/mitigation exercises
Suggested future work in this area

Based on the biannual work plans of the JEG

The composition of the Joint Expert Group is unbalanced. We need more input from the Water Convention.

More active participation is required in the implementation of the future work and in hosting of the meetings.

Continuous and active work is expected from participants

There is a need for a sound financial base to support eligible countries.
Thank you for kind attention!