Cooperation with the UNECE-WHO/Europe Protocol on Water and Health

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Why a treaty to manage water resources and prevent water-related diseases?

In the pan-European region:

14 deaths per day due to inadequate water, sanitation and hygiene

Diarrhoeal diseases can be prevented through:
- safely managed drinking-water
- adequate sanitation and safely managed wastewater disposal
- good handwashing practices

In the WHO European Region diarrhoeal diseases cause an estimated 14 deaths per day due to inadequate sanitation.

14 people die every day of diarrheal disease due to inadequate water, sanitation and hygiene (*WHO, 2016)

18% of investigated outbreaks linked to water

- Hepatitis A
- Legionellosis
- Cryptosporidiosis
- Tularemia
- Rotavirus
- West Nile fever
- Yersinosis
- Giardiasis
- Leishmaniasis - cutaneous
- Old World phleboviruses
- Leishmaniasis - visceral
- Dengue
- Trichostonglyiasis
- Aeromonas & marine Vibrio

*WHO, 2016
• 21 million do not use basic drinking-water services
• 57 million do not enjoy piped water at premises
• 4.7 million use surface water
• 36 million lack access to basic sanitation services
• 328,000 practice open defecation
• 30% and 60% of urban wastewater, in high- and upper-middle income countries released to the environment without treatment
• 3/4 without basic drinking-water services live in rural areas
• 20% of rural dwellers live in homes without access to basic drinking water, as opposed to 3% of urban residents in the Caucus and Central Asia

Emerging threats: *Legionella*, micropollutants, antimicrobial resistance

(WHO, 2017)
The Protocol on Water and Health

World’s first legal treaty designed to reduce water-related deaths and diseases through improved water management.

It is up to the countries to translate its legal provisions into the reality of greater access to safe water and improved sanitation.

26 countries are Parties to the Protocol.

UNECE and WHO/Europe provide joint secretariat services.
Scope and provisions

- Adequate supplies of *wholesome drinking-water*
- Provision of *adequate sanitation* that protects health and the environment
- **Protection of water resources**, including the reduction of harmful discharges
- Safe use of water for *recreational purposes*
- Safe use of *wastewater and sewage sludge in agriculture*
- **Effective surveillance systems** for monitoring and for responding to incidents and outbreaks
Main obligations under the Protocol: setting targets and reporting

Setting and implementing targets
- Intersectoral coordination mechanisms
- Baseline analysis
- Setting targets and indicators
- Official adoption at highest possible level
- Developing implementation action plans
- Regular revision

Reporting on progress
- Collect and evaluate data on common indicators, national targets and Protocol priority areas
- Publish results at national level (public involvement)
- Review progress
- Submit summary report to the Meeting of the Parties every 3 years
Core provision: health systems

**Article 8:** Establish, improve or maintain national and local surveillance and early warning systems

1. WRD outbreaks/incidents identified
2. Public authorities notified
3. Institutional capacities strengthened
4. Public information provided
5. Contingency planning established
6. Preventive/remedial actions taken
2030 Agenda and Protocol: coherence of approaches

- Address the **whole water cycle**
- Focus on **intersectorality**
- Focus on **inequalities**
- Define **ultimate objectives** and countries set its own **targets**
- Follow-up and review of **progress**
Impact of work under the Protocol

- Works with countries to ensure political will combined with intersectoral strategies
- Provides platform for capacity building and professional training across the region
- Promotes deeper understanding of the relationship between water, sanitation and health
- Encourages the uptake of internationally recognized tools and approaches in regulation, management (WSPs and SSPs) and surveillance, both in policy and practice
Programme of work for 2017-2019

Support for setting and implementing targets

- Prevention and reduction of water-related diseases
- Equitable access to water and sanitation
- Increasing resilience to climate change
- Assistance to support implementation at national level

Compliance Committee

- Safe and efficient management of water supply and sanitation
- Institutional water, sanitation and hygiene
- Small-scale water supplies and sanitation
Areas of cooperation with the UNECE Water Convention

- Increasing resilience to climate change (building capacity to deal with water scarcity and its health impacts)
- Assistance to Protocol target setting and implementation at national level under EUWI+ National Policy Dialogues in:
  Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova, Tajikistan, Ukraine
- Increased cross-fertilization: transboundary aspects analyzed under the Protocol and health dimension integrated in reporting under the Convention
International Workshop on Water Scarcity: Taking action in transboundary basins and reducing health impacts (Geneva, 11-12 December 2017)

- Aimed to accelerate actions to address water scarcity and reduce the related health, social, economic and environmental risks, by sharing practical solutions, in particular from the perspective of transboundary water cooperation and health impacts

- More than 130-140 participants from all over the world

- First joint event under the Water Convention and the Protocol on Water and Health since several years

- Concluded with a call for more frequent cooperation across sectors and countries, including between the Convention and Protocol communities
Prospects for future cooperation

• Expand collaboration between Convention and Protocol communities on the issue of increasing resilience to climate change

• Continue cooperation in the framework of the National Policy Dialogues

• Further cross-fertilization: promoting integration of the health perspective in transboundary agreements and consideration of the transboundary dimension of the Protocol
Reporting under the Protocol

• Art. 7 of the Protocol: every 3 years Parties should report on their progress to the MOP

• All 26 Parties and 6 other States submitted national summary reports in 2016

• Next reporting cycle starts in October 2018 (deadline for submission - 23 April 2019)

• Guidelines and template adopted by the MOP (harmonized to the extent possible with the water, sanitation and health related SDGs)
Welcome to Protocol MOP in Belgrade (19-21, November 2019)
Added value and benefits of implementing the Protocol in Serbia