



PROCEEDINGS OF THE

18th MEETING OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL POLICY DIALOGUE ON IWRM IN ARMENIA

October 15, 2019
Yerevan, Armenia

The 18th Meeting of the Steering Committee (SC) of the National Policy Dialogue (NPD) on Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) in Armenia was co-chaired by Mr. Edgar Pirumyan, Head of the Water Resources Management Agency of the Ministry of Nature Environment of the Republic of Armenia and Mr. Vardan Melkonyan, Chairman of the Water Committee of the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructures of the Republic of Armenia. The SC meeting aimed to provide an update on recent developments in the area of IWRM and policy development; to provide an update on the implementation of the road map of 5 EU Water Directives in Armenia under the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA); to discuss progress and next steps in implementing the European Water Initiative Plus (EUWI+) programme in Armenia and to receive feedback from the national stakeholders; to provide a platform for coordination of donor activities in the water sector in Armenia and to enhance the international cooperation with partner organizations; and to discuss remaining challenges in the area of IWRM and next steps

In the **opening session** welcoming remarks were made by Mr. Pirumyan, Mr. Melkonyan and Mr. Gonzalo Serrano De La Rosa, Head of Cooperation Section of the European Union (EU) Delegation to Armenia.

The opening session was followed by stock-taking of achievements of the NPD in the past 10 years of the EU Eastern Partnership. The high-level panel discussion was moderated by Mr. Edgar Pirumyan, and the key panellists were Mr. Gonzalo Serrano De La Rosa, Ms. Irina Ghaplanyan, Deputy Minister of Environment, and Mr. Dmitri Mariasin, Resident Representative of the UNDP in Armenia.

The **first session** of the meeting related to presenting recent achievements in the area of water policy development, IWRM and information regarding institutional changes. Key challenges in the water sector and next steps to achieve efficient, equitable and sustainable development and management of water resources were also discussed.

Mr. Pirumyan presented achievements in the development of legislative acts in the field of IWRM in 2019, and also remaining challenges and next steps to enhance IWRM in Armenia. Mr. Melkonyan made a presentation on the options to solve wastewater treatment issues in Armenia, possible investments and solutions; main issues in the drinking water sector; and strategy of the Republic of Armenia in reservoir construction.

The presentation was followed by a Q&A session, during which several issues were discussed, including questions related to the main achievements and challenges towards IWRM in Armenia.

Based on the results of the presentations and follow-up discussion the following SC decision was adopted:

- *The Steering Committee welcomes progress in recent policy developments and institutional changes in the water sector of Armenia.*



The **second session** of the meeting related to presenting the progress under Result 1 of the EUWI+ programme. Ms. Christine Kitzler, UNECE, provided an introductory presentation summarizing the results achieved under Result 1 within the EUWI+. Then, the EUWI+ project national experts Ms. Haykanush Parsamyan and Mr. Tigran Oganezov presented the progress with the implementation of the CEPA implementation roadmap, including preparation of a package of amendments to the Water Code of Armenia to ensure smooth implementation of the CEPA road map. The EUWI+ project national expert Ms. Emma Anakhasyan provided a brief update on latest developments regarding the Protocol on Water and Health in Armenia. Ms. Tatiana Efimova from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and Mr. Vahagn Tonoyan, EUWI+ Project Representative in Armenia, presented the process of preparation of a concept paper on development of the Irrigation Sector of Armenia and Institutional Strengthening of WUAs. Mr. Zurab Jincharadze, Project Representative in Georgia, presented the outcomes of the bilateral meeting between Georgia and Armenia on cooperation in the Khrami-Debed basin, held on October 14, 2019.

All presentations were followed by a Q&A session, during which the SC members and representatives of beneficiary institutions discussed the challenges and opportunities for smooth implementation of the activities under Result 1 of EUWI+ project in Armenia. Based on the results of the presentation and follow-up discussion the following SC decisions were adopted:

- *The Steering Committee welcomes the progress in amending the Water Code and the law on the National Water Program in line with the CEPA implementation roadmap in the area of water quality and water resources management and requested the ministry to ensure the early adoption of the CEPA implementation roadmap.*
- *The Steering Committee welcomes that the targets in the context of the Protocol on Water and Health have been completed and submitted to the Ministry for adoption.*
- *The Steering Committee welcomes the idea of development of the Concept Paper on the Development of the Irrigation Sector of Armenia and Institutional Strengthening of WUAs” and requests the EUWI+ programme team to closely coordinate with the Water Committee.*
- *The Steering Committee welcomes the outcomes and agrees next steps of the bilateral meeting between Georgia and Armenia on cooperation in the Khrami-Debed basin.*

The **third session** of the meeting was devoted to presenting the progress under Results 2 and 3 of the EUWI+ Project. Presentations were made by experts from the EU Member States Consortium and local contractors. First, an introductory presentation was made by Mr. Alexander Zinke, EU Member States Consortium Team Leader. Following that, Ms. Gayane Shahnazaryan, Deputy Director of the Environmental Monitoring and Information Centre (EMIC) of the Ministry of Environment, provided an update on EUWI+ laboratory development. Mr. Levon Azizyan, Deputy Director of Hydromet Service of the Ministry of Emergency Situations and Mr. Harutyun Yeremyan, Head of Division of EMIC provided an update correspondingly on surface and groundwater monitoring. Afterwards, Ms. Liana Margaryan from “Geocom” LLC and Mr. Seyran Minasyan from the Institute of Chemical Physics of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia presented progress in the development of river basin management plans (RBMPs) respectively for Sevan and Hrazdan River basin districts (RBDs). Finally, Ms. Yunona Videnina from the French International Office of Water, Ms. Alice Savadyan and Ms. Arevik Hovsepyan from the “Country Water Partnership” NGO made a presentation on data sharing as a base for knowledge development and multidisciplinary integration, and participation of stakeholders in the basin planning process and awareness raising as key for policy implementation.

All presentations were followed by Q&A session, during which the SC members and representatives of beneficiary institutions discussed challenges and provided recommendations on further successful





implementation of activities under Results 2 and 3 of the EUWI+ project in Armenia. Based on the results of the presentations and follow-up discussion the following SC decisions were adopted:

- *The Steering Committee welcomes the progress made by RBMP contractors and calls on to continue to closely follow the ToR for the assignment.*
- *The Steering Committee acknowledges the progress in laboratory renovation, procurement and delivery of laboratory equipment as well as in field surveys and related trainings on various surface and groundwater monitoring subjects.*
- *The Steering Committee values the diversity of communication activities such as awareness raising events and successful execution of stakeholder consultation on RBMP elements.*
- *The Steering Committee is committed to the next steps foreseen in 2020 in terms of policy development, finalizing draft RBMPs including water body classification and in complementing the capacity development on monitoring and data management.*

The **fourth session** of the meeting was aimed at providing synergies with other international projects implemented in the water sector of Armenia. The session was led by the Ministry of Environment and provided a platform for co-ordination and exploring synergies with and between other activities on water, implemented by donors and international organizations. Presentations were made by Mr. Yuri Poghosyan, National Coordinator of the ENPI SEIS Project in Armenia, Ms. Lilith Harutyunyan, Task Leader of the USAID ASPIRED Program, and Mr. Armen Varosyan, Chief of Party of USAID Pure Water Program in Armenia.

In the **closing session** of the 18th Meeting of the SC of the NPD on IWRM in Armenia Mr. Pirumyan recalled the Steering Committee decisions made, as follows:

DECISIONS OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE

1. The Steering Committee welcomes progress in recent policy developments and institutional changes in the water sector of Armenia.
2. The Steering Committee welcomes the progress in amending the Water Code and the law on the National Water Program in line with the CEPA implementation roadmap in the area of water quality and water resources management and requested the ministry to ensure the early adoption of the CEPA implementation roadmap.
3. The Steering Committee welcomes that the targets in the context of the Protocol on Water and Health have been completed and submitted to the Ministry for adoption.
4. The Steering Committee welcomes the idea of development of the Concept Paper on the Development of the Irrigation Sector of Armenia and Institutional Strengthening of WUAs” and requests the EUWI+ programme team to closely coordinate with the Water Committee.
5. The Steering Committee welcomes the outcomes and agrees next steps of the bilateral meeting between Georgia and Armenia on cooperation in the Khrami-Debed basin.
6. The Steering Committee welcomes the progress made by RBMP contractors and calls on to continue to closely follow the ToR for the assignment.
7. The Steering Committee acknowledges the progress in laboratory renovation, procurement and delivery of laboratory equipment as well as in field surveys and related trainings on various surface and groundwater monitoring subjects.
8. The Steering Committee values the diversity of communication activities such as awareness raising events and successful execution of stakeholder consultation on RBMP elements.
9. The Steering Committee is committed to the next steps foreseen in 2020 in terms of policy development, finalizing draft RBMPs including water body classification and in complementing the capacity development on monitoring and data management.