



5th Session

MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE PROTOCOL ON WATER AND HEALTH

19-21 NOVEMBER 2019 | BELGRADE | SERBIA

Round-table discussion on financing of the Protocol on Water and Health

Item 6 of the provisional agenda “Programme of work for 2020–2022, terms of reference of bodies established to implement it and resources needed for its implementation”

Thursday, 21 November, 3.15–4.15 p.m.

Concept note

Background

At its fifth session (Belgrade, 19-21 November 2019), the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health is expected to finalize and adopt its programme of work for 2020–2022 by agreeing on its structure, future activities, lead countries and governing bodies to guide its implementation.

The Meeting of the Parties is also expected to make arrangements related to the financial and human resources needed to implement the activities in the programme of work and indicate funding for these activities.

The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to consider the resources needed for the implementation of the programme of work for 2020–2022, based on the overview of resource requirements for this period.¹

While the recognition of the Protocol gained significant momentum, resulting in multiple achievements throughout the pan-European region, the financial resources that were made available to the joint secretariat under the programmes of work for 2014–2016 and for 2017–2019 were insufficient to ensure effective implementation of all planned activities and securing an adequate level of secretariat support.

Despite the financial contributions by Parties to the UNECE trust fund and to the WHO voluntary fund, the various in-kind contributions by Parties, other States and organizations, as well as the significant support provided by the United Nations and the WHO regular budget, the lack of sustainable, predictable and unearmarked funding continued to be of concern and needs to be urgently addressed by the Protocol constituencies.

To this end, a specific round-table discussion on financing will be organized with Parties to the Protocol.

¹ See https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2019/WAT/11Nov_19-21_MOP5PWH/Official_docs/ECE_MP.WH_2019_3_ENG.pdf.

Objective and scope

The objective of the round-table discussion on financing is to discuss how to strengthen sustainability and predictability of financing by encouraging all Parties to the Protocol to contribute financially and in-kind to the implementation of the programme of work for 2020-2022.

The round-table discussion is suggested to focus on the following questions:

1. What financial contribution can your country make in order to support implementation of the programme of work for 2020–2022, including funding from the competent authority/ies represented by the Protocol focal points or other national entities, such as ministries of foreign affairs and development cooperation agencies? As a Party, how can your country support efforts to enhance the sustainability and predictability of financing under the Protocol?
2. How can your country contribute in kind to the Protocol's activities, including by planning and implementing activities foreseen under the programme of work for 2020–2022, hosting meetings (including travel arrangements and providing meeting rooms, accommodation and/or meals for participants) or supporting the production of publications?

Organization of work

The round-table discussion on financing will commence with a presentation by the joint secretariat on the contributions provided since the entering into force of the Protocol in 2005, highlighting challenges and good practices by Parties that have been substantially supporting the Protocol, as well as suggestions on the way forward.

Based on the report of the joint secretariat, the discussion will be structured by distinguishing between the following categories of Parties:

- **Group A:** Parties providing regular financial contributions
- **Group B:** Parties providing occasional financial contributions
- **Group C:** Parties that have not yet had the opportunity to provide direct financial contributions

All Parties are invited to deliver **two-minute statements** in response to the above questions. Please prepare your contributions to the round-table by consulting with the relevant national authorities (e.g. ministries of environment/water, health, foreign affairs and finance as well as development cooperation agencies). Parties are kindly invited to communicate their pledges to the joint secretariat (nataliya.nikiforova@un.org and schmollo@who.int) prior to the meeting, if possible.

Representatives of other States and international and non-governmental organizations may also take the floor to indicate their contributions to the implementation of the Protocol.

On the basis of the above statements, Parties will be invited to discuss the way forward to enhance the predictability and sustainability of funding of the programme of work of the Protocol for 2020-2022.