



European Union Water Initiative Plus for the
Eastern Partnership Countries (EUWI+)

PROCEEDINGS OF THE SECOND NATIONAL INTERAGENCY STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING SUPER- VISING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUWI+ IN BELARUS

5 December 2019, Hotel "Belarus", Minsk, Storozhevskaya 15



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Abbreviations

Committee	National Interagency Steering Committee supervising the implementation of the European Union Water Initiative Plus programme in the Republic of Belarus
CRICUWR	Central Research Institute for Complex Use of Water Resources, Minsk, Republic of Belarus
EaP	Eastern Partnership
EC	European Commission
EECCA	Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia
EU	European Union
EU-MS	EU Member States
EUWI+	European Union Water Initiative Plus
IOW	International Office of Water, France
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
MNREP	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Belarus
RCAC	The state institution “Republican Center for Analytical Control in the Area of Environmental Protection”, Minsk, Belarus
NFP	National Focal Point
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NPD	National Policy Dialogue
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
RBMP	River Basin Management Plan
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SCM	Steering Committee Meeting (of the EU Action EUWI+)
SEIS	Shared Environmental Information System
TA	Technical Assistance
ToR	Terms of References
UBA	Umweltbundesamt GmbH, Environment Agency, Austria
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
WFD	Water Framework Directive

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Participants of the second meeting of the national Interagency Steering Committee supervising the implementation of the European Union Water Initiative Plus programme in Belarus were welcomed by Mr. Khmel, Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection and Chair of the Steering Committee, and on behalf of the EUWI+ implementing partners by Mr. Mamadzhanov, Mr. Martusevich, Mr. Zinke, Mr. Seguin and Ms. Videnina.

The main objective of the meeting was to discuss the progress and next steps in implementing the EUWI+ in Belarus.



In accordance with the approved agenda, the discussions took place around several topics:

An overview of changes in national legislation on water management was presented during the first session. The representative of the Ministry of Housing and Communal Services of the Republic of Belarus (Minzhilkomkhov) noted that in July 2019 the new version of the Law of the Republic of Belarus “On Drinking Water Supply” entered into force, in the framework of which Belvodokanal was created. Director of Belvodokanal outlined the main functions and tasks of this new enterprise.

The progress achieved in cooperation with the neighboring countries (Russia, Ukraine, EU Member States) in the field of transboundary water management was presented by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Belarus (MNREP).

1. Ms. Tatiana Slizh (MNREP) presented a brief overview of recent changes in the legal and institutional frameworks in the water sector in Belarus and of the national priorities under the EUWI+ programme and about progress in transboundary water cooperation with the neighboring countries.
2. Mr. Alexander Zinke (UBA, Austria) presented information about achievements in upgrading the laboratory capacities in Belarus and delivered a statement on behalf of the EUWI+ EU Member State Consortium outlining also other major achievements.
3. Mr. Ihar Dzeraviaha (Belarusian State University) and Ms. Sniazhana Dubianok (CRICUWR) informed about the development of training materials on Economic instruments for managing water resources and water bodies and water infrastructure systems in Belarus.
4. Mr. Alisher Mamadzhonov (UNECE) and Mr. Alexander Martusevich (OECD) presented information about the Result 1 related activities of the EUWI+ in 2018-2019.
5. Mr. Alisher Mamadzhonov (UNECE) and Ms. Palina Zakharko (CRICUWR) provided information about the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the draft national Strategy for water resources management for the period until 2030, in the context of climate change (start of the SEA process).
6. Ms. Sniazhana Dubianok (CRICUWR) and Mr. Alisher Mamadzhonov (UNECE) informed about the national reporting on the SDG indicators 6.3-6.5 (status of approving methodologies and building time series) and about methodological support on reporting under the SDG 6.5.2 indicator on transboundary water cooperation.
7. Ms Alena Drazdova (Ministry of Health) and Mr. Alisher Mamadzhonov (UNECE) presented the draft revised national targets under the Protocol on Water and Health to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes.
8. Ms. Palina Zakharko (CRICUWR) presented the pilot local actions to support the implementation of the national Water Strategy and RBMPs: Recommendations on developing drinking water supply systems in Kopyl rayon of Minsk oblast.
9. Mr. Kanstantsin Tsitou (CRICUWR, surface water expert) and Ms. Olga Vasneva (Institute of Geology, groundwater expert) informed about the progress in the implementation of the river basin management principles in Belarus, including with respect to the approval of the Dnieper RBMP and the development of the Pripjat RBMP, and about the progress in surface and ground water surveys in 2019.
10. Representatives from IOW, UBA and CRICUWR informed about the consultations on the draft Pripjat RBMP and about the progress in the specific implementation actions.
11. Mr. Alexander Martusevich (OECD) presented the draft outline of the proposed report on the national and local actions aimed at achieving greater level of water security – experience of Belarus / EUWI+ project.
12. Discussion about the expected results by the end 2020, possible follow up work and about the demands for future work was also held.

2 RESULTS AND DECISIONS

The national Interagency Steering Committee supervising the implementation of the European Union Water Initiative Plus programme in Belarus (the Committee) noted the contribution of the EUWI+ programme in Belarus to the:

- Implementation of the national water policy in Belarus, including the support for the SEA of the draft national Strategy for water resources management for the period until 2030, in the context of climate change;
- Revision of national targets under the Protocol Water and Health;
- Development of methodologies for monitoring nationalised SDG 6.3-6.5 indicators, as well as reporting on SDG 6.5.2 under the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes.

The Committee welcomed:

- Progress in the development of the laboratories' capacity for wastewater quality control, as well as in the preparation of draft training materials on economic instruments for managing water resources and bodies, and water infrastructure systems;
- Approval of the Dnieper River Basin Management Plan, developed with the support of the EUWI + programme;
- Progress in the development of the Pripjat river basin management plan and the start of concrete measures in accordance with the EU Water Framework Directive.

The Committee took note of the results of the EUWI+ programme expected by the end of 2020, and encouraged the project partners, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Belarus and other beneficiaries in Belarus to focus on timely delivery of the expected results. In this regard, the Committee supported the expected extension of the project by 6 months to allow for the effective utilization of the budget allocated for the procurement of laboratory equipment and other investments.

The project partners presented the strategic directions for possible future work within the project. In its turn, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Belarus also identified possible areas for cooperation. It was emphasized that the issue of adaptation to climate change was very relevant. In this regard, it was proposed to consider the possibility of performing work on the economic assessment of the use of water resources for irrigation needs on the example of one of the districts of the Gomel oblast.

The following decisions were made based on the results of the second meeting of the national Interagency Steering Committee of the European Union Water Initiative Plus in Belarus:

1. To recognize the work of the EUWI+ programme in the Republic of Belarus in the reporting year as satisfactory.
2. To recommend the OECD to revise the draft training materials, taking into account comments from the EU and other interested parties.
3. To recommend the Republican Center for Analytical Control (RCAC) in cooperation with the Ministry of Economy to ensure a swifter registration of the equipment procured under the EUWI+, to be able to timely make use of the remaining budget for the WFD compliant investments.
4. To the participants of the event:
 - 4.1. To provide in written form to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Belarus possible proposals on the areas for further implementation under the EUWI+ programme by 12 December 2019;
 - 4.2. To submit official comments on the draft revised national targets under the Protocol on Water and Health to the Ministry of Health by 16 December 2019.
5. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Belarus to summarize the proposals received in accordance with paragraph 4.1, and send them for consideration to the project partners by December 20, 2019.

The minutes were drafted by Ms. Tatiana Slizh.

3 ANNEXES

AGENDA OF THE MEETING

2ST MEETING OF THE NATIONAL INTERAGENCY STEERING COMMITTEE SUPERVISING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUWI+ PROGRAMME IN BELARUS

Minsk, 5 December 2019



Venue: Hotel Belarus, Strozhevskaya 15, Minsk

(Working languages: Russian and English with simultaneous interpretation)

The objectives of the meeting are:

- to discuss progress and next steps in implementing the European Water Initiative Plus (EUWI+) programme in Belarus and to receive feedback from national stakeholders;

to discuss expected results by end 2020 and demands for future work

8.30 – 9.00	REGISTRATION
9:00 – 9:30	OPENING SESSION
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Andrei Khmel, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Belarus (hereinafter - <i>Minprirody</i>), Chair of the Inter-agency Committee supervising the EUWI+ implementation in Belarus - Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda• EU Delegation to Belarus – welcoming statement• OECD representative – welcoming remarks by EUWI+ Implementing Partners
SESSION 1	NATIONAL PRIORITIES IN THE WATER SECTOR IN BELARUS
9:30 – 10:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brief overview of recent changes in the legal and institutional frameworks in the water sector in Belarus and of the national priorities under the EUWI+ programme - Representatives of <i>Minprirody</i> and <i>Minzhilkomkhoz</i>• Progress in transboundary water cooperation with the neighboring countries, Ms. Tatiana Slizh, <i>Minprirody</i>• Q&A followed by discussion
SESSION 2	MILESTONES IN LOCAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT UNDER EUWI+ EAST

10:00 –11:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Achievements in upgrading of Belarus laboratory capacities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement by the EUWI+ EU Member State Consortium, Alexander Zinke, Environment Agency, Austria (ii) A milestone in local expert capacity development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing training materials on Economic instruments for managing water resources, bodies and systems in Belarus – Ihar Dzeraviahha and Sniazhana Dubianok, local specialists • Q&A (iii) Statements by the funding and beneficiary institutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement by Dep. Minister Khmel
11:15 - 11:35	Coffee break
SESSION 3	EUWI+ CONTRIBUTION TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL WATER POLICY IN BELARUS
11:35 –13:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Result 1 related activities of the EUWI+ in 2018-2019 - Representatives of OECD and UNECE • Strategic Environmental Assessment of the draft national Strategy for water resources management for the period until 2030, in the context of climate change: start of the process – Alisher Mamadzhanov, UNECE and Palina Zakharko, CRICUWR • National reporting on the SDG indicators 6.3-6.5: status of approving methodologies and building time series - Ms. Sniazhana Dubianok, CRICUWR • Methodological support on reporting under the SDG 6.5.2 indicator on transboundary water cooperation– Ms. Sniazhana Dubianok, CRICUWR, A. Mamadzhanov, UNECE • Q&A (10 minutes) • Presentation of the draft revised national targets under the Protocol on Water and Health to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes – A. Drazdova, Ministry of Health, A. Mamadzhanov, UNECE • Piloting local actions to support implement the national Water Strategy and RBMPs: Recommendations on developing potable water supply systems in Kopyl rayon of Minsk oblast - Palina Zakharko, CRICUWR and representative of the Kopyl rayon administration • Q&A followed by discussion
13:00 –14:00	Lunch break
SESSION 4	EUWI+ CONTRIBUTION TO RIVER BASIN MANAGEMENT and TRANS-BOUNDARY CO-OPERATION
14:00 –15:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress in implementation of the river basin management principles in Belarus: (i) Dnieper RBMP approval and Pripyat RBMP development; and (ii) progress in

	<p>surface and ground water surveys in 2019: surface waters – Kanstantsin Tsitou, CRICUWR; ground waters – Vasneva O., Institute of Geology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation on Draft Pripjat RBMP – IOW representative • Specific Implementation Actions: description and progress – UBA, IOW and/or CRICUWR representative • Q&A followed by discussion
16:15 - 16:45	Coffee break
SESSION 5	EXPECTED PROJECT RESULTS BY END 2020 AND DEMANDS FOR FUTURE WORK
16:45 –17:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expected results by end 2020 and possible follow up work - Representatives of the EUWI+ implementing partners • A proposed report on national and local actions aimed at achieving greater level of water security – experience of Belarus / EUWI+ project: presentation of draft outline of the report - OECD representative • Demands for future work – Representative of <i>Minprirody</i> • Q&A followed by discussion
17:30 – 18:00	CLOSING SESSION
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concluding statements and decisions on future activities • Closure of the meeting

