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MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN
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FOURTH WORKSHOP ON WATER AND ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE IN TRANSBOUNDARY BASINS

Transboundary climate change adaptation serving multiple purposes

To be held in Geneva, 25-26 June 2013

Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland,
starting at 10.00 a.m. on Tuesday, 25 June 2013

INFORMATION NOTICE

I. Objectives

This workshop will bring together professionals from all over the world working on adaptation to climate variability and change especially -but not only- in transboundary basins. The workshop aims to provide an opportunity to:

- Share experience on adapting to climate variability and change within the water sector as well as provide a platform for discussion with other water-related sectors on this issue;
- Identify, collect and analyze good practices and lessons learnt on adaptation to climate change, with a particular focus on transboundary basins, as a basis for the collection of good practices to be prepared by 2015 for the seventh World Water Forum;
- Support the creation of a global network of basins working on climate change adaptation by sharing the progress in different basins, including the pilot projects on climate change adaptation in transboundary basins under the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), as well as other similar initiatives by partners;
- Provide input to debates on water and climate, for example under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Convened during the International Year of Water Cooperation the workshop will highlight examples of successful cooperation between stakeholders, sectors and countries in adaptation to climate change.



Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes



II. Topics of the workshop

The overall focus of this fourth workshop will be on **transboundary climate change adaptation serving multiple purposes**. Previous workshops as well as experience on the ground have shown that climate change adaptation should serve a wide array of purposes in order to get sufficient support for implementation of measures. Involving various sectors is an important prerequisite for successful implementation of adapting water management to climate change. This requires knowing their interests, concerns and motivations to be able to explain 'what's in it for them'. The following themes will therefore be covered by this workshop:

- Multi-purpose adaptation measures : Examples of adaptation measures serving a plurality of objectives will be presented and discussed;
- Integration of water sector oriented adaptation measures/strategies with other sectors such as energy, agriculture and navigation: Representatives from other sectors will be invited to this workshop to explain their needs and interests;
- Examples of tools useful for climate change adaptation in transboundary basins and already used on various scales will be presented and partly applied, e.g. for modeling, vulnerability assessment, scenario-building, communication, stakeholder involvement, decision making etc.
- How to develop adaptation strategies, select and implement measures at different levels will be discussed.

All presentations and discussions will as much as possible focus on transboundary issues of climate change adaptation as well as on situations of water scarcity and drought. A detailed programme will be issued in May 2013.

III. Organization of work

The workshop will be organized on 25 and 26 June 2013, back-to-back with the sixth meeting of the Task Force on Water and Climate (27 June 2013), under the leadership of the Governments of the Netherlands and Switzerland, with the support of the UNECE secretariat. It is organized in partnership with the International Network of Basin Organizations (INBO), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the Alliance for Global Water Adaptation (AGWA) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) International Waters Learning Exchange and Resource Network (IW:LEARN). Funding for the workshop and the pilot projects programme is provided by Finland, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Austria and the European Commission as well as the GEF IW:LEARN.

The workshop is addressed to all those who are responsible for, or involved in the process of developing an adaptation strategy and addressing climate change impacts, at the national and transboundary levels: first and foremost governmental representatives, but also water and health managers, local authorities, and representatives of academia, research institutes, international and non-governmental organizations.

The workshop will be organized in a way that sharing of experience will be optimized and will consist of an interesting combination of plenary presentations and discussions, smaller group discussions and exercises. Working languages will be English, French, Russian and Spanish.



IV. Background

Water resources are vulnerable and can be strongly affected by climate change. Climate change and extreme weather events often involve too much or too little water, with wide-ranging consequences for human societies and ecosystems. The fact that many water bodies cross boundaries implies that risks and challenges are shared between countries and that solutions need to be coordinated.

Adaptation measures in one country, especially structural measures such as dams, reservoirs or dykes can have significant negative effects on other riparian countries. Cooperation on adaptation can help to find better and more cost-effective solutions, by considering a larger geographical area in planning measures, by broadening the information base and by combining efforts. Although many countries are now starting to assess climate change impacts and to develop adaptation strategies for their own territory, still very little is done at the transboundary level and few concrete actions are implemented at national basin scale.

Recognizing the urgency of this, the Parties to the UNECE Water Convention have developed a range of activities on adaptation to climate change in a transboundary context, including a Guidance on Water and Adaptation to Climate Change, a programme of pilot projects and a platform for exchanging experience on adaptation to climate change in transboundary. The programme of pilot projects was transformed into a global network of basins in 2013, in cooperation with INBO, as an outcome of the sixth World Water Forum in 2012 (target 3.3.2).

The start of the global network is related to the global opening of the Water Convention in February 2013: The UNECE Water Convention turned into a global convention which will allow accession by all United Nations Member States as of end of 2013. This 'going global' was driven by the aim to share the Water Convention's experience worldwide.

In 2013-2015, in addition to the network of basins and global platform, a collection of good practices and lessons learnt will be prepared for presentation at the seventh World Water Forum in Spring 2015 in the Republic of Korea.

The following organizations are partners in organizing this workshop:

- International Network of Basin Organizations (INBO) which is gathering at world level basin organisations in order to exchange good practices for better water resource management at basin scale, including the constraints related to the global changes, namely climate change: <http://www.inbo-news.org>
- The World Meteorological Organization (WMO): is the UN specialized agency in the areas of meteorology, climatology and hydrology, furthering the application of meteorological, climatological and hydrological data and information for the overall benefit of the society. WMO has launched the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS) as a global partnership of governments and organizations that produce and use climate information and services, water has been identified as one priority area for GFCS implementation: www.wmo.int
- The Alliance for Global Water Adaptation (AGWA) is a network of development banks, governments, civil society organizations, and for-profit institutions that are focused on developing the best practices for implementing and operationalizing climate adaptation through the lens of water. <http://www.alliance4water.org>



- The Global Environment Facility (GEF) International Waters Learning Exchange and Resource Network (IW:LEARN) exists to strengthen Transboundary Waters Management (TWM) by facilitating portfolio learning and information management amongst GEF IW projects and partners: <http://iwlearn.net/>

This workshop is the fourth workshop on Water and Climate Change in Transboundary Basins in the framework of the platform for exchanging experience under the UNECE Water Convention. It will build on the discussions and results of previous workshops organized since 2008 and present progress in this area. Information on the previous workshops can be found at:

http://www.unece.org/env/water/water_climate_activ.html

V. Practical information

The workshop will start at 10.00 a.m. on Tuesday, 25 June 2013 and end at 6.00 p.m. on Wednesday, 26 June 2013. It will be held in the Palais des Nations, Geneva. The sixth meeting of the Task Force on Water and Climate will be held on Friday 27 June 2013. Working languages will be English, French, Russian and Spanish.

Focal points are requested to disseminate information on the workshop and to facilitate nomination of relevant experts from their respective countries.

Eligible participants from countries with economies in transition and developing countries may apply for financial support to facilitate their participation in the workshop. Requests for financial support should be submitted to the UNECE secretariat (cammile.marcelo@unece.org) as soon as possible, but not later than **15 May 2013. No application will be accepted after this deadline.**

Participants requiring entry visas should inform the secretariat as soon as possible. The minimum amount of time needed for obtaining a visa is 15 working days since Switzerland is part of the Schengen zone since 2009. Participants needing a visa are therefore requested to submit their application as soon as possible and **initiate visa procedures at least three weeks before the meeting.**

In accordance with United Nations accreditation procedures, participants are requested to complete the registration form available online at http://www.unece.org/env/water/transboundary_adaptation_workshop_2013.html and to transmit it to the UNECE secretariat **by 10 June 2013** either by fax (+ 41 22 917 0621) or e-mail (cammile.marcelo@unece.org). On their way to the meeting, participants should obtain an identification badge at the Pass and Identification Unit of the United Nations Office at Geneva Security and Safety Section located at the Pregny Gate, 14 Avenue de la Paix. Please allow time for this.

Practical information on the Palais des Nations, as well as on transport and accommodation in Geneva, is available online at: <http://www.unece.org/meetings/practical.htm>

Further information, the registration form and relevant material will be made available on the following website in due course: http://www.unece.org/env/water/transboundary_adaptation_workshop_2013.html

Please find all further information on the sixth Meeting of the Task Force on Water and Climate here: http://www.unece.org/env/water/6th_meeting_taskforce_water_climate_2013.html

