



United Nations
Economic
Commission for
Europe



Ministry of Transport,
Public Works and Water
Management of the
Netherlands



Ministry for the
Environment,
Land and Sea of
Italy



Federal Ministry for the
Environment, Nature Conservation
and Nuclear Safety



World Health
Organisation
Regional Office for
Europe

MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO
THE CONVENTION ON THE PROTECTION
AND USE OF TRANSBOUNDARY
WATERCOURSES AND INTERNATIONAL LAKES

MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE PROTOCOL ON WATER AND HEALTH
TO THE CONVENTION ON THE PROTECTION AND USE OF TRANSBOUNDARY
WATERCOURSES AND INTERNATIONAL LAKES

Workshop on water and adaptation to climate change

Amsterdam (the Netherlands), 1–2 July 2008

INFORMATION NOTICE

I. Objectives

1. The Workshop on water and adaptation to climate change is the first UNECE region-wide event that will take stock of progress and difficulties in designing and implementing strategies to adapt to climate change in the water, environment and the health-related sectors, both within the national and transboundary contexts.
2. Through concrete examples, the workshop will illustrate the different components of effective adaptation strategies, including legal, institutional, technical and financing aspects and promote the sharing of good practices and lessons-learned in the UNECE region.
3. The workshop will thus assist governments in the UNECE region to make adaptation happen both in their domestic water and the related health policies and in their cooperation on transboundary waters.
4. The workshop will also be an important step in the preparation of a Guidance on water and climate adaptation, currently under development within the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) and its Protocol on Water and Health.
5. Environment, water and health sectors as well as other water-related fields will be represented. Government officials, water and health managers, practitioners, scientists, businessmen, international experts and public activists will come together to inform and learn from each other. Participants will have opportunity to present successful experiences and discuss root causes of unfortunate failures.

II. Background

6. Climate change affects the hydrological cycle and thus water availability and water quality. The impacts of climate change will vary considerably from region to region and even from basin to basin. This threat forces governments to design and implement practical steps towards adaptation. Legislative, policy and institutional frameworks have to be adapted, special measures implemented and necessary resources allocated. However adaptation is still in its infancy across the entire UNECE region, and knowledge and experience are still lacking, in particular in the transboundary context.

7. The Parties to the Water Convention recognized the importance of this emerging issue and decided at their fourth meeting (Bonn, 2006) to develop a Guidance that would provide governments with practical recommendations on how to implement adaptation in the water sector and throughout water-related health policies and services, addressing in particular the transboundary aspects.

8. The Guidance will be the first regional policy instrument that will address in an integrated way water and health concerns in relation to adaptation to climate change. The Task Force on Water and Climate under the Water Convention and the Task Force on Extreme Weather Events, under the Protocol on Water and Health are jointly preparing this document. The Guidance is expected to be adopted by Parties at high political level, thereby paving the way for its successful implementation.

9. The Amsterdam workshop is an important milestone in this process. In addition to bringing together different experiences, it will also provide an opportunity for feedback and comments by participants on the Guidance and for enriching the text with practical examples.

10. The work at the UNECE level is based on the work previously carried out within member countries of the European Environment Agency (EEA) during the German EU Presidency and in particular on the survey¹ organized by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety and the EEA in 2007. As a preparation for the workshop, a survey was conducted among non-EEA countries in the UNECE region in order to identify the expected impact of climate change on water resources as well as the adaptation measures planned or implemented. The workshop will present and discuss the findings of these surveys.

11. The workshop is organized under the auspices of the Water Convention and of its Protocol on Water and Health, under the joint leadership of the Government of Italy, the Government of Germany and the Government of the Netherlands, with the support of the UNECE and WHO/EURO, and in collaboration with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Meteorological Organisation.

III. Organization of work

12. The workshop will address: (a) current knowledge about adaptation and climate change; (b) policy, legislative and institutional frameworks; (c) forecasting, modelling and vulnerability, including vulnerability of various sectors such as energy agriculture and tourism; (d) adaptation and

¹ Which can be found under : http://reports.eea.europa.eu/technical_report_2007_2/en/eea_technical_report_2_2007.pdf

coping measures; and (e) financial matters. The health-related aspects and cross-cutting themes (such as education and communication) will be addressed throughout all sessions, as necessary.

13. The Workshop will consist of the following sessions:

- *Session 1: Setting the scene.*
- *Session 2: Making adaptation work: policy, legislation and institutions.*
- *Session 3: Reducing uncertainty: forecasting, modelling and vulnerability.*
- *Session 4: Make adaptation happen!*
- *Session 5: Where should the money come from?*
- *Session 6: Final discussion on the guidance on water and adaptation to climate change.*

14. Sessions will have different formats (e.g. presentations, panel discussions, working groups) and will be professionally moderated. To maximize the time for discussion and exchange of experience, interventions from the floor should last not more than 3 minutes.

15. A detailed provisional programme for the workshop will be issued at the beginning of June 2008.

IV. Background documentation and workshop outputs

16. The following documents will serve as background material for the workshop and be made available on the website:

- draft UNECE Guidance on water and adaptation to climate change (in English and Russian)
- a background paper on the outcomes of the survey among non-EEA countries on impacts of climate change and adaptation experience (in English and Russian)
- EEA-report: Climate change and water adaptation issues (in English only)

17. Participants are welcomed to make available at the workshop any other relevant material.

18. The two outputs of the workshop that will be finalised after the event are:

- (a) A Chairperson's summary with main conclusions;
- (b) A revised version of the guidance on water and climate adaptation including comments received and specific examples.

V. Practical information

19. The Workshop will start at 9.30 a.m. on 1 July 2008 and end at 5.00 pm on 2 July 2008. The Workshop will be conducted in English and Russian.

Meeting venue and hotel accommodation

20. The workshop will take place at the Golden Tulip Apollo Hotel in Amsterdam (Apollolaan 2, 1077 BA Amsterdam, phone +31 (0)20 6735922, fax +31 (0)20 5705744. The hotel is located in

the southern part of Amsterdam, a unique place where five canals merge into one, just 30 minutes from Amsterdam International Airport. Find out more at <http://www.goldentulipapolloamsterdam.com/default.aspx?Language=EN>.

21. The host has made provisional bookings for 60 hotel rooms on the nights of June 30, July 1 and July 2 for the workshop participants in the Apollo hotel. The price for a hotel room (including breakfast & taxes) is € 169,50 per night. Please book your hotel room directly with the Golden Tulip Apollo hotel (mentioning the “Workshop on Water and Adaptation to Climate Change” and indicating your name, address, reservation dates) by sending an email to info@gtaa.nl, by 2 June 2008 the latest. After that date availability of rooms cannot be guaranteed. Please settle your individual hotel bill. The Apollo hotel accepts current credit cards.

22. During the workshop, set lunches (on 1-2 July) and dinner (on 1 July) are served in the hotel. Please indicate in your Registration Form, if you have specific dietary requirements.

Travel to Amsterdam

23. By air you will enter the Netherlands through Amsterdam international airport (AMS-Schiphol Airport). Check with your travel agent, or use for example www.amadeus.net to find out which connection best fits your needs. Depending on your departure place, it might also be advantageous to travel to Amsterdam by train (Dutch Railways www.ns.nl) or by bus. Please check with your travel agent.

Visas

24. The Netherlands form part of the Schengen Area. If you are a passport holder of one the UNECE member States listed below, you need to apply for a “Schengen Visa” at the nearest diplomatic representation authorised issuing such visas. Please apply early, as obtaining a visa may take several weeks. The representatives of the following UNECE countries require a visa to enter the Netherlands: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Montenegro, Russian Federation, Serbia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. The host will provide you with the invitation letter for visa purpose. Please indicate this requirement in your Registration Form and contact Mrs. Saskia Vos (Saskia.s.vos@rws.nl / phone +31 320 298346) for further questions.

Currency and money

25. In the Netherlands the currency is the Euro (€). Up-to-date exchange rates are available at <http://www.xe.com/ucc/> If needed you can buy Euros at exchange desks in the airport, railway station, and at automatic teller machines (with a credit card) and at exchange offices downtown.

Local transport to the hotel

26. From Amsterdam International Airport, take the train with the direction “Utrecht Central Station” and get off at the 1st stop “station Amsterdam Zuid”. From the train station “Amsterdam Zuid” you can either catch a bus or tram to take you to the hotel, please find the time tables at www.gvb.nl.

Insurance

27. Please make sure that you have adequate individual health, accident and travel risk insurance cover, they will not be covered by the organisers.

Registration

28. The Workshop is open to experts from national authorities, water and health managers and practitioners, representatives of joint bodies, the private sector, academia, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders from all UNECE member countries as well as for experts from international organizations.

29. Each participant should complete a registration form (see http://www.unece.org/env/water/meetings/water_climate_workshop.htm) and return it to **both** the secretariat (water.convention@unece.org) and the local organizers (saskia.s.vos@rws.nl) as soon as possible, but not later than **10 June 2008**.

30. Experts from eligible countries with economies in transition may apply for financial support to facilitate their participation in the workshop. Requests for financial support together with the registration forms should be addressed to the UNECE secretariat (email: water.convention@unece.org) as soon as possible, but not later than **25 May 2008**.

Further questions and assistance

31. Should you need additional information or advice on practical matters, please contact Mrs. Saskia Vos (Saskia.s.vos@rws.nl / phone +31 320 298346) at the Dutch Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management, RWS Centre for Water Management.

32. 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/meetings/water_climate_workshop.htm
