



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

Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment
Tenth meeting, 10-11 June 2009
Agenda item 4

**PROJECT PROPOSAL FOR STRENGTHENING CAPACITY FOR DATA
ADMINISTRATION FOR MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT OF TRANSBOUNDARY
WATER RESOURCES IN EASTERN EUROPE, CAUCASUS AND CENTRAL ASIA**

Prepared by the International Office for Water with the assistance of the secretariat and the
International Water Assessment Center

Background and proposed action by the Working Group

1. Upon request by the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment, the International Office for Water presented a proposal on the establishment of a UNECE metadata database of the water sector in the countries in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) (ECE/MP.WAT/WG.2/2008/4 and Corr.1) at the ninth meeting of the Working Group. Its main objectives included facilitation of the identification of data needed for monitoring and assessment of transboundary waters and providing access to the data and information.
2. A number of countries expressed their interest in participating in a future project. The Working Group agreed that the establishment of a EECCA-wide metadata database on water was an important issue. Thus, the Working Group invited the International Office for Water to continue to lead this activity on behalf of France and to report on progress made at the Working Group's next meeting (see report of the meeting ECE/MP.WAT/WG.2/2008/2).
3. To fulfil this mandate the International Office for Water has made efforts to fund raise for the project and in particular it has approached the French Global Environment Fund (FFEM).
4. The present document summarizes the project proposal jointly defined by the secretariat of the Water Convention, IWAC and the International Office for Water. This proposal has been submitted to the French Global Environment Fund. An important assumption of the proposal is that the metadata database cannot be established in one go for the whole EECCA region but rather through a number of pilot basins and further replication throughout the region.
5. This proposal was accepted in the pre-selection phase and a formal decision on launching the funding process will be taken by the FFEM in July 2009. If funded the project should be carried out in two years, from January 2010 to December 2011. The first phase of the project will be devoted to the definition of the two pilot basins and of the specific objective in each basin.
6. The Working Group is invited to comment on the proposal and advise on its future implementation.
7. In particular countries sharing the basins which have been identified as potential pilot basin should express their interest in participating in the pilot projects and their possible contribution to it.

Description of the scope and objectives of the project proposal

8. The project will support the preparation of the second and future assessment of transboundary waters carried out under the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes. It aims to assess both the state of the shared waters, and the efficiency of measures taken to deal with transboundary impacts.

9. The overall aim of the project is to **build capacity in data administration within the main national and regional authorities concerned with transboundary water management**. Through **developing production and sharing information**, this will provide **support for transboundary water resource management policies and action**.

10. The proposed FFEM-funded actions put particular focus on **building up capacity to identify existing data**, and on **developing the production and sharing of homogenous and consistent information** necessary for **water resource management, whether at national and local level, or for regional assessments**.

11. Suggested actions to reach this objective are grouped into three components:

Component 1: Preliminary phase for selecting the 2 transboundary basins and confirming partners' commitment

12. Component 1 corresponds to a preliminary phase aiming to select 2 pilot transboundary basins.

13. Taking into account past and ongoing activities, feasibility and opportunities for cooperation, the potential pilot projects have been limited to the following list of pre-selected basins.

- Daugava (Russian Federation – Oblast - Belarus, Latvia)
- Neman (Belarus, Lithuania, Russian Federation - Kaliningrad)
- Pripyat (Belarus, Ukraine)
- Seversky Donets (Russian Federation, Ukraine)
- Dniester (Ukraine, Republic of Moldova)
- Prut (Republic of Moldova , Romania)
- Transboundary waters of Central Asia (Kyrgyzstan , Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan)



14. This component, to be led by the Secretariat of the Water Convention, shall comprise:
- a) a phase for analyzing the 7 pre-selected basins and choosing the 2 pilot basins
 - b) a phase for confirming partners' commitment, with possible adjustments to the project's objectives for the 2 basins.

Component 2: Actions undertaken in the 2 pilot transboundary basins in liaison with the main national and local authorities in countries involved in water resource management

15. The aim of this component is to build up administration and data sharing capacity in the 2 pilot basins, using methods that can be replicated in other transboundary basins in the EECCA region.
16. To do this, the plan is to work in parallel in each of the 2 pilot basins on the following:
- a) Strengthening the cooperation environment between concerned institutions for the administration of data and information that is useful for managing the basin. This will notably include the preparation of a draft “management plan for water data on the basin”;
 - b) Support to the development of tools to be used by the main partners for the administration of data, and in particular:
 - Defining and adopting common rules for producing metadata
 - Setting up tools for managing metadata (e.g. servers and software) on each basin, and/or at national level, depending on the case, and developing a metadata catalogue
 - Identifying and supporting the development of complementary tools (e.g. servers, databases/GIS, depending on the means available) that could be developed for use by target partners, with the aim of building data exchange capacity on identified priority themes.
 - c) Setting-up of procedures and tools for sharing information and data through:
 - Developing and adopting common rules for sharing data that respect the rules of confidentiality defined by the data producers
 - Case-by-case characterization of the exchange scenarios and exchange procedures (i.e. who supplies what to whom, why, how, when and in what format)
 - Reinforcement of system interoperability, both from a semantic angle (common language, common frames of reference) and a technical angle (i.e. format and exchange procedures), in order to limit the manipulation of data during exchanges
 - Implementing of exchanges on priority themes, including setting up the first cartographic web services.
 - d) Support for producing the sought-after information during local water resource management processes, with:
 - Support in stipulating which information to produce to meet with management needs (content of maps, calculation methods for statistics and indicators)
 - Support in the actual production of maps, statistics, progress reports and indicators sought after.

Component 3: Actions undertaken at regional level

17. Component 3 groups together regional-level actions. These actions aim to organize a first regional catalogue promoting metadata and information produced by the 2 pilot basins, as well as to disseminate results on the project to other transboundary basins and countries in the EECCA region and receive feedback.

18. To this end, the following is planned:

- Creating and setting up a **regional metadata catalogue** (server software). This catalogue would be hosted on a server at IWAC and constitute a single point of entry for identifying all or part of the data described in the pilot basins’ metadata catalogues, plus other national or regional catalogues

- Producing and disseminating **leaflets presenting the policies and techniques of the project's results**
- Organizing a **side event during the "Environment for Europe" ministerial conference** planned at the end of 2011 in Astana (Kazakhstan), to present progress on the project and potential uses for the results in other regions
- **Other communication initiatives**, in particular for **disseminating results** internationally and promoting procedures to other transboundary basins in the EECCA region.

19. To conclude, this 2 years project, should ultimately allow each of the 2 pilot basins to achieve the following:

- The constitution (or strengthening) of an institutional cooperation network for managing data on water;
- The production of a guideline document along the lines of a "water data management plan", approved by the various partners involved;
- The setting-up of a metadata catalogue of data sources used to manage transboundary waters, with direct input from the actual producers where possible;
- Identification of the principle data-management partners' needs for capacity building in data administration, with implementation of priority reinforcement operations;
- Definition of rules to share data, with respect for conditions of confidentiality;
- The development of tools and procedures for sharing data and their application on some priority topics;
- Support for the production of information useful for assessing transboundary waters, and improved quality of previously produced information.

and at the regional level:

- The setting-up of a first regional-level metadata catalogue with a particular emphasis on information collected on the 2 pilot basins;
- The organization of events and development of policy-based and technical information media, for disseminating feedback, in particular to regional and national authorities involved in managing transboundary waters in other basins in the region.