



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

**Working Group on Water Management**

Fourth meeting

Agenda item 4 (a)

Working Paper N. 9

**Joint work of UNECE with the Global Water Partnership (GWP) on integrated water  
resources management (IWRM)**

The European Union, at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) (Johannesburg, September 2002) has formally launched the global “Water Initiative: Water for Life - Health, livelihoods, economic development and security (EUWI)”. As part of the EUWI, a partnership was established in Johannesburg between EU and Ministers of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA): the “Strategic Partnership on Water for Sustainable Development”. An important component of the Partnership is transboundary water cooperation in the NIS.

UNECE has been involved since the beginning together with Global Water Partnership and UNEP on the development of the part on transboundary rivers basins and regional seas.

The statement of a high-level meeting of EECCA representatives (Moscow, 5-6 March 2003) on the implementation of the partnership, in English and in Russian, as well as a summary of the session on transboundary river basins and regional seas are reproduced below.

Statement of the High Level Meeting in Moscow, 5-6 March 2003  
on “Strategic Partnership on Water for Sustainable Development”

1. We, representatives of countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA), EC member states, Switzerland, the European Commission, international and non-governmental organisations, have gathered in Moscow, Russian Federation, on March 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, 2003 – the international Year of Freshwater – to discuss the status, challenges and commitments of implementation of the “Strategic Partnership on Water for Sustainable Development” which was launched at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in September 2002.
2. We reaffirm our commitment to co-operation on water-related issues between East and West, and the Strategic Partnership as its component, directed at implementation of water policy aspects of the “East-West Environmental Partnership”, which was also launched at the World Summit on Sustainable Development.
3. We recognise the challenges and problems that EECCA countries face in the area of water supply and sanitation and in the area of sustainable management of water resources, including transboundary watercourses and regional seas issues, as well as in other areas, as mentioned in the Strategic Partnership Declaration.
4. We support the structure of partnership proposed in the programme document “EU Water Initiative, EECCA-component” which was discussed at the meeting in Moscow, and recognise the Danish role in development and co-ordination of this initiative on behalf of EU. We also recognise the role of Russia and other EECCA countries in advancement of this initiative.
5. We recognise the need for efficient mechanisms for improving co-ordination and communication, and for developing the Strategic Partnership further. We request the Organising Committee which was established for preparation of the High Level Meeting to take the necessary measures to support the interim Secretariat in continuing its activities up to the Kiev Ministerial Conference in May 2003, and to support the chairpersons of the working groups formed at the meeting in Moscow in further shaping the initiative.
6. We appeal to the chairpersons of the working groups to continue their work for further development of the Strategic Partnership in general and its building blocks in particular, until appropriate mechanisms are created. We note with interest the final document of the Consultative Meeting on the Environment, Water and Security of countries of Central Asia and “Invitation for partnership” (Almaty, Kazakhstan, 30-31 January 2003) presented at the High Level Meeting, reflecting a subregional approach to implementation of the Strategic Partnership.
7. We call on all EECCA countries and other interested partners to join this initiative and to take part in further development of the Strategic Partnership, for instance through participation in the Working Group designing the initiative. We welcome the great interest and active participation of the civil society in preparation of the outcomes of this meeting and confirm our commitment to working in co-operation with all stakeholders on further development and implementation of the Strategic Partnership.
8. We encourage Denmark and the Russian Federation to present the Strategic Partnership, on behalf of EECCA and EU countries and stakeholders, at the European Day at the 3<sup>rd</sup> World Water Forum in Kyoto on March 21, 2003, and also at the Kiev Ministerial Conference.

9. We express our deep gratitude to the Ministry of Natural Resources of the Russian Federation, to the Danish Environmental Protection Agency (DEPA), to DHI Water and Environment, and to the Russian Regional Environmental Centre for organising this meeting.

*Approved in Moscow on March 6, 2003*

**Резолюция Совещания Высокого уровня в Москве, 5-6 марта 2003 г.**  
**«Стратегическое партнерство по воде в целях устойчивого развития»**

1. Мы, представители стран Восточной Европы, Кавказа и Центральной Азии (ВЕКЦА), государств-членов ЕС, Швейцарии, Европейской комиссии, международных организаций и НПО, собрались в Москве, Российская Федерация, 5-6 марта 2003 года, в Международный год пресной воды, чтобы обсудить статус, проблемы и задачи реализации «Стратегического партнерства по воде в целях устойчивого развития», провозглашенного на Всемирном саммите по устойчивому развитию в Йоханнесбурге в сентябре 2002 года.
2. Мы вновь подтверждаем нашу приверженность сотрудничеству по водной проблематике между Востоком и Западом и Стратегическому партнерству, как его компоненту, направленному на реализацию вопросов водной политики Партнерства Восток-Запад в области окружающей среды, начало которому было положено на Всемирном саммите по устойчивому развитию.
3. Мы признаем проблемы и задачи стран ВЕКЦА по обеспечению населения водоснабжением и канализацией, а также по устойчивому управлению водными ресурсами, включая трансграничные водотоки и региональные моря, а также другие направления, отмеченные в Декларации Стратегического партнерства.
4. Мы поддерживаем структуру партнерства, предложенную в программном документе «Водная инициатива ЕС, компонент ВЕКЦА», обсужденном на Совещании в Москве, и роль Дании как ведущего государства в развитии настоящей инициативы – координатора от Европейского Союза, а также роль Российской Федерации и других стран ВЕКЦА в ее продвижении.
5. Мы понимаем необходимость создания эффективных механизмов совершенствования координации и взаимодействия для дальнейшего продвижения Стратегического партнерства. Мы просим, чтобы Оргкомитет, созданный для подготовки Совещания Высокого уровня, оказал бы необходимую поддержку временному Секретариату и продолжил свою работу вплоть до Конференции министров окружающей среды региона ЕЭК ООН в Киеве в мае 2003г., также оказывая поддержку руководителям рабочих групп, сформированных во время Совещания в Москве для дальнейшего развития инициативы.
6. Мы обращаемся к руководителям рабочих групп с призывом продолжить работу, направленную на дальнейшую разработку Стратегического партнерства в целом и его структурных блоков, в частности, до тех пор, пока не будут созданы соответствующие механизмы. Мы с интересом отмечаем итоговый документ Консультативной встречи по окружающей среде, воде и безопасности стран Центральной Азии «Приглашение к партнерству» (Алматы, Казахстан, 30-31 января 2003г.), представленный на Совещании и отражающий субрегиональный подход к реализации Стратегического партнерства.
7. Мы призываем все страны региона ВЕКЦА и других заинтересованных партнеров присоединиться к этой инициативе и принять участие в дальнейшей разработке Стратегического партнерства, например, участвуя в деятельности рабочих групп, развивающих инициативу. Мы приветствуем большой интерес и активное участие гражданского общества в подготовке заключительных материалов этого Совещания и подтверждаем наше намерение сотрудничать со всеми заинтересованными сторонами при дальнейшей разработке и реализации Стратегического партнерства.
8. Мы призываем Данию и Российскую Федерацию представить Стратегическое партнерство от имени стран ЕС и ВЕКЦА, а также других заинтересованных сторон в

ходе Дня Европы на Третьем Всемирном Водном Форуме в Киото 21 марта 2003г., а также на Конференции министров окружающей среды региона ЕЭК ООН в Киеве.

9. Мы выражаем нашу глубокую признательность Министерству природных ресурсов Российской Федерации, Датскому агентству по охране окружающей среды (DEPA), Институту ДНІ по проблемам воды и окружающей среды, а также Российскому региональному экологическому центру за проведение этого Совещания.

*Принято в Москве 6 марта 2003 года*

## **Group session on transboundary river basins and regional seas**

Chairperson: Mr. Koskin (Russian Federation)

Facilitator: Mr. Enderlein (UNECE)

Rapporteur: Mr. Gishin (NGO Ecoterra)

Some 30 representatives of Governments, international organizations, NGOs and the private sector participated in the work of the session. Work focused on three major topics:

- What should be the main focus of the EU WI regarding transboundary river basins and regional seas?
- Existing building blocks and identification of new building blocks
- Coordination of future work

### **I. Main focus of the EU WI**

Participants agreed in principle on the five major direction of work set out in the background paper, namely: (a) legal and regulatory framework and its implementation; (b) Establishments and strengthening of institutions; (c) Monitoring and assessment; (d) access to information and public participation; and (e) river basin management planning including decision-support systems and integration of land and water management (concerted action plans).

Participants stressed that the first two items are particularly important as they provide the basis for the implementation of the items (c) to (e) which are by their very nature technical issue rather than policy- or strategy-linked issues.

#### *Items (a) and (b)*

Under items (a) and (b), the harmonization of the legal and regulatory basis as well as strengthening joint bodies (including training of staff) were of particular importance. Given that the UNECE Water Convention and the two related protocols on water and health and on civil liability will continue to provide the overall framework for cooperation under items (a) and (b), participants stressed the need for the drawing up of bilateral or multilateral agreements to take into account the specifics of the river basins. Participants appreciated the information by Belarus that this country will become soon a Party to the Water Convention, and encouraged the non-Party countries in the Caucasian sub-region (Armenia, Georgia) and in Central Asia (Uzbekistan, Tadjikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan) to ratify without further delay.

Participants also stressed the need for drawing up or finalizing work on regional seas agreements for the two missing water bodies: the Aral and the Caspian. The close link between sustainable water management in transboundary river basins (pollution prevention, water-quantity related problems) and the protection of the regional seas was once more underlined.

#### *Items (c) to (e)*

Participants pointed to some problem areas that should also be addressed by building blocks. Examples include:

- Rational use of water, demand management and sharing of water among countries

- Indicators for sustainable water management (to measure also progress under the EU WI)
- Ecosystem approach in water management, including aspects of biodiversity and integration of land and water management
- Pollution prevention and rehabilitation of damaged ecosystems
- Implementation of the principles of the EU Water Framework Directive at least in the river basins the NIS countries share with EU member countries.

In the discussion of the above new proposals it was particularly underlined that country initiatives linked to the EU Water Framework Directive would also help resolving problems mentioned above under ecosystem approach and pollution prevention.

The participants agreed to draft proposals for building blocks that would help filling the gaps identified above, and to develop ownership on the existing and newly proposed building blocks.

## **II. Building blocks**

Participants noted that the existing list of building blocks was mainly based on inputs by international organization that are in charge of coordination international programmes (e.g. under the UNECE Water Convention, the Black Sea Convention, the Tacis programmes), rather than on inputs by EECCA countries. Therefore, the list should be supplemented by country proposals (as much as possible to be coordinated with riparian countries in one or the other river basin). Participants agreed to provide a first set of new building blocks by the end of the meeting.

Participants, while taking into account the existing list of building blocks, raised concern that the chosen structure of presenting the building blocks was too complicated

A possible new grouping could be made as follows:

### *Cooperation on issues that are common for all EECCA countries*

This would particularly address strategies, plans and programmes. The following existing building blocks would also be covered: sustainable flood prevention, compliance with agreements, indicators for integrated water resources management; UNECE, UNEP, Swedish EPA, Russian MRN, Ecoterra project on transboundary waters and possible follow up, Manual on public participation in water management. Further proposals are expected by the end of the meeting.

### *Sub-regional cooperation*

This would include sub-regional cooperation of the Caucasian countries, the countries of central Asia, sub-regional cooperation under the “Northern Dimension”, cooperation on the Black Sea basin etc. This would also cover the existing building blocks that address sub-regional cooperation issues.

### *Ecosystems of specific transboundary rivers*

This would include work on issues that are specific for a given river basin. Examples of existing building blocks include the Tacis projects on monitoring and assessment of the Tobol, Kura, Severski Donets and Propyat.

### **III. Coordination of future work**

Participants noted the existing cooperation arrangements, e.g. under the UNECE Water Convention and the Black Sea Convention. They also noted the valuable work done by the working group that was in charge of preparing the EECCA component of the EU WI.

These arrangements should be maintained, and interaction between these “bodies” strengthened.

It was however very important to include representatives of the EECCA into the future fine-tuning of work. A meeting of high-level representatives of EECCA, like the present one, should be envisaged on, maybe yearly intervals.