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## **UNECE WATER CONVENTION DEFINES PRIORITIES UNTIL 2015 AND BEYOND**

The Strategic Workshop on the Future Work under the UNECE Water Convention: Building on the Findings of the Second Assessment and Other Results Achieved (14-15 February 2012) reviewed the extensive work under the Convention with a view to setting directions for future activities. The workshop was the first step in the development of a new programme of work for 2013-2015. It will be followed in the next months by broad consultations with different stakeholders to further refine the programme of work for its formal adoption at the sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention (Rome, 28-30 November 2012).



are undernourished and 1.3 billion people have no access to electricity, action and interdisciplinary solutions are urgent. As most of the water resources are of transboundary nature such solutions need not only to be negotiated between sectors but also at the international level. Linking water, energy and food sectors and benefits of cooperation in the future work will help achieve win-win solutions making a difference both in the UNECE region and beyond.

The workshop has confirmed the relevance of the tasks set by the current programme of work, underlining the importance of the continuity of the Convention's work and of long-term perspective. In particular it confirmed that the support to transboundary cooperation, including through the development of new agreements and the support to the institutional frameworks for cooperation, is and should remain the "core business" of the Convention. At the same time the workshop brought up some new ideas for the future work. The nexus between water, food security and energy and the quantification of benefits of transboundary water cooperation were highlighted as possible issues for the next programme of work. As globally 0.9 billion people lack access to safe drinking water, 1 billion people

Building on the results and lessons-learnt from the Second Assessment of Transboundary Rivers, Lakes and Groundwaters recently prepared under the Convention, participants of the workshop also identified several possible themes and approaches for a special thematic edition of the assessment in 2015. This special edition is set to address a specific issue and to be geographically focused.

The workshop also intensively debated the consequences of the opening of the Water Convention to non-UNECE countries - its "globalization" - and the implications for the future programme of work. It was recognized that this is a key priority for the future. In this respect, the role of partners to back the implementation of the Convention outside the UNECE region and to help its proven legal mechanisms and expertise become accessible globally was considered crucial. □

## **NEW UNITED NATIONS - REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA PARTNERSHIP FRAMEWORK**



In February 2012, the United Nations and the Government of the Republic of Moldova have finalized a new Partnership Framework for the period 2013-2017. This document has been recently signed by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Moldova and 22 organizations of the UN system, including UNECE.

The Partnership Framework is a programme document setting up the commitment of the UN organizations to work collectively as one in the Republic of Moldova and highlighting where the UN Development System can contribute most effectively to the achievement of national development priorities.

The objective of the Partnership Framework is to support the Republic of Moldova in achieving the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 and addressing the major development challenges that the country is confronted with in its transition to a modern European nation. With the underlying goal to improve the lives of all people living in Moldova, the UN agencies will work together to

strengthen the capacity of the country in three broad thematic areas:

- (i) Democratic governance, justice, equality and human rights;
- (ii) Human development and social inclusion; and
- (iii) Environment, climate change and disaster risk management.

As a participating non-resident agency, UNECE will be actively involved in the implementation of the Partnership Framework. Through its capacity-building and advisory services, UNECE will contribute to strengthening the capacity of the Government of the Republic of Moldova to achieve national development priorities in the areas of energy efficiency, environment, statistics and innovative, knowledge based development.

UNECE has been actively supporting development efforts of countries with economies in transition through the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and One UN. In 2011, UNECE signed the UNDAFs of Albania, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine. With the UN - Republic of Moldova Partnership Framework, the total number of countries with the UNECE participation in UNDAF has reached 17. □

# UNFC – A TOOL FOR ENHANCED ENERGY SECURITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

Mr. Hongpeng Liu, Chief of the Energy Security and Water Resources Section at ESCAP, when speaking at a workshop on the UNFC in Bangkok on 9-10 February, highlighted the critical role of fossil fuel and mineral resources for development in the region. "Resources are limited and access to them could become contentious. It becomes essential to be able to assess the supply base and reserves in a scientific manner that is accepted by all" observed Mr. Liu. "Implementing the United Nations Framework Classification for Fossil Energy and Mineral Reserves and Resources 2009 (UNFC) will help the ESCAP region with accurate resource assessments that will promote enhanced energy security and sustainability" he said.

The Workshop on UNFC Resource Classification (for Oil, Gas and Minerals) was organized by the Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and South-East Asia (CCOP), in cooperation with UNECE and ESCAP, under its Enhancing Public Petroleum Management Programme (funded by the Norwegian Government). The goal of the programme is to create the highest possible value for society from petroleum resources in order to improve the quality of life of the people in CCOP Member Countries.

Mr. Per Blystad, Senior Advisor in the Norwegian Petroleum Directorate, explained that one should not underestimate the importance of efficiency in upstream resource management. Current forecasts show that in 2035, fossil fuels will provide about 80% of primary energy. It is therefore critical that non-renewable energy resources be managed efficiently. Mr. Blystad noted "a common classification system could significantly enhance our ability to document and evaluate the potential resource base in a consistent and accurate manner, leading to a more reliable database for global energy studies. The UNFC is such a system and the Norwegian Petroleum Directorate is proud to have been integrally involved in its development since 2002. Development of the classification is not yet finished, as the specifications remain to be finalized and those need to be at hand for the system to be complete. Thus, the coming years will be critical." Specifications are the secondary rules necessary to ensure an appropriate level of consistency in application of the UNFC.

Government representatives from the minerals and petroleum sectors from Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Korea, Lao People's

Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam participated in the two-day event.

Professor He Qingcheng, Director, CCOP Technical Secretariat, observed that the UNFC system captures common principles and provides a tool for consistent reporting of extractive activities, regardless of the commodity. "The UNFC paves the way towards improved and efficient global communications among stakeholders that will then aid stability and security of supplies with better understood rules and guidelines. This is also relevant as we move forward towards securing affordable, sustainable and more environmentally-friendly resources that CCOP countries are also advocating" stated Professor He.

Dr. Ian Lambert, Group Leader of Geoscience Australia, underlined the value of the UNFC as a universal template. Geoscience Australia is a government agency that evaluates Australia's national stocks of minerals and energy resources. "Industry, financial, national and international resource reporting systems should be mapped to a universal template – the UNFC 2009 – to clarify the similarities and differences between systems in use around the world" observed Dr. Lambert. "Currently, at national and international levels, we are comparing and adding estimates that are not compatible, and this is an unsatisfactory situation." □



For more information on the UNFC, please visit:  
<http://unece.org/energy/se/reserves.html>  
or contact Ms. Charlotte Griffiths at:  
[reserves.energy@unece.org](mailto:reserves.energy@unece.org).

## FACTS AND FIGURES USERS PLEASSED WITH CHANGES TO UNECE STATISTICAL DATABASE

The UNECE Statistical Database has been significantly enhanced in content and functionality in recent months – resulting in positive feedback from users.

The database contains data from three UNECE Divisions, covering a growing range of topics including economic, social, transport and forestry statistics. The most recent additions are data on progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and on international migration.

New data on economic globalisation will be added in 2012, and proposals to add energy and environmental indicators are being considered. The volume of available data has increased three-fold over the last five years, whilst increased automation of data work has reduced the human resources required by nearly 50% over the same period.

New functionality, introduced during 2011 includes the possibility to view key indicators in a simple graphic form, showing comparisons between countries and changes over time. Interactive links to definitions of statistical concepts have been added to help users to better understand the data. The database

interface has been simplified where possible, and more data are now available in Russian.

However, the real value of the UNECE statistical database is demonstrated by its use. Data downloads have increased by around 30% over the last year, with particularly strong growth in interest for key indicators, data on wages and statistics on road traffic accidents.

The annual database user survey for 2011 showed that over 80% of users think that the quality of our data is good or excellent, compared with 76% in 2010. This result compares very favourably with similar surveys for other international organizations.



Users were particularly happy with the improvements in explaining the statistical concepts used, but raised concerns about timeliness. As a result, improving the availability of data for the latest periods is a key priority in the UNECE data quality improvement programme for 2012. □

To see the changes for yourself, please visit:  
<http://w3.unece.org/pxweb>.  
Feedback on any aspect of the database is always welcome, and should be sent to:  
[support.stat@unece.org](mailto:support.stat@unece.org).

Information Service  
United Nations  
Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)  
CH-1211 Geneva 10 - Switzerland

Tel.: +41 (0) 22 917 44 44  
Fax: +41 (0) 22 917 05 05  
E-mail: [info.ece@unece.org](mailto:info.ece@unece.org)  
<http://www.unece.org>



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