

Ref.: 2020/OES/232/ENV/146

13 October 2020

Excellencies,

I have the honor of writing to you with regard to the Consultation Process under the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) – World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for Europe Protocol on Water and Health, to which the Russian Federation is a party since 1999.

According to the terms of reference governing the Consultation Process and endorsed by the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (see enclosed), the Committee may, based on its assessment of the results of the national summary reports submitted by Parties or other information available to the Committee, invite a Party or a small group of Parties to engage in consultations. At its fifth session (Belgrade, 19–21 November 2019), the Meeting of the Parties encouraged Parties to engage in consultations with the Committee, following the successful completion of consultations with Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, carried out between 2017 and 2019. At its 19th meeting (Geneva (online), 15 May 2020), based on previous experience with the Consultation Process and on decision V/1 on general issues of compliance, the Compliance Committee discussed possible future consultations to be undertaken in the period 2020–2022. In particular, the Committee considered the situation regarding the setting of targets and target dates in the Russian Federation.

Setting, monitoring and regularly reviewing intersectoral targets on water, sanitation and health is a key obligation for Parties to the Protocol. It enables countries to collect integrated data; monitor progress towards the achievement of national and/or local objectives; and strengthen intersectoral cooperation. Based on the national summary report submitted in 2019 by the Russian Federation, it appeared that the country was facing challenges in setting targets under article 6 of the Protocol. The Committee therefore considered that the Russian Federation might benefit from tailored advice and assistance and requested the secretariat to explore whether the country would be interested in taking part in the Consultation Process.

His Excellency
Mr. Dmitry Kobylkin
Minister of Natural Resources and
Environment
of the Russian Federation
Moscow

His Excellency
Mr. Mikhail Murashko
Minister of Healthcare
of the Russian Federation
Moscow

I would like to recall that the Consultation Process is not a compliance review procedure. Hence, it is not of an inquisitive nature and its objective is not to establish whether a Party is compliant or not. The objective of the Process is to assist Parties in implementing the provisions of the Protocol and it consists of advice and assistance, which may vary depending on the specific conditions and needs of the Party(s) involved. It may address scientific, technical, legal and administrative issues. The procedure is guided by the same principles as the work of the Compliance Committee, i.e. that it be simple, facilitative, non-adversarial and cooperative.

I would encourage your country to use this opportunity to engage in the proposed consultations and I would appreciate receiving your response to the invitation by 30 October 2020.

Please accept, Excellencies, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Olga Algayerova

Enclosure