

Activities of the Joint Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents

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Hungary/Co-Chair of JEG

Joint Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents

UNECE Water
Convention

UNECE
Industrial
Accidents
Convention

JEG

Joint Expert Group (JEG)

- Established in 1998
- Focus on prevention of accidental water pollution and its consequences
- Linking integrated water resources management to industrial safety

New Co-Chair:

Mr. Bojan Srdic, Ministry of Environmental Protection of Republic of Serbia.

Many thanks for Mr. Gerhard Winkelmann-Oei, Federal Environment Agency, Germany for his outstanding chairmanship



Activities & achievements since September 2020



Promotion and translation of guidances developed by the JEG



Follow-up to 2019 contingency planning seminar & Development of a catalogue/web page for accidental pollution events and good practice



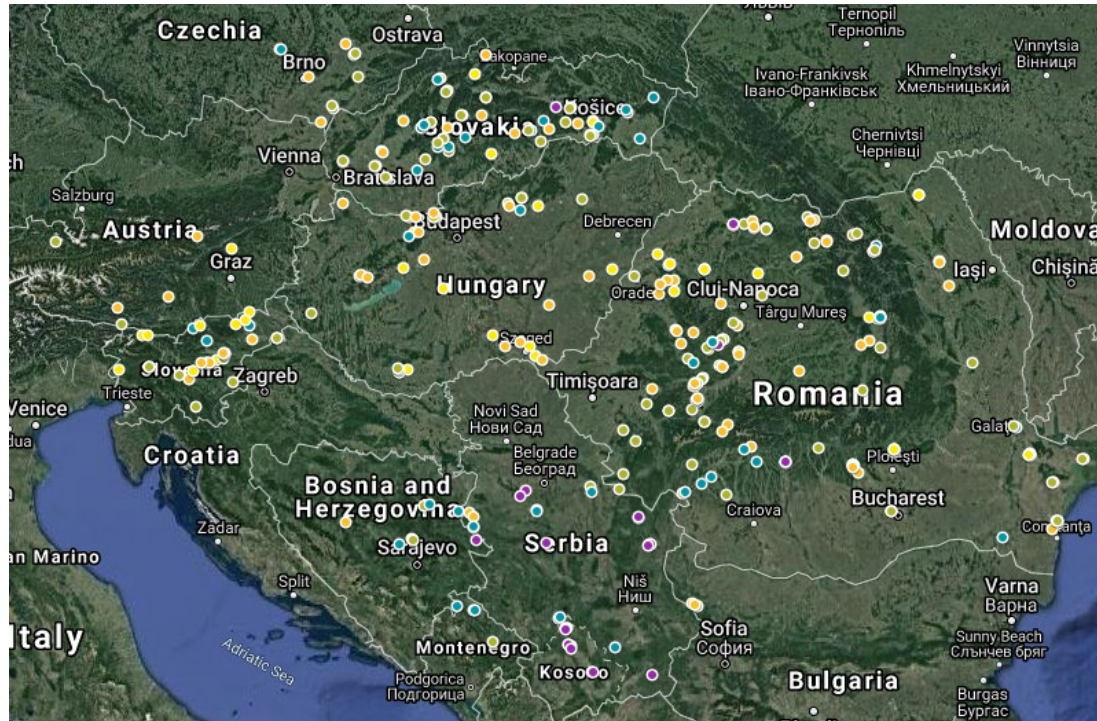
Transboundary exercises



handover meeting with co-Chairs on 11 February 2021

UNECE Safety Guidelines for TMFs and related checklist: examples and maps

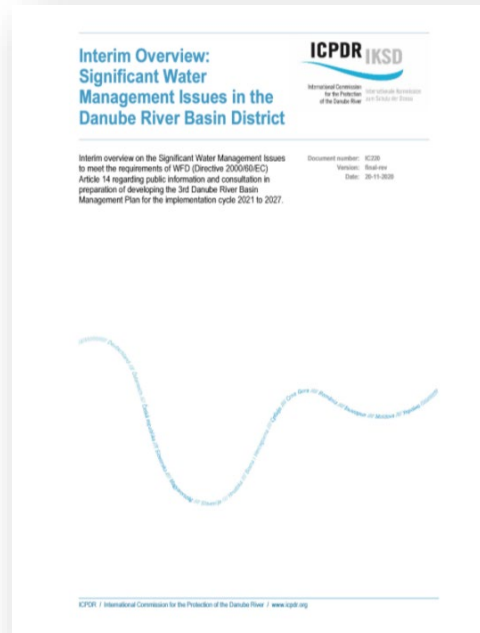
TMF map of the Danube River Basin countries *



The map was developed in the frame of the project "Capacity development to improve safety conditions of tailings management facilities in the Danube River Basin – Phase I: North-Eastern Danube countries" (Reference number: Z6 - 90 213-51/79, Project number: 118221). The project is funded by the German Federal Environment Ministry's Advisory Assistance Programme (AAP) for environmental protection in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and other countries neighbouring the European Union. It was supervised by the German Environment Agency (UBA).

Colour scheme:

- lilac – very high hazard ($THI^{**} > 14$)
- blue – high hazard ($12 < THI \leq 14$)
- green – medium hazard ($10 < THI \leq 12$)
- orange – low hazard ($8 < THI \leq 10$)
- yellow – very low hazard ($THI \leq 8$)



Methodology applied in Dniester River Basin



UNECE Online seminar and decision on strengthening mine tailings safety – Dec 2020

- **Online seminar** – 43 countries, 115 participants, 37 organizations, 12 speakers
- Preparedness and response are important, but prevention is key
- Mine tailings safety is a regional issue, not just a national matter

- **Decision** – adopted at CoP-11 (Industrial Accidents Convention; 7-9 Dec 2020); **agreed actions**, e.g.:

Use the **Safety guidelines and good practices for TMFs**

Improve inter-institutional and stakeholder coordination

Review legislation and policies on mine tailings against int. GP, e.g. the SG

Increase efforts to strengthen tailings safety and prevent failures, in view of **more extreme weather events due to climate change**

Include TMFs in the **identification and notification of hazardous activities**



Online seminar
1 December 2020
9.30-12.30 CET

Register here: <https://indico.un.org/event/35252/>

**Mine tailings safety in the UNECE region and beyond:
Online seminar**

Online Toolkit and Training for Strengthening Mine Tailings Safety

Overview

Industrial accidents at tailings management facilities (TMFs) have led to environmental catastrophes with devastating effects on humans and the environment within and across countries. Major industrial accidents in the UNECE region and beyond have motivated countries to develop and implement tools under the UNECE Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents to strengthen mine tailings safety and to prevent such accidents in the future.



This online toolkit assists countries in strengthening TMF safety and management practices. It serves as a hub for anyone wishing to learn about the importance of and work and tools on mine tailings safety under the Convention. At the same time, it provides online training for countries, without physically meeting, to improve their knowledge about the impacts and challenges of mine tailings and to apply existing guidelines, including UNECE's tools, to improve tailings safety. Through the drop-down menus below, this online toolkit and training includes four sections: background information on mine tailings safety; a 3-step practical training for countries to enhance safe management practices; a summary of UNECE's mine tailings work and partners; and further reading on key reports and references.

Improving the management and safety of mine tailings increases countries' understanding and governance of disaster risks, including through inter-institutional and cross-sectoral cooperation. As such, the work contributes to accomplishing the objectives of Agenda 2030, with its Sustainable Development Goals and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. It also strengthens mineral resource governance, sustainable infrastructure and disaster resilience, both within and across countries.

Background information - A call for an urgent action

Practical training (3 steps)

UNECE's mine tailings work and partners

Further reading - Key reports and references on mine tailings safety

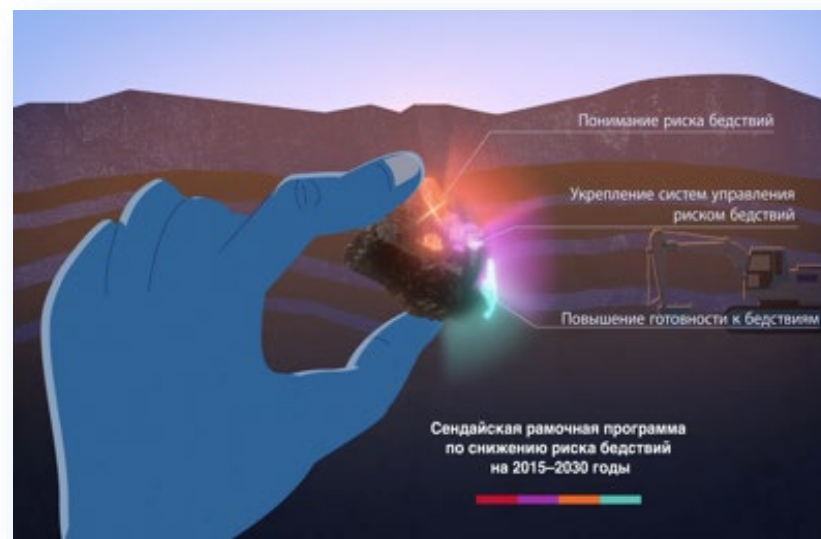
SENDAI FRAMEWORK
FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION 2015-2030

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Online Toolkit and Training for Strengthening Mine Tailings Safety

- Practical training → 3-step approach
- Available at <https://unece.org/environment-policy/industrial-accidents/online-toolkit-and-training-strengthening-mine-tailings>

Training Video on Mine Tailings Safety (ENG, RUS)



Lessons learnt and challenges

- CoVID-19 created a difficult environment (on-line meetings only)
- Some activities e.g. excercises were suspended
- Meeting are organised only biennially and serviced by the secretaries, but parties free to organise additional meetings
- Translation of guidances into national languages
- Cooperation with RBO's

Proposed future activities for 2022-2024 workplan

- Future activities based on the workplan
- Call for nominations for the JEG
- Organization of a virtual meeting to discuss the upcoming activities in depth – in late spring of 2021
- Planning of JEG meeting likely in 2022 (either in the margins of the TMF safety project in Kyrgyzstan, or organized separately with the support of Hungary)

Thank you

For more information on the Joint Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents:

<https://unece.org/joint-expert-group-water-and-industrial-accidents>

For more information on JEG guidance and good practice:

<https://unece.org/environment-policy/industrial-accidents/overview>

A brochure on the Joint Expert Group and its outputs is available at:

<https://unece.org/environment-policy/publications/brochure-joint-expert-group-water-and-industrial-accidents>

Online Toolkit and Training for Strengthening Mine Tailings Safety; Mine tailings video:

<https://unece.org/environment-policy/industrial-accidents/online-toolkit-and-training-strengthening-mine-tailings>