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## Sixth Meeting of the Inter-agency Coordination Council of the National Dialogue on Water Policy in Kazakhstan

20 November 2020, Nur-Sultan, IWAC office, 29 Syganak street, BC «Eurocenter», office No 904.

### MINUTES OF THE SESSION

#### OPENING SESSION

The Sixth meeting of the Inter-agency Coordination Council of the National Dialogue on Water Policy in Kazakhstan was opened by the Chairperson, vice-minister of the ecology, geology and natural resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan, *Mr. Yerlan Nysanbayev*. The Chairperson welcomed members of Inter-agency Coordination Council, representatives of private sector and international partners: EC, UNECE and OECD.

Welcoming remarks were given by:

- *Mr. Johannes Stenbaek Madsen*, Head of Cooperation, Delegation of the European Union to Kazakhstan.
- *Mr. Alisher Mamadzhanov*, Environmental Affairs officer, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).
- *Mr. Alexander Martusevich*, Project manager, Water Program of the organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

The meeting agenda has been adopted without any objections raised by the participants. The Inter-agency Coordination Council and meeting participants were presented with the plan of work for 2021 and NPD meeting draft protocol. The minutes reflect the order of the agenda sessions.

#### SESSION 1. NATIONAL DIALOGUE ON WATER POLICY

**Session 1** provided meeting participants with a review of activities of UNECE and OECD, which they carry out within the framework of National Water Policy Dialogue, as well as presented information on the tasks of the Regional project "European Union – Central Asia: cooperation in the field of water resources, environment and climate change (WECOOP)".

*Mr. Alisher Mamadzhanov*, UNECE Environmental Affairs officer, gave an overview of the European Union Water Initiative National Policy Dialogues (NPD) on Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) and UNECE activities in the region of Central Asia. The main points of his



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presentation covered launch of first policy packages in Kazakhstan, NPD and its meetings, priorities identified during the inception phase and the launch of new policy packages in 2021.

*Mr. Alexander Martusevich*, Project manager for the Water Program of OECD, gave his presentation on developing a national set of water security indicators linked to SDGs and green growth indicators (GGIs) in Kazakhstan. His presentation included both positive and negative trends that are a risk factor for the country's water security.

*Mr. Valts Vilnitis*, WECOOP Team leader, provided an overview of the Regional project "European Union – Central Asia: cooperation in the field of water resources, environment and climate change (WECOOP)". He talked about the third phase of WECOOP project (15 October 2019 – 14 October 2022), its main goals, events, and results.

During the question and answer session, a suggestion was given by *Mr. Nariman Kipshakbaiev*, Director of SIC Kazakh Branch, Interstate Commission for Water Coordination, Chairman of Water Partnership in Kazakhstan in regards of the importance of considering priority issues in the sphere of protection and use of transboundary watercourses in countries of Central Asia and timely coming up with more practical solutions to the issues.

The Chair mentioned that regional scientific organizations in Central Asia have significantly contributed to the development of cooperation among Central Asian countries and underlined the importance of considering their recommendations in the implementation of regional projects.

## **SESSION 2. ACTIVITIES OF KAZAKHSTAN ON THE PROTECTION AND USE OF WATER RESOURCES OF TRANSBOUNDARY RIVERS**

**Session 2** provided meeting participants with an overview of activities in Kazakhstan on the protection and use of water resources, focusing on the main priorities in the field of water resources management in the country, issues related to cooperation between Kazakhstan and neighboring countries intergovernmental commissions and the direction of the water resources management Program of Kazakhstan until 2030.

*Ms. Aliya Shalabekova*, Director of Transboundary Rivers Department of the Ministry of Ecology, Geology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan, delivered her presentation on activities on the development of cooperation of Kazakhstan on the protection and use of water resources of transboundary rivers. She focused on the cooperation within the framework of intergovernmental commissions and on the National report of Kazakhstan on SDG indicator 6.5.2.

*Mr. Marat Imanaliev*, Chief expert of the Committee on Water Resources, Ministry of Ecology, Geology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Kazakhstan, presented a Concept of the Water Resources Management Program of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2020-2030. He talked about main goals, tasks and activities included in the Program.

During the question and answer session meeting participants discussed the importance of financing water management activities in Kazakhstan, regional and scientific organizations, as well



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as discussed questions of the inclusion of groundwater related activities in the work of a Concept of the Water Resources Management Program of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2020-2030.

### **SESSION 3. THEMATIC AREAS OF THE NATIONAL DIALOGUE ON WATER POLICY IN KAZAKHSTAN**

**Session 3** was devoted to the discussion of thematic areas of the National Policy Dialogue. Thus, reports were given on the water resources management and industrial accidents, and the relationship between water and health. Due to the different nature of thematic areas, it was decided to divide the session in two blocks, each followed by a discussion section.

*Ms. Claudia Kamke*, Environmental Affairs officer at UNECE and *Ms. Zhanara Kubler*, Assistant Programme Management officer at UNECE gave a presentation on the activities to strengthen inter-institutional cooperation on mine tailings safety and the prevention of accidental water pollution in Kazakhstan and Central Asia. They talked about UNECE activities to support Kazakhstan and other Central Asian countries in strengthening the safety of tailing dumps (2020-2021) and the need to create interagency working group (IMWG) on safety of tailing dumps and prevention of accidental water pollution in Kazakhstan.

During a discussion section, *Mr. Talabek Makeev*, expert, highlighted the importance of ensuring intersectoral cooperation to provide the effective management of tailing safety in the work of IMWG. He as well talked about the importance of considering the location of industrial sites by implementing water drainage systems to avoid industrial accidents (ex: hydrotechnical facilities in Altyntau, Kokshetau).

*Mr. Arsen Nugmanov*, Chief expert, Department of prevention of emergency situations, Ministry for Emergency situations of the Republic of Kazakhstan, then provided a short report on transboundary cooperation in emergency prevention and response. He stated that the Ministry for Emergency situations of the Republic of Kazakhstan is currently developing cooperation plans to eliminate emergencies in a view of a recent breakthrough of Sardoba reservoir. Thus, government authorities of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan are working on the development and approval of the interaction plan to avoid similar situations from happening in the future.

During the second block of the session, *Mr. Alisher Mamadzhanov*, UNECE Environmental Affairs officer, delivered his presentation on the work under the Protocol on Water and Health in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. He talked about WASH and COVID-19, protocol targets to achieve the SDGs while integrating COVID-19 and Kazakhstan's accession to the Protocol of water and health.

The final report of **session 3** was given by *Ms. Zaure Yelshibayeva*, Head of the Department of sanitary and hygienic control over industrial and radiation-hazardous municipal facilities, the Committee of sanitary and epidemiological control of the Ministry of health of the Republic of Kazakhstan, where she provided information in the status of Kazakhstan's accession to the Protocol on Water and Health. Despite the preliminary approval of the Draft Resolution with the Ministry of



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Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, conduction of the further process requires the update of the legal basis for the accession. Thus, she concluded that in a view this, the Ministry of Health asks the Ministry of Ecology, Geology and natural resources of Kazakhstan to initiate a legal basis for procedures for accession to the Protocol.

## CLOSING SESSION

### **Discussion and adoption of the draft Work Plan of the National Dialogue on Water Policy in Kazakhstan for 2021**

During the closing session, the Chair gave the floor to *Mr. Serik Akhmetov*, Director of the International Water Assessment Center, who provided an overview of the draft Plan of Work for 2021.

*Mr. Akhmetov* briefly went through the points of the document that are planned to be accomplished with the support of international partners and donor organizations. Among them, carrying out further work on Kazakhstan's accession to the Protocol on Water and Health, IMWG creation, considering promotion of the work on the regional NEXUS project and the upcoming work related to the basin of the Syr Darya river.

During the discussion of the draft Protocol of the meeting, a suggestion was given in regards of exploring a possibility of holding next National Dialogue on Water Policy meeting in 2021 with the participation of Interstate Commission for Water Coordination members.

The Chair expressed his gratitude to the meeting participant and closed the meeting.