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## Economic Commission for Europe

### Inland Transport Committee

#### Working Party on Inland Water Transport

##### Working Party on the Standardization of Technical and Safety Requirements in Inland Navigation

###### Sixty-first session

Geneva, 29 June–1 July 2022

Item 4 (b) of the provisional agenda

##### **Inland Waterways Infrastructure: Inventory of Main Standards and Parameters of the E Waterway Network (Blue Book)**

## **Improvements to the structure of the Inventory of Main Standards and Parameters of the E Waterway Network (Blue Book)**

### **Note by the secretariat**

#### **I. Mandate**

1. This document is submitted in line with the Proposed Programme Budget for 2022, part V, Regional cooperation for development, section 20, Economic Development in Europe, Programme 17, Economic Development in Europe (A/76/6 (Sect.20), paragraph 20.76).
2. At its sixtieth session, the Working Party on the Standardization of Technical and Safety Requirements in Inland Navigation (SC.3/WP.3) was informed by the secretariat about comments received in relation to the structure of the Inventory of Main Standards and Parameters of the E Waterway Network (Blue Book) and data presentation. SC.3/WP.3 decided to continue discussion at its sixty-first session with a view to improving the fourth revision of the Blue Book planned for 2023.
3. SC.3/WP.3 may wish to consider the proposals and decide as appropriate.

#### **II. Overview of the comments received by the secretariat**

4. The Blue Book contains technical characteristics of European inland waterways and ports of international importance (E waterways and ports) identified in the European Agreement on Main Inland Waterways of International Importance (AGN) with the purpose to show, on an internationally comparable basis, the current inland navigation infrastructure parameters in Europe as compared to the minimum standards and parameters prescribed in AGN. At its forty-first session, the Working Party on Inland Water Transport agreed that the Blue Book should be updated every five years so that it could serve as a basic instrument for

monitoring progress made in the implementation of AGN (TRANS/SC.3/143, paragraph 24).

5. The secretariat has received a number of comments from member States and international organizations<sup>1</sup> on possible improvements of the structure of the Blue Book and data presentation that could improve usability and visibility of information.

6. The Blue Book identifies the list of missing links and bottlenecks on European inland waterways. Additionally, the list of missing links could be presented in a separate table, given their particular importance for the establishment of a continuous E Waterway Network according to AGN. The table could also be supplemented with information about ports and locks planned on future connections.

7. Records in table 1 “Navigational characteristics of main European inland waterways of international importance” and table 2 “Parameters of locks of inland waterways of international importance” are not completed. Maximum convoy size data are available for sections covering only 73 % of the total length in the present situation, and 76 % for the target values. For single unit size, only 45 % of the total length is covered. Furthermore, some of the data may require updating.

8. While the Blue Book provides data on the allowed dimensions of vessels and convoys, it does not contain information on the waterway characteristics such as the channel width, the actual depth, the curve radius etc. This information would allow comparing those characteristics at a network level.

9. In table 3 “Navigational Characteristics of Main European Inland Waterways of International Importance”, E ports are classified in accordance with their annual cargo-handling capacity (0.5–3 million tons, 3–10 million tons and over 10 million tons). Ports included in the last group may differ significantly in their main characteristics. The Working Party may wish to subdivide this group into the relevant subgroups.

10. The Blue Book could be supplemented with information on the total length of inland waterways and waterway sections and the number of locks and ports by country.

### **III. New developments**

11. Currently, the European Commission is working on the finalization of the revised Guidelines for the development of the trans-European transport network, amending Regulation (EU) 2021/1153 and Regulation (EU) No 913/2010 and repealing Regulation (EU) 1315/2013. SC.3/WP.3 might wish to consider this document in its future work with a view to complement the Blue Book with the relevant information for inland waterways and ports included into the core and comprehensive trans-European transport networks.

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<sup>1</sup> Report of InCom Working Group No. 179–2020 “Standardization of Inland Waterways Proposal for the Revision of the ECMT 1992 Classification” of the World Association for Waterborne Transport Infrastructure.