

Teleconference (through WebEx) of the Joint Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents

Geneva and online, 09:30 – 12:00 CET, 2 June 2023

Background

The Joint Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents, under both the Water and Industrial Accidents Convention, has been active since 1998. Its work is guided by [the JEG strategy](#).

At its twelfth meeting, the Conference of the Parties adopted its workplan for 2023-2024, including items:

- ***Meetings of JEG (estimate 1 meeting and 1 teleconference)
Preventing accidental water pollution:***

At the intersection of the Industrial Accidents and Water Conventions, in the framework of their JEG, this activity addresses long-term strategy objectives of facilitating cooperation between riparians and river basin commissions and promoting the prevention of accidental water pollution and preparedness, namely 1 (a)–(b), 2 (a)–(b), 3 (a)–(b) and 4 (a)–(c). It contributes to all Sendai Framework priorities and SDG targets 3.9, 3.d, 6.3, 11.5, 11.b, 12.4, 13.1 and 17.6 through the development and implementation of joint policies on industrial safety, water management and disaster risk management. This activity entails an exchange of experiences and good practices among riparians and river basin commissions, focused specifically on early warning and alert systems and Natech events, based on a collection of examples of Natech accidents. As such, it will support application of ECE Safety Guidelines, Good Practices and Checklists.

Expected deliverables: JEG workshop on preventing accidental water pollution, including early warning and alert systems, including identification and exchange of good practices and collection of examples of Natech accidents affecting transboundary waters.

Lead and supporting Parties: Slovakia, in cooperation with Finland, Hungary, Rep. of Moldova, Romania and Serbia, with financial support from Germany, in cooperation with the Water Convention and river basin commissions, including ICPDR.

This workshop is a natural follow-up to the JEG seminar on emerging risks in accidental water pollution: focus on natural hazard-triggered accidents (5 Oct 2022), it was agreed that the workshop should focus on prevention of accidental water pollution and early-warning systems.

- ***Knowledge exchange on accidental water pollution (including multi-hazard) warning systems, good practice and lessons learned (subject to the provision of additional financial resources)***

This activity entails the development of a catalogue/web page that will provide information on accidental water pollution events, including Natech events, good practice by countries and river basin commissions, and bilateral cooperation examples. It can be linked with above-mentioned JEG workshop on preventing accidental water pollution, including early warning and alert systems (see table 1 above, activity 2.8). It contributes to long-term strategy objectives 1 (a)–(c), 2 (a)–(c), 3 (a)–(b) and 4 (b)–(c), all Sendai Framework priorities and SDG targets 3.9, 3.d, 6.3, 11.5, 12.4 and 13.1 through

the development and implementation of joint policies on industrial safety, water management and risk reduction

Expected deliverables: Questionnaire; catalogue or web page on accidental water pollution warning systems; recommendations on their deployment

Lead/supporting countries/organizations: [donor to be determined], with the support of Finland, Romania, JEG and river basin organizations

The Conference of the Parties to the Industrial Accidents Convention at its twelfth meeting (29 Nov-1 Dec 2022) also mandated JEG, in cooperation with the Working Group on Implementation (WGI) and the Bureau, to assess whether there exists a need for the Guidelines to facilitate the identification of hazardous activities for the purposes of the Convention to be revised and updated in order to cover more comprehensively the hazards and risks arising from tailings management facilities (TMFs), and to share its findings in the form of an official document with the Conference of the Parties at its thirteenth meeting.

Objectives of the teleconference

The main objective of the teleconference, organized with the financial support of the German Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection is to discuss the draft concept and planning for the JEG workshop and meeting in 2024. JEG members will be invited to comment on the programme of the workshop, to contribute to its organization and to propose speakers for the event. In addition, the JEG members will be invited to share their views on and consider the update of the Guidelines to more comprehensively cover TMF related hazards and risks.

Background documents for discussion

- Draft concept note for the JEG workshop in 2024, drafted by Slovakia, in cooperation with the secretariat and circulated by the secretariat in advance of the teleconference
- Conclusions from the JEG seminar on emerging risks in accidental water pollution: focus on natural hazard-triggered accidents, available at: <https://unece.org/info/Environmental-Policy/Industrial-Accidents/events/369991>
- Guidelines to Facilitate the Identification of Hazardous Activities for the Purposes of the Convention, available at: https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2022-09/ENG_Guidelines_to_facilitate_the_identification_of_hazardous_activities_for_the_purposes_of_the_UNECE_Industrial_Accidents_Convention_Location_Criteria_.pdf
- Presentation on the JEG planned activities for 2023-2024, delivered at the Joint meeting of the Bureau with the Working Group on Implementation (14 Feb 2023)
- Background document on Consideration for the UNECE Industrial Accidents Convention and its Guidelines on Identification of Hazardous Activities to more comprehensively cover the hazards and risks of tailings management facilities

Provisional agenda

1. Opening and setting the scene Moderation by the JEG Co-chair from Hungary		
09.20 – 09.30	All participants to connect remotely, test their microphones and sort out any technical issues to start the meeting on time	
09.30 – 09.40	Welcome and purpose of the teleconference	<i>JEG co-chairs</i>
09.40 – 10.00	Planned JEG activities in 2023-24 and CoP-12 outcomes	<i>Secretariat</i>
2. Preparation of JEG workshop on prevention of accidental water pollution and early warning system (and back-to-back JEG meeting) in 2024 Moderation by the JEG members from Slovakia		
10.00 – 10.10	The outcomes of the 2022 JEG seminar	<i>JEG co-Chair from Hungary</i>
10.10 – 10.30	Presentation on the draft concept and programme of the JEG workshop	<i>Representative from Slovakia</i>
10.30 – 10.50	Feedback from JEG members concerning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elements of the Programme, incl. suggestions for speakers • Envisaged contributions by JEG members • Format, date and location 	<i>Tour-de-table involving all JEG Members</i>
10.50 – 11.00	Presentation of draft agenda for 2024 JEG meeting back-to-back with the JEG workshop	<i>JEG co-Chair from Hungary</i>
3. Possible update of the Guidelines to facilitate the identification of hazardous activities for the purposes of the Convention in view of TMFs Moderation by the JEG Co-chair from Serbia		
11.00 – 11.10	Introduction to mandate given to JEG, in cooperation with the Working Group and the Bureau, by UNECE TEIA CoP to assess whether there exists a need for updating the Guidelines to facilitate the identification of hazardous activities for the purposes of the Convention (Location Criteria)	<i>JEG co-chair from Serbia in cooperation with the secretariat</i>
11.10 – 11.50	Feedback from JEG members concerning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments on need to update the Guidelines to facilitate the identification of hazardous activities for the purposes of the Convention (Location Criteria) 	<i>Tour-de-table involving all JEG Members</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of a capacity criterion of 1 million cubic metres to facilitate the identification of TMFs 	
4. Closing of the teleconference Moderation by the JEG Co-chair from Hungary		
11.50 – 12.00	Wrap-up and next steps	<i>JEG Co-chairs</i>