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**Economic Commission for Europe****Inland Transport Committee****Working Party on Inland Water Transport****Sixty-seventh session**

Geneva, 11–13 October 2023

Item 14 of the provisional agenda

**Activities of the Economic Commission for Europe****Bodies of Interest to the Working Party****Alignment of the Governance Framework and Review of the Mandate of the Working Party on Inland Water Transport****Note by the secretariat****I. Mandate**

1. This document is submitted in line with the proposed Programme Budget for 2023, part V, Regional cooperation for development, section 20, Economic Development in Europe, Programme 17, Economic Development in Europe (A/77/6 (Sect. 20), table 20.6).
2. At its eighty-fifth session, the Inland Transport Committee (ITC) (a) encouraged all working parties to review and align their terms of reference (ToR) and rules of procedure (RoP) to those of ITC, and (b) decided to proceed with the review process of the mandates of its working parties in the course of 2023 and noted that it takes place in the context of a broader transformation following the endorsement of the revised ToR of ITC by the Economic and Social Council (ECE/TRANS/328, paragraphs 16 and 18).
3. As a follow-up of the ITC decisions, the ITC Chair and the Director of the Sustainable Transport Division invited the Chairs of ITC working parties, and among them SC.3, to support and contribute to key decisions of ITC by:<sup>1</sup>
  - Aligning their ToR and RoP to those of ITC, where appropriate
  - Taking part in the review process of their mandates in accordance with the proposed modalities by submitting the necessary information.
4. This document contains a proposal for the requested input of SC.3.

**II. Alignment of Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure**

5. At its sixty-fifth session (3–5 November 2021), SC.3 revised its ToR to bring them in line with the ITC Strategy until 2030, the Ministerial declaration “Inland Navigation in a Global Setting”, the *White Paper on the Progress, Accomplishments and Future of*

<sup>1</sup> Ref. UNECE/2023/TRANS/52 of 18 May 2023.



*Sustainable Inland Water Transport* and its programme of work for 2022–2023 (ECE/TRANS/SC.3/215, paragraph 97). The revised ToR were adopted by ITC at its eighty-fourth session on 25 February 2022 (ECE/TRANS/316, paragraph 27).

6. At its sixty-sixth session (12–14 October 2022), SC.3 agreed on its own RoP, aligned with those of ITC (ECE/TRANS/SC.3/217, paragraph 103). They were adopted by ITC at its eighty-fifth session on 24 February 2022 (ECE/TRANS/328, paragraph 29 (d)).

7. SC.3 may therefore wish to note that its ToR and RoP are aligned to those of ITC.

### **III. Input for the Review Process of the Mandate**

8. The information in this chapter is requested for the review process of the SC.3 mandate. It is structured in accordance with the proposed modalities of the 2023 review of mandates and the list of recommended information attached to the letter of the ITC Chair and the Director of the Sustainable Transport Division mentioned above. The recommended information covers the period 2018–2023.

#### **A. Subsidiary Body Mandates and Governance Framework**

9. Alignment with the ITC ToR and RoP: this information is provided in chapter II of this document.

#### **B. Working Party Objective**

10. According to its ToR, the objective of SC.3 is as follows:

“In support of the objective of the ECE transport subprogramme to facilitate the international movement of persons and goods by inland transport modes and improve safety, environmental protection, energy efficiency and security in the transport sector to levels that contribute effectively to sustainable transport. SC.3, assisted where appropriate by SC.3/WP.3,<sup>2</sup> will carry out activities aimed at making inland water transport more sustainable, green and resilient to climate change. These activities also aim to support the implementation of the ITC Strategy until 2030, in particular, related to tasks such as (a) servicing and administering legal instruments related to inland water transport, (b) fostering and supporting the introduction of new technologies and innovations in inland water transport, (c) promoting sustainable regional and interregional inland transport connectivity and mobility and (d) supporting capacity building activities on legal instruments under the ITC purview and resolutions relevant to inland water transport.”<sup>3</sup>

#### **C. Work Areas Covered by the Working Party**

11. According to its ToR, the clusters of SC.3 activities are:

- (a) Organize a pan-European policy dialogue on the inland water transport issues;
- (b) Promote a coordinated development of modern, sustainable and resilient E waterway network;
- (c) Address safety and operational requirements in inland navigation and encourage modernization and greening of fleet and infrastructure;
- (d) Promote integration of inland water transport in multimodal transport chains, automation, digitalization and other innovations;

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<sup>2</sup> Working Party on the Standardization of Technical and Safety Requirements in Inland Navigation.

<sup>3</sup> Terms of Reference of the Working Party on Inland Water Transport, <https://unece.org/transport/documents/2022/05/terms-reference-working-party-inland-water-transport-sc3>, paragraph 3.

(e) Contribute to the prevention of pollution from vessels and resilience of the sector to climate changes;

(f) Contribute to the harmonization of the international legal framework for inland water transport;

(g) Undertake other activities related to regional and international cooperation or requested by ITC.

12. Activities of SC.3 listed in paragraph 11 above cover the following as the main work areas:

- Transport facilitation (subparagraphs (a), (b), (d) and (f))
- Safety (subparagraphs (b), (c) and (f))
- Environmental and climate performance (subparagraphs (c) and (e))
- Innovations (subparagraphs (c) and (d)).

13. In the field of legal instruments for inland water transport, SC.3 services (a) eight United Nations conventions and agreements administered by ITC, and (b) the *Budapest Convention on the Contract for the Carriage of Goods by Inland Waterway* (CMNI) adopted at the Diplomatic Conference under the joint auspices of the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR), the Danube Commission (DC) and the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and deposited with the Government of Hungary.

## **D. Efficiency and Value Added**

### **1. Internal overlaps and/or duplication with other bodies of the Economic Commission for Europe**

14. SC.3 is the only ITC subsidiary body that addresses all relevant aspects of inland navigation and river-sea transport in Europe as well as pleasure navigation on European waterways and beyond towards an efficient, safe and sustainable transport mode. In its activities, SC.3 and its subsidiary body, SC.3/WP.3 deliver inputs to the implementation of the ITC Strategy until 2030, as indicated in paragraph 10 above.

### **2. External overlaps and/or duplication with other bodies outside the Economic Commission for Europe**

15. There are no similar bodies in other regional commissions of the United Nations that focus their activities on inland water transport.

16. There is no other intergovernmental body in Europe outside ECE with an equivalent mandate and geographical coverage. In the area of safety and operational requirements in inland navigation and River Information Services (RIS), there are similarities with the standards of the European Committee for Drawing up Standards in the Field of Inland Navigation (CESNI). CESNI comprises experts of the member States of CCNR and of the European Union and has four observer States as of 31 July 2023. The CESNI standards are mandatory for one half of ECE member States and applied by 57 per cent of ECE member States including the observers. Therefore, there is no duplication of the geographical scope of activities.

### **3. Internal synergies other bodies of the Economic Commission for Europe**

17. SC.3 and SC.3/WP.3 collaborate closely with:

- Working Party on Intermodal Transport and Logistics (WP.24) on aligning the *European Agreement on Main Inland Waterways of International Importance* (AGN) and the *Protocol on Combined Transport on Inland Waterways to the European Agreement on Important International Combined Transport Lines and Related Installations* (AGTC Protocol), promoting the development of container transport on inland waterways in accordance with ITC resolution No. 269 “Facilitating the Development of Container Transport on Inland Waterways”

- Working Party on Transport Statistics (WP.6) on the E waterway census
- Working Party on Transport Trends and Economics (WP.5) on collecting data from countries on the benchmarking of construction costs of inland waterway infrastructure and preparing inputs on inland water transport to WP.5 publications
- Trade Division on digitalization of transport documents and the electronic data interchange.

18. SC.3 and SC.3/WP.3 contribute to the implementation of the ECE Road Map on Intelligent Transport Systems for 2021–2025 and collaborate with other ITC subsidiary bodies involved in this activity.

#### 4. External synergies with other bodies outside the Economic Commission for Europe

19. SC.3 and SC.3/WP.3 collaborate closely with:

- European Commission on policy issues related to the development of inland water transport and other relevant areas
- CCNR, DC, Mosel Commission (MC), International Sava River Basin Commission (SC) on updating the *Inventory of Main Standards and Parameters of the E Waterway Network* and standardization of technical and safety requirements in inland navigation, in particular, the European Code for Inland Waterways (CEVNI)
- CCNR, DC, MC, SC and the secretariat of the Convention on Collection, Deposit and Reception of Waste Produced during Navigation on the Rhine and Inland Waterways – on the prevention of pollution of inland waterways by vessels
- International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA) on Vessel Traffic Services on inland waterways
- World Association for Waterborne Transport Infrastructure (PIANC) on the classification of inland waterways and RIS
- International Organization for Standardization (ISO) on developing standards for management and handling of waste generated on-board inland navigation vessels
- European Transport Workers' Federation (ETF) on addressing labour market challenges
- European Boating Association (EBA) on issues related to recreational navigation, in particular, International Certificate for Operators of Pleasure Craft.

### E. Work Methods

20. The deliverables of SC.3, including the number of meetings, official documents, publications and databases, are indicated in the ITC programmes of work of the Transport subprogramme, programme plans and publication programmes:

- 2018: ECE/TRANS/2018/21, Add.1 and Corr.1, ECE/TRANS/2018/22
- 2019: ECE/TRANS/2019/23, ECE/TRANS/2019/24
- 2020: ECE/TRANS/2020/21, ECE/TRANS/2020/22/Rev.1, ECE/TRANS/2020/23
- 2021: ECE/TRANS/2021/8, ECE/TRANS/2021/9, ECE/TRANS/2021/10
- 2022: ECE/TRANS/2022/8, ECE/TRANS/2022/9, ECE/TRANS/2022/10 and Corr.1
- 2023: ECE/TRANS/2023/11, ECE/TRANS/2023/12, ECE/TRANS/2023/13/Rev.1.

21. The subsidiary body of SC.3 is SC.3/WP.3 which follows the same governance framework. The informal expert groups, active as of July 2023, are the CEVNI Expert Group and the Informal Working Group on Recreational Navigation.

## F. Main Partners

22. The main partners are listed in paragraph 18 above.

## G. Results Achieved\*

23. Information on the results achieved by SC.3 is available in the ITC reports and programmes of work of the Transport subprogramme listed in paragraph 20 above. Detailed information on particular achievements is given below.

24. Regulatory and normative work:

- There are 74 contracting parties to the nine legal instruments under the SC.3 purview, 58 of which are contracting parties to the United Nations conventions and agreements.<sup>4</sup>
- Three legal instruments: AGN, *Convention on the Measurement of Inland Navigation Vessels* and CMNI have accessions of 70 per cent of ECE member States with navigable inland waterways or above.
- The most recent accessions to the legal instruments were made by Poland in 2017 (AGN and the *Convention on the Measurement of Inland Navigation Vessels*).
- The secretariat regularly gives advice to ECE member States who are considering accession to AGN and other legal instruments. To facilitate this, SC.3 (a) approved the road map for ratification, acceptance, approval and accession to AGN at its sixty-third session and (b) considered the draft road map for acceding to the AGTC Protocol at the joint workshop with WP.24; the participants recommended WP.24 to apply it.
- Acting as the AGN Administrative Committee in terms of amending the annexes to the Agreement in accordance with Article 13, paragraph 2, and Article 14, paragraph 2 of AGN, SC.3 considers the relevant amendment proposals. The most recent amendments to annexes I and II of AGN were introduced by the Depositary notifications C.N.56.2018.TREATIES-XI.D.5 of 31 January 2018 and C.N.377.2018.TREATIES-XI.D.5 of 6 August 2018 and entered into force on 6 November 2018. The updated text of AGN is available on the ECE website.<sup>5</sup>
- Other legal instruments are also subject to assessment by SC.3 and SC.3/WP.3 in terms of implementation, efficiency and updating: (a) the *Convention of Measurement of Inland Navigation Vessels* in 2013; (b) the *Convention on Registration of Inland Navigation Vessels* in 2015–2016, and (c) conventions and agreements and SC.3 resolutions in terms of resilience to pandemics and similar situations in 2021.
- SC.3 resolutions on the various aspects of inland water transport have the status of recommendations, however, many of them have been introduced into the national legislation. In 2017–2022, SC.3 adopted 18 resolutions (resolutions Nos. 87–104). The most important are: (a) the *Inventory of Most Important Bottlenecks and Missing Links in the E Waterway Network* (resolution No. 49, revision 2); (b) the *European Code for Signs and Signals on Inland Waterways* (resolution No. 90); (c) *Recommendations on Harmonized Europe-Wide Technical Requirements for Inland Navigation Vessels* (resolution No. 61, revision 2); (d) CEVNI (resolution No. 24, revision 6); (e) resolutions on RIS and (f) updates to SC.3 resolutions on recreational navigation, in particular, the *International Certificate for Operators of Pleasure Craft* (resolution No. 40, revision 4).

\* Since 2017.

<sup>4</sup> As of 31 July 2023.

<sup>5</sup> <https://unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trans/doc/2019/sc3/ECE-TRANS-120r4efr.pdf>.

25. Policy recommendations:

- Ministerial declaration “Inland Navigation in a Global Setting” adopted at the International Conference in Wrocław (Poland) on 18 April 2018, supported by ITC resolution No. 265 “Facilitating the Development of Inland Water Transport”
- *White Paper on the Progress, Accomplishments and Future of Sustainable Inland Water Transport*, adopted by SC.3 at its sixty-third session and endorsed by ITC at its eighty-second session (25–28 February 2020).

26. SC.3 and SC.3/WP.3 contribute to sustainable inland transport and mobility for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in the sector and the implementation of the ITC Strategy until 2030 by adopting resolutions and amendments to SC.3 documents, organizing workshops, round tables and follow-up discussions, providing recommendations and inputs to ITC documents on topical issues and challenges in the sector, in particular:

- Improving the international regulatory framework for inland water transport (workshop on 23 June 2021)
- Automation, digitalization and cybersecurity (resolutions on RIS, resolution No. 95 “Enhancing international cooperation to support the development of automation in inland navigation”, the ongoing work on CEVNI, workshops on 8 October 2020, 3 November 2021 and 15 February 2023)
- Modernization and greening of inland water transport (amendments to CEVNI and resolutions Nos. 21, and 61, workshops on 16 February 2022, 29 June 2022)
- Development of container transport on inland waterways and river-sea transport (workshops and round table discussions on 13 February 2020 and 12 October 2022, ITC resolution No. 269)
- Circular economy (workshops on 7 October 2020 and the follow-up discussion at the sixty-fifth session of SC.3)
- Climate change, its impact on the sector and mitigation activities (workshops on 17 February 2021 and 11 October 2023)
- Equal rights and opportunities for women in inland navigation (workshops on 12 February 2020 and 3 July 2023)
- Professional qualifications, labour market challenges and enhancing the overall attractiveness of the sector (workshops on 13 February 2019 and 3 July 2023)
- Terminology for inland water transport (*Glossary for Inland Water Transport* adopted by SC.3 at its sixty-sixth session).

27. SC.3 held seven workshops and round table discussions in 2017–2022, and SC.3/WP.3 – 13 workshops and round table discussions in 2017–2023.

28. SC.3 regularly, on a biennial basis, evaluates its results based on the expected accomplishments and adjusts its programme of work as appropriate. At its sixty-third session, SC.3 agreed to maintain the biennial programme of work and the four-year plan for the future, aligned with the ITC Strategy until 2030 (ECE/TRANS/SC.3/210, paragraph 99). The review of the programme of work of SC.3 and the expected accomplishments for 2018–2019, 2020–2021 and 2022–2023 are available in ECE/TRANS/SC.3/2017/24, ECE/TRANS/SC.3/2019/21 and ECE/TRANS/SC.3/2021/12.

## **H. Results and Changes Expected in Near Future**

29. SC.3 adopts the expected accomplishments for the forthcoming biennial period in the programme of work. The expected accomplishments for 2024–2025 are proposed in ECE/TRANS/SC.3/2023/17.

30. SC.3 and SC.3/WP.3 have not identified a need in:

- Streamlining and synergizing activities within each of the expected results
- Ways of improving efficiency and methods of work
- Optimization of the structure of the programme of work
- Areas identified for enhancement or abolishment.

31. Currently, the successful work and accomplishment of all tasks set out by member States and ITC for SC.3, SC.3/WP.3 and informal expert groups are supported by one staff member of the ECE Sustainable Transport Division. While the secretariat is putting every effort to deliver high quality service, its capacity appears limited for a number of activities undertaken by SC.3 and its subsidiary bodies. Allocation of additional human and budget resources to the secretariat should therefore be considered, in particular, if SC.3 finds it desirable to intensify its activities.

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