

TOWARDS ENHANCED COOPERATION OF UNECE MEAs: Informal guidance

Version of 1 December 2015

Annex:

Activities jointly implemented by two or more UNECE MEAs

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) provides the secretariat for the five conventions and their protocols – the UNECE multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs).¹ This “joint secretariat” forms the basis for many activities being organized jointly under two or more UNECE treaties. Examples are provided in the table below. See also the publication on UNECE MEAs in Central Asia.

Water and Industrial Accidents

A particularly significant example of formal cooperation is the UNECE work on Water and Industrial Accidents. The Joint ad hoc Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents is a unique example of cooperation in an effort to promote synergies among the UNECE environmental treaties. It was established under the Industrial Accidents and Water Conventions in 1998 with the aim to support cooperation on issues related to the prevention of accidental pollution of transboundary waters.

Since its establishment, the Joint Expert Group has produced several guidance documents on different subjects, e.g. the safety of pipelines and of tailing management facilities, and has provided inputs to various documents, e.g. location criteria for identification of hazardous activities. It has also promoted international response exercises on transboundary rivers through the organization of specific thematic activities.

Several workshops dealing with prevention of accidental water pollution have also been jointly organized in the framework of the Industrial Accidents and Water Conventions.

Synergies between UNECE MEAs

<i>MEAs involved</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Dates</i>
Water Convention and other MEAs	Publication: <i>Strengthening Water Management and Transboundary Water Cooperation in Central Asia: the Role of UNECE Environmental Conventions</i>	December 2011
Air Convention and other UNECE MEAs	Missions of the secretariat to Central Asian States to discuss the ways of strengthening the ratification and implementation of the UNECE MEAs with particular focus on the Air Convention	2012–2013
Water and Industrial Accidents Conventions	Joint ad hoc Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents (JEG) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development of a checklist on contingency planning for accidents affecting transboundary waters, with introductory guidance, and contribution to its testing in the Danube Delta	ongoing 2011 to November 2015

¹ The Protocol on Water and Health is serviced jointly by UNECE and WHO/Europe.

<i>MEAs involved</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Dates</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication: <i>Safety guidelines and good practices for Pipelines</i> (re-issue) 	May 2015
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication: <i>Safety guidelines and good practices for Tailings Management Facilities</i> 	May 2014
Water Convention, with Espoo and Industrial Accidents Convention and Protocol on Water & Health	National Policy Dialogues on Integrated Water Resources Management and Water Supply and Sanitation	ongoing
Industrial Accidents Convention, with Water Convention	Project: <i>Improving hazard and crisis management in the Danube Delta</i>	December 2010 to November 2015
Protocol on Water & Health and Aarhus Convention	Publication: <i>Guide to public participation under the Protocol on Water and Health</i>	November 2013
Water and Aarhus Conventions	Conference: <i>Public participation and water resources management: where do we stand in international law?</i>	December 2013
Espoo Convention, Protocol on SEA and Water Convention	Assessment and reduction of transboundary impacts on transboundary watercourses and international lake (in the context of subregional coordination in the Baltic Sea)	2015
Espoo Convention, Protocol on SEA and Aarhus Convention	Effective public participation in SEA/EIA (in the context of subregional coordination in the Baltic Sea)	2015
Espoo and Aarhus Conventions (plus OSCE)	Joint capacity-building activities for Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia on public participation in decision-making, including to strengthen the capacities of national Aarhus Centres and the regional Aarhus Centres Network in the EIA and SEA processes	
Protocol on SEA and Aarhus Convention	Joint meeting: <i>Public participation in environmental decision-making: focus on strategic environmental assessment</i>	October 2012
Industrial Accidents Convention and Protocol on SEA	Joint guidance: Land-use planning and related safety aspects	2015–2017
Industrial Accidents Convention and Protocol on SEA (plus UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management)	Sharing of good practices on safety and land-use planning, plus development of guidance on safety and land-use planning, Joint seminar on 13 April 2016, in the framework of the Working Group on Development (Industrial Accidents Convention) and Working Group on Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment	2015–2016
Air Convention and Protocol on PRTRs	Information exchange on air pollutant emissions from sources covered by the Protocol on PRTRs	
Protocol on SEA and Aarhus Convention	Publication: Recommendations on public participation under the Aarhus Convention and the Protocol on SEA to the Espoo Convention	November 2015

<i>MEAs involved</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Dates</i>
Industrial Accidents Convention and Aarhus Convention	Cooperation on the proposed amendment of Article 9 of the Industrial Accidents Convention with regard to strengthening its provision on public participation	2015
Industrial Accidents Convention and Protocol on PRTRs (plus Sub-committee of the Globally Harmonized System for the Classification and Labelling of Chemicals)	Cooperation on aspects related to chemicals management, joint input to the UN system-wide Environmental Management Group / Issues Management Group on the Sound Management of Chemicals and Waste, joint contribution to the UNEP SAICM International Conference of Chemicals Management, October 2015 (ICCM-4)	since 2015, ongoing

In addition, there is constant interaction between the Conventions and their respective Protocols, particularly the Espoo Convention and its Protocol on SEA, which share a Working Group on EIA and SEA.