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**EUWI**  
EU WATER INITIATIVE



## Minutes of the Joint Meeting of

### **The second session of the Steering Committee under the UNECE-SDC project on the Implementation of targets under the Protocol on Water and Health in the Republic of Moldova and the annual EUWI National Policy Dialogue meeting led by the OECD**

The joint meeting took place on 10 October 2013 in the premises of the National Centre for Public Health in Chisinau. It was attended by around 35 representatives of governmental entities, international organizations and other development partners and stakeholders (list of participants in the annex).

In the opening session the welcoming statements were delivered by the Deputy Minister of Health, Ms. Svetlana Cotelea (Chair of the meeting), Head of the Water Management Department of the Ministry of Environment, Ms. Serafima Tronza, and Director of Cooperation of the Swiss Cooperation Office in the Republic of Moldova Ms. Georgette Bruchez. Mr. Alexander Martusevich, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) EAP Task Force, and Mr. Alisher Mamadzhanov, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), provided the overview of the meeting objectives and goals.

The first session of the meeting was dedicated to the presentation of the national report of the Republic of Moldova submitted under the second reporting exercise under the Protocol on Water and Health. The report was introduced in detail by the national Protocol focal points – Ms. Tronza and Mr. Ion Salaru (First Deputy Director of the National Centre for Public Health). The participants discussed the process of the preparation of the report, specifically regarding the participation of public. It was noted that within the UNECE-Swiss Agency for Cooperation and Development (SDC) project on the implementation of targets set under the Protocol by Moldova in 2010, the public discussion on the draft report were organized in April 2013. The participants further discussed the status of implementation of the national targets under the Protocol and noted the overall progress on many targets and indicators while also discussing the areas where the progress has been lagging behind. It was highlighted that the findings of the report should play an important role in drafting the Action Plan on the implementation of targets, which is one of the key outputs of the UNECE-SDC project. Mr. Mihaly Kadar, UNECE consultant, also provided his comments on the report.

Mr. Mamadzhanov informed the meeting about the upcoming third session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health to be held in Oslo on 25-27 November 2013 and informed about a possibility to organize an official side-event dedicated to the Moldovan experience. He also thanked the Moldovan experts for sharing their experience with their colleagues in the Caucasus and Central Asia during subregional and regional events organized by UNECE in 2013, which was possible thanks to the SDC financial support.

The second session was dedicated to the Clearing House mechanism and awareness raising activities under the Protocol. In the first presentation, Mr. Salaru presented the process leading to the establishment of the Clearing House under the Protocol on Water and Health at the National Centre for Public Health. It was noted that the process was initiated in late 2012 and was guided by the Steering Committee and Stakeholder meetings that provided comments on the Terms of Reference of the Clearing House. The establishment of the Clearing House as a hub for information on water and health issues and a resource centre for governmental officials, non-governmental organizations and the general public was one of the main outputs of the UNECE-SDC project. The process was finalized by the Order of the Ministry of Health on the establishment of the Clearing House at the National Centre for Public Health. The Clearing House will contribute to increasing awareness on the Protocol by conducting campaigns, trainings and briefings on themes relevant to the Protocol.

Ms. Tatiana Siniaeva, NGO Eco-TIRAS, provided an overview of the planned activities of the Clearing House including public awareness campaigns, trainings for media, NGO representatives and general public. The Steering Committee welcomed the opening of the Clearing House; its official opening took place on 10 October 2013 following the conclusion of the Steering Committee meeting.

The third session of the meeting reviewed the progress in the development of the Action Plan towards implementation of the national targets under the Protocol on Water and Health, which serves as the key project output along with the resource mobilization strategy that would complement the Action Plan. The participants discussed the progress in these outputs based on the presentation of the draft extended concept program of the Action Plan, including the resource mobilization strategy, delivered by Mr. Valeriu Gonciar, Ministry of Health, and Ms. Tamara Guvir, independent expert. Mr. Kadar shared the Hungarian experience on the implementation of national targets in his presentation.

In the discussion that followed, the participants provided concrete suggestions and comments on the structure of the Action Plan and the resource mobilization strategy, modality of its adoption by the Government (e.g. as a program). Specifically, it was mentioned that the Action Plan should be a light and a user-friendly document. The options for the implementing period of the Plan were also discussed. There was also a general agreement that in light of the national report under the Protocol and the need that it revealed for a revision of some national targets adopted in 2010, the Action Plan should be based on the revised targets. It was, however, noted that the revision should not constitute a fundamental change in the targets but be rather seen as an update process. Based on this discussion, the Steering Committee accepted the proposed modality of work on the program under the Action Plan noting that the process should be held in a participatory manner with participation of key stakeholders.

The next session was held within the annual EU Water Initiative National Policy Dialogue (EUWI NPD) meeting led by OECD and was dedicated to the discussion of possible topics on economic and financial aspects of Water Resources Management under the EUWI NPD in Moldova for 2014-2015. Mr. Martusevich delivered a presentation on water for green growth, outlining the future work of the OECD/EAP Task Force on economic and financial aspects of water resources management and possible topics for the EUWI NPD work on water policy in Moldova. This presentation was followed by an overview of water-related priorities for 2014-2015 presented by Ms. Tronza. Priorities stated by the Ministry of Environment and other key local stakeholders during the discussion included an assessment of the use of economic instruments for water management; further work on business models for rural sanitation; a review of financial mechanisms and ear-marked funds to support investment in the water sector; an assessment of mechanisms to address affordability issues in the water sector.

In the final session of the joint meeting, Ms. Tronza presented the new Water Law of the Republic of Moldova and outlined the work on the elaboration of the by-laws and regulations under this Law. It was specifically noted that the Law and regulations are in conformity with relevant EU water-related directives. The participants exchanged views on the new legislation and noted that the work under the UNECE-SDC project and EUWI NPD should take into account these new legal acts.

#### **Summary of Decisions of the joint meeting:**

- The meeting adopted the workplan of the UNECE-SDC project on the implementation of the targets set under the Protocol on Water and Health as was presented by Mr. Mamadzhyanov.
- The meeting welcomed the opening of the Clearing House under the Protocol on Water and Health in the National Centre of Public Health.
- The meeting approved the proposed modality of work on the elaboration of the Action Plan and the resource mobilization strategy for the implementation of targets set under the Protocol on Water and Health, noting that the process should be held in a participatory manner under the guidance of the project Steering Committee.
- The meeting strongly supported the continuation of the EUWI NPD in the Republic of Moldova and requested OECD and the Ministry of Environment to develop concrete ideas for the future work to be presented at the next NPD meeting.
- The Steering Committee invited the Ministries of Health and Environment and the NGO community to actively participate in the third session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health (Oslo, November 2013) and entrusted them with the organization of a special side-event to share the Moldovan experience.