



Convention on Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses
and International Lakes
Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment

WGMA/2007/1

Eighth meeting
Helsinki, Finland, 25–27 June 2007
Items 4 to 11 of the provisional agenda

**EXCERPT FROM THE WORKPLAN FOR THE PERIOD 2007-2009
ADOPTED BY THE PARTIES TO THE WATER CONVENTION
AT THEIR FOURTH MEETING
(Bonn, 20-22 November 2006)**

PROGRAMME AREA III: MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT

Responsible body: Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment, with Finland as lead Party. The International Water Assessment Centre (IWAC) will assist in the implementation of the programme area.

Rationale: The programme area on monitoring and assessment will help Parties bordering the same transboundary waters to establish and implement joint programmes for monitoring the conditions of transboundary waters, including floods and ice drifts, as well as transboundary impact; agree on pollution parameters and pollutants whose concentrations in transboundary waters will be regularly monitored; carry out joint or coordinated assessments of the conditions of transboundary waters and the effectiveness of measures taken to prevent, control and reduce transboundary impact; exchange reasonably available data on environmental conditions of transboundary waters, including monitoring data; inform each other about any critical situation that may have a transboundary impact; and make available to the public the results of water and effluent sampling, together with the results of the verification of compliance with water-quality objectives and permit conditions. Furthermore, within this programme area, the Meeting of the Parties will prepare periodic assessments of the status of transboundary waters and international lakes, which will allow to measure progress in the implementation of the Convention.

Resource requirements:

Participation in the meetings of the Working Group: 45,000 USD.

3.1 Assessment of the status of transboundary waters and international lakes in the UNECE region

Work to be undertaken:

(a) Finalization of the first assessment report on the status of transboundary waters for the Sixth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” (Belgrade, 10–12 October 2007). In particular, the Working Group will prepare:

(i) Completion of the assessment for the EECCA region;

(ii) An assessment of all major transboundary rivers in SEE according to the agreed outline, through the completion of the data sheets as a first step. The compiled draft assessment will be finalized in a regional workshop;

(ii) An assessment of major transboundary river basins shared by EU countries according to the agreed outline, through the completion of data sheets or the submission of relevant material from reports under the EU WFD;

(iii) An assessment of transboundary groundwaters for Central Asia, Caucasus and SEE according to the agreed outline through the completion of the groundwater questionnaire as a first step. The compiled draft assessments will be finalized in regional workshops;

(iv) An executive summary of the assessment for transboundary rivers, lakes and groundwaters with a clear action-oriented political message. A special group with experts from the different subregions will be responsible for this task; and

(v) A contribution to the EEA Belgrade report on the state of the environment;

(b) Preparation of the workplan for the second assessment report to be published either in connection with the next Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” or with the sixth meeting of the Parties.

Lead Party/organization: Finland, Slovakia and the British Geological Survey (for the groundwater part).

Participating countries: all countries

Main partners: Cooperation will be sought with UNESCO (for the organization of regional workshops on groundwater in SEE and Central Asia), the European Environment Agency (EEA) and the Interstate Coordination Water Commission of Central Asia (ICWC), the Water Programme of the Global Environment Monitoring System (GEMS) of UNEP and GWP.

Resource requirements:

Consultant (covered by Finland).

Expert meetings in SEE, Central Asia and Caucasus: 45,000 USD (for three meetings).

Editing, translation and printing of the full report: 30,000 USD.

3.2 Establishment of a meta-database on the transboundary waters of the UNECE region

Work to be undertaken:

(a) Design of the meta-database structure, considering that the meta-database will in the long term serve all activities under the Convention and its protocols, not only the ones related to monitoring and assessment; and

(b) Data collection, meta-database population and maintenance, including establishment of links to other sources of information.

Lead Party: The secretariat and Finland.

Participating countries: All countries.

Main partners: Cooperation will be sought with EEA, joint bodies in the region, EECCA RECs (through the GEF project for the establishment of a database and a website on river basin management) and others to be defined.

Resource requirements:

Depending on the functionalities and the use definition, up to 117,000 USD (12 man-months of programming plus database population).

3.3 Technical guidelines

Work to be undertaken:

(a) Updating of the inventory of existing technical guidance, tools and examples of monitoring and assessment practices, including a short description of their contents and scope, as well as an expert judgment, if possible, to be published on the IWAC website; and

(b) Preparation of specific guidelines on technical aspects of monitoring and assessment, as needed, in particular to support the implementation of the Strategies for Monitoring and Assessment of Transboundary Rivers, Lakes and Groundwaters. To complete this task, specific expert groups will be established.

Lead Party/organization: IWAC for the inventory; to be defined for the preparation of technical guidelines.

Participating countries: all countries.

Main partners: Cooperation will be sought with UNESCO, WMO and others to be defined.

Resource requirements:

IWAC will cover the costs related to the updating of the inventory.

Development of technical guidance (consultancy, expert group meetings, translation and printing): 30,000 USD.

3.4 Pilot programmes on monitoring and assessment

3.4.1 Pilot programmes on transboundary rivers

Work to be undertaken:

- (a) Finalization of the recommendations report for the Latorica/Latoritsa-Uh/Uzh;
- (b) Implementation of the pilot projects recommendations into the monitoring programmes of the riparian countries, through evaluation meetings which will be held back to back with the meetings of the transboundary commissions or the meetings of relevant international projects;
- (c) Support in the creation of joint transboundary commissions (in compliance with the Convention's requirements) responsible for the monitoring and assessment programmes;
- (d) Support to UNECE countries in the implementation of the Convention through new pilot projects (initiation and support in the preparation of the projects which will be financed from other sources, e.g. EU sources, GEF and others), e.g. on the Sava River Basin; and
- (e) Dissemination of pilot projects' results through workshops organized in the framework of other international projects in transboundary river basins in the UNECE region.

Lead organization: IWAC.

Participating countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czech Republic, Croatia, Georgia, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine and others to be defined.

Other partners: Cooperation will be sought with the relevant joint bodies, including the Sava River Basin Commission, and with ongoing international projects, such as projects under the TACIS programme and UNDP, EECCA RECs, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

Resource requirements: To be defined in cooperation with IWAC.

3.4.2 Pilot programmes on transboundary groundwaters

Work to be undertaken:

- (a) Continuation of the ongoing pilots: extension of the methodology and results of the Aggtelek-Slovak Karst Groundwater Pilot to other groundwaters shared by Slovakia and Hungary; continuation of the Bug pilot programme; continuation of the pilot programme on transboundary groundwaters shared by Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan and, development of a new pilot on the Neterva Karst groundwater;
- (b) Development and implementation of new pilot projects by partnering with ongoing international projects;

(c) Organization of multi-purpose workshops for transboundary waters in EECCA and SEE in order to:

- (i) Promote and build capacity regarding the Convention, the Guidelines on Monitoring and Assessment of Transboundary Groundwaters and the UNECE Strategies for monitoring and assessment of transboundary rivers, lakes and groundwaters;
- (ii) Share lessons learned from “old” pilot projects with potential new pilot project teams;
- (iii) Identify the problems and gaps in transboundary groundwater management in the aquifers concerned.

Lead organization: IWAC.

Participating countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Poland, Slovakia, Ukraine and others to be defined.

Other partners: Cooperation will be sought with UNESCO and other partners of the Internationally Shared Aquifer Resources Management (ISARM) Programme (FAO and the International Association of Hydrogeologists), ICWC (for a pilot project on return flow) as well as with ongoing international projects in the region, including UNDP projects.

Resource requirements:

Costs of groundwaters pilots to be defined in cooperation with IWAC.

Participation of experts in the meetings of the Core Group on Groundwater: 22,500 USD (for three meetings).

3.4.3 Pilot programmes on transboundary lakes

Work to be undertaken: Implementation of a trilateral project (Estonia – Finland – Russian Federation) on Lake Peipsi to test the Guidelines on Monitoring and Assessment of Transboundary and International Lakes; development and implementation of new pilot projects (e.g. on Jandar Lake shared by Georgia and Azerbaijan) by partnering with ongoing international projects.

Lead Party: Finland.

Participating countries: Azerbaijan, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, the Russian Federation and others to be defined.

Other partners: Cooperation will be sought with the Finnish-Russian Joint Commission and the Estonian-Russian Transboundary Water Commission and with UNDP international projects.

Resource requirements: Costs covered by Finland (for the Lake Peipsi pilot).

3.5 Capacity-building for monitoring and assessment of transboundary waters

Work to be undertaken: Organization of workshops, training and other capacity-building activities to assist particularly EECCA and SEE countries to harmonize monitoring and assessment programmes and develop joint programmes via a step-wise approach.

The activities will focus on:

- (a) Exchanging experience between EU countries on joint monitoring and assessment programmes developed in accordance with the EU Water Framework Directive; as well as on the promotion of the lessons learned in non-EU countries;
- (b) Supporting implementation of the UNECE Strategies for monitoring and assessment of transboundary rivers, lakes and groundwaters;
- (c) Developing biological monitoring; and
- (d) Supporting the establishment of transboundary early warning and notification systems and contingency plans;
- (e) Encouraging and exchanging data exchange.

Lead Party: To be defined.

Participating countries: To be defined.

Other partners: Cooperation will be sought with UNESCO, the Meeting of the Parties to the Industrial Accidents Convention and the Joint Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents, and the Finnish project in Georgia.

<p><u>Resource requirements:</u> 50,000 USD per workshop/training.</p>

3.6 Assistance to Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health on issues related to target setting, assessment and reporting

Work to be undertaken: the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment will cooperate with the Task Force on Indicators and Reporting established under the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health to assist Parties to the Protocol to review and assess their progress towards the achievement of the targets established under article 6, paragraph 2 of the Protocol, and to prepare guidelines for harmonized reporting, in particular in relation to water management targets.

Lead Party of the Task Force on Indicators and Reporting: Switzerland

Other partners: Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management, the WHO Collaborating Centre for Water and Health. Cooperation will be sought with UN-Water, the “Environment for Europe” process, the European Environment and Health Committee, the CEHAPE Task Force, the WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme and OECD.