



**Economic and Social
Council**

Distr.
GENERAL

MP.WAT/WG.2/2002/1

13 September 2002
ENGLISH ONLY

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

**MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON
THE PROTECTION AND USE OF TRANSBOUNDARY
WATERCOURSES AND INTERNATIONAL LAKES**

Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment

Third meeting

Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE)
Helsinki, 3-5 October 2002

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Opening statements.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Adoption of the report of the second meeting (MP.WAT/WG.2/2001/3).
4. Monitoring and assessment of transboundary waters:
 - (a) Monitoring and assessment of transboundary rivers;
 - (b) Monitoring and assessment of transboundary groundwaters;
 - (c) Monitoring and assessment of transboundary/international lakes;
 - (d) Monitoring and assessment of transboundary estuaries

- (e) Monitoring, warning and alarm, and notification systems: links with the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents;
 - (f) Rapid environmental and health risk assessment in transboundary river basins;
 - (g) Monitoring, surveillance, early warning, and response systems: links with the Protocol on Water and Health.
5. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the Convention's work on monitoring and assessment.
 6. International Water Assessment Centre.
 7. Partners in cooperation:
 - (a) International Conference on monitoring and assessment;
 - (b) Cooperation with UN bodies on transboundary groundwaters;
 - (c) World Summit on Sustainable Development;
 - (d) Kiev Ministerial Conference.
 8. Monitoring strategy until 2006 and beyond:
 - (a) Stepwise approaches in monitoring and assessment;
 - (b) Future work under the Convention linked to monitoring and assessment.
 9. Work plan 2000-2003 (MP.WAT/WG.2/2001/3, annex).
 10. Election of officers.
 11. Dates and venue of the fourth meeting of the Working Group.
 12. Other business.
 13. Closure.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

The third meeting of the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment will be held at the Finnish Environment Institute at the invitation of the Government of Finland. The Working Group meeting will start on 3 October 2002 at 9.30 hours and close on 5 October at 15 hours.

Item 8 on "Monitoring strategy until 2006 and beyond" will be discussed in the morning and afternoon sessions on 4 October.

The Working Group meeting will be chaired by Mrs Lea Kauppi (Finland) and Ms. Zsuzsa Buzas (Hungary), Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Working Group, respectively. The working language will be English.

For technical information, delegations may wish to refer to annex I and contact the host authorities or the secretariat.

The secretariat, the host country and the International Water Assessment Centre, respectively, will communicate the working papers to the pre-registered participants.

Item 1: Opening statements

A representative of Finland and the Director of the International Water Assessment Centre will make opening statements.

Item 2: Adoption of the agenda

The Working Group is expected to adopt its agenda as set out in the present document.

Item 3: Adoption of the report of the second meeting

The Working Group is expected to adopt the report of its second meeting (MP.WAT/WG.2/2002/3).

Item 4: Monitoring and assessment of transboundary waters

(a) Monitoring and assessment of transboundary rivers

The Working Group will examine a working document prepared by Mr. John Chilton, British Geological Survey, under the auspices of IWAC on the experience gained with the implementation of the pilot projects on the rivers Bug, Latoritza/Uhz, Ipoly, Morava and Maros. The Working Group will draw conclusions and make recommendation for future activities on these rivers.

The Working Group will also discuss ways and means of documenting achievements and evaluating the work undertaken under the newly established pilot projects on the rivers

Kura, Serverski Donets and Tobol, and its involvement in the pilot project on the Pripyat River that does not formally fall under the Convention's pilot project programme.

(b) Monitoring and assessment of transboundary groundwaters

The Working Group will, on the basis of a working document prepared by the Chairman of the core group on groundwaters, Mr. Geo Arnold, Netherlands, examine progress made in the preparation/implementation of pilot projects on groundwater monitoring and assessment. It will make recommendations for future work by the core group on groundwaters.

(c) Monitoring and assessment of transboundary/international lakes

The Working Group will, on the basis of a working document prepared by the Chairman of the core group on lakes, Mr. Pertti Heinonen, Finland, examine progress made in the preparation/implementation of pilot projects on lake monitoring and assessment. It will make recommendations for future work by the core group on lakes.

The secretariat will inform the Working Group about the discussions and decisions by the Working Group on Water Management regarding its programme element 2.7 on management and sustainable development of international lakes (see MP.WAT/WG.1/2002/9, paras. 10-20; and annex I) for which currently no lead Party exists. The Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment will consider advantages and disadvantages of merging this programme element with its activities under the lake pilot projects, and inform the Chairman of the Working Group on Water Management, Mr. Milan Matushka, Slovakia, accordingly.

(d) Monitoring and assessment of transboundary estuaries

The Working Group will examine a working paper prepared by the Finnish Environment Institute containing: (i) a preliminary inventory of transboundary estuaries in the ECE region; (b) an overview of assessment methods; and (c) a preliminary compilation of literature references. It will agree on possible activities in this area, and designate a lead country for this activity.

(e) Monitoring, warning and alarm, and notification systems: links with the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents

Based on the relevant outcome of the first and second meetings of the joint ad hoc expert group on water and industrial accidents (see documents on the expert group at the web site at <http://www.unece.org/env/teia/doc.htm> and at the web site at <http://www.ingenius-berlin.de/jeg/web/>), the Working Group will agree on its input to the expert group's activities on the understanding that the Conference of the Parties to the Industrial Accidents Convention at its second meeting in November 2002 will adopt the expert group's proposals (see documents for that meeting that will be available soon at the web site <http://www.unece.org/env/teia/doc.htm>).

(f) Rapid environmental and health risk assessment in transboundary river basins

A representative of the Regional Office for Europe of the World Health Organization (WHO/EURO) will inform the Working Group on the progress of the pilot project on rapid environmental and health risk assessment, with Italy as lead country, and supported by WHO/EURO and UNECE. This project was initiated by the European Environment and Health Committee, following industrial accidents in the lower Danube basin, and became part of the work plan in programme area IV (Water and Health) carried out under the auspices of the Working Group on Water and Health. It is also part of the current work plan under the Industrial Accidents Convention.

(g) Monitoring, surveillance, early warning, and response systems: links with the Protocol on Water and Health

The Working Group will make arrangements to assist - upon request - the Working Group on Water and Health in its activities linking water-related and human-health-related systems for monitoring and assessment. This could also include assistance by IWAC on indicators that are designed to show how far progress was made in the prevention, control or reduction of water-related disease.

Item 5: Evaluation of the effectiveness of the Convention's work on monitoring and assessment

The Working Group will consider a working paper prepared by the secretariat on possible ways and means to comply with the request of the Parties to the Convention that riparian Parties should report jointly, preferably through their joint bodies, to the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment and to the third meeting of the Parties in 2003 on their experience with the implementation of the guidelines on monitoring and assessment of transboundary rivers and transboundary groundwaters (ECE/MP.WAT/5, paragraph 37 (e)).

The Working Group will make arrangements for gathering information from Parties and/or joint bodies so that the Working Group at its fourth meeting could consider a draft secretariat note before it is submitted to the third meeting of the Parties (26-28 November 2003).

Item 6: International Water Assessment Centre

In a working paper, the Director of IWAC, Mr. Wim Cofino, Netherlands, will inform the Working Group about achievements of the Centre and the proposed priorities of its work until the third meeting of the Parties (November 2003) and beyond. This information will be based on the outcome of the meetings of the International Core Group that acts as IWAC's steering committee, the outcome of the workshop entitled "East meets the West in integrated river basin management" held in Bratislava on 27-28 June 2002, IWAC's inputs to the World Water Development Report, the relevant conclusions and recommendations of the second international conference on sustainable water management

of transboundary waters in Europe (Miedzzydroje, 21-24 April 2002), and other water-related activities.

The Working Group may wish to make suggestions regarding IWAC's role under the Convention and its anticipated activities to support the secretariat in implementing decisions by the Parties and supporting international programmes carried out under the auspices of UN bodies. Based on the outcome of this discussion, a new programme element will be inserted in the 2000-2003 work plan regarding IWAC's activities.

Item 7: Partners in cooperation

(a) International Conference on monitoring and assessment

The Director of IWAC will inform the Working Group about preparations for the international conference on global monitoring and assessment of water tentatively scheduled to be held in the Netherlands on 15-18 September 2003 as a contribution of UNECE, the International Water Assessment Centre and the Parties to the Convention to the International Year of Freshwater 2003.

The Working Group will make arrangements to support the preparations for, and development of the conference.

(b) Cooperation with UN bodies on transboundary groundwaters

The Working Group will take note of the information by the Chairman of the core group on groundwater, Mr. Geo Arnold, Netherlands, and the secretariat about UNECE's and IWAC's contributions to groundwater programmes carried out by the United Nations in other regions in the world, and make arrangements for assistance, if need be.

(c) World Summit on Sustainable Development

The Director of IWAC and the secretariat will inform the meeting on the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development of relevance to the activities of the Working Group, particularly: (i) the activities of UN system organizations to draw up the first edition of the World Water Development Report for consideration at the Third World Water Forum (Japan, 21-23 March 2003); and (ii) the EU Water Initiative, including its component for the newly independent States (NIS). Copies of the relevant parts of the EU Water Initiative that fall under the joint responsibility of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention, UNECE and the Global Water Partnership will be made available to the participants.

(d) Kiev Ministerial Conference

The Working Group will take note of the preparatory process for the Kiev Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" (21-23 May 2003). In particular, it will be informed by the secretariat on the preparation of the environment strategy for the newly independent States (NIS) including a background paper on integrated water resources

management. The most recent version of the background paper, which further specifies the relevant parts of the EU Water Initiative and also contains major activities linked to monitoring and assessment of transboundary waters, will be made available to participants.

Item 8: Monitoring strategy until 2006 and beyond

(a) Stepwise approaches in monitoring and assessment

A representative of UNEP's Global Programme of Action (UNEP/GPA) will inform the Working Group about possible activities to draft a paper on step-wise approaches to monitoring in developing countries that could also address countries in transition in the ECE region. The Working Group will agree on its contribution to this activity, which may become part of the future strategy on monitoring and assessment.

(b) Future work under the Convention linked to monitoring and assessment

The Chairperson, Mrs Lea Kauppi, will present a working paper in which she informs the Working Group on the outcome of informal discussions and brainstorming sessions with the friends of the Chair on a mid-term (until 2006) and long-term strategy (beyond 2006) under the Convention related to monitoring and assessment.

On the basis of this working paper, the draft background paper on integrated water resources management including transboundary river basin issues (see item 7 (d)), relevant parts of the EU Water Initiative (see item 7 (c)) and other information provided during the meeting, the Working Group will: (i) further elaborate the proposed mid-term and long-term activities on monitoring and assessment of transboundary waters in NIS countries; and (ii) agree on other principle activities to draw up a mid-term and long-term strategy on monitoring and assessment under the Convention, including the 2003-2006 work plan.

The Working Group will make work-sharing arrangements, using a special discussion forum established under IWAC's web page, with a view: (i) to finalize its input related to monitoring and assessment in NIS well in advance of the Third World Water Forum and the Kiev Ministerial Conference; and (ii) to finalize work on the other parts of the draft strategy and the 2003-2006 work plan at its fourth meeting.

Item 9: Work plan 2000-2003 (MP.WAT/WG.2/2001/3, annex)

The Working Group will consider its 2000-2003 work plan (ECE/MP.WAT/5, annex II, programme area II as updated at its first and second meetings (MP.WAT/WG.2/2001/3)), and update it, if need be, taking also into account information by the Chairpersons of the other working groups (Working Group on Legal and Administrative Aspects, Civil Liability, Monitoring and Assessment, and Water and Health), the Co-chairpersons of the joint ad hoc expert group on water and industrial accidents, and the secretariat regarding activities of relevance to the work plan of the Working Group.

Item 10: Election of officers

Noting that the current chairpersons are eligible for re-election, the Working Group will elect a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson.

Item 11: Dates and venue of the fourth meeting of the Working Group

The Working Group will set the indicative dates for its fourth meeting. Noting that the deadline for submission by the secretariat of meeting documents for the third meeting of the Parties is mid-September 2003, the Working Group should meet at the latest in the second week of September 2003.

The secretariat would appreciate it if, following established practice, the meeting could be hosted by a Party to the Convention.

Item 12: Other business

At the time of writing, the secretariat had no points to propose under this item.

Item 13: Closure

A representative of the host country will close the meeting of Working Group.

Annex

VENUE OF THE MEETING

The meeting will take place at the Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE) at the following address:

Mechelininkatu 34 a
00260 Helsinki

For help on organizational matters, the representative of the host country, Mrs. Sirkka Haunia, can be contacted as follows:

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