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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

Seventh meeting

Geneva, 3–5 May 2006

Item 10 of the provisional agenda

**WORK-PLAN ON MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT
FOR 2007–2009 AND BEYOND**

Submitted by the Chairperson of the Working Group, Ms. Lea Kauppi (Finland)

1. At its sixth meeting, the Working Group entrusted its chairperson with the preparation of a draft work-plan on monitoring and assessment to be submitted for adoption by the Parties at their fourth meeting (Bonn, 20–22 November 2006) (see annex). The proposal is based on the outcome of the discussions at previous meetings of the Working Group and at workshops organized under the Convention's project "Capacity for Water Cooperation" and includes possible follow-up activities to the ongoing work.
2. The Working Group may wish to:
 - (a) Examine the proposals contained in the annex and agree on those elements which should be further elaborated to become part of the draft work-plan on monitoring and assessment;
 - (b) Draw up additional elements for the work-plan, following proposals by Parties and non-Parties;
 - (c) Consider, on the basis of the agreed work-plan, the need to revise the rationale for this programme area;

(d) Inform on the willingness of Parties and non-Parties to lead or participate in the implementation of the various work-plan elements;

(e) Entrust the secretariat with the task of assessing the possible costs involved in work-plan implementation, including travel assistance to eligible participants;

(f) Agree on future steps for finalizing, with the assistance of the secretariat, the draft work-plan for submission to the fourth meeting of the Parties.

Annex

DRAFT WORK-PLAN 2007–2009

Rationale adopted at the third meeting of the Parties for the work-plan 2004–2006:

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.

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

Lead Party: Finland.

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, Serbia and Montenegro, October 2007);

(b) Preparation of the work-plan for the future periodic assessments (second assessment report to be published in 2012).

2. Establishment of a database on the transboundary waters of the UNECE region

Lead Party: Finland and the secretariat.

Work to be undertaken:

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

(b) Data collection, database population and maintenance.

3. Technical guidelines

Work to be undertaken:

- (a) Completion and updating of the inventory of existing technical guidance, tools and examples of monitoring and assessment practices published on the IWAC website (lead organization: IWAC);
- (b) Preparation of specific guidelines, if needed, on technical aspects of monitoring and assessment. To complete this task, specific expert groups could be established.

4. Pilot programmes on monitoring and assessment

5. Development of good practices and recommendations for early warning systems and their integration into monitoring and industrial accidents notification systems

Work to be undertaken:

- (a) Compilation of an inventory on the functioning of existing early warning systems for transboundary water bodies;
- (b) Development of good practice for early warning with automatic monitoring stations, which use sensors for measuring certain physico-chemical parameters as well as fish, daphnia, algae and/or bacteria to warn for acute toxic effects;
- (c) Development of recommendations to combine early warning systems for transboundary water bodies with industrial accidents notification systems.

6. Capacity-building on questions related to monitoring and assessment of transboundary waters

Work to be undertaken:

Organization of workshops, training and other capacity-building activities to assist particularly countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) and in South-Eastern Europe (SEE) to develop joint monitoring systems. The activities could focus, for example, on hydro-meteorological monitoring, biological monitoring, early warning systems, quality assurance and quality management in laboratories, data management and data exchange, assessment methods and reporting or, in general, the implementation of the UNECE strategies for monitoring and assessment of transboundary rivers, lakes and groundwaters. The activities will be developed in collaboration with different funding agencies. They will have different lead Parties/organizations or will be led by the secretariat.

7. Assistance to Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health on issues related to monitoring and assessment

Work to be undertaken:

Assist Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health in preparing guidelines for harmonized reporting under the Protocol, in particular in relation to water management targets.