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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

**WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR EUROPE**

MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE
PROTOCOL ON WATER AND HEALTH
TO THE CONVENTION ON THE PROTECTION
AND USE OF TRANSBOUNDARY
WATERCOURSES AND INTERNATIONAL
LAKES

Working Group on Water and Health
First Meeting
Geneva, 26-27 June 2008

ANNOTATED PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE FIRST MEETING

To be held at the Palais des Nations*
and starting on Thursday, 26 June 2008, at 10 a.m.

I. PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of the agenda

* Delegates attending meetings at the Palais des Nations are requested to complete the registration form, which is available on the UNECE website (http://www.unece.org/env/water/meetings/documents_WGWH.htm) and to transmit it to the UNECE secretariat no later than two weeks before the meeting by e-mail (olga.carlos@unece.org). On their way to the meeting, delegates should obtain an identification badge at the Pass and Identification Unit of the United Nations Office at Geneva's Security and Safety Section, located at the Pregny Gate, 14, Avenue de la Paix (see the map on the UNECE website: <http://www.unece.org/meetings/practical.htm>). In case of difficulty, please contact the secretariat by telephone at +41 22 917 1926.

3. Election of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson(s)
4. Progress in the ratification process
5. Surveillance and early-warning systems, contingency plans and response capacities
6. Development of targets and indicators
7. Water supply and sanitation in short-term critical situations and adaptation to climate change
8. Ad Hoc Project Facilitation Mechanism
9. Compliance Procedure
10. Public awareness, education, training, research and development and information
11. Equitable access
12. Regional and sub-regional workshops
13. Financial arrangements to support the implementation of the Protocol
14. Fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health
15. Partners in cooperation: links with other organizations and programmes
16. The role of the Protocol's/Convention's Focal Points and the promotion of the Protocol
17. Other business
18. Date and venue of the second meeting
19. Closure of the meeting

II. BACKGROUND AND PRACTICAL INFORMATION

1. At their first meeting (Geneva, 17–19 January 2007), the Parties to the Protocol established the Working Group on Water and Health as an open-ended subsidiary body which would be responsible for the overall implementation of the programme of work. In accordance with its terms of reference, the Working Group reviews progress, proposes modifications to the work programme to adapt to changing conditions, and reports to the Meeting of the Parties (see ECE/MP.WH/2/Add.2 - EUR/06/5069385/1/Add.2 and ECE/MP.WH/2/Add.5 - EUR/06/5069385/1/Add.5).

2. The Meeting of the Parties entrusted Mr. Kjetil Tveitan (Norway) with the preparations for the first meeting of the Working Group (ECE/MP.WH/2 - EUR/06/5069385/1).
3. The first meeting of the Working Group will be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, back-to-back with the first meeting of the Ad Hoc Project Facilitation Mechanism (25 June 2008).
4. The meeting will start on 26 June 2008 at 10 a.m. and will close on 27 June at 5 p.m. The working languages will be English, French and Russian.
5. All relevant documentation for the meeting will be made available in due course at www.unece.org/env/water/meetings/documents_WGWH.htm.
6. The meeting is open to experts from Parties and non-Parties to the Protocol representing governmental authorities, the private sector and non-governmental organizations as well as other interested stakeholders. In this respect, focal points are requested to facilitate nomination of relevant experts from their respective countries. Given the complexity of the issues discussed, delegates should consult within their countries with relevant health, foreign affairs, environment and water management authorities to ensure that the views, needs and approaches of all concerned sectors are taken into account.
7. Experts from eligible countries may apply for financial support to facilitate their participation in the meeting. Requests for financial support should be addressed to the secretariat as soon as possible and in any case by 12 May 2008.
8. Participants requiring an entry visa should inform the secretariat as soon as possible. They should contact the nearest Swiss diplomatic representation to apply for the visa.
9. Practical information on the Palais des Nations, transport and accommodation in Geneva is available at: <http://www.unece.org/meetings/practical.htm>.

III. ANNOTATIONS TO THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Item 1: Opening of the meeting

10. Representatives of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and of the Regional Office for Europe of the World Health Organization (WHO-EURO) will open the meeting.

Item 2: Adoption of the agenda

11. The Working Group is expected to adopt its agenda as set out in this document.

Item 3: Election of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson(s)

12. The Working Group will elect a chairperson, and if it deems necessary, one or more vice-chairpersons.

Item 4: Progress in the ratification process

13. By 1 April 2008, the following 21 countries had ratified the Protocol, which entered into force on 4 August 2005: Albania, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Norway, the Republic of Moldova, Portugal, Romania, the Russian Federation, Slovakia, Switzerland and Ukraine. Representatives of other countries especially countries that informed of forthcoming ratification at the first Meeting of the Parties, will report on their progress in the ratification process.

14. The Working Group will discuss possibilities to increase ratifications by the year 2009 that marks the tenth anniversary of the Protocol's adoption.

Item 5: Surveillance and early-warning systems, contingency plans and response capacities

Documentation: Progress report on the activities of the Task Force on Surveillance and prospects for future work (ECE/MP.WH/WG.1/2008/3 - EUR/08/5086340/7); questionnaire on water-related disease surveillance (ECE/MP.WH/WG.1/2008/4 - EUR/08/5086340/8); draft guidelines on water-related diseases surveillance.

15. Parties and Signatories will exchange experiences and provide information on steps made in establishing national and/or local surveillance, early-warning and response systems, as well as difficulties encountered in complying with the obligations of article 8 of the Protocol.

16. The Working Group will review the progress of the Task Force on Surveillance and provide guidance on the following issues:

(a) Assessment of the current capacity for water-related disease surveillance.

17. The Task Force on Surveillance developed a questionnaire to assess existing capacity for water-related disease surveillance. The questionnaire is hosted in electronic format on a protected site of the Italian Higher Institute for Health (<http://cms2.iss.it/>). Deadline for replies was set to 20 March 2008, however, by 1 April 2008, only 7 countries had replied to the questionnaire (Andorra, The Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Norway and Slovakia). The Working Group will agree on ways and means to collect replies from all Parties and from as many non-Parties as possible.

(b) Guidelines on water-related diseases surveillance

18. The Working Group will review progress in the development of the guidelines on water-related diseases surveillance prepared by the Task Force. In particular, it will advise the Task

Force on the further development of the policy part of the guidelines, in particular by identifying further contributors.

(c) Future work

19. The Working Group will discuss and agree on the future work of the Task Force on Surveillance.
20. It will advise on possible scientific workshops to be organized by the Task Force, their scope and objectives as well as relevant practical arrangements.
21. The Working Group will also discuss and agree on the proposal to prepare by the second Meeting of the Parties, a review on the current burden of water-related disease through drinking-water exposure, including the resource implications.

Item 6: Development of targets and indicators

Documentation: Draft guidelines on the setting of targets, evaluation of progress and reporting (ECE/MP.WH/WG.1/2008/L.1 - EUR/08/5086340/9); proposed targets and indicators of progress according to article 6, paragraph 2 (a) to (g) of the Protocol on Water and Health (ECE/MP.WH/WG.1/2008/L.2 - EUR/08/5086340/10); proposed targets and indicators of progress according to article 6, paragraph 2 (h) to (n) (ECE/MP.WH/WG.1/2008/L.3 - EUR/08/5086340/11); and, report on the first meeting of the Task Force on Indicators and Reporting.

22. Parties and Signatories will exchange experiences and provide information on steps made in setting targets and identifying relevant indicators of progress, as well as difficulties encountered in complying with the obligations of articles 6 and 7 of the Protocol.
23. The Chairperson of the Task Force on Indicators and Reporting, Mr. Pierre Studer (Switzerland), will report on the progress achieved in this area. In particular, as elaborated by the first meeting of Task Force on Indicators and Reporting, (13 -14 March, 2008), he will present:
 - (a) The Draft guidelines on the setting of targets, evaluation of progress and reporting (ECE/MP.WH/WG.1/2008/L.1 - EUR/08/5086340/9);
 - (b) Proposed targets and indicators of progress according to article 6, paragraph 2 (a) to (n) of the Protocol on Water and Health (ECE/MP.WH/WG.1/2008/L.2 - EUR/08/5086340/10 and ECE/MP.WH/WG.1/2008/L.3 - EUR/08/5086340/11);
 - (c) Elements of the reporting system under the Protocol on Water and Health;
 - (d) Plans and progress in the preparation of the workshop on target setting and reporting to be held in Geneva on 2-3 December 2008;

24. The Working Group will comment on these documents and provide recommendations for further work to be undertaken.

Item 7: Water supply and sanitation in short-term critical situations and adaptation to climate change

Documentation: Report on the first meeting of the Task Force on Extreme Weather Events.

25. Italy took the leadership of the Task Force on Extreme Weather Events after the first meeting of the Parties. The Chairperson of the Task Force, Ms. Luciana Sinisi (Italy), will present progress made at the first meeting (Rome, 21-22 April 2008), future plans to fulfil the Task Force mandate, and cooperation and work sharing arrangements with the Water Convention's Task Force on Water and Climate.

26. The Working Group will provide recommendations on the further work to be undertaken by the Task Force and in particular on the cooperation with the other Task Forces established under the Protocol and with the Convention's Task Force on Water and Climate.

Item 8: Ad Hoc Project Facilitation Mechanism

Documentation: Draft criteria for consideration of project proposals by the Ad Hoc Project Facilitation Mechanism (ECE/MP.WH/AC.1/2008/3 - EUR/5086361/7); Guidelines for preparation of project proposals for the Ad Hoc Project Facilitation Mechanism.

27. The Chairperson of the Ad Hoc Project Facilitation Mechanism (AHPFM) will inform about the outcome of the first meeting of the AHPFM (Geneva, 25 June 2008).
28. The Working Group will discuss and adopt criteria for consideration of project proposals by the Ad Hoc Project Facilitation Mechanisms and guidelines for submission of such project proposals.
29. The Working Group will discuss the role of the Ad Hoc Project Facilitation Mechanism for the implementation of the Protocol and of the programme of work adopted at the first meeting of the Parties.

Item 9: Compliance Procedure

Documentation: Report on the first meeting of the Compliance Committee (ECE/MP.WH/C.1/2008/2 - EUR/08/5069385/6).

30. The Compliance Committee was established under decision I/2 of the Meeting of the Parties. The Chairman of the Compliance Committee, Prof. Attila Tanzi (Italy), will report on the activities of the Committee, in particular the outcome of its first meeting (12 March 2008).

Item 10: Public awareness, education, training, research and development and information

31. A representative of Romania, lead Party for this activity, will inform the Working Group on future plans under this element of the programme of work.

32. The Working Group might also examine the need for further provisions on access to information, public participation in decision-making and public access to judicial and administrative review of decisions within the scope of the Protocol, in the light of experience gained in these matters in other international forums, in order to prepare a proposal for consideration by the Parties at their second meeting.

Item 11: Equitable access

33. A representative of France, lead Party for this activity, will inform the Working Group on the outcome of the workshop on Equitable Access to Water (Paris, 5-6 July 2007).

34. The Working Group will be informed about follow-up activities under this element of the programme of work that aims to promote the implementation of the Protocol in relation to facilitating access to water and sanitation for poor, vulnerable and socially excluded people through information exchange on: (i) targeted measures to overcome water affordability issues; and (ii) solidarity measures to improve access to water and sanitation in rural areas.

Item 12: Regional and sub-regional workshops

35. The Working Group will be informed on past workshops addressing specific aspects of the Protocol and facilitating exchange of experiences related to the development and implementation of policies and strategies on water and health and on foreseen follow-up activities.

- (a) Second International Conference on Health and Water Quality Aspects of the Man made Recreational Water Environment (Munich, Germany, 14-16 March 2007);
- (b) Workshop on the use of groundwater as a source of drinking water (Island Krk, Croatia, 14-15 April 2008,);
- (c) Capacity for Water Cooperation (CWC) Workshop on “Water and Health” (Bucharest, Romania, 14-16 May 2008).

36. The Working Group will also be informed about the preparation for the workshop on small water supplies and developing criteria for suitable guidance to small supplies for applying water safety plans to be held in Bad Elster, Germany, in November 2008.

Item 13: Financial arrangements to support the implementation of the Protocol

37. The Meeting of the Parties entrusted the Working Group on Water and Health to overview the management of Protocol's funds under the UNECE Technical Cooperation Trust Fund and the WHO-EURO Voluntary Fund.

38. On the basis of a paper by the joint secretariat, the Working Group will be informed about the financial status of the two funds, the contributions received, funds used and the missing resources necessary for implementing the core elements of the work programme.

39. Having regard to the voluntary scheme of contributions established under decisions I/5 on financial arrangements to support the implementation of the Protocol and the need to secure sufficient funding for the adopted programme of work, delegations from donor countries will be invited through a tour de table to indicate how they intend to contribute for the year 2008-2009.

Item 14: Fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health

40. The Working Group will discuss its contribution to the fifth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health tentatively scheduled to take place in Italy in autumn 2009.

Item 15: Partners in cooperation: links with other organizations and programmes

(a) Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

41. A representative of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights will inform the Working Group of recent developments within the United Nations human rights system relevant to the Protocol, in particular related to the right to health, the human right to water and sanitation as a component of this right, and the right to an adequate standard of living, as well as on opportunities for cooperation under the Protocol's programme of work

(b) Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

42. A representative of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) will inform the Working Group on OECD activities, including activities of the Task Force for the Implementation of the Environmental Action Programme (EAP Task Force) for Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) countries and on opportunities for cooperation under the Protocol's programme of work.

(c) United Nations Development Programme

43. A representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) will inform the Working Group about the new UNDP Regional Programme on Human Rights-Based Approaches (HRBA) to Water Governance, provide an update and background information on relevant UNDP projects and activities in the water sector, and indicate opportunities for cooperation under the Protocol's programme of work.

(d) EECCA Component of the European Union Water Initiative

44. A representative of the European Commission will inform the Working Group on the work carried out under the EECCA component of the European Union Water Initiative, in particular related to National Policy Dialogues, and on opportunities for cooperation and mutual support in the EECCA region.

(e) Other partners

45. Other partners, including relevant NGOs and private sector organizations, will be invited to inform the Working Group of their activities related to the Protocol and on opportunities for cooperation to attain the objectives of the Protocol and implement the programme of work.

(f) International Year of Sanitation

46. Participants will exchange information on their activities carried out within the framework of the International Year of Sanitation specifically linked to the Protocol.

Item 16: The role of the Protocol's Focal Points and the promotion of the Protocol

47. Decision I/4 on the designation and responsibilities of Focal Points spells out the Focal Points' responsibilities.

48. Participants will exchange views on ways and means to strengthen the action of Focal Points at national level, in particular concerning the promotion of the Protocol at the national level and the implementation of the programme of work.

49. Moreover, the Chairperson of the Bureau of the Meeting of the Parties will present a draft communication plan for the promotion of the Protocol. The Working Group will discuss and agree on actions to be carried out by the Bureau, the joint secretariat and the Focal Points to promote the Protocol at local, national and international levels.

Item 17: Other business

50. Delegates wishing to propose points under this item are requested to inform the joint secretariat as soon as possible.

Item 18: Date and venue of the second meeting

51. The Working Group will set a tentative date and venue for its second meeting.

Item 19: Closure of the meeting

52. The Chairperson will close the meeting on Friday 27 June, at 5 p.m.
