

CONCLUSIONS OF THE FINAL WORKSHOP:

“Improving the safety of industrial tailings management facilities based on the example of Ukrainian facilities”

May 19-20, 2015, Kiev, Ukraine

Vice Minister Serhiy Kurykin of the Ministry of Ecology highlighted in his opening remarks, the importance of the issue of tailings management facilities (TMFs) for Ukraine and stressed that the project created a chance to move forward to increase safety of TMFs. He also stated that in Ukraine TMFs form a kind of resource that is not used yet as an alternative source of energy. In addition to their central role in improving TFM safety in Ukraine, the conclusions of the workshop are therefore also important as a part of work to develop strategies for recovering valuable resources from TMFs.

During the workshop the participants discussed and highly valued the TMF methodology – comprised of a tailing hazards index (THI), checklists and a measure catalogue – which was developed within the project (<http://www.tmf-ukraine.org/>). In particular, the workshop participants unanimously agreed that it is:

- *A useful methodology for Ukraine and likewise other countries in the UNECE region;*
- *A living document as a Multipurpose and Multi aspect **tool** that could be adjusted to country specific needs and that could be improved with increasing experience;*
- *A powerful tool for the process of harmonizing technical standards throughout the UNECE region;*

Furthermore the THI (Tailing Hazard Index), can be easily used by competent authorities and inspectors. In particular, they agreed that the proposed THI:

- *Is a practical tool to create a first preliminary overview and for prioritisation of TMF sites likely to be of most concern on a national and international level;*
- *Supports the efficiency of limited financial and institutional capacities in directing the available resources;*
- *Helps to define first actions to be taken on the international and national level.*

Participants recommended that the checklists could be easily used by inspectors and operators. In particular, they pointed out the following:

- *Group A2 – Visual inspection (group 2) are of central importance;*
- *Visual inspection is a must for inspectors, TMF owners and independent experts, in the light of the limited economic resources available;*
- *The preliminary and prompt visual evaluation of the TMF safety level helps to identify the need for taking actions (measures);*
- *Group C – Check of Inactive Sites, may need an increased numbers of questions, as these are neglected sites and the absence of management contributed to a higher likelihood of failure;*
- *Group B – Detailed check with 301 questions should be subject to efforts to reduce the number of questions in the future.*

*Participants further emphasized the important role that **training** would play in ensuring the application of the TMF methodology, stressing that the TMF methodology constitutes a practical tool for trainings of inspectors, operators, decision-makers and other stakeholders that can be easily applied. For the implementation past experience has shown that “training of trainer” programmes are most efficient in this respect.*

Participants agreed further that the TMF methodology is also useful in providing training in different forms, e.g. face-to-face but also online (e.g. through webinars and other means).

Participants also discussed other project findings and outcomes, concluding on the following:

- *The training in November 2014 at the Kalush TMF found that no changes since the emergency situation have occurred related to salt leaching and lack of maintenance works at the dams. Support for competent authorities is urgently needed to improve the unchanged situation since 2010.*
- *The legal assessment made for Ukraine shows that this should be the starting point for long-term actions to reach clear legislation with clear responsibilities for operators and competent authorities.*

Participants discussed possible next steps to ensure the future use of the TMF checklist methodology in Ukraine and other countries in the UNECE region. The following was recommended:

- **Ukrainian participants** urged that the TMF methodology was to be assessed by the concerned national authorities and suggested that thereafter it could be used by the Ukrainian government as methodology for inventarisation, prioritisation and establishment of action plans to reduce the risks of TMFs in the country. It was also recommended that this process should be guided by the Ministry of Ecology and include all concerned stakeholders;
- **Representatives from other countries** should initiate action programmes and reports to the respective national authorities to create awareness on the increasing dangers of TMFs and to request the inclusion of TMF problems as high priority on their national environmental action plans. They should also request considering their concerned institutes for the assessment of the TMF methodology in order to propose adaption for national implementation. This should be done in order to start training of trainers for initiating the inventarisation, prioritisation and establishment of action plans to reduce the risks of TMFs in their countries. The process should be guided by the concerned Ministry/Ministries and should include all concerned stakeholders;
- **International Organisations (e.g. ICPDR and UNECE)** should support the sharing and future application of the TMF methodology in their regions, through communicating with member countries to facilitate its distribution and possible training opportunities. In particular, it was recommended that Ukraine is preparing a self-assessment and action plan in the framework of the Assistance Programme of the UNECE Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents which would provide the basis for needs-driven external assistance projects designed to overcome the shortcomings.

For the ICPDR it might be worth to get an overview to the country specific problems within the Danube River Catchment. An TMF inventory based on application of the THI might be the first step for further actions

EC Delegation in Ukraine:

EU Representatives of EU countries welcome the TMF initiative and understand the importance of the issue for Ukraine. They encourage the Ministry of Environment to make prioritisation of TMF issues and request EU support.