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**Assistance to countries in the Caucasus, Central Asia
and Eastern and South-Eastern Europe: progress
report on assistance activities carried out in 2015–2016**

Progress report on the implementation of assistance activities in 2015–2016*

**Note by the secretariat, prepared in cooperation with the Working
Group on Implementation and the Bureau**

Summary

The present document provides information on the activities carried out under the Assistance Programme during the biennium 2015–2016, as requested by the Conference of the Parties at its eighth meeting (ECE/CP.TEIA/30, para. 18). It includes information on activities carried out in partnership with other international organizations and other assistance activities carried out by Parties in-kind. The Conference of the Parties is invited to take note of the implementation of these activities.

* The present document is being issued without formal editing due to resource constraints.



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Introduction

1. The present document includes a review of the progress in the implementation of the Assistance Programme under the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (Industrial Accidents Convention) during the biennium 2015–2016. It includes information on the continued implementation of the Strategic Approach (ECE/CP.TEIA/2008/5). It also provides information on assistance provided to countries in transition, in partnership with other international organizations, and other assistance activities carried out by Parties to the Convention through in-kind resources.

I. Background

2. The Assistance Programme was adopted at the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Industrial Accidents Convention (Budapest, 27–30 October 2004) (see CP.TEIA/2004/2 and ECE/CP.TEIA/12, para. 39).¹ The Conference of the Parties at its fifth meeting (Geneva, 25–27 November 2008) adopted the Strategic Approach for the implementation phase of the Assistance Programme and invited beneficiary countries to apply it. At its sixth meeting (The Hague, 8–10 November 2010), the Conference of the Parties adopted the document on benchmarks for the implementation of the Convention (ECE/CP.TEIA/2010/6)² to facilitate the work of the beneficiary countries.

3. At its eighth meeting (Geneva, 3–5 December 2014), the Conference of the Parties took note of the development of the benchmarks for the implementation of the Convention in a more flexible form, presenting the information in a synthesized manner in a more user-friendly layout. It invited Assistance Programme beneficiary countries to use the new document and to provide feedback on its application at the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. It further reminded committed countries to use the Strategic Approach and its tools and requested the Working Group on Implementation to monitor their implementation and to report its findings at the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (ECE/CP.TEIA/30, para. 22).

II. Implementation of the Strategic Approach in 2015–2016

4. During its meetings in 2015 and 2016,³ the Working Group on Implementation reviewed the revised self-assessments and action plans received from Albania, Armenia, Serbia and Uzbekistan. No self-assessments or action plans from countries that had not yet previously submitted either of these documents were received. After the Working Group's review, feedback was provided to all beneficiary countries. In addition, the countries were encouraged to start the preparation of project proposals with a view to their later submission to the Working Group and the Bureau.

5. The Working Group noted that only Serbia had made use of the more flexible form of the benchmarks when preparing the updated self-assessment. Despite the conduct of a national training session in 2014, Albania had not made use of the user-friendly version when submitting a revised self-assessment and action plan. The Working Group understood

¹ These documents are available from www.unece.org/env/teia/cop_c4.html.

² Available from www.unece.org/env/teia/cop_c1.html.

³ Reports of these meetings are available from www.unece.org/index.php?id=36733, www.unece.org/index.php?id=36746, www.unece.org/index.php?id=40456, www.unece.org/index.php?id=41753 and www.unece.org/index.php?id=42753

that this might have been due to institutional changes in the country. The secretariat had recommended in its official and informal correspondence with the beneficiary countries the use of the benchmarks in their more flexible and user-friendly form.

6. At its twenty-eighth meeting (Geneva, 30 June–1 July 2015), the Working Group on Implementation invited a representative of Georgia to report on progress made in the implementation of the Strategic Approach since the High-level awareness raising meeting and expert workshop for Georgia (Tbilisi, 5–8 November 2013). The Georgian focal point for the Convention reported that:

(a) Georgia had experienced political changes since 2013 and industrial safety had become a lower priority on the political agenda. Consequently, progress towards the process of accession to the Convention had slowed down;

(b) Political and institutional support was focused on the development of the national chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) threat reduction strategy;

(c) Georgia had prepared a detailed action plan related to the CBRN threat reduction strategy, and requested the Working Group to accept this action plan instead of a separate self-assessment and action plan under the Strategic Approach, expressing concern with regard to resource capacities and partial duplication of work.

7. The Working Group on Implementation considered that several areas of the action plan on the CBRN threat reduction strategy overlapped with the Strategic Approach, in particular with regard to the identification of hazardous activities. The Convention was also specifically mentioned in the action plan with respect to notification systems for industrial accidents in the national and transboundary context. The Working Group agreed to invite Georgia to prepare a project proposal based on its national action plan prepared to support the implementation of the CBRN threat reduction strategy. It considered that a more flexible approach was important, taking account the new political realities, the need to maintain the engagement of beneficiary countries and the complexity of the tools developed under the Strategic Approach.

8. No targeted financial contributions were provided by Parties during the biennium 2015–2016 for the carrying out of dedicated assistance activities to further the implementation of the Strategic Approach, either nationally or through subregional workshops.

III. Activities carried out under the Assistance Programme during the biennium 2015–2016

9. The following section provides an overview of activities carried out under the Assistance Programme during the biennium 2015–2016.

A. Project on hazard and crisis management in the Danube Delta involving the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and Romania

10. The Project on hazard and crisis management in the Danube Delta (Danube Delta project) began in December 2010, following the expression of interest by the Republic of Moldova in strengthening its cooperation with Romania and Ukraine for the effective prevention of and response to emergencies involving hazardous activities in the Danube Delta. The project focused on effective cooperation between the Republic of Moldova, Romania and Ukraine with regard to the management of hazardous activities in the Danube Delta. Its goal was to enhance, and where possible harmonize, the mechanisms and

approaches for efficient and effective hazard and crisis management. The hazard management component of the project was funded mainly by Germany. The Netherlands, Finland and Romania made dedicated contributions to finance the crisis management component. The Danube Delta project was also co-financed through the contributions by other donors to the Assistance Programme, as approved by the Bureau. The in-kind contributions provided by the beneficiary countries were crucial to its conduct and finalization. The Czech Republic, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden provided further in-kind expert contributions. The project completed in November 2015.

11. Three main activities were carried out in 2015 and 2016 within the framework of the Danube Delta project, as presented below. Furthermore, the project management group met seven times, back-to-back with project activities or remotely via teleconference or videoconference.

1. Hazard and crisis management week

12. The Hazard and crisis management week (Chisinau, 23–26 March 2015)⁴ comprised a segment on hazard management, a table-top exercise and an evaluation workshop addressing complacency in emergency planning and response. It incorporated all components of the safety chain concept that were covered by the Danube Delta project (hazard and crisis management) and their respective subcategories (for hazard management: proaction and prevention; for crisis management: preparedness and response).

13. Germany provided financial support for the hazard management segment of the event, Finland for the crisis management segment. The Republic of Moldova as the host country provided valuable in-kind contributions. Approximately 40 representatives from the national competent and enforcement authorities, civil protection services and industry from the Republic of Moldova, Romania and Ukraine participated in the event. A team of international experts from Germany, the Netherlands, Romania and Sweden, together with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) secretariat, facilitated the Hazard and crisis management week.

14. During the hazard management segment, participants discussed aspects related to safety management and culture as well as complacency in industrial accidents prevention. They considered the national legal frameworks for hazard management in the Republic of Moldova, Romania and Ukraine and possible approaches for improving hazard management on the national and international levels, including through enhanced transboundary cooperation.

15. During the crisis management segment, representatives of the project countries discussed their national legal frameworks for crisis management, identified gaps and highlighted ways to improve emergency preparedness and response and identify a more effective use of existing systems for accident notification and mutual assistance.

16. During the table-top exercise, the participants identified shortcomings and areas for improvement in an event of an emergency in the areas of early warning, response actions, monitoring, notification, flow of information and modelling. The table-top exercise served as a test platform for the further refinement of the scenario for the field exercise and a draft joint contingency plan for the Danube Delta. Representatives of the national points of contact for the ECE Industrial Accident Notification (IAN) System tested the connectivity of the system and its capabilities regarding early warning and mutual assistance requests and provision. They also tested the use of the Accident Emergency Warning System

⁴ More information about the Hazard and crisis management week is available from www.unece.org/index.php?id=38473.

operated under the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River with its Principle International Alert Centres.

2. Field Exercise in the Danube Delta

17. The general objective of the field exercise (Giurigulesti, Republic of Moldova, 2–3 September 2015)⁵ was to test the emergency procedures for notification, preparedness, response and mutual assistance in the Republic of Moldova, Romania and Ukraine, as contained also in the draft joint contingency plan. Finland, the Netherlands and Romania supported the field exercise financially. The Czech Republic as well as the project countries, in particular the Republic of Moldova as the host, provided valuable in-kind contributions. The field exercise had the following specific objectives:

(a) Test, provide feedback on and finalize the joint contingency plan for the Danube Delta after the exercise;

(b) Identify the human, material and technical resources in the countries to manage the accident risk arising from oil terminals in the Danube Delta;

(c) Improve the cooperation during interventions carried out jointly by the intervention forces and logistical and communications support structures of the three countries in the Danube Delta region;

(d) Ensure coordination in case of an emergency in the Danube Delta region and establish the flow and structures of information required for decision-making;

(e) Establish notification, monitoring and intervention procedures as well as common procedures for rescue units to cross state borders to assist and prevent the expansion of contamination zones in the Danube Delta region.

18. Participants in the exercise were crisis management experts from the Republic of Moldova, Romania and Ukraine, including representatives from all relevant national, regional and local authorities involved in the response to a large-scale industrial accident with transboundary consequences. In addition, international experts, including independent evaluators from the Czech Republic, participated in the exercise.

19. The field exercise was based on a scenario that included an oil spill in the Danube River as well as the rupture of an ammonia tank, leading to the release of large volumes of the toxic substance near residential and commercial areas. The evaluation of the table-top and field exercises identified a variety of lessons to be learned, as captured in a separate evaluation report.⁶

3. Final workshop of the Danube Delta project

20. The objectives of the final workshop of the Danube Delta project (Bucharest, 20–21 October 2015)⁷ were to highlight the background, milestones and implementation approach of the project, to showcase its results, discuss the challenges encountered, identify lessons learned and determine next steps. Participants in the final workshop were representatives of the national competent authorities from the Republic of Moldova, Romania and Ukraine, as well as industry representatives, project partners from other international organizations, international experts and representatives of the donor countries. The final workshop comprised two segments, one on hazard management, the other on crisis management.

⁵ More information about the field exercise is available from www.unece.org/index.php?id=38502.

⁶ The evaluation report of the field exercise is available from www.unece.org/index.php?id=38473.

⁷ More information about the final workshop of the Danube Delta project is available from www.unece.org/index.php?id=38504

21. During the hazard management segment, the participants discussed the main deliverables in the area of hazard management, namely the comparative analysis of the legal frameworks of the three countries, the hazard map showing the location of oil terminals in the Danube Delta and the Safety guidelines and good industry practices for oil terminals.⁸ The participants also discussed how further to improve hazard management in the Danube Delta and agreed to develop related national action plans.

22. During the crisis management segment of the final workshop, the participants discussed the main deliverables in the area of crisis management, namely the draft joint contingency plan for the Danube Delta, the table-top and field exercises and the evaluation report of the field exercise. They also considered how to improve crisis management in the Danube Delta and outlined the way forward for the finalization and approval of the joint contingency plan.

23. During the High-level segment of the final project workshop, the Ministers of Environment of the Republic of Moldova and Romania and the State Secretary of the Ministry of Interior of Romania signed the Trilateral Declaration of Intent “Towards improved hazard and crisis management in the Danube Delta”. The Acting Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine welcomed the activities conducted in the framework of the project, appreciating their contribution to enhancing hazard and crisis management and expressing interest in furthering the bilateral and multilateral cooperation on preventing and responding to accidental pollution crises in the Danube Delta and the Lower Prut river.

24. In the Declaration, the project countries decided to finalize the joint contingency plan and committed to negotiate, with the objective of updating an existing agreement,⁹ provisions aimed specifically at the prevention of, preparedness for and response to industrial accidents capable of causing transboundary effects, complemented, if necessary, by a set of operational guidelines. They welcomed the efforts of ECE to facilitate the process of improving hazard and crisis management in the Danube Delta and the contributions by donor countries and partner organizations to the Danube Delta project. They also invited ECE, the European Union, the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River and other related international and regional organizations and actors to express their support for the implementation of the Declaration.

25. The key activities organized and the deliverables developed under the Danube Delta project are available on the dedicated ECE project website.¹⁰ The website also presents a short report on the project, finalized in cooperation with Germany, which sets out its implementation approach, key results and sustainability.

B. Subregional workshop for Central Asia on industrial accident prevention

26. A subregional workshop on chemicals management, identification and notification of industrial hazardous activities and accidental water pollution (Astana, 26–28

⁸ The Safety guidelines and good industry practices for oil terminals are available from www.unece.org/index.php?id=41066.

⁹ Agreement between the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning of the Republic of Moldova, the Ministry of Waters, Forests and Environmental Protection of Romania, and the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources of Ukraine on cooperation in the Danube Delta and Lower River Prut nature protected areas, signed at Bucharest on 5 June 2000.

¹⁰ Available from www.unece.org/env/teia/ap/ddp.

May^o2015),¹¹ was attended by more than 25 participants of the national competent authorities from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan, along with experts from Belarus and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the ECE secretariat servicing the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Subcommittee of experts on the Globally Harmonized System on the Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS) also attended the meeting. The Joint United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)/Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Environment Unit and Switzerland were represented through a remote Internet connection.

27. The workshop was the first in a series of subregional capacity-building activities to support the implementation of the Convention's amended annex I, supported financially by Norway. Germany provided additional dedicated funding for the workshop organization including the participation of experts from Central Asia and Eastern Europe. OPCW provided support to the financing of three workshop participants. Kazakhstan as the host country provided valuable in-kind contributions. Switzerland and the United Kingdom provided in-kind contributions in terms of expertise.

28. The objectives of the workshop were to:

(a) Familiarize the countries of Central Asia with the Convention in order to enhance industrial safety, safeguard human health and the environment and enhance subregional cooperation;

(b) Increase the expert and administrative capacity in the area of the identification and notification of hazardous activities, in line with the amended annex I of the Convention, aligned with GHS;

(c) Increase the capacity of the countries of Central Asia to prevent accidental water pollution.

29. During the workshop, participants exchanged information and good practices on their procedures, approaches and practices concerning the identification of hazardous activities and accidental water pollution. They also participated in a hands-on training on the classification of hazardous substances and the identification of hazardous activities with regard to annex I of the Convention.

30. The main conclusions from the workshop were:

(a) Countries of Central Asia have different systems for the identification of hazardous activities in place and these are not fully in line with the requirements of annex I of the Convention. Further work to ensure such alignment is necessary, especially with regard to the determination of a possible transboundary effect and the introduction of mechanisms for consultation with neighbouring countries on the identification of hazardous activities;

(b) Countries need to improve further their legal and administrative frameworks for the identification and notification of hazardous activities in line with the Convention;

(c) Efforts to prevent accidental water pollution are addressed at the national level and bi- and multilaterally through various agreements and basin councils in Central Asia. Further steps are important to ensure the prevention and mitigation of possible transboundary effects of accidental water pollution, with a particular attention to the threats posed by tailings management facilities.

¹¹ More information about the subregional workshop in Central Asia is available from www.unece.org/index.php?id=39866

C. Working Group Meeting of the National Policy Dialogue Steering Committee in the Republic of Kazakhstan

31. Since 2012, a National Policy Dialogue on Integrated Water Resources Management has been implemented in Kazakhstan in the framework of the ECE Convention on Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention). The National Policy Dialogue is the main operational instrument of the European Union Water Initiative component for Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

32. A Steering Committee, comprised of representatives of the different national authorities in charge of water resource protection and use, guides the National Policy Dialogue process. The Steering Committee held its third Working Group meeting on 16 September 2015 in Astana. At the request of Kazakhstan, the secretariat of the Industrial Accidents Convention and representatives of the Committee of environmental regulation, control and state inspection in the oil and gas complex under the Ministry of Energy Kazakhstan, the national competent authority for the implementation of the Convention, were invited to attend this meeting. The Kazakh member of the Joint ad hoc Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents (Joint Expert Group), under the Water and Industrial Accidents Conventions, also participated.

33. The ECE secretariat highlighted the linkages between industrial accidents and transboundary water pollution and the progress achieved by Kazakhstan in implementing the Convention. A specific focus of the meeting was on the prevention of accidental water pollution from tailings management facilities and the related ECE safety guidelines and good practices.¹²

34. The Steering Committee reiterated the conclusions from the subregional workshop on industrial accidents prevention for the countries of Central Asia (see Section III.B above), recommending that Kazakhstan consider improving its inter-ministerial coordination and cooperation regarding the implementation of the Industrial Accidents Convention, including through the nomination of the relevant national authorities as competent for the implementation of the Convention.

D. Workshop on industrial accident prevention in Montenegro

35. A workshop on industrial accident prevention was held on 6–9 June 2016 in Podgorica, with the aim to support the competent authorities in Montenegro in the transposition and implementation of the Seveso III Directive¹³ and Industrial Accidents Convention. For the implementation of the workshop, Slovenia provided financing, leadership and expertise under the Slovenian International Development Programme.

36. The workshop, attended by representatives from competent authorities of Montenegro responsible for environmental protection and emergency planning, focusing on the following themes:

- (a) Establishment of a register of hazardous activities with potential transboundary effects;

¹² Available from www.unece.org/index.php?id=36132.

¹³ Directive 2012/18/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 July 2012 on the control of major-accident hazards involving dangerous substances, amending and subsequently repealing Council Directive 96/82/EC.

(b) Assessment of progress based on the benchmarks for the implementation of the Convention;

(c) Identification of future activities to be implemented by competent authorities.

37. The workshop participants discussed possible approaches to upgrade the existing system of mechanisms for the control of hazards of industrial accidents and to harmonize it with the Seveso III Directive and the Convention. During the workshop, a hands-on training exercise on the identification of hazardous activities with regard to annex I of the Convention was carried out. Participants discussed principles and procedures to assess progress regarding the implementation of the Convention, using the agreed indicators and criteria under the Strategic Approach, and identified actions to ensure further improvement of the legal and administrative framework for the control of hazards arising from industrial accidents. Among others, workshop participants identified the need to harmonize the legislation regulating industrial accidents prevention, to use available data to set up a preliminary list of hazardous activities and to start a dedicated dialogue with the operators of relevant hazardous activities.

IV. Assistance activities carried out in cooperation with other international organizations

38. In the course of the biennium 2015–2016, synergies with other international organizations were sought in order to maintain and enhance the Convention’s presence in the Caucasus and Eastern Europe and to promote its implementation.

39. In addition to the activities highlighted below, the Convention was represented through the secretariat and office holders in the third and fourth meetings of the Inter-agency coordination group on industrial accidents (Paris, 7 May 2015 and Geneva, 15 April 2016).¹⁴ The secretariat also participated in dedicated inter-agency coordination calls to share information between the international organizations active in Armenia and Georgia, notably on the respective focal points, projects and activities.

40. The ECE secretariat also raised awareness of the Convention in Assistance Programme beneficiary countries through its continued participation in the annual meetings of the Commonwealth of Independent States Inter-State Council on Industrial Safety (Astana, 17–18 September 2015 and Bishkek, expected September 2016). It also participated in the International workshop of the industrial safety regulatory bodies of the BRICS¹⁵ countries on “Effective regulation of industrial safety as an element of stability of national economy” organized by the Russian Federation (Moscow, 11–12 November 2015). A presentation on the Convention by the secretariat and its participation in a roundtable discussion at the meeting served to provide information on the Convention to representatives of the national authorities from beneficiary countries that were invited to attend as member States and associate members of the Commonwealth of Independent States.¹⁶

¹⁴ More information on the inter-agency coordination meetings on industrial accidents is available from www.unece.org/index.php?id=38481 and www.unece.org/index.php?id=41772.

¹⁵ BRICS is the acronym for an association of five major emerging national economies: Brazil, China, India, the Russian Federation and South Africa.

¹⁶ Besides the Russian Federation, the following Assistance Programme beneficiary countries are member States of the Commonwealth of Independent States: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova and Tajikistan. Turkmenistan and Ukraine are associate members.

A. Hazard Mapping in Armenia

41. The Joint UNEP/OCHA Environment Unit organized a workshop on hazard mapping in Armenia using the Flash environmental assessment tool (FEAT) (Yerevan, 27–29 January 2015).¹⁷ The goal of the workshop was to support the Ministry of Emergency Situations and the Ministry of Environment in their efforts to map the industrial hazardous activities in Armenia, thus strengthening Armenia’s capacity to prevent, prepare for and respond to industrial accidents.

42. During the workshop, representatives of the environmental and disaster management authorities came together to identify priority actions for improving environmental emergency preparedness and response and to increase collaboration among the national authorities on industrial safety. The ECE secretariat, participating in the workshop via teleconference, highlighted the link between the industrial hazard mapping process, the identification of hazardous activities as stipulated by the Convention and other ongoing initiatives related to disaster risk reduction and CBRN threat reduction.

B. Environmental safety of gas and oil pipelines in Belarus

43. The seminar “Environmental safety of gas and oil pipelines of Belarus” (Minsk, 17–18 September 2015)¹⁸ was held in the framework of the Environment and Security Initiative. It was organized by the non-governmental organization (NGO) Zoï Environment Network, UNEP and the United Nations Development Programme, in cooperation with ECE and the national authorities of Belarus.

44. The seminar was attended by representatives of the national authorities responsible for industrial safety, emergency situations and environmental protection, oil and gas pipelines operators, research organizations, international and national NGOs from Belarus, the media and international experts from the Czech Republic, Germany, Latvia and Ukraine. The Chair of the Joint Expert Group represented the Industrial Accidents Convention at the seminar.

45. The main objective of the seminar was to discuss the assessment “Environmental safety of main pipelines in Belarus”, prepared with reference to the ECE Safety guidelines and good practices for pipelines.¹⁹ The assessment resulted in recommendations for improving the legal framework and practices with regard to environmental safety of the main pipelines and a study of international good practices to enhance environmental safety and prevent pipeline accidents.

46. Four recommendations were developed by the authors of the assessment and presented at the workshop:

(a) The need to update technical regulatory legal acts (technical regulations) of Belarus in the field of pipeline transport, in line with the legal and regulatory framework which is being created in the Eurasian Customs Union²⁰ and in view of the good practices contained in the ECE Safety guidelines and good practices for pipelines;

¹⁷ More information about the meeting is available from www.unece.org/index.php?id=38477.

¹⁸ More information about the seminar is available from www.unece.org/index.php?id=40495

¹⁹ Available from www.unece.org/index.php?id=41068.

²⁰ The following countries are members of the Eurasian Economic Union and its customs union: Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation

(b) The development of a national standard on “Main pipeline transport of oil, gas and petroleum products” by the National Technical Committee for Standardization of Belarus;

(c) Improved coordination between the competent authorities in the event of accidents on principal pipelines through the development and implementation of relevant technical regulations;

(d) Review and update of the national methodological approaches to risk assessment in the case of emergencies on pipeline transport facilities.²¹

C. Information on hazardous chemicals to ensure sound chemicals management in Georgia

47. The European Centre for Environment and Health of the Regional Office for Europe of the World Health Organization (WHO) organized a workshop on “Needs for information on hazardous chemicals to ensure implementation of sound chemical management in Georgia” (Tbilisi, 29–30 October 2015).²² The workshop was organized within the framework of the project “Development of legislative and operational framework for collection and sharing information on hazardous chemicals in Georgia”, funded by Germany. Representatives of public authorities responsible for chemicals management, public health, industrial safety, emergencies and environmental protection, NGOs, academia and international experts attended the workshop.

48. The ECE secretariat presented at the workshop by means of a teleconference, highlighting the synergies and interlinkages between chemical management and industrial accident prevention, preparedness and response and the identification of hazardous activities under the Convention.

D. Environmental Emergencies Preparedness in Georgia

49. The Joint UNEP/OCHA Environment Unit organized, in cooperation with the secretariat of the Industrial Accident Convention, the Environmental Emergencies Preparedness and FEAT Training for Georgia (Tbilisi, 24–26 November 2015). The goal of the training was to support to the Emergency Management Agency of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Environment in their efforts to map the industrial hazardous activities in Georgia, thus strengthening the capacity of the country to prevent, prepare for and respond to industrial accidents.

50. During the training, representatives of the environmental and disaster management authorities came together to identify priority actions for improving environmental emergency preparedness and response and to increase collaboration on industrial safety. The ECE secretariat prepared and provided training materials on the identification of hazardous activities, which were used to train workshop participants.

²¹ More information about the meeting is available from www.unece.org/index.php?id=40495.

²² More details about the meeting are available from www.unece.org/index.php?id=41481.

V. Other assistance activities

A. Activities to address risk management at tailings management facilities, including at the subregional level

51. The following section provides an overview of other assistance activities carried out during the biennium 2015–2016 with in-kind resources provided by Parties. Germany provided in-kind financing, leadership and expertise in the carrying out of projects on tailings management facilities, which comprised the two following activities.

1. Final workshop on tailings management facility safety

52. The final workshop on tailings management facility safety (Kiev, 19–20 May 2015) took place on the completion of the project “Improving the safety of industrial tailings management facilities based on the example of Ukrainian facilities”. The workshop served to present the project deliverables and discuss lessons learned and next steps.

53. The project examined the principles and recommendations of the ECE Safety Guidelines and Good Practices for Tailings Management Facilities and compared those with the specific situation in Ukraine to allow an improvement of the operation of industrial tailings management facilities and the identification of appropriate administrative and legislative decisions. The project also contributed to the international and cross-border cooperation, as increasing the safety of industrial tailings management facilities in Ukraine would increase environmental safety for neighbouring countries in the basins of the Dnieper, Danube and Dniester Rivers and the Black Sea.

54. The ECE Safety Guidelines and Good Practices were used to develop a tailings management facility methodology, which comprised a tailing hazards index, checklists and a catalogue of measures. These documents, prepared for operators and competent authorities, should allow for the identification of weaknesses in tailings safety, the prioritization of sites of most concern and the implementation of short, medium and long-term measures to address the risks at tailings management facilities.

55. The results of the project were highly appreciated by Ukraine as a beneficiary country, but also by others, such as the European Union and the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River. Participants in the final workshop recommended the application of the methodology by inspectors and operators in Ukraine and other ECE countries with tailings management facilities, stressing the need for training to ensure use of the methodology. Participants further requested international organizations to facilitate the distribution and application of the methodology among their member States. Based on the results of the project, Germany indicated its readiness to support the implementation of two follow-up projects, one on improving the safety at tailings management facilities in Georgia and another on raising knowledge on tailings safety at universities in Ukraine.

2. Subregional workshop on tailings management facility safety in the Caucasus

56. A subregional workshop on tailings management facility safety was planned to be held in the fourth quarter of 2016 in Georgia, as part of a project on safety of tailings management facilities in the Caucasus, led by Germany. This project intends to apply to the tailings management facility checklist that was tested in Ukraine and transfer the lessons learned from the project completed in Ukraine to the Caucasus.

B. Activities of the Joint ad hoc Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents to support the use and application of safety guidelines and checklists developed under its auspices and provide assistance in organizing workshops, seminars and exercises

57. This section provides a brief overview of the activities carried out by the Joint Expert Group to support the use and application of safety guidelines and checklists developed under its auspices and provide assistance in organizing workshops, seminars and exercises. These activities were carried out through in-kind financing and with expertise provided by members of the Group, notably from the Czech Republic and Sweden.

58. Between 2010 and 2014, the Joint Expert Group prepared a checklist for contingency planning for accidents affecting transboundary waters, at the request of the governing bodies of the Industrial Accidents and Water Conventions and with the aim to contribute to mitigating the severity of the consequences of industrial accidents affecting transboundary watercourses for human health and the environment.

59. The Conference of the Parties to the Industrial Accidents Convention, at its eighth meeting (Geneva, 3–5 December 2014), took note of the checklist and recommended its application as a tool for harmonized contingency planning between neighbouring States. It further requested the secretariat to publish the checklist in the three official languages following the testing of its application in the framework of the Danube Delta project and its review by the Meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention at its seventh session (Budapest, 17–19 November 2015).

60. The members of the Joint Expert Group from Germany and Sweden participated in the Hazard and Crisis Management Week (23–26 March 2015), organized within the Danube Delta project, to provide support to countries with economies in transition in the application of guidance developed by the Joint Expert Group and to test the checklist's application. Participants from the Republic of Moldova, Romania and Ukraine applied the checklist and considered it a useful tool for their preparation of a draft trilateral joint contingency plan for the Danube Delta. The feedback provided by the participants helped to make small adjustments and finalize the checklist for discussion at the Meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention, which also took note of the checklist and recommended its application.
