



European Union Water Initiative Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EUWI EECCA) Working Group 19th meeting

12-13 May 2016

Place: Conference Room at IEA, Paris (9, rue de la Fédération)

Languages: English and Russian with simultaneous interpretation

The EUWI EECCA is the regional component of the EU Water Initiative focused on Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. The EUWI EECCA Working Group is the body which monitors and steers the work of EUWI EECCA and provides a platform for regional policy dialogue and exchange of experience. The Working Group meets once a year, to set priorities, review major EU and EECCA developments regarding water management policies and share the experience of partner countries and information about relevant projects.

The EUWI EECCA supports the overall goals of the European Neighbourhood Policy and priorities established by the EU-CA Strategy which constitutes a framework for the implementation of the environment and water pillar of the EU Strategy for Central Asia. Support to implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is another core aim of the work.

The Working Group meeting will bring together senior officials representing water and environmental authorities, experts from EU Member States, Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia; as well as international organisations, multilateral and bilateral donors. The EU has joined forces with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) to support EECCA countries to achieve progress in the management of freshwater resources.

The meeting will be chaired by Mr Gheorghe Constantin, Chair of the EUWI EECCA Working Group and co-chaired by the representatives of the European Commission (EC) and the European External Action Service (EEAS).

OUTLINE OF THE AGENDA

DAY 1: Thursday 12 May 2016

Selected Achievements of EUWI EECCA countries in 2012-2016

09:30 – 10:00

Introduction, objectives of the meeting and welcome

Mr. Gheorghe Constantin, Chair of the EUWI EECCA Working Group, Director of Water Resources Management, Romania

Ms Angela Bularga, Programme Manager, Directorate-General for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, EC

Ms Kumi Kitamori, Head, Green Growth and Global Relations Division, Environment Directorate, OECD

Mr Bo Libert, Regional Advisor, Coordinator, UNECE



10:00 – 11:00	Session 1: Overview of the recent trends with the water sector reform in the countries - <i>Tour de Table</i> All participating countries from EECCA will briefly present information on 1-2 priority on-going or forthcoming reforms related to water resources management	5 min for each country, no slides
11:00 – 11:30	Coffee break	
11:30 – 13:00	Session 2. Legal and institutional reforms in the water sector of EECCA countries In the past few years EECCA countries demonstrated their willingness to modernise their approaches towards water resource management. Convergence towards the principles of Integrated Water Resources Management and the EU Water Framework Directive is now on the agenda of legal and institutional reforms of the countries. Main challenges and achievements of legal and institutional reforms, supported by National Policy Dialogues - <i>Mr. Peep Mardiste, UNECE</i> Development of the new Water Law and bylaws in Georgia - <i>Ms. Mariam Makarova, Georgian Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection</i> Development of water legislation in Armenia - <i>Mr. Khachik Hakobyan, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Nature Protection of the Republic of Armenia</i> Water Sector Reform Programme 2016-2025 and related institutional changes - <i>Mr. Daler Kholmatov, Ministry of Energy and Water Resources of Tajikistan</i> Development of national water strategy in Azerbaijan - <i>Mr. Arif Akhundov, Head of Department, State Water Agency of Azerbaijan</i> <i>Discussion</i>	
13:00 – 14:30	Lunch break	
14:30 – 15:30	Session 3. Managing water for green growth and sustainable development Transition to a green economy model assumes a drastic increase in resource use efficiency, including water, and decoupling of sustainable and inclusive growth from environmental pollution. The OECD will briefly introduce work on linkages between water and green growth with references to countries strategies and sectorial programmes – <i>Ms Tatiana Efimova, OECD</i> Towards a national strategy for sustainable sanitation in Armenia	



– *Mr. Volodya Narimanyan, Deputy Chairman. State Committee of Water Economy of Armenia*

Improving Economic Instruments for Water Resources Management in the Republic of Buryatia - *Alexander Shekhovtsov, Technical Director in Russia, GEF-UNDP Baikal Project National*

Introducing economic incentives for improving water use efficiency and preventing damage to surface water resources: experience from Kyrgyzstan - *Mr. Kokumbek Tashtanaliev, General Director, Department of Water Resources and Irrigation, Ministry of Agriculture and Melioration*

Discussion

15:30 – 16:00

Coffee break

Session 4. On-going work on water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus

Oral reports

16:00 – 16:50

In several EECCA countries, National Policy Dialogues have been focusing on addressing the water-food-energy and ecosystems security nexus has been in the focus of, as well as cross-cutting issues such as impact of, and adaptation to, climate variability and change. Adoption of SDGs in Sept. 2015, by the UN Summit, including targets for water, food and energy security, suggests that this work avenue will be topical for EECCA countries also in the future. This session will overview OECD work on tools to support making and implementing decisions on nexus, and UNECE work on nexus assessments in trans-boundary basins; as well as work on improving coherence between the water, agri-food and energy policies at the national and trans-boundary levels.

OECD work on the nexus and related SDGs – *Mr Alexander Martusevich, OECD*

Assessing water-food-energy and ecosystems security nexus in trans-boundary basins: the case of Syr-Darya basin – *Mr. Bo Libert, UNECE*

Water Cooperation in Central Asia: Experience, Processes and Challenges – *Mr Iskandar Abdullaev, Executive Director, CAREC*

Discussion

16:50 – 17:45

Session 5. Transboundary cooperation and role of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)

EECCA countries follow their commitments to effectively implement in their law and practice the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs). Helping countries to advance the ratification and implementation of relevant MEAs including through strengthening of



transboundary cooperation is one of work streams of EUWI EECCA NPDs. – *Mr. Peep Mardiste, UNECE*

Bilateral agreement between Moldova and Ukraine in the Nistru (Dniestr) River basin - *Ms Diana Celac, Ministry of Environment of Moldova and Mr Oleksandr Bon, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine*

Transboundary cooperation between Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation - *Mr Yerbol Tashimov, Ministry of Agriculture of Kazakhstan*

17:45 – 18:00 Closure of the first day

DAY 2: Friday 13 May 2016

Future developments in Eastern partnership and Central Asia countries

Session 6. Future regional and national-level support

09:30 – 10:30 **Support to water policy reform and implementation in Eastern Partnership countries**

Implementation of the European Union Water Initiative Plus for the Eastern Partnership: Introduction by Ms. Angela Bularga, Programme Manager, DG NEAR

Tour de Table

10:30 – 11:30 **Support to water policy reform and implementation in Central Asia**

On-going political dialogue and technical cooperation with countries of Central Asia: brief overview by Mr. Piotr Byczkowski (EEAS)

Implementation of the Water Diplomacy Project: Presentation by Ms. Ekaterina Strikeleva, CAREC

Preparation of the EU 'Nexus Dialogues' project in Central Asia presentation by Ms Sophie Lainé, EC, Unit DEVCO C5

Tour de Table

11:30 – 12:00 **Coffee break**

12:00 – 13:00 **Session 7. Demand for future cooperation within the EUWI EECCA Working Group**

This session aims to receive feedback from partner countries and other stakeholders on the need for and organisation of dialogue and exchange of experience involving the Eastern Partnership and Central Asia countries in the future, building on the EUWI EECCA Working Group achievements.



The session will be facilitated by the Mr Gheorghe Constantin,
Chair of the EUWI EECCA Working Group

Tour de Table

13:00

Closure of the meeting