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Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes

Eighth session

Astana, 10–12 October 2018

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Opening of the session and adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the eighth session

**To be held in the Astana Congress Centre, starting on Wednesday,
10 October 2018, at 10 a.m.**

I. Provisional agenda

High-level segment

1. Opening of the session and adoption of the agenda.
2. Status of ratification of the Convention and its Protocols and report on credentials.
3. Adoption of revised rules of procedure.
4. Special session: Transboundary water cooperation: Sharing water for people, planet, prosperity and peace:
 - (a) Part 1 – Transboundary water cooperation and water allocation: Preventing conflict and ensuring peace and stability;
 - (b) Part 2 – Sharing waters in the context of growing water scarcity: How can transboundary water cooperation make a difference?

General segment

5. Reporting under the Convention and on Sustainable Development Goal indicator 6.5.2.
6. Opening of the Convention, promotion and partnerships:

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- (a) Part 1 – Assistance with countries’ accession to and implementation of the Convention through projects on the ground and capacity development;
 - (b) Part 2 – Strategy for the implementation of the Convention at the global level;
 - (c) Cooperation with partners.
7. Implementation and compliance.
 8. Supporting implementation and application of the Convention through projects on the ground and capacity development.
 9. European Union Water Initiative and National Policy Dialogues.
 10. Water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus in transboundary basins.
 11. Identifying, assessing and communicating the benefits of transboundary cooperation.
 12. Adapting to climate change in transboundary basins.
 13. Water and industrial accidents.
 14. International Water Assessment Centre.
 15. Programme of work for 2019–2021, terms of reference of the bodies established to implement it and resources needed for its implementation.
 16. Election of officers.
 17. Date and venue of the ninth session of the Meeting of the Parties.
 18. Other business.
 19. Presentation of the main decisions.
 20. Closing of the session.

II. Annotations

1. The eighth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) will be held from 10 to 12 October 2018 in the Astana Congress Centre at the invitation of the Government of Kazakhstan. The session will follow a high-level workshop on financing transboundary basin development, to be organized on 9 October under the leadership of Kazakhstan, the Netherlands and Switzerland and in cooperation with the Asian Development Bank, the European Investment Bank, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) International Waters Learning Exchange and Resource Network (IW:LEARN) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE). It will be the first Meeting of the Parties with Parties from outside the pan-European region, marking a turning point in the global opening of the Convention.

2. The Meeting will consist of a general segment and a high-level segment. The high-level segment, dealing with items 1 to 4 of the provisional agenda, will be held in the morning and early afternoon of Wednesday, 10 October, starting at 10 a.m. The general segment, covering items 5 to 20 of the provisional agenda, will take place from the afternoon of Wednesday, 10 October until 6 p.m. on Friday, 12 October. The working languages will be Arabic, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

3. Additional practical information on the meeting, as well as all relevant documentation, will be posted on a dedicated page of the Convention's website¹ in due course.

4. A number of side events will be organized during the session. A detailed programme of these events will be available in October 2018. Participants interested in contributing to or organizing a side event are invited to submit a proposal through the session's web page by 15 August 2018.

5. In view of the expected large participation in the meeting, participants are requested to limit the length of their interventions during the general segment to a maximum of two minutes. Full statements provided to the secretariat will be posted on the session's web page.

High-level segment

1. Opening of the session and adoption of the agenda

Tentative timing: Wednesday, 10 October, 10–10.50 a.m.

6. Mr. Bakytzhan Sagintayev, Prime Minister of Kazakhstan, will open the meeting.
7. Statements by high-level representatives of the United Nations and ECE will follow.
8. Mr. Yerlan Nyssanbayev, Vice-Minister of Agriculture of Kazakhstan, will address the Meeting. A high-level representative of Hungary will also make opening remarks.
9. Mr. Peter Kovacs, Chair of the Meeting of the Parties, will invite the Parties to adopt the agenda as set out in the present document.

2. Status of ratification of the Convention and its Protocols and report on credentials

Tentative timing: Wednesday, 10 October 2018, 10.50–11 a.m.

10. The secretariat will inform the Meeting about the status of ratification of the Convention, the Protocol on Water and Health, the Protocol on Civil Liability and Compensation for Damage Caused by the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents on Transboundary Waters (Protocol on Civil Liability) and the amendments to articles 25 and 26 of the Convention.

11. In accordance with the rules of procedure (see ECE/MP.WAT/19/Add.1), the Bureau will examine the credentials² submitted by Parties and submit its report to the Meeting. Parties to the Convention are therefore requested to inform the secretariat of the

¹ www.unece.org/env/water/mop8.html. Please note that documents with symbols ending in "INF." followed by a number are informal documents and are available only from the meeting web page (not from the Official Documents System of the United Nations (ODS)).

² Credentials are required for all Parties to the Convention (countries which are not Parties to the Convention do not need credentials). Credentials are normally issued by the Head of State or Government, the Minister for Foreign Affairs or, in the case of a regional economic integration organization, the competent authority of the organization and must indicate the composition of the delegation, including the Head of delegation, and state that the delegation is empowered to participate in the Meeting of the Parties and to take decisions on behalf of the respective Government or organization under the applicable rules of procedure.

name(s) of their representative(s) at their earliest convenience and to submit the credentials or a copy of them to the secretariat in advance of the session, preferably by 1 October 2018.

Documentation

Informal document

Status of ratification of the Water Convention, its Protocols and amendments (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/ INF.1)

3. Adoption of revised rules of procedure

Tentative timing: Wednesday, 10 October 2018, 11–11.10 a.m.

12. In light of the global opening of the Convention, it has become necessary to update or review certain decisions in order to reflect its expanded membership. The Meeting will review and be invited to adopt the draft revised rules of procedure of the Meeting of the Parties, prepared by the Bureau with the assistance of the secretariat.

Documentation

Draft revised rules of procedure of the Meeting of the Parties (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/1)

4. Special session – Transboundary water cooperation: Sharing water for people, planet, prosperity and peace

Tentative timing: Wednesday, 10 October, 11.10 a.m.–1 p.m. and 3–4.30 p.m.

13. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity, also seeking to strengthen universal peace. It recognizes the key importance of transboundary water cooperation to ensure sound freshwater management that is essential to human health, environmental sustainability, economic prosperity and conflict prevention.

14. The high-level segment will focus on the importance of transboundary water cooperation, and particularly the role played by the Water Convention, to guarantee that the sharing of water resources and their derived benefits contributes to the well-being of people and the planet and helps to improve prosperity and foster peace.

15. The high-level segment will provide an opportunity for a strategic discussion between Parties; other States, including prospective Parties from all regions; international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and academia. It will consist of two moderated high-level panel discussions, followed by interventions from the floor, with guiding questions.

16. High-level speakers are invited to bring an object to illustrate their presentation and its main messages during the panel discussions and in their interventions from the floor. These objects will become part of a piece of work illustrating the progress in and challenges of transboundary water cooperation worldwide.

17. In light of the limited time available, interventions from the floor should not exceed three minutes. In order to facilitate the running of the high-level segment, delegations planning to make a statement are invited to inform the secretariat in advance.

(a) Part 1 – Transboundary water cooperation and water allocation: Preventing conflict and ensuring peace and stability

18. Experience with implementation of the Water Convention and with transboundary water cooperation in general shows that cooperation has the potential to generate a broad range of benefits for cooperating countries, such as accelerated economic growth, increased human well-being, enhanced environmental sustainability and increased political stability. Failure to cooperate can prevent or slow development in transboundary basins.

19. Recently, two important panels have sent strong political messages on this topic. The High-Level Panel on Water³ has stressed that the strengthening of transboundary water cooperation can be a powerful tool for reaching the Sustainable Development Goals and the Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace⁴ has emphasized the role of water as a driver of peace and highlighted the importance of international water law and the principles, norms and institutions that it has developed in promoting stability and preventing conflicts.

20. A key dimension of transboundary cooperation is the need to share water and benefits it generates in a reasonable, equitable and sustainable manner. Balancing different water needs and responding to water-food-energy-ecosystem interdependencies is a common challenge in the face of increasing demands from different sectors, growing water scarcity and climate variability.

21. Moreover, development in transboundary basins requires innovative financial instruments that recognize the need for transboundary water cooperation and foster coordination between all countries and sectors in the basin in order to ensure that investments have positive and sustainable impact. In that connection, participants will be informed about the outcomes of the High-level workshop on financing transboundary basin development (Astana, 9 October 2018).

22. Panellists and interventions from the floor will focus on the following questions:

(a) How has transboundary water cooperation contributed to sustainable development, conflict prevention and regional integration in your transboundary basins? What are the main benefits derived from cooperation?

(b) Which approaches and good practices have been developed in order to inform water allocation decisions in light of conflicting interests and uses in transboundary basins? How should legal and institutional frameworks be designed in order to enable sustainable and equitable sharing of transboundary waters?

(c) How could financial mechanisms better contribute to the promotion of water as an instrument of coordinated development and peace in transboundary basins? How can the Water Convention and its activities further support stable and sustainable water management in transboundary basins?

(d) What are the roles and contributions of different organizations and partners in supporting equitable and sustainable water allocation and contributing to water diplomacy in transboundary basins?

(b) Part 2 – Sharing waters in the context of growing water scarcity: How can transboundary water cooperation make a difference?

23. Water scarcity already affects every continent, including regions that have been traditionally water-rich, and is of growing concern. Population growth, rising incomes and

³ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/HLPWater>.

⁴ <https://www.genevawaterhub.org/resource/matter-survival>.

expanding cities are driving an unprecedented rise in water demands, while supply is becoming more erratic and uncertain owing to climate change and variability. About 2 billion people are currently living in water-stressed areas and it is anticipated that by 2025, half of the world's population will do so. While scarcity has the potential to aggravate conflicts between riparian countries, cooperation can increase water use efficiency and become an important part of the solution in addressing this global challenge.

24. Building on experience with implementation of the Water Convention and with transboundary water cooperation in general, the session will provide an opportunity to consider ways of sharing and allocating limited water resources among countries and sectors in transboundary basins, with due regard for the environment, and to examine the ways in which cooperation can increase the resilience of society.

25. Panellists and interventions from the floor will focus on the following questions:

(a) How is cooperation evolving in your basin to deal with growing water scarcity?

(b) What are the incentives to implement tailored actions to manage demand, increase water efficiency and share benefits, and what are the challenges faced in their implementation?

(c) How can better valuing water help to address the problem of water scarcity in the transboundary context?

(d) How can implementation of the Water Convention as a global legal and intergovernmental framework, and activities under its framework, support sustainable water allocation and benefit-sharing in the context of water scarcity?

Documentation

Informal document

Programme of the high-level segment (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/ INF.2)

General segment

26. During the general segment, the Meeting of the Parties will review achievements under the current programme of work and examine proposals for activities under the programme of work for 2019–2021. (A more detailed discussion of the overall programme of work for 2019–2021 will take place under agenda item 15.)

Documentation for all the following agenda items

Report on the implementation of the programme of work for 2016–2018, including partnerships (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/2)

Overview of contributions and expenditures in 2016–2018 (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/3)

Draft programme of work for 2019–2021 (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/4)

Programme of work for 2016–2018 (ECE/MP.WAT/49/Add.1)

Report of the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management on its eleventh meeting (ECE/MP.WAT/WG.1/2016/2)

Report of the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management on its twelfth meeting (ECE/MP.WAT/WG.1/2017/2)

Report of the second joint meeting of the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management and the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment (ECE/MP.WAT/WG.1/2018/2-ECE/MP.WAT/WG.2/2018/2)

5. Reporting under the Convention and on Sustainable Development Goal indicator 6.5.2

Tentative timing: Wednesday, 10 October, 4.30-6 p.m. and Thursday, 11 October, 10-10.45 a.m.

27. At its seventh session, the Meeting of the Parties adopted decision VII/2 (see ECE/MP.WAT/49/Add.2) introducing a regular reporting mechanism under the Convention, beginning with a pilot reporting exercise in 2017. In paragraph 2 of that decision, the Meeting encourages all Parties and non-Parties, especially those sharing basins with Parties and those considering accession to the Convention, to participate in the pilot reporting exercise by submitting to the secretariat their filled-out reporting forms and their comments on the reporting template. On the basis of the reports submitted, the secretariat was asked to prepare a report providing an overview of the Convention's implementation and the advancement of transboundary water cooperation.

28. The introduction of reporting under the Convention coincided with the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals and their targets in 2015. Target 6.5 calls for countries to implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation as appropriate. In order to measure progress, indicator 6.5.2 (Proportion of transboundary basin area with an operational arrangement for water cooperation) was agreed by the United Nations Statistical Commission in March 2016 and subsequently adopted by the General Assembly in July 2017 as part of the global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. ECE and the United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (UNESCO) have led the development of the step-by-step methodology for calculating indicator 6.5.2 and have been designated as "custodian agencies" for the indicator.

29. In order to maximize synergies and efficiencies, at the eleventh meeting of the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management (Geneva, 18-19 October 2016), it was decided to combine reporting under the Convention and reporting on indicator 6.5.2 and to send all Parties a single template for the provision of this information. Similarly, all countries sharing transboundary waters were invited to report on indicator 6.5.2 through a questionnaire which, in addition to a section on calculation of the indicator, includes three other sections based on the Convention's reporting template. This makes it possible to gain a full picture of the status of transboundary water cooperation, track progress more closely beyond the indicator value and establish the current baseline with greater accuracy.

30. All Parties were invited to report under the Convention and on Sustainable Development Goal indicator 6.5.2 by 15 May 2017. All other countries were invited to report on indicator 6.5.2 by 15 June 2017 and to send their reports to both ECE and UNESCO. As of June 2018, 107 countries have submitted a reply. In 2018, based on the data received, a global baseline indicator report was prepared by ECE and UNESCO and input to the report of the Secretary-General on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals was provided. Moreover, based on data collected for all indicators under Sustainable Development Goal 6, UN-Water prepared the first synthesis report on water and sanitation.

31. The Meeting of the Parties will be informed about progress on the integrated monitoring of water and sanitation-related Sustainable Development Goal targets under the Global Environment Management Initiative (GEMI), operating under the UN-Water umbrella and will discuss the findings of the Sustainable Development Goal 6 Synthesis Report 2018 on Water and Sanitation.

32. The Meeting will review progress on transboundary cooperation worldwide on the basis of the aforementioned ECE-UNESCO global baseline report and the outcome of the high-level political forum held in 2018. Using the lessons learned from recent developments in transboundary water cooperation, the Meeting will discuss ways to accelerate progress in ensuring that all transboundary basins are covered by operational arrangements by 2030.

33. Representatives of ECE and UNESCO will present initiatives to support future reporting on indicator 6.5.2 and to promote the use of reports to foster transboundary water cooperation.

34. The Meeting will also discuss the advancement of the Convention's implementation based on a report prepared by the ECE secretariat (ECE/MP.WAT/51).

35. The Meeting will then examine and be invited to adopt the draft decision on reporting and the revised template for reporting under the Convention (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/5), prepared on the basis of the outcomes of the technical meeting on the template for reporting on indicator 6.5.2 and under the Water Convention (Budapest, 16–17 January 2018) and the ensuing discussions at the second joint meeting of the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management and the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment (Geneva, 28–30 May 2018).

36. Lastly, the Meeting will discuss future work in this area beyond 2018, including the development of a guide on reporting under the Convention.

Documentation

Draft decision on reporting and revised template for reporting under the Convention (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/5)

Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (E/2018/64)

Progress on transboundary water cooperation: Global baseline for SDG indicator 6.5.2

Progress on transboundary water cooperation under the Water Convention (ECE/MP.WAT/51)

Sustainable Development Goal 6 Synthesis Report 2018 on Water and Sanitation⁵

Informal document

Report of the technical meeting on the template for reporting on Sustainable Development Goal indicator 6.5.2 and under the Water Convention, jointly prepared by ECE and UNESCO (Budapest, 16–17 January 2018) (ECE/MP.WAT/WG.1/2018/INF.5-ECE/MP.WAT/WG.2/2018/INF.5)

⁵ Available online at: www.unwater.org/publications/highlights-sdg-6-synthesis-report-2018-on-water-and-sanitation-2/.

6. Opening of the Convention, promotion and partnerships

Tentative timing: Thursday, 11 October, 10.45 a.m.–1 p.m. and 3–3.30 p.m.

(a) Part 1 – Assistance with countries' accession to and implementation of the Convention through projects on the ground and capacity development

37. The triennium 2016–2018 was marked by the global opening of the Convention, beginning with the accession of the first countries from Africa and progress towards accession by other countries in various regions. New Parties and countries in the process of accession will be invited to inform the Meeting about their progress and lessons learned from the accession process.

38. The Meeting will be informed about activities carried out by the secretariat, Parties and partners in 2016–2018 in order to build capacity and raise awareness of the Water Convention and the Convention on the Law of the Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses at the national, basin, regional and global levels.

39. The meeting will also be informed about activities paving the way for future implementation of the Convention outside the pan-European region, and specifically in new Parties and countries working towards accession.

40. Participants will then discuss future activities designed to further promote and build capacities regarding the Convention and its implementation beyond the ECE region, to be carried out during the period 2019–2021.

(b) Part 2 – Strategy for the implementation of the Convention at the global level

41. At its seventh session (Budapest, 17–19 November 2015), through its decision VII/3 (see ECE/MP.WAT/49/Add.2), the Meeting of the Parties entrusted the Bureau and the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management, in cooperation with non-Parties, key partners and the secretariat, with the task of developing a strategy for the implementation of the Convention at the global level, including its relationship with the Convention on the Law of the Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses and the role of key partners. The meeting will review the draft strategy and will be invited to adopt it and discuss ways to ensure its implementation.

42. Lastly, the Meeting will discuss and be invited to adopt the draft decision on the designation and responsibilities of focal points, prepared by the Bureau with the support of the secretariat.

(c) Cooperation with partners

43. Partnerships with international organizations, including other global and regional multilateral environmental agreements, and NGOs are essential to implementation of the Convention and its programme of work. Partnerships will become even more crucial with the opening of the Convention and the need to foster its implementation at the global level. In accordance with decision VII/4 on cooperation with partners for the implementation of the Convention, the Meeting will review existing partnerships and foster the establishment of new ones.

44. The Chair of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health will provide an update on progress achieved under the Protocol and past cooperation between the Convention and the Protocol. The Meeting will discuss ways to further strengthen such cooperation.

45. A representative of GEF will be invited to report on its activities with regard to international waters and cooperation with ECE in accordance with decision VI/4.

46. Representatives of global and regional organizations will be invited to inform the Meeting about their ongoing and planned activities in support of implementation of the Convention and opportunities to cooperate with the Meeting within the framework of the strategy for the implementation of the Convention at the global level.

47. Lastly, the Meeting will be informed about the secretariat's cooperation with and contributions to relevant global processes, including UN-Water, the high-level political forum and its regional preparatory process, the World Water Forum, World Water Weeks, the Budapest Water Summit, the International Decade for Action on Water for Sustainable Development, 2018–2028 and other relevant international processes.

Documentation

Draft strategy for the implementation of the Convention at the global level (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/6)

Draft decision on the designation and responsibilities of focal points (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/7)

The Economic Commission for Europe Water Convention and the United Nations Watercourses Convention: An analysis of their harmonized contribution to international water law (ECE/MP.WAT/42)

The Global Opening of the 1992 Water Convention (brochure) (ECE/MP.WAT/43/Rev.1)

The Water Convention- Responding to global water challenges (ECE/MP.WAT/52)

Informal documents

GEF and the Water Convention (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/ INF.3)

7. Implementation and compliance

Tentative timing: Thursday, 11 October, 3.30–4 p.m.

48. The Chair of the Implementation Committee will present the Committee's work over the past three years and its report to the Meeting of the Parties.

49. The Meeting will discuss the report and be invited to adopt the draft decision on general issues of implementation contained in it.

50. Parties will be invited to elect five members of the Implementation Committee.

Documentation

Report of the Implementation Committee to the Meeting of the Parties and draft decision on implementation (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/8)

Report of the Implementation Committee on its sixth meeting (ECE/MP.WAT/IC/2016/2)

Report of the Implementation Committee on its seventh meeting (ECE/MP.WAT/IC/2016/4)

Report of the Implementation Committee on its eighth meeting (ECE/MP.WAT/IC/2017/2)

Report of the Implementation Committee on its ninth meeting (ECE/MP.WAT/IC/2018/2)

Decision VI/1 on support to implementation and compliance (see ECE/MP.WAT/37/Add.2)

Informal document

List of candidates for the Implementation Committee (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/INF.4)

8. Supporting implementation and application of the Convention through projects on the ground and capacity development

Tentative timing: Thursday, 11 October, 4–4.30 p.m.

51. The Meeting will be informed about the various capacity-building and assistance activities implemented over the past three years in order to promote implementation of the Convention in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Other examples of secretariat support for the negotiation of agreements at the basin or regional level worldwide will also be presented. Countries involved in these activities will be invited to comment.

52. The Meeting will also discuss possible future activities in this area.

Documentation

Principles for effective joint bodies for transboundary cooperation (ECE/MP.WAT/50)

9. European Union Water Initiative and National Policy Dialogues

Tentative timing: Thursday, 11 October, 4.30–5.15 p.m.

53. The Meeting will discuss progress on the European Union Water Initiative (EUWI), National Policy Dialogues on Integrated Water Resources Management (facilitated by ECE) and Water Supply and Sanitation (facilitated by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)).

54. Participants will examine lessons learned from the dialogues and discuss future development of the dialogues beyond 2018, including links with other programme areas under the Convention.

10. Water-food-energy-ecosystems nexus in transboundary basins

Tentative timing: Thursday, 11 October, 5.15–6 p.m.

55. The Chair of the Task Force on the Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus, the secretariat and representatives of the riparian countries and basin organizations involved will present the work carried out in this area, including the main findings of the basin assessments in the Drin, Drina and North-Western Sahara Aquifer System, policy briefs prepared,⁶ general conclusions and lessons learned. The Meeting will be invited to make comments and to endorse the synthesis publication, which summarizes experience in applying the methodology and lessons learned from the assessments and builds on a number of publications, reports and policy briefs on the nexus. The meeting will then discuss future work beyond 2018, including follow-up to the basin assessments.

56. Participants will be informed about the outcomes of the Global Workshop on Water Allocation (Geneva, 16–17 October 2017) and discuss future work in this area beyond 2018. Representatives of countries, basin organizations and international partners will be invited to indicate their interest in participating in and contributing to these activities.

⁶ All policy briefs and documents are available online at: www.unece.org/env/water/publications/pub.html.

Documentation

Methodology for assessing the water-food-energy-ecosystem nexus in transboundary basins and experiences from its application: Synthesis (ECE/MP.WAT/55)

Reconciling Different Resource Uses in Transboundary Basins: Assessment of the Water-Food-Energy-Ecosystems Nexus (ECE/MP.WAT/46)

11. Identifying, assessing and communicating the benefits of transboundary cooperation

Tentative timing: Friday, 12 October, 10–10.45 a.m.

57. The lead Parties for the work on the benefits of transboundary cooperation, the secretariat and representatives of the riparian countries and basin organizations involved will present the activities carried out since 2016 in a number of basins worldwide (the Okavango-Cubango, Sio-Malaba-Malakisi and Drina rivers) by applying the Policy Guidance Note on the Benefits of Transboundary Water Cooperation: Identification, Assessment and Communication. The Meeting will also be informed about the outcomes of the global workshop, Moving forward transboundary water cooperation: Building on its benefits (Geneva, 6–7 February 2018) and will review and endorse the synthesis publication Identifying, assessing and communicating the benefits of transboundary water cooperation - Lessons learnt and recommendations.

58. The Meeting will then discuss future activities beyond 2018 and how assessments of the benefits of cooperation can support other activities implemented under the Water Convention, such as accession processes and the negotiation of basin agreements. Participants will be invited to indicate their interest in participating in these activities.

Documentation

Identifying, assessing and communicating the benefits of transboundary water cooperation - Lessons learnt and recommendations (ECE/MP.WAT/NONE/11)

Policy Guidance Note on the Benefits of Transboundary Water Cooperation: Identification, Assessment and Communication (ECE/MP.WAT/47)

12. Adapting to climate change in transboundary basins

Tentative timing: Friday, 12 October, 10.45–11.45 a.m.

59. The co-Chairs of the Task Force on Water and Climate will report on the work on adaptation to climate change in transboundary basins carried out since 2016 within the framework of the programme of pilot projects on water and adaptation to climate change, the global network of basins working on climate change adaptation and the platform for exchanging experience on adaptation to climate change in the transboundary context. This work has been based on the Strategy for future work on climate change adaptation in transboundary basins under the Convention (ECE/MP.WAT/2015/4), which the Meeting of the Parties had considered at its seventh session and the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management had adopted at its eleventh meeting. Activities in this programme area include the organization of two international workshops: the workshop on financing climate change adaptation in transboundary basins (Geneva, 13–14 September 2016) and the International Workshop on Water Scarcity: Taking action in transboundary basins and reducing health impacts (Geneva, 11–12 December 2017), a joint activity under the Water Convention and the Protocol on Water and Health. Participants, particularly from

the pilot basins (the Chu Talas, Dniester, Neman and Sava basins) will be invited to comment. The Meeting will then be informed about the work on financing climate change adaptation in transboundary basins, including the Training on how to prepare bankable projects for financing climate change adaptation in transboundary basins (Dakar, 21–23 June 2017), organized in cooperation with several financing institutions, and the publication prepared as an outcome to the training with the World Bank. A representative of Italy will be invited to report on the International Summit “Water and Climate – Meeting of the Great Rivers of the World” (Rome, 23–25 October 2017).

60. Participants will discuss input to global processes on climate change and disaster risk reduction, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction. Representatives of these processes will be invited to inform the meeting about past and potential future cooperation. The Meeting will also be invited to discuss and adopt the Words into Action Implementation Guide for Addressing Water-Related Disasters and Transboundary Cooperation. The guide, which was prepared by a drafting group under the Task Force on Water and Climate in cooperation with the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction, provides guidance for implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 with regard to water resources management.

61. The Meeting will then discuss proposed future activities in this area of work for 2019–2021. Representatives of countries, basin organizations and international partners will be invited to make comments and indicate their interest in participating in future activities.

Documentation

Strategy for future work on climate change adaptation in transboundary basins under the Convention (ECE/MP.WAT/2015/4)

Implementation Guide for Addressing Water-Related Disasters and Transboundary Cooperation (ECE/MP.WAT/56)

Water and Climate Change Adaptation in Transboundary Basins: Lessons Learned and Good Practices (ECE/MP.WAT/45)

How to prepare bankable projects for climate change adaptation in transboundary basins

13. Water and industrial accidents

Tentative timing: Friday, 12 October, 11.45 a.m.–12.30 p.m.

62. 2018 marks the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of the Joint Ad Hoc Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents under the Water Convention and the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (Industrial Accidents Convention) in order to support work in the area of accidental water pollution.⁷ The co-chairs of the Group will present its achievements, products and lessons learned. The Meeting will then be invited to comment on and take note of the draft safety guidelines and good practices for the management and retention of firefighting water and to recommend their use and implementation by countries in order to prevent accidental pollution of soil and water, including such pollution causing transboundary effects. The draft safety guidelines and good practices will also be submitted for the same action to the Conference of the Parties to the Industrial Accidents Convention at its tenth meeting (Geneva, 4–6 December 2018).

⁷ www.unece.org/env/teia/jeg.html.

63. Lastly, the Meeting will discuss future activities planned by the Expert Group for 2019–2020.

Documentation

Draft safety guidelines and good practices for the management and retention of firefighting water: general recommendations (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/9-ECE/CP.TEIA/2018/12)

Draft safety guidelines and good practices for the management and retention of firefighting water: technical and organizational recommendations (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/10-ECE/CP.TEIA/2018/13)

14. International Water Assessment Centre

Tentative timing: Friday, 12 October, 12.30–1 p.m.

64. At its seventh session, the Meeting of the Parties welcomed the offer of Kazakhstan to host the International Water Assessment Centre (IWAC) in Astana and entrusted Kazakhstan and the Bureau, with the support of the secretariat, with the task of cooperating closely to define future arrangements concerning the Centre, including its terms of reference and its programme of work, and reporting to the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management at its eleventh meeting. Following that session, the Working Group was presented with draft terms of reference for the Centre, prepared by Kazakhstan in consultation with the secretariat, and requested Kazakhstan to finalize them in cooperation with the Bureau and the secretariat. Based on the final terms of reference (ECE/MP.WAT/WG.1/2017/4), the Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe on hosting the International Water Assessment Centre in Kazakhstan was signed on 30 May 2017. IWAC was officially opened on 7 December 2017. A representative of Kazakhstan will brief the participants on the Centre's terms of reference and resources, and on the activities implemented to date. The Meeting will then discuss the draft workplan of IWAC, prepared on the basis of the Regional Meeting on strengthening intersectoral cooperation on water resources management and fostering the role of water to promote sustainable development and the implementation of Agenda 2030 (Almaty, Kazakhstan, 12–13 July 2018).

Documentation

Draft workplan of the International Water Assessment Centre for 2019–2021 (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/11)

15. Programme of work for 2019–2021, terms of reference of the bodies established to implement it and resources needed for its implementation

Tentative timing: Friday, 12 October, 3–4.30 p.m.

65. The secretariat will recall the consultative process through which the programme of work for 2019–2021 was developed. On the basis of the discussions under previous agenda items, the Meeting is expected to discuss, finalize and adopt the programme of work for 2019–2021. To that end, the Meeting will discuss the draft programme of work activity by activity and will:

- (a) Agree on the structure of the programme of work, future activities and lead countries;

(b) Agree on the intergovernmental bodies, with their respective mandates, to be established or extended in order to guide implementation of the programme of work;

(c) Make arrangements related to the financial and human resources needed for implementing the activities in the programme of work and indicate funding for these activities according to their priority. Parties and other interested States and organizations are invited to inform the secretariat in advance of the session of their intention to contribute financially to the programme of work's implementation. The secretariat will make the information received available to participants and delegations will be invited to provide any supplementary information.

Documentation

Draft programme of work for 2019–2021 (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/4)

Overview of contributions and expenditures in 2016–2018 (ECE/MP.WAT/2018/3)

16. Election of officers

Tentative timing: Friday, 12 October, 4.30–4.45 p.m.

66. In accordance with its rules of procedure, the Meeting will elect its officers, who will remain in office until the next elections at the ninth session of the Meeting of the Parties. In particular, the Meeting is expected to elect a Chair, two Vice-Chairs and additional officers, as it deems necessary, considering that the Bureau must be composed of no fewer than eight persons.

17. Date and venue of the ninth session of the Meeting of the Parties

Tentative timing: Friday, 12 October, 4.45–4.55 p.m.

67. The Meeting of the Parties will be invited to set dates for its ninth ordinary session. Delegations are encouraged to offer to host the session so that the Meeting can decide on its venue.

18. Other business

Tentative timing: Friday, 12 October, 4.55–5 p.m.

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

19. Presentation of the main decisions

Tentative timing: Friday, 12 October, 5–5.45 p.m.

69. The Chair will present the main decisions taken by the Meeting of the Parties. The Meeting will be invited to entrust the secretariat, in consultation with the Bureau, with the task of finalizing the report on its eighth session.

20. Closing of the session

Tentative timing: Friday, 12 October, 5.45–6 p.m.

70. The Chair and a representative of the host country will be invited to make final statements. The Chair will then officially close the session.
