Capacity for Water Cooperation  
Workshop on Legal, Institutional and Technical Aspects of Managing Transboundary Groundwaters  
Almaty, Kazakhstan, 29-31 May 2012  
Hotel Kazzhol, 127/1 Gogol street


The workshop is organized jointly by UNECE, OSCE Centre in Astana, UNESCO, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Center “Cooperation for Sustainable Development” with financial support from the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment and the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The workshop aims at building capacity of government officials and other experts in EECCA countries on the legal and technical aspects of management and protection of groundwaters, with a focus on transboundary groundwaters. Specifically, the workshop aims to:

- Familiarize the participants with existing processes, technical studies and legal frameworks related to management of transboundary groundwaters;
- Present the experience of countries and joint bodies in the UNECE region on the management and protection of groundwaters and the application of IWRM to transboundary groundwaters;
- Initiate dialogue and exchange of information on legal and institutional frameworks and management practices in EECCA subregion;
- Discuss the draft Model Provisions on Transboundary Groundwaters with representatives of the countries of EECCA;
- Develop recommendations on the management and protection of transboundary groundwaters, including improvement of legal and institutional frameworks for cooperation in EECCA subregion.

DAY 1 – Tuesday, 29 May 2012

9:30–10:15 Opening session

Chairperson: Mr. Gabriel de los Cobos, State of Geneva, Switzerland

Welcome address and opening speeches

Mr. Gabriel de los Cobos, State of Geneva, Switzerland  
Ms. Iulia Trombitcaia, UNECE  
Mr. Alexander Peytchev, OSCE Centre in Astana  
Mr. Simon Sargsyan, UNESCO Almaty Office for Central Asia  
Ms. Natalia Alexeeva, UNDP  
Ms. Vera Mustafina, Center “Cooperation for Sustainable Development”
10:15 - 13:00 Session 1: Management challenges and response — international law and its application to groundwaters

**Chairperson:** Ms. Iulia Trombitcaia, UNECE

The status of transboundary aquifers in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, and a summary of pressures and management issues

*Ms. Annukka Lipponen, UNECE*

**11:00 – 11:30 Coffee break**

Draft Articles on the Law of Transboundary Aquifers: major principles and obligations

*Ms. Raya Stephan, UNESCO*

Application of the UNECE Water Convention to groundwater and the draft Model Provisions on Transboundary Groundwaters

*Mr. Alexandros Kolliopoulos, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Greece/Vice-Chair of the Legal Board under UNECE Water Convention*

13:30 – 14:30 Lunch

14:30- 16.00: Session 2: Governance of transboundary groundwaters: international experience

**Chairperson:** Ms. Caroline Milow, Office of the EU Special Representative for Central Asia

Global Groundwater Policy and Governance: The GEF Project on Groundwater Governance and Other Observations

*Mr. Robert Varady, University of Arizona, United States of America/Global Environment Facility project “Groundwater Governance”*

Strengthening the management of transboundary groundwaters: the role of specific agreements and joint bodies

*Ms. Iulia Trombitcaia, UNECE*

Progress towards institutionalizing cooperation on transboundary groundwater: Convention on the Protection, Utilization, Recharge and Monitoring of the Franco-Swiss Genevese Aquifer

*Mr. Gabriel de los Cobos, Service of geology, soils and waste, State of Geneva*

16:00 – 16:30 Coffee break

16:30 – 17:45 Session 3: Initiating cooperation: assessment and characterization of transboundary groundwaters

**Chairperson:** Mr. Simon Sargsyan, UNESCO

Transboundary groundwater bodies of Danube River Basin District importance – Methodology for delineation, assessing and presenting the status

*Mr. Andreas Scheidleder, Austrian Environment Agency/Groundwater Task Group of the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR)*

Examples of managed aquifer recharge and needs for cooperation in Central Asia

*Mr. Akmal Karimov, International Water Management Institute, Central Asia Office*

Global Environment Facility (GEF) project in preparation: groundwater potential in the transboundary Syr Darya Basin

*Ms. Natalia Alexeeva, UNDP*
17:45 – 18:30 Informal evening session: Information collection for a subregional overview — governance of transboundary groundwaters in the EECCA

**Moderator:** Mr. Robert Varady, University of Arizona

An adapted version of a questionnaire designed for the Groundwater Governance GEF project will be distributed to the participants and time will be given to fill it out. Responses are made anonymously. The information collected will help to better understand how transboundary groundwaters are perceived in the EECCA subregion, what are the main issues in the management of groundwaters and which institutions are involved in their governance.

The information collected will be used to orient work related to transboundary groundwaters by the co-organizers, and will in particular be taken into account in developing future work under the UNECE Water Convention.

**DAY 2 – Wednesday, 30 May 2012**

The situation regarding groundwater management in the EECCA countries, with a focus on transboundary groundwaters, will be reviewed through a series of presentations by sub-region. Each sub-regional series will be followed by a summary of the main issues, which will feed into the discussion on the recommendations on the management and protection of transboundary groundwaters in EECCA subregion (session 8, day 3).

All presenters are invited to address the following points:

- How is groundwater management organized at the national level? Which institutions are involved? How does groundwater management relate to management of surface waters? How groundwater protection is organized at national level (pollution prevention and control, permitting abstractions and other uses etc.)?
- Are transboundary groundwaters covered by the present bilateral or multilateral agreements to which the country is a party? Is there need for specific agreements on groundwater?
- Do joint (interstate) bodies deal with groundwaters?
- What are the main challenges and lessons learned in managing groundwaters at national and transboundary levels?

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<th>9.30- 12.00 Session 4: Groundwater management situation and the legal basis in Eastern Europe</th>
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| **Chairperson:** Ms. Vera Mustafina, Center “Cooperation for Sustainable Development”  
**Rapporteur:** Ms. Iulia Trombitcaia, UNECE |

Management of groundwaters and transboundary groundwaters in the Republic of Belarus  
*Ms. Volha Biarozka and Ms. Olga Vasniova, Belarusian Research Geological Exploration Institute*

Management of groundwaters and transboundary groundwaters in the Republic of Moldova  
*Mr. Dumitru Coada and Ms. Mariana Merlan, State Agency of Geology and Mineral Resources*

11:00 – 11:30 Coffee break

Management of groundwaters and transboundary groundwaters in Ukraine  
*Mr. Grygorii Petruk, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources and Mr. Peter Chalyi, Nedra Ukraine, Zapadukrgeologiya*

Rapporteur’s summary of the main issues in Eastern Europe.

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<th>12.00- 13.30 Session 5: Groundwater management situation and the legal basis in the Caucasus</th>
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| **Chairperson:** Mr. Amirkhan Kenshimov, UNDP  
**Rapporteur:** Ms. Madina Ibrasheva, OSCE Centre in Astana |

Management of groundwaters and transboundary groundwaters in Armenia
Mr. Arutyun Yeremyan, Ministry of Nature Protection and Mr. Vilik Sargsyan, Architecture and Construction State University of Yerevan

Management of groundwaters and transboundary groundwaters in Georgia
Mr. Merab Gaprindashvili, Department of Geological Hazards and Geological Environment, Ministry of the Environment and Mr. Merab Chalatashvili, Geological Service, Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources

Rapporteur’s summary of the main issues in the Caucasus.

13:30 – 14:30 Lunch

14.30–17.30 Session 6: Groundwater management situation and the legal basis in Central Asia

Chairperson: Mr. Alexander Peytchev, OSCE Centre in Astana
Rapporteur: Ms. Barbara Janusz-Pawletta, Kazakh- German University

Management of groundwaters and transboundary groundwaters in Kazakhstan
Mr. Mukhtar Zhakenov, Committee of Water Resources of the Ministry of Agriculture and Mr. Bulat Yespayev, Committee of Geology and the Use of Subsoil of the Ministry of Industry and New Technology

Management of groundwaters and transboundary groundwaters in Kyrgyzstan
Ms. Ekaterina Sahvaeva, Department of Water Resources and Land Improvement/Mr. Gennadii M. Tolstikhin, Institute of Water Problem and Hydropower under National Academy of Sciences

15:40 – 16:00 Coffee break

Management of groundwaters and transboundary groundwaters in Tajikistan
Mr. Akmal Akhmedov, Department of Geology under Government of Tajikistan and Mr. Rustam Barotov, Tajik Hydro Meliorative Expedition

Management of groundwaters and transboundary groundwaters in Uzbekistan
Mr. Sherzod Soatov, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Rapporteur’s summary of the main issues in Central Asia.

19:00 Reception for all participants of the workshop, Hotel Kazzhol
DAY 3 – Thursday, 31 May 2012

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<th>09:30-11:00 Session 7: Governance of transboundary groundwaters in the EECCA</th>
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**Chairperson:** Ms. Iulia Trombitcaia, UNECE

This session will discuss the following:

1) Selected questions on governance and management of transboundary groundwaters, including at least the following:
   - What is the importance of bilateral and multilateral agreements in governing transboundary groundwater resources?
   - How effective joint (interstate) authorities are in addressing groundwater-related concerns?
   - How to improve public awareness and increase public participation in groundwater management at national and transboundary levels?
   - How to achieve integrated management of surface and groundwaters? Any concrete examples of arrangements that work and could be replicated in the EECCA subregion?

2) The Draft Model Provisions on Transboundary Groundwaters (the document made available): The participants are invited to share their view on the present version. Concrete suggestions for changes should be conveyed through the national Focal Points to the UNECE Water Convention or through the national representative to the second meeting of the Core Group on Groundwater (Geneva, 11-12 June 2012). A summary of the workshop will be presented to the Core Group on Groundwater and the joint meeting of the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management and the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment (3-4 July 2012).

11:00 – 11:30 Coffee break

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<th>11:30-13:00 Session 8: Workshop conclusions: recommendations on the way forward</th>
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**Chairperson:** Mr. Alexander Peytchev, OSCE Centre in Astana

Possible recommendations on the management and protection of transboundary groundwaters in EECCA subregion, including improvement of legal and institutional frameworks for cooperation, will be discussed in this session. In particular, the aim is to, on the one hand, identify the key issues regarding management of transboundary groundwaters and what are the complicating factors, and on the other hand find potential ways of improving the situation through e.g. strengthening the legal basis, developing the institutional set-up, capacity building and finding opportunities for transboundary cooperation.

The recommendations developed drawing upon the presentations and discussions in the workshop will be widely distributed, notably through the web page of the UNECE Water Convention.

13:00 Closing of the workshop

13:00 – 14:00 Lunch

14:00 Departure by bus on a field trip to a well field where groundwater is abstracted. All workshop participants are invited to join the field trip.