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Item 4 of the provisional agenda

**Review of past activities and discussion of
future activities in the different areas of work**

Report on the implementation of the programme of work for 2010–2012, including an overview of contributions and expenditures

Note by the secretariat

Summary

The present document reports on the implementation of the workplan for the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes for the period 2010–2012 (ECE/MP.WAT/29/Add.1), which was adopted at the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties. Specifically, it looks at the activities undertaken by the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management, the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment, the Legal Board, the Bureau, the Convention's task forces and expert groups, and the secretariat to this end. It also informs Parties about financial contributions to the Convention's trust fund and the use of these and other extrabudgetary resources for programme implementation from 1 September 2009 until 31 July 2012, in accordance with decision III/2 (ECE/MP.WAT/15/Add.1, annex II, para. 4). The document should be read together with the draft vision for the future of the Convention (ECE/MP.WAT/2012/L.2), especially its section on challenges and achievements.

At their joint session (Geneva, 3–4 July 2012), the two Working Groups discussed the implementation of the current workplan and requested the secretariat to submit the present document to the sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties (see ECE/MP.WAT/WG.1/2012/2–ECE/MP.WAT/WG.2/2012/2, forthcoming).

The Meeting of the Parties may wish:

- (a) To endorse the report on the implementation of the workplan for 2010–2012 and the report on contributions and expenditures annexed thereto;
- (b) To commend the members of the two Working Groups, the Bureau, the other bodies under the Convention and the secretariat for their excellent work in providing support for the implementation of the Convention through assistance and capacity-building activities, pilot projects, reports and publications, and for their assistance in the organization of workshops, conferences, training courses and other meetings;
- (c) To express its gratitude to Parties and non-Parties to the Convention, especially to the lead Parties of activities, that have provided human and financial resources to implement the workplan.

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Highlights of the 2010–2012 workplan

1. The implementation of the 2010–2012 workplan of the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) has resulted in many major achievements. The following can be highlighted:¹

(a) Major progress was made in the field of support to implementation and compliance, mainly due to the negotiation under the Legal Board resulting in a proposal for the establishment of an Implementation Committee, to be decided upon by the Meeting of the Parties at its sixth session. The establishment of the Committee is an important step in the evolution of the Convention which will strengthen its implementation and increase its effectiveness and normative authority in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) region and beyond;

(b) After more than three years of preparations, the *Second Assessment of Transboundary Rivers, Lakes and Groundwaters*² was launched at the Seventh “Environment for Europe” (EfE) Ministerial Conference (Astana, 21–23 September 2011). It forms a comprehensive, up-to-date overview of pressing issues related to transboundary waters in the European and Asian parts of the ECE region. It has consolidated regional assessments, as a valuable vehicle to bring together Parties and non-Parties, and even countries outside the ECE region. Its process of preparation allowed a broad exchange of experience and debate on emerging issues, and built capacity on different aspects of transboundary water management. The Second Assessment process can be considered as the most collaborative effort ever under the Convention: covering the entire region, with attention given to all countries and with numerous partner organizations and even neighbouring non-ECE countries involved. More than 250 experts contributed to its preparation;

(c) The work of the Task Force on Water and Climate has had significant impacts at the political level, as well as on the ground. The activities on water and climate have developed into one of the most successful areas of work under the Convention, recognized at the global level. The yearly workshops on water and climate change adaptation in transboundary basins have become venues of global reference for the debate on this issue. Thanks to the work by the Task Force, the need for transboundary cooperation in climate change adaptation has been increasingly recognized, including within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the European Union (EU). More and more countries sharing transboundary basins are starting to address these issues jointly. This has led to concrete results, for example, some of the pilot projects under the Water Convention have developed joint impact and vulnerability assessments for the first time at the basin level;

(d) The National Policy Dialogues (NPDs) on Integrated Water Resources Management and Water Supply and Sanitation under the EU Water Initiative have made an important contribution to the development of water sector reforms and the achievement of the water-related Millennium Development Goals. The dialogues respond to countries’ needs and are much requested: countries in which the NPDs were supposed to end, requested their continuation; new countries expressed interest in NPDs (Kazakhstan).

¹ General achievements are included in the draft vision for the future of the Convention (ECE/MP.WAT/2012/L.2).

² United Nations publication, Sales No. E.11.II.E.15. Available from http://www.unece.org/env/water/publications/pub/second_assessment.html.

Donors and international organizations also showed interest in NPDs as NPDs often provide a platform to share expertise and coordinate initiatives;

(e) In general, in 2010–2012, work under the Convention focused increasingly on projects on the ground, which have supported implementation of the Convention at the regional, national and subnational levels. The concrete outcomes of such projects, for example a draft regional framework for dam safety in Central Asia, the signature of the Memorandum of Understanding in the Drin Basin or the creation of a regional platform for water quality in Central Asia, provide powerful evidence of the usefulness of the work undertaken in the framework of the Convention at the country and basin levels.

1.³ Support to implementation and compliance

1.1 Mechanism to facilitate and support implementation and compliance

2. Following the mandate given by the Meeting of the Parties at its fifth session, the proposal for a mechanism to support implementation and compliance, as well as its core rules of procedure, were negotiated by the Legal Board during its seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth meetings (2010–2012).

3. Once established, the Implementation Committee will aim at facilitating, promoting and safeguarding the implementation and application of and compliance with the Convention. The establishment of the Implementation Committee is an important step towards better understanding and implementation of the Convention, especially in the light of its forthcoming globalization. The mechanism will also be an innovative tool to prevent conflict and address existing differences in the implementation and/or interpretation of the Convention. It will complement and guide future assistance activities and could become an important source of guidance for interventions by other actors, in particular bilateral and multilateral donors.

4. The Legal Board also discussed whether to introduce reporting under the Convention. The view prevailed that a reporting mechanism under the Convention could be a useful tool for Parties to assess progress and to foster implementation, as well as a useful instrument for the Implementation Committee to carry out its functions. However, as some reporting mechanisms on water already existed, in particular within the EU, it was considered important to avoid duplications and overburdening of national administrations. Further discussions on the issue of reporting were postponed to the next triennium.

1.2 Advice and assistance

5. Advice was provided, upon request, to help countries ratify the Convention and comply with its provisions, mainly through members of the Legal Board and experts from Parties, and, indirectly, through projects mostly implemented by the ECE Regional Adviser (see section 3.2) as well as the National Policy Dialogues (see section 5). This included organization of capacity-building seminars on the Convention in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan (see section 3.2.1), as well as in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (October 2009). Three new countries ratified the Convention since the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Turkmenistan.

6. Efforts were also made to promote ratification of the amendments to articles 25 and 26 of the Convention, in particular by Switzerland, other Bureau members, France and the

³ The present report details implementation of the workplan for 2010–2012 following the numbering of the programme areas as set out in the workplan.

secretariat through political dialogue and diplomatic contacts. Thanks to these efforts, since 2009, nine countries have acceded to the amendments to the Convention and several are in the process of doing so.

Study on the application of the Convention to groundwater

7. Following the mandate given by the Meeting of the Parties, a preliminary study on the application of the principles of the Convention to transboundary groundwater was developed by the Legal Board and the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management (ECE/MP.WAT/WG.1/2012/3–ECE/MP.WAT/WG.2/2012/3). The study provides explanations and analyses of the provisions of the Convention, different guidance documents developed under its framework and other relevant references in relation to groundwater. A draft was discussed by the Legal Board at its eighth meeting (Geneva, 24–25 February 2011) and by the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management at its sixth meeting (Geneva, 4–5 May 2011). At those meetings, the two bodies, and subsequently the Bureau, agreed to continue the work on transboundary groundwaters and to develop draft model provisions on transboundary groundwaters.

Model provisions on transboundary groundwaters

8. A core group on groundwater composed of technical and legal experts was created in order to develop the draft model provisions, for consideration and possible adoption by the Meeting of the Parties at its sixth session (ECE/MP.WAT/2012/L.5). The document was prepared by the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the Legal Board on the basis of the comments provided by the members of the core group on groundwater during and after its first and second meetings (Geneva, 30 January and 11–12 June 2012, respectively).

9. The model provisions improve guidance on the application of the Convention to transboundary groundwaters and are expected to support the Parties negotiating bilateral or multilateral agreements dealing with transboundary groundwaters, but also domestic legislators. They support countries in managing groundwaters, which are playing an increasingly important role in social and economic development but face risks from unsustainable use, pollution and climate change impacts.

2. Assessment of transboundary rivers, lakes and groundwaters⁴

10. The Second Assessment is the most comprehensive, up-to-date overview of the status of transboundary waters in the European and Asian parts of the ECE region. More than 150 transboundary rivers, 40 lakes and some 200 transboundary groundwaters have been assessed in close cooperation with the national environment and water administrations. The Second Assessment was prepared over the period 2008–2011 with the aim to facilitate informed decision-making on the management of transboundary waters. It is intended to serve as a tool to inform, guide and stimulate further action by Governments, river basin organizations, the international community, including donors, and concerned non-governmental organizations.

11. The Second Assessment was prepared by subregions. A decisive step in the preparations was a dedicated workshop held in each subregion, allowing representatives of countries sharing transboundary waters to work together to develop an accurate picture of all transboundary waters — both surface and groundwaters — with the aim of monitoring

⁴ See also “Lessons learned from the Second Assessment and plans for future assessments under the Convention” (ECE/MP.WAT/2012/2) and http://www.unece.org/env/water/assessment_activ.html.

and bringing positive changes to their management and of laying the groundwork for future work. The following workshops were organized:

- (a) Workshop on transboundary cooperation and assessment of transboundary waters in South-Eastern Europe (Sarajevo, 18–20 May 2009);
- (b) International Workshop on Transboundary Water Resources Management in the Caucasus (Tbilisi, 8–10 December 2009);
- (c) Workshop on transboundary waters in Eastern and Northern Europe (Kyiv, 27–29 April 2010);
- (d) Workshop on transboundary water management in Central Asia (Almaty, Kazakhstan, 13–15 October 2010);
- (e) Subregional workshop on transboundary water cooperation in Western and Central Europe (Budapest, 8–10 February 2011).

12. Following the subregional workshops, and after collection of information through datasheets and their validation with concerned countries, the ECE secretariat developed text for the assessments of each transboundary river, lake and groundwater in all analysed subregions as well as subregional summaries. All subregional and basin assessments were presented, discussed and endorsed at the meetings of the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment.

13. The assessment increased awareness at the political level on the status and importance of transboundary waters, thanks to the official intergovernmental process, its launching at the Seventh “EFe” Ministerial Conference, and the promotion of the findings in various forums. Moreover, the Second Assessment supported the development of the future programme of work for 2013–2015, providing an important basis for various activities, and contributed to the identification of strategic directions under the Convention.

3. Projects on the ground

3.1 Programme of pilot projects on transboundary rivers, lakes and groundwaters⁵

3.1.1 Pilot projects on water and adaptation to climate change

14. The programme of pilot projects on adaptation to climate change in transboundary basins includes eight basins and aims to strengthen capacity to adapt to climate change, to promote implementation of the *Guidance on Water and Adaptation to Climate Change*⁶ and to create positive examples demonstrating the benefits of, and possible mechanisms for transboundary cooperation in adaptation planning and implementation. The projects include joint impact and vulnerability assessment and the development of a basin-wide adaptation strategy. The implementation of the following projects is supported by the Convention secretariat in the framework of the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) together with other partners:

- (a) The “Pilot project on river basin management and climate change adaptation in the Neman River Basin” has resulted in a joint assessment of water resources and climate change impacts in the Neman Basin, thereby enabling a renewal of cooperation between the riparian countries on the shared river basin;

⁵ See also “Lessons learned and future work on climate change adaptation in transboundary basins” (ECE/MP.WAT/2012/3) and http://www.unece.org/env/water/water_climate_activ.html.

⁶ United Nations publication, Sales No. 09.II.E.14.

(b) In the project “Reducing vulnerability to extreme floods and climate change in the Dniester River Basin” a first basin-wide impact and vulnerability assessment has been developed, as well as detailed flood risk modelling in two priority sites;

(c) In the project “Building the link between flood risk management planning and climate change assessment in the Sava River Basin” an assessment of vulnerability to floods has been performed, and a draft programme for the development of the first flood risk management plan for the basin has been developed;

(d) In the project “Promoting Cooperation to Adapt to Climate Change in the Chu and Talas Transboundary Basin” a basin-wide vulnerability assessment is currently under development.

15. The following projects are implemented by other organizations:

(a) The project “Jointly developing a transboundary climate change impact assessment in the Rhine”, implemented by the International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine, has resulted in a study of scenarios for the discharge regime of the Rhine,⁷ which presents discharge projections at representative gauging stations on the Rhine and the Moselle for the near future (up to 2050) and for the remote future (up to 2100);

(b) The project “Adaptation of the Meuse to the Impacts of Climate Evolutions” implemented by the Etablissement Public d’Aménagement de la Meuse has performed the first hydraulic modelling for the entire Meuse basin, carried out flood warning exercises and public awareness-raising activities and implemented some small, no-/low-regret measures such as ecosystem restoration;

(c) In the Danube Basin, the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River has prepared a detailed study on climate change impacts in the basin and is currently developing a first transboundary adaptation strategy, to be finalized by the end of 2012;

(d) The project “Dauria Going Dry: adaptation to climate change in transboundary headwaters of the Amur River Basin”, implemented by the Dauria International Protected Area with the support of the World Wildlife Fund Russian Federation, has enabled the formation of an ecosystems monitoring network, the enlargement of the system of protected areas and increased public awareness on the importance of preserving the Amur headwaters.

16. The collection and exchange of experience was ensured through a platform which included regular meetings of the Task Force on Water and Climate and the core group on pilot projects, as well as annual workshops and a web-based platform.⁸ Three workshops on this topic organized in 2010–2012 raised significant interest from experts and media and saw an increasing participation by non-ECE countries, with the last being a truly global workshop. These workshops have progressively become global core events for the debate on climate change adaptation in transboundary basins:

(a) Workshop on water and climate change: how to develop an adaptation strategy in transboundary basins (Geneva, 10–11 May 2010);

(b) Second workshop on adaptation to climate change in transboundary basins: challenges, progress and lessons learned (Geneva, 12–13 April 2011);

⁷ <http://www.iks.org/index.php?id=342&L=3&cHash=455fdab52ce6eafbf6f72632159564bf>.

⁸ <http://www1.unece.org/ehlm/platform/display/ClimateChange/Welcome>.

(c) Third workshop on water and climate change adaptation in transboundary basins: Making adaptation work (Geneva, 25–26 April 2012).

17. In addition, a core group of representatives of the pilot projects met twice in 2010–2012, enabling a direct and more in-depth exchange of experience between the projects in a smaller setting. Moreover, the Convention secretariat and the lead Parties were invited to share the experience under the Convention and advise other organizations on transboundary cooperation in adaptation, such as at the “Technical workshop on water, climate change impacts and adaptation strategies” (Mexico City, 18–20 July 2012) organized under UNFCCC.

18. Overall, the activities in this area have led to increased awareness on the importance of transboundary cooperation in climate change adaptation as well as improved shared knowledge and experience in this regard through the pilot projects and platform. Moreover, the cooperation on adaptation to climate change has in some basins been a driver for a general enhancement of basin cooperation.

3.1.2 *Pilot projects on joint monitoring and assessment of transboundary waters, including data management and information exchange*

19. The project on joint monitoring and assessment of transboundary waters aims at reinforcing data administration in order to support transboundary water management. Based on a grant from the French Global Environment Facility to the International Water Assessment Centre (IWAC), the project is implemented by the International Office for Water and IWAC in two transboundary pilot basins: on the Aral Sea Basin, in collaboration with the Executive Committee of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (EC-IFAS); and on the Dniester River Basin. So far, in these two basins, the diagnostic phase has been completed and the development of an action plan is ongoing. Regional tools facilitating identification and access to the available information are being developed. In the final project phase, the results and experiences obtained in the two pilot areas will be disseminated.

3.1.3 *Pilot projects on payments for ecosystem services*

20. Implementation of the *Recommendations on Payments for Ecosystem Services in Integrated Water Resources Management*⁹ was promoted through four pilot projects:

(a) An ongoing pilot project implemented by the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia (CAREC) funded by the Government of Switzerland and the Swiss Reinsurance Company aims to establish a payment for ecosystem services (PES) mechanism in the Lake Issyk Kul Basin in Kyrgyzstan. Scientific assessments helped to identify providers and beneficiaries of ecosystem services and to understand how to improve water-related ecosystem services provision. Discussions with stakeholders enabled designing the mechanism in accordance with the local context and stakeholders’ willingness. PES contracts were signed in December 2011. As of August 2012, the first payment round was implemented. Activities related to tree planting and fencing were conducted to limit erosion of pastures and forests, thus reducing the sediment load in the river;

(b) Another project funded by Switzerland and implemented by CAREC aims to introduce PES in Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan through national dialogues, trainings and estimation of economic value of water-related ecosystem services. The results of national feasibility studies, economic and social analysis, awareness activities, capacity

⁹ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.07.II.E.12.

building and dialogues are expected to empower local stakeholders to start pilot PES projects;

(c) A project on the introduction of PES in the upper Hrazdan Basin in Armenia has led to a proposal to apply a PES scheme in the basin in order to address water quality deterioration due to untreated wastewater discharge. It is proposed to adopt a law “On Payment for Ecosystem Services” defining the main concepts, including the concepts of PES payments, types, rates, calculation and payment procedures as well as methods for calculating the actual volumes of PES;

(d) Germany and the Netherlands have finalized the first phase of a study on ecosystem services on the transboundary Vecht River which aims to demonstrate the practical usefulness of ecosystem services in water management in transboundary, local and regional settings. The first phase sought to identify the ecosystem services in this region and to screen them for relevance, through interviews with stakeholders in both countries. The Vecht plays an important socio-economic role, and river restoration is the main challenge. Through the ecosystem services assessment it is expected to identify integral solutions to the problems in the area, new funding opportunities for measures and more support by land owners and the public.

3.2 Other projects supporting implementation of the Convention

3.2.1 Transboundary water management in Central Asia

Capacity-building for cooperation on dam safety in Central Asia

21. The first phase of the project on capacity-building for cooperation on dam safety in Central Asia (2006) resulted in a model national law on safety of large hydraulic facilities, including dams, intended as a basis for national harmonized legal frameworks, and a draft regional agreement on cooperation on dam safety, which stipulates, inter alia, the exchange of information and notification of other countries in case of dam accidents. Key outcomes of the second phase (2007–2011) included: (a) the enactment of national legislation on dam safety in Tajikistan and further enhanced safety legislation in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan; (b) the development of cooperation on the safety of individual dams (e.g., a safety assessment of the Kirov Dam undertaken by a joint Kazakh-Kyrgyz working group); (c) development of a model technical regulation on the safety of hydro-technical installations; and (d) organization of training activities. The project allowed Central Asian countries to develop and intensify dialogue and achieve a common understanding on the necessity of cooperation in this area. The project was undertaken in cooperation with EC-IFAS with funding from Finland through ENVSEC and the Russian Federation.¹⁰

Chu and Talas Rivers project

22. The Kazakh-Kyrgyz Chu and Talas Rivers Commission was inaugurated in 2006 with the support of ECE and other organizations which created a mutually beneficial way for Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan to share responsibility for water infrastructure used by both countries. The Chu and Talas Rivers project, implemented in 2008–2011 in cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and funded by Finland, supported further broadening of cooperation to improve the joint management of the rivers — to include, among others, protection of ecosystems and stakeholder participation — and to achieve integrated management of surface waters and

¹⁰ <http://www.unece.org/env/water/damsafety.html>.

groundwaters.¹¹ The progress in cooperation on the Chu and Talas Rivers serves as a good model for cooperation on transboundary waters in Central Asia.

Central Asian Regional Water Information Base Project

23. The Central Asian Regional Water Information Base Project (CAREWIB), implemented by the Scientific Information Centre of the Inter-State Commission for Water Coordination, improves the availability and exchange of information in the water and environmental sectors in Central Asia. The second phase of the project (2007–2012), funded by Switzerland, focuses on improving the management of water information at the national level and on further developing the regional web portal and database.¹²

Water quality in Central Asia

24. The Water Quality in Central Asia project, funded by the United Nations Development Account and implemented in cooperation with CAREC, focuses on improving cooperation related to water quality between the countries of Central Asia. It aims to establish common principles for measurement, exchange of information and joint assessment of water quality as well as to develop more efficient national policies, including the standards and principles for permitting of environmentally harmful activities. Key outcomes in 2009–2012 included: (a) development of a Diagnostic Study on Water Quality in Central Asia; (b) agreement on a cooperation plan, “Development of regional cooperation to ensure water quality in Central Asia”; and (c) establishment of a Regional Expert Group on Water Quality. The project contributed to strengthening national capacity on water quality management through provision of training and equipment. Parameters for joint monitoring were developed, and a pilot monitoring exercise was implemented by three countries. The project enabled the first regional discussion on water quality and established a platform for sustained cooperation on this issue.¹³

Berlin Water Process

25. Following several conferences in 2008 organized by ECE and the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the ECE was entrusted with implementing one of the components of the Berlin Water Process, which aims to improve transboundary water management in Central Asia, as part of the environment and water pillar of the EU strategy for Central Asia.

26. The ECE-German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) project, “Regional Dialogue and Cooperation on Water Resources Management in Central Asia”, was implemented in 2009–2011. Key outcomes included: (a) proposals for the further institutional strengthening of regional water cooperation developed in dialogue with the Central Asian countries; (b) 15 capacity-building activities, including regional conferences and national seminars on the Convention in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan; and (c) a publication, *Strengthening Water Management and Transboundary Water Cooperation in Central Asia: the Role of UNECE¹⁴ Environmental Conventions* (ECE/MP.WAT/35), produced in cooperation with the five ECE multilateral environmental agreement (MEA) secretariats. The programme improved understanding of international water law, in particular the Water Convention and other ECE MEAs, in Central Asian countries and strengthened their capacity in the areas of transboundary water cooperation,

¹¹ www.unece.org/env/water/centralasia.html.

¹² www.cawater-info.net.

¹³ <http://www.carecnet.org/programmes-and-activities/water-initiatives-support/project-water-quality-in-central-asia/?lang=en>.

¹⁴ Unofficial acronym for ECE, sometimes used to avoid confusion with other regional bodies.

IWRM, climate change and water and health. The project therefore laid the basis for improved implementation of the Convention in the subregion as well as for future accessions.¹⁵

Strengthening cooperation on hydrology and environment between Afghanistan and Tajikistan in the upper Amu Darya River basin

27. The project, “Strengthening cooperation on hydrology and environment between Afghanistan and Tajikistan in the upper Amu Darya River Basin” started in 2011 with support from the Russian Federation in the framework of the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA). It facilitates the establishment of long-term cooperation between Afghanistan and Tajikistan on hydrology and environment. It also aims to improve the understanding and access to information about water resources and environmental conditions in the upper Amu Darya Basin among relevant stakeholders basin-wide. On the basis of existing bilateral agreements the two countries will strengthen their cooperation and information exchange. The first bilateral meeting took place in March 2012 in Dushanbe and the next one will take place in Kabul later in 2012. The project is expected to facilitate, among others, the progressive involvement of Afghanistan in cooperation with Central Asian countries under the framework of the Water Convention.

3.2.2 *Transboundary water management in South-Eastern Europe*

28. Transboundary water management in South-Eastern Europe is supported by the Government of Sweden and implemented in cooperation with Global Water Partnership Mediterranean. A framework has been established for transboundary cooperation in the extended Drin River Basin through the support of the Drin Dialogue project. The five Drin River riparians signed a Memorandum of Understanding on a Shared Strategic Vision for the Sustainable Management of the Drin River Basin in November 2011. This lays the basis for a sustained continued cooperation in the whole basin. The project facilitated, for the first time, cooperation at the basin level between all riparian countries.

3.2.3 *Transboundary water management in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus*

Dniester Basin cooperation

29. Support to cooperation in the Dniester Basin is provided by OSCE, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and ECE under ENVSEC, with funding from Finland and Sweden. The main outcomes of the project are a draft Dniester River Basin treaty, strengthened cooperation on information exchange, water and health and biodiversity, and increased public awareness. The draft treaty is under consideration by the Governments of Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova. When signed and ratified, it will represent a model of progressive cooperation and management of transboundary waters for all countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

Kura Basin bilateral cooperation and accession of Georgia to the Convention

30. With funding from Canada, OSCE and ECE support transboundary water cooperation in the Kura River Basin between Azerbaijan and Georgia under ENVSEC. A bilateral transboundary water agreement has been drafted and is being negotiated by the two countries. If signed, this agreement will give an example for water cooperation in the Caucasus and could pave the way for other similar agreements. ECE also provides support to the accession of Georgia to the Convention.

¹⁵ <http://www.unece.org/env/water/cadialogue/cadwelcome.html>.

4. Sharing of experiences and capacity-building

4.1 Strategic conferences and seminars

31. Instead of a seminar to prepare for the Astana EfE Ministerial Conference, as originally foreseen in the workplan, a joint meeting of the Bureau of the Water Convention and the Bureau of the Committee on Environmental Policy was held in January 2010 in Geneva which helped to shape the conference agenda.

32. In March 2011, the Bureau decided to organize a series of subregional seminars to promote the Convention among non-ECE countries and to foster exchange of experience between ECE and non-ECE countries, with a view to preparing for the globalization of the Convention. The first event of its kind, the International Conference on Europe-Asia Transboundary Water Cooperation (Geneva, 15–16 December 2011), organized in cooperation with the Government of Switzerland, was devoted to the promotion of dialogue and cooperation on the management and protection of transboundary waters along the border of the two continents. The conference brought together more than 100 participants, including high-level representatives, from Central Asian and bordering countries. It focused on key issues in transboundary basins, in particular: balance of different interests and uses; prevention and reduction of disaster risks and industrial accidents; adaption to extreme weather events and climate change; protection of ecosystems and water quality; and legal and institutional aspects of transboundary water cooperation. It demonstrated the clear interest of non-ECE countries in the Convention, which underlined the importance of having an intergovernmental framework for discussing transboundary water issues.¹⁶

33. The strategic workshop on future work under the ECE Water Convention, “Building on the findings of the Second Assessment and other results achieved” (Geneva, 14–15 February 2012) reviewed the extensive work under the Convention with a view to setting directions for future activities and discussing topics for the thematic assessment. It provided a strong basis for the development of the draft programme of work for 2013–2015.¹⁷

4.2 Capacity-building and exchange of experience on technical issues

Workshop on water and forest in low-forest cover countries

34. A workshop, “Forest and water in drylands: a virtuous cycle — Information exchange from the Mediterranean to Central Asia”, was organized jointly by the Convention, the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment, the ECE/Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Forestry and Timber Section and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) on 7 and 8 July 2011 in Geneva during the Forest and Water Week. Participants discussed whether and how forests and afforestation in drylands could positively influence water availability and water quality and if PES were a feasible option. The workshop concluded that the relation between forests and water depends on many factors such as species, age and soil. Forests and water must be understood at the ecosystem and landscape level, considering land use, social, ecological and hydrological aspects.¹⁸

¹⁶ http://www.unece.org/euro_asia_conference.html.

¹⁷ http://www.unece.org/env/water/strategic_workshop.html.

¹⁸ http://www.unece.org/env/water/meetings/forest_water_drylands_workshop.html.

4.3 Capacity for Water Cooperation project

35. The Workshop on Legal, Institutional and Technical Aspects of Managing Transboundary Groundwaters took place in Almaty, Kazakhstan, from 29 to 31 May 2012 — the sixth workshop organized in the framework of the Capacity for Water Cooperation (CWC) Project, which aims to strengthen capacity for transboundary water management in the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. The workshop was organized jointly by ECE, the OSCE Centre in Astana, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the non-governmental centre, Cooperation for Sustainable Development (Almaty, Kazakhstan), and funded by Switzerland and Finland. The workshop initiated dialogue and exchange of information on legal and institutional frameworks and management practices with regard to transboundary groundwaters in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Participants developed recommendations on the management and protection of transboundary groundwaters, including improvement of legal and institutional frameworks for cooperation in the subregion.¹⁹

5. European Union Water Initiative and National Policy Dialogues²⁰

36. Since late 2006, NPDs on IWRM — one of the main operational instruments of the EU Water Initiative, with ECE as strategic partner²¹ — have been implemented in Armenia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. In 2008, the NPD on IWRM started in Kyrgyzstan. In 2010 and 2011, policy dialogues on IWRM were initiated in Azerbaijan, Georgia, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. In 2012, an NPD on IWRM is starting in Kazakhstan. NPDs on IWRM are supported by the European Commission, bilateral donors (Denmark, Finland, Germany, Norway and Switzerland) and OSCE.

37. The NPDs on IWRM provide practical assistance to strengthen IWRM implementation in countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Activities build on the principles of IWRM and the requirements of the Water Convention, its Protocol on Water and Health, the EU Water Framework Directive²² and other relevant documents. An important outcome of the NPDs are so-called “policy packages”, such as legislative acts, strategies, ministerial orders and plans of implementation. Key issues on the agenda of NPDs on IWRM include: strategic water management plans based on IWRM principles, drinking water quality, management of transboundary waters and adaptation of the water sector to climate change.

38. In the period 2010–2012, the programme has proven to be extremely useful and strategic in supporting different activities under the Convention’s and Protocol on Water and Health programmes of work. It has led to many measurable outputs, e.g., most recently: (a) a programme of water management measures for the Marmarik River Basin in Armenia; (b) a draft of a National Water Strategy in Azerbaijan; (c) an initiative to develop a national water law based on IWRM principles in Georgia; (d) the development of targets in the context of the Protocol in Kyrgyzstan; (e) a road map for its NPD on IWRM and support to

¹⁹ <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=29751>.

²⁰ See also “Report on implementation of the European Union Water Initiative National Policy Dialogues on Integrated Water Resources Management and on Water Supply and Sanitation” (ECE/MP.WAT/2012/4) and <http://www.unece.org/env/water/npd>.

²¹ The water supply and sanitation pillar of the NPDs is carried out with OECD as strategic partner. OECD also acts in the area of economic and financial dimension of IWRM.

²² Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2000 establishing a framework for Community action in the field of water policy.

elaboration of the Water Sector Reform Strategy in Tajikistan; (f) accession by Turkmenistan to the Water Convention, which was supported through activities of an inter-agency high-level expert group; and (g) follow-up activities to implement targets under the Protocol (set in 2010) in the Republic of Moldova.

6. Water and industrial accidents

6.1 Protocol on Civil Liability

39. In 2010, the Bureaux of the Water Convention and the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (Industrial Accidents Convention) decided on a three- step approach in order to jointly promote ratifications of the Protocol on Civil Liability and Compensation for Damage Caused by the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents on Transboundary Waters. In 2011, the first step was implemented by undertaking a study aimed at better understanding what national legislation is required to implement the Protocol in the light of differences between the Protocol and other civil liability instruments.

40. The study prepared by an independent consultant showed that there is no substantive incompatibility with Directive 2004/35/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 April 2004 on environmental liability with regard to the prevention and remedying of environmental damage. Another important conclusion drawn from the study is that, given its complementarity with the Directive, ratification and entry into force of the Protocol should not face objection by the EU.

6.2 Joint Ad Hoc Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents

41. In 2010, in accordance with the strategy of the Joint Ad Hoc Expert Group on Water and Industrial Accidents, the latter was mandated by the Bureaux of both Conventions to develop a methodology for harmonized contingency planning for accidents with potential impacts on transboundary watercourses. In 2010–2012, meetings of the Joint Ad Hoc Expert Group were held for this purpose. As of August 2012, the methodology is at an advanced stage of preparations and one more meeting of the Joint Expert Group could suffice for its finalization.

42. A seminar on the occasion of the twenty–fifth anniversary of the Sandoz accident was organized by the Government of Germany in Bonn on 8 and 9 November 2011, with the main objective to reflect on the progress achieved in the area of prevention of accidental water pollution in the ECE region. The seminar also examined existing deficits in prevention of water pollution by chemical substances, and formulated recommendations on how to address those deficiencies. Participants jointly identified a number of challenges, such as new sources of risk, reliable and up-to-date inventories of risk sources and enforcement of procedures and safety standards, including personnel and technical capacity.²³

²³ http://www.unece.org/sandoz25_seminar.html.

7. Cooperation with the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health

43. Efforts were made to link some activities under the Convention to those under the Protocol on Water and Health, in particular:

(a) Concerning adaptation to climate change (programme area 3.1.1), health aspects were integrated, where appropriate, both in the pilot projects and in the platform, for example through the involvement of representatives of ministries of health at the workshops;

(b) With regard to the NPDs under the EU Water Initiative (programme area 5), depending on the priorities expressed by countries, implementation of the Protocol, in particular the setting of targets, was included into the activities of NPDs in the Republic of Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan;

(c) Regarding the setting of targets and target dates according to article 6 of the Protocol, as well as reviewing progress and reporting according to article 7, regular exchange of information was established between the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment and the Protocol's Task Force on Setting Targets and Reporting.

8. Promotion of the Convention

44. The Convention and the Protocol on Water and health, their activities and products were successfully promoted during the sixth World Water Forum (Marseille, France, 12–17 March 2012) in the framework of the ministerial, regional and thematic processes. Several sessions, in particular of the European regional process, were organized by the Convention secretariat, in cooperation with partners. A new brochure on the Convention (“The Water Convention: serving the planet”) was produced in English, Russian, French, Spanish and Arabic, and disseminated at this forum, as well as two posters on the Convention.

45. The twentieth anniversary of the Water Convention in 2012 was celebrated through different means, including press releases, articles, the elaboration of a poster with a timeline of the highlights of the Convention's past 20 years and the launching of an awareness-raising project for civil society organizations. An event to celebrate the Convention's anniversary and to debate its future, in particular its forthcoming global opening and the relationship with the 1997 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses, was organized by Finland (Helsinki, 3–4 September 2012).²⁴

46. The Convention, its Chair, Bureau and secretariat provided substantive input to the Seventh Efe Ministerial Conference, which had “sustainable management of water and water-related ecosystems” as one of its two main topics. This included the drafting of an official substantive document for the Conference, support to the organization of the ministerial round tables and the launching of the Second Assessment, as well as the preparation of the Astana Water Action as one of the main Conference outcomes.

47. Other promotion activities included presentations on the Convention and its achievements in different meetings and events such as the World Water Week in Stockholm and the dissemination of information on activities under the Convention through different

²⁴ http://www.unece.org/env/water/20th_anniversary_2012.html.

means (e.g., though supporting the participation of non-ECE countries at meetings). The Convention secretariat also contributed to the work of UN-Water, in particular by drafting the regional chapter of the fourth World Water Development Report and by co-leading together with UNESCO the UN-Water Thematic Priority Area on Transboundary Waters, which performed a mapping of United Nations agencies' activities on transboundary waters. The website for the Convention and its Protocol was redesigned in 2011. Finally, a process of cooperation between the chairs of the ECE MEAs and the Committee on Environmental Policy was started with the aim to promote the exchange of experience and the development of synergies.

Annex

Overview of contributions and expenditures (1 September 2009–31 July 2012)

I. Balance on 31 August 2009

The balance of the Water Convention's trust fund on 31 August 2009 was USD 473,725.

II. Contributions to the trust funds^a

<i>Country</i>	<i>Date received</i>	<i>Currency</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Amount in USD^a</i>	<i>Earmarked/explanation</i>
Germany	23/07/09	EUR	658 677	926 409	GIZ project in Central Asia
European Commission	31/07/09	EUR	200 000	280 898	NPDs
Germany	29/10/09	EUR	5 000	7 267	Fifth Meeting of the Parties (MOP 5)
Switzerland	25/11/09	CHF	60 000	58 823	MOP 5
France	01/12/09	USD	44 000	44 000	Participation of experts from Afghanistan
Germany	02/12/09	EUR	489 177	736 712	GIZ project
Switzerland	17/12/09	CHF	44 000	43 956	Low forest cover workshop
Switzerland	17/12/09	CHF	100 000	99 900	NPDs
Switzerland	17/12/09	CHF	5 000	4 995	Legal Board
Switzerland	17/12/09	CHF	50 000	49 950	Climate change
Finland	08/01/10	EUR	200 000	288 600	Second Assessment
Finland	18/01/10	EUR	5 000	7 215	Unearmarked
Finland	26/01/10	EUR	10 000	14 430	Unearmarked
Finland	27/01/10	EUR	100 000	144 300	Dam safety
EU through OECD	15/03/10	EUR	200 000	269 905	NPDs
Germany	24/03/10	EUR	12 000	16 195	Legal Board
Sweden	07/05/10	USD		137 137	SEE projects
Germany	20/05/10	EUR	20 000	25 348	Working Groups
Netherlands	29/06/10	EUR	40 000	48 840	Climate change
Finland	27/07/10	EUR	273 000	336 620	Second Assessment
Czech Republic	02/08/10	EUR	10 000	13 100	Unearmarked
Netherlands	16/09/10	EUR	10 000	12 700	Climate change

^a The Water Convention trust fund and newly established trust funds for Water and Security (i.e., ENVSEC projects), Regional Dialogue and Cooperation on Water Resources Management in Central Asia (GIZ project) and NPDs. For funds provided by the European Commission for NPDs and ENVSEC programme support costs are 7 per cent.

<i>Country</i>	<i>Date received</i>	<i>Currency</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Amount in USD^a</i>	<i>Earmarked/explanation</i>
Finland	22/11/10	EUR	207 200	287 777	Climate change
Finland	22/11/10	EUR	87 000	120 833	Kyrgyzstan and Georgia NPDs
Refund to Sweden	12/11/10	USD	-29 720	-29 721	SEE project
Germany	12/12/10	EUR	251 764	329 534	GIZ project
Norway	13/12/10	USD	34 780	34 781	Implementation and compliance
Norway	17/12/10	USD	151 370	151 370	NPD Turkmenistan
Switzerland	22/12/10	CHF	80 000	82 644	CWC Groundwater workshop
Switzerland	22/12/10	CHF	75 000	77 479	Europe-Asia conference
Switzerland	22/12/10	CHF	65 000	67 148	Transboundary flood workshop ^b
Switzerland	22/12/10	CHF	60 000	61 983	National seminars in Central Asia
Switzerland	22/12/10	CHF	21 800	22 520	Promotion
Finland	28/12/10	EUR	5 000	6 693	Unearmarked
Switzerland	07/01/11	CHF	20 000	21 030	Low forest cover workshop
Sweden	25/01/11	USD	37 555	37 555	Drin project
EU through OECD	28/01/11	EUR	150 000	197 100	NPDs
Germany	25/03/11	EUR	20 000	27 473	Working Groups
Finland	30/03/11	EUR	5 000	6 868	Working Groups
Finland	03/05/11	EUR	181 200	268 444	Climate change
Finland	03/05/11	EUR	115 700	171 407	NPDs
Czech Republic	27/05/11	USD	10 000	10 000	Unearmarked
Germany	05/07/11	EUR	15 000	21 459	Legal Board
Finland	25/07/11	EUR	60 000	85 837	Second Assessment
Refund to Germany	22/09/11	EUR	-36 567	-52 238	GIZ project
ENVSEC (Finland and Sweden)	22/09/11	USD	201 400	201 400	Pilot projects on Chu Talas, Dniester and Sava
Finland	08/11/11	EUR	8 000	11 315	Unearmarked
Germany	11/11/11	EUR	17 000	24 045	Europe-Asia conference
Netherlands	11/11/11	EUR	100 000	141 443	Climate change
Switzerland	18/11/11	CHF	80 000	88 593	Promotion of Second Assessment
Switzerland	12/12/11	CHF	30 000	32 573	Promotion
Switzerland	28/12/11	CHF	20 000	21 716	NPDs
Switzerland	28/12/11	CHF	20 000	21 716	Legal Board
Norway	29/12/11	USD	258 461	258 461	NPDs, Legal Board, promotion

^b This workshop did not take place; funds were used for other purposes as agreed with the donor.

<i>Country</i>	<i>Date received</i>	<i>Currency</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Amount in USD^a</i>	<i>Earmarked/explanation</i>
ENVSEC (Finland)	03/01/12	USD	78 581	78 581	Sava pilot project
EU (through OECD)	28/02/12	EUR	125 000	163 827	NPDs
Switzerland	08/05/12	CHF	30 000	33 076	Climate change workshop
Finland	10/05/12	EUR	161 600	214 039	Climate change
Finland	10/05/12	EUR	97 300	128 874	NPDs
Germany	22/05/12	EUR	10 000	13 245	Working Groups
Czech Republic	25/05/12	USD	10 000	10 000	Unearmarked
Hungary	04/07/12	USD	5 000	5 000	Groundwater
				51 272	Interest for the period covered
Total				7 074 452	

^a Exchange rates from currency of contribution to dollars is calculated on the date of funds transfer. Figures are rounded.

III. Expenditures

Total expenditures from 1 September 2009 until 31 July 2012 were USD 6,245,330. A breakdown of costs is shown in sections (a) through (i) below.

(a) Official meetings

<i>Description</i>	<i>Amount in USD</i>
MOP 5	61 020
Bureau meetings	18 000
Working Group meetings	76 000
Total	155 020

(b) Programme area 1: Support to implementation and compliance

<i>Description</i>	<i>Amount in USD</i>
Staff	22 780
Expert travel	125 000
Consultancies	70 610
Total	218 390

(c) Programme area 2: Assessment of transboundary rivers, lakes and groundwaters

<i>Description</i>	<i>Amount in USD</i>
Staff	425 000
Staff travel	55 000
Expert travel	133 880
Consultancies	94 380
Grants	286 000
Total	994 260

(d) Programme area 3: Projects on the ground**(i) Climate change**

<i>Description</i>	<i>Amount in USD</i>
Staff	225 100
Staff travel	37 800
Expert travel	243 700
Consultancies	134 500
Grants	248 500
Total	889 600

(ii) Berlin Water Process

<i>Description</i>	<i>Amount in USD</i>
Staff	592 650
Staff travel	207 670
Expert travel	211 960
Consultancies	224 700
Grants	680 800
Total	1 917 800

(iii) Other projects

<i>Description</i>	<i>Amount in USD</i>
Dam safety	144 300
Drin project	175 000
Total	319 300

(e) Programme area 4: Sharing of experiences and capacity-building

<i>Description</i>	<i>Amount in USD</i>
Travel of staff	3 860
Travel of experts	96 000
Grants	50 000
Total	149 860

(f) Programme area 5: EU Water Initiative and NPDs

<i>Description</i>	<i>Amount in USD</i>
Staff	823 000
Staff travel	155 000
Expert travel	78 000
Consultancies	225 000
Grants	210 000
Total	1 491 000

(g) Programme area 6: Water and industrial accidents

All contributions to and expenditures through the Industrial Accidents Convention trust fund.

(h) Programme area 7: Cooperation with the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health

No additional expenditures (costs mainstreamed in other activities).

(i) Programme area 8: Promotion of the Convention

<i>Description</i>	<i>Amount in USD</i>
Staff travel	32 000
Consultancies	31 300
Grants, exhibition, miscellaneous	46 800
Total	110 100

IV. Approximate balance on 31 July 2012

The approximate balance of the various trust funds as at 31 July 2012 was USD 1,302,847.

V. Expected expenditures until end of 2012

<i>Description</i>	<i>Amount in USD</i>
Staff	280 500
Staff travel	68 000
Expert travel	170 000
Consultancies	136 000
Grants	226 000
Total	880 500

VI. Contributions provided by countries and partners directly^c

<i>Donor country/ organization</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Sponsored activity</i>
Second Assessment		
Hungary	5 000 EUR	Workshop on Western and Central Europe (hospitality and local costs)
IWAC	130 860 EUR	Central Asia and Eastern Europe subregional workshops, Bratislava meeting, IWAC work
Ramsar Convention	5 000 CHF	Travel of secretariat and experts
UNEP GRID-Arendal	29 880 CHF	Maps
International Groundwater Assessment Centre	25 000 EUR	Maps
NPDs		
Denmark	243 000 EUR	Experts for NPDs in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan
Finland	42 000 EUR	Experts for NPDs in Azerbaijan and Georgia
OSCE (partly through ENVSEC)	25 800 EUR	NPDs
Workshops for sharing experiences		
Finland	35 000 EUR	Anniversary event, Helsinki
Finland (embassy in Kazakhstan)	15 900 USD	CWC groundwater workshop
OSCE	6 832 EUR	CWC groundwater workshop
Switzerland	7 000 CHF	Reception for the Europe-Asia conference
Switzerland	3 300 CHF	Reception for the strategic workshop
Germany	44 000 EUR	Sandosz+25 workshop
Climate change		
IWAC	89 660 EUR	Support to the pilot projects

^c Without transfer of funds to ECE; approximate amounts, as provided by countries/partners.

<i>Donor country/ organization</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Sponsored activity</i>
GEF iw:learn (through GWP)	12 000 EUR	Climate change workshop
Finland (through ENVSEC)	230 000 EUR	Dniester pilot project
Finland (through ENVSEC)	190 000 EUR	Chu Talas pilot project
Sweden (through ENVSEC)	170 000 USD	Neman pilot project
Projects on the ground		
France	800 000 EUR	Metadata database project
Canada (through ENVSEC)	80 000 USD	Kura project
United Nations Development Account	430 000 USD	Water quality in Central Asia project
Finland and Sweden through ENVSEC	400 000 USD	Dniester project
Russian Federation	50 000 USD	Dam safety project
ENVSEC	25 000 USD	Dam safety project
ENVSEC	30 000 USD	Drin project
Finland (through OSCE)	100 000 EUR	Chu Talas project
Switzerland	300 000 USD	CAREWIB
Russian Federation	150 000 USD	Cooperation between Tajikistan and Afghanistan
Staff costs		
Germany	123 600 USD	Junior Professional Officer (JPO) for 2010
France	140 000 USD	JPO for 2011–2012