

### Water Convention



MARSEILLE, FRANCE '12

## UNECE to contribute actively to 6<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum

UNECE will present its work and actively contribute to discussions at the 6<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum, to be held on 12- 17 March in Marseille, France. The largest water event in the world, the Forum brings together, every three years, more than 25,000 stakeholders from the worldwide water community, including ministers, local authorities, parliamentarians, NGOs and many more. The goal of the 6<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum is to bring water high on all political agendas. Participants will address the major water-related challenges our world is facing, at the local, regional and global levels, from access to water for all to climate change and food security.

This year's Forum aims to be the "Forum of solutions", translated into common and measurable goals. In this framework, UNECE will showcase the unique solutions it offers under its Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourse and International Lakes (Water Convention) and the Protocol on Water and Health.

Climate change impacts on water resources are already visible and transboundary basins are particularly affected. Therefore, UNECE will present its unique solution in this regard, the "programme of pilot projects and platform for exchanging experience on climate change adaptation in transboundary basins". UNECE is co-organizing part of the high level special event "2012, European Year of Water", which will be jointly opened on 12 March by Andrey Vasilyev, UNECE's acting Executive Secretary and Connie Hedegaard, EU Commissioner for Climate Action. The solutions will be presented under the focus of "Adapting to climate change in Europe".

The right to water and sanitation, recognized as a human right by the UN General assembly and the Human Rights Council in 2010, will be another important topic of discussion at the Forum. To support the actual realization of this right UNECE and WHO-EURO will launch on 13 March the publication "No one left behind: Good practices for equitable access to water and sanitation", developed under the Protocol on Water and Health.

The Forum will also be an important step in the transformation of the Water Convention into a global legal framework for transboundary water cooperation, with the expected entry into force of the amendments opening ratification to non-UNECE members States in 2012. The implications of the Water Convention's globalization will be discussed in several events gathering representatives of the Parties to the Convention but also non Parties, such as in the high level round table on transboundary waters, in a session on water law and in a side event organized by Finland. □

More details about UNECE's involvement during the World Water Forum can be found at: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=29143>.

### Transport

## Highlights of Inland Transport Committee meeting

### Approval of key Euro-Asian Transport Document

The UNECE Inland Transport Committee (ITC) approved a key report presented by the Group of Experts on Euro-Asian Transport Links (EATL) during its 74<sup>th</sup> annual session in Geneva last week. The ITC welcomed the progress made by the Group of Experts on EATL in completing Phase II of the EATL project. The ITC's endorsement of the report marks significant progress in the coordination of long-term national investment plans in infrastructure that promote transport and trade connections between Europe and Asia.

The report will now be finalized and published in collaboration with national focal points from 18 countries in the Euro-Asian region. The Group of Experts is now asking for its work to be extended for at least another two years to allow the group to move forward with EATL Phase III. Next steps for the project include efforts to attract new countries to join the initiative, further involvement of financial institutions, and the expansion of the Geographical Information System (GIS) database of existing Euro-Asian transport links. The Report is expected to be finalized and disseminated in the coming months.



## Policy Segment on ITS

Another key highlight of the ITC session was the high-level policy segment on Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) "Intelligent Mobility – thinking about tomorrow's transport". The session focused on the deployment of ITS in the framework of global, sustainable mobility. The kick-off event marks a milestone for future United Nations activities on ITS. During the session, UNECE unveiled its new strategy package on ITS. The package features three key documents: an overview of ITS with best practices, a strategic note reviewing the gaps and impediments to ITS use, and the UNECE Road Map on ITS identifying 20 global actions UNECE will undertake over the next several years.

## UNECE Lays Groundwork for Road Safety Activities

The ITC endorsed the UNECE Plan to implement the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety (2010-2020). The UNECE Transport Division will undertake a wide array of activities in support of the Decade, including subregional, regional and global road safety promotional campaigns. □

For more information, please visit:

[http://www.unece.org/trans/events/2012/itc74\\_2012.html#c28536](http://www.unece.org/trans/events/2012/itc74_2012.html#c28536).

## Trade



## Delivering Aid for Trade: the way forward

On 22 February 2012, on the sides of the UNCTAD XIII pre-conference event "Thinking Development: Three Decades of the Trade and Development Report", the UN Inter Agency Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity organized a meeting "Delivering Aid for Trade: The way forward", with participation of government representatives, UN agencies, civil society and NGOs. The meeting was also attended by the United Nations Resident Coordinators from selected countries of Asia, Africa and Europe, such as Bhutan, Cape Verde, Lesotho, Serbia and Ukraine, as well as 15 Cluster members, including UNECE.

The objective of the meeting was to share experience on how the Cluster has been contributing to delivering Aid for Trade at the country level within the overall framework of the Delivering as One and discuss the way forward

The UN Inter Agency Cluster on Trade and Productive Capacity was officially launched in April 2008 at UNCTAD XII by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and UNECE has participated in the Cluster since its very inception. Since then, the Cluster has greatly contributed to the promotion of system wide coherence in providing technical assistance in the area of international trade and productive capacity in 30 countries, including 8 countries in the UNECE region: Albania, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova, Serbia and Ukraine.

The session provided with an opportunity for an interactive discussion with all stakeholders of the process, including the donors, the beneficiaries and the implementing partners. During their presentations, the United Nations Resident Coordinators of Lesotho, Cape Verde, Ukraine and Peru stressed the effectiveness of the Cluster approach in their respective countries and its contribution to policy coherence. Switzerland, a donor country, provided its insight on an ongoing Cluster Programme in Lao PDR and a forthcoming one in Tanzania.

Agencies members of the Cluster stressed the important role of the Cluster in mainstreaming trade into national development strategies and in ensuring policy coherence in trade related technical assistance of the United Nations. They emphasized that the joint programmes designed by the Cluster ensured greater coherence and synergies and contributed to greater impact of their work. Moreover, they enabled the agencies to tap into a wide range of expertise and pool together necessary resources to increase effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of their operations at the country level.

The session concluded that:

- the Cluster is instrumental in the open rationalization of Aid for Trade assistance and aligning it with national development plans
- the agencies of the United Nations system must act together to achieve sustained and effective development impact
- donors support, in particular through Multi Donor Trust Funds is crucial to ensuring the success of the UN Delivering as One in the area of trade and productive capacity in developing countries and economies in transition. □

*Not an official record - For information only*