

Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation

UNECE Activity Report

National Policy Dialogue on Integrated Water Resource Management in Tajikistan



National policy dialogues (NPDs) on integrated water resources management (IWRM) and water supply and sanitation (WSS) are the main operational instruments of the European Union Water Initiative. This Initiative is aimed at contributing to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and targets set at the World Summit on Sustainable Development for the water supply and sanitation, within an integrated approach to water resources management. The UNECE secretariat acts as a strategic partner of the EU in the implementation of the National Policy Dialogues in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) on IWRM. The objective of NPDs is to initiate country-specific activities regarding IWRM in order to improve their regulatory and administrative frameworks, to help countries set their priorities and to develop their capacities of addressing water related MDGs. In the EECCA countries, the NPDs were launched in 2006. As of today NPDs are being implemented in eight EECCA countries.

In Tajikistan, access to safe water supply and sanitation is very low. Only 25.4 per cent of urban residents have access to the central drainage system and only five per cent of rural residents, which has aided in the spread of various contagious diseases such as typhoid fever, viral hepatitis and bacterial bloody flux. More than 90 per cent of the water in Tajikistan is used for irrigation purposes but an inefficient institutional setup, inadequate funding and an outdated water management infrastructure has hampered the delivery of proper irrigation services. Floods are another pressing water management issue. The launch of the National Policy Dialogue in 2010 is aimed at supporting the ongoing water sector reform in Tajikistan, assisting the Government in addressing water management challenges and achieving water related MDGs.

The project supported the initiation of the NPD IWRM in Tajikistan by hiring two national consultants to prepare the NPD materials and reports, undertaking two UNECE advisory missions and organizing a high-level stakeholder meeting. The Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs provided additional support to this UNDAF activity by providing a Danish international expert, who advised the national experts in the initiation of the NPD IWRM.

As an outcome of the project, a NPD IWRM high-level Steering Committee, comprising key water management stakeholders, has been established. It is chaired by the Deputy Minister of Land Reclamation and Water Resources. The members of the Steering Committee include senior officials and experts from the ministries, agencies, academia and NGOs. The Memorandum of Understanding to be signed at the First Steering Committee meeting between the UNECE and the MLRWR has also been drafted. The mapping of the water management processes and key stakeholders has been conducted and the report is being finalized. The NPD IWRM roadmap for Tajikistan is currently being drafted and will be presented for discussion of the stakeholders at the NPD IWRM First Multi-stakeholder Steering Committee meeting that will take place on 16 March 2011.¹

¹ The First Steering Committee was scheduled for December 2010. However, due to a conflict of dates with the high-level meeting of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea which required the attendance of the Chair of the NPD IWRM Steering Committee, it was rescheduled for 16 March 2011.