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UNECE AND SLOVAKIA EXTEND TERM OF TER PROJECT CENTRAL OFFICE IN BRATISLAVA

On 21 December 2011, Jan Figel, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Transport, Construction and Regional development of the Slovak Republic and Ján Kubiš, UNECE Executive Secretary, signed an Addendum to the Agreement between the Slovak Republic and the United Nations on the Trans-European Railway (TER) Project Central Office. The original Agreement signed in 2009 ensured hosting of the TER Project Central Office in Bratislava until 31 December 2011. The Addendum will ensure its smooth operation until 31 December 2014.



The TER Project is a subregional cooperation project among Central, Eastern and South-Eastern European countries. It aims to: improve the quality and efficiency of

rail transport operations, assist the integration process of European transport infrastructure systems, and develop a coherent and efficient international railway and combined transport system in accordance with the UNECE Pan-European infrastructure agreements.

18 UNECE member countries participate in the project: Armenia, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Georgia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia and Turkey. □

For more information, please visit:
http://www.unece.org/trans/main/tem_ter.html.

ACTIVE AGEING AND SOLIDARITY BETWEEN GENERATIONS: EUROPEAN YEAR OPENS AS UNECE GEARS UP FOR MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE IN SEPTEMBER 2012

Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations is the theme dedicated to a special year under the auspices of the European Union. Under the Danish Presidency the year was officially opened on 18 January with a conference *Stay active: what does it take?* Gathering politicians and experts, older people, civil society organizations, employers and trade union representatives, the opening event in Copenhagen featured many positive examples where active ageing is already taking place across the EU and how it is benefiting older persons' health as well as their integration and participation in society.

The European Year coincides with the ten-year review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) that was adopted at the United Nations Second World Assembly on Ageing held in Madrid in 2002. In the UNECE region MIPAA fulfilment is guided by the ten commitments set out in the Regional

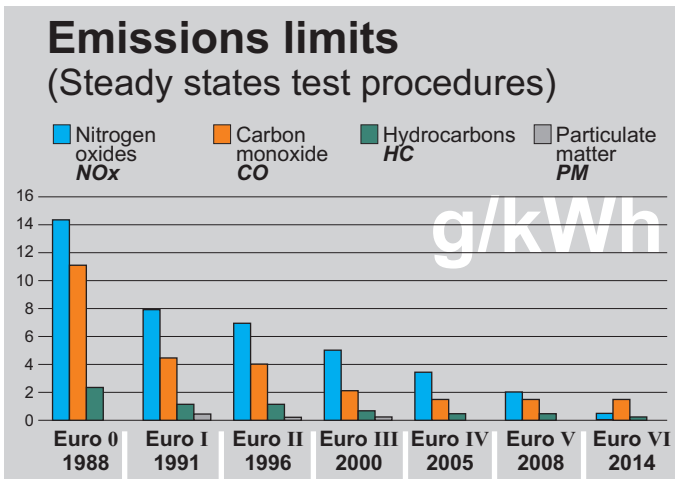
Implementation Strategy (RIS). For the review, UNECE member States have been asked to prepare reports on progress in implementing MIPAA/RIS, results of which will be synthesized in a regional report. The second review and appraisal since 2002 will culminate in the Ministerial Conference under the motto *Ensuring a Society for all ages: promoting quality of life and active ageing* in September 2012. □



European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations 2012:
<http://europa.eu/ey2012/>.
UNECE Ministerial Conference:
http://www.unece.org/pau/ageing/ministerial_conference_2012.html.

UNECE TO ADOPT NEW CEILINGS OF EMISSIONS FOR TRUCKS AND BUSES

On 19 January 2012, the Working Party on Pollution and Energy, approved a proposal for an amendment to Regulation No. 49, concerning more stringent emission requirements for heavy duty vehicle engines. The proposal will be submitted to the World Forum in June 2012 for its final adoption. It will enter into force gradually as of the first quarter of 2013, with full application in January 2014.



The new ceilings introduce a reduction in emissions of 50% or more for Hydrocarbons, Non-methane hydrocarbons, Methane, Nitrogen oxides and Particulate matter. Some of these pollutants are contributing to global warming via their Green House Gas effect (methane for instance has a Global Warming Potential - for 100-year time horizon - 21 times higher than CO), while others have adverse effects on human health.

This modification is aimed at aligning the requirements on emissions of gaseous pollutants from engines used on heavy duty vehicles to the Euro VI legislation (EC Regulations 595/2009 and 582/2011), which will enter into force in the European Union in January 2013. It will allow all Parties to the 1958 Agreement, including the Member States of the European Union, Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Malaysia, Montenegro, Norway, Russian Federation, Serbia, Switzerland, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey and Ukraine to apply these new ceilings.

The maximum emission limits allowed for engines used on heavy duty vehicles have been the object of several legislative initiatives since the 1980s, which have resulted in massive reductions in emissions of pollutants (see chart). □

STRENGTHENING WATER MANAGEMENT AND TRANSBOUNDARY WATER COOPERATION IN CENTRAL ASIA: THE ROLE OF UNECE ENVIRONMENTAL CONVENTIONS

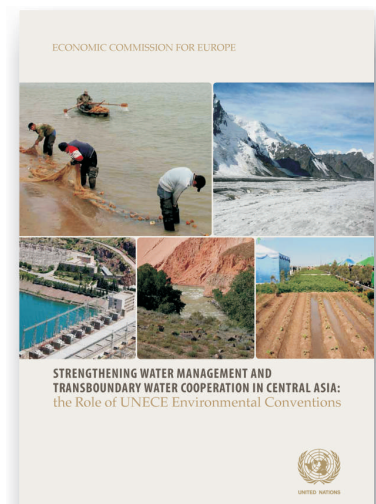
OFF THE PRESS

The shrinking of the Aral Sea — one of the greatest man-made environmental disasters — has affected the livelihoods and health of millions of people in Central Asia. It is a shocking example of the disastrous consequences of the unsustainable use of water resources. Today, the efficient and sustainable management of available water resources in the five countries of Central Asia — Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan — is essential and should be a priority in the context of regional political, economic and environmental cooperation.

Faced with the challenges of finding long-term, mutually acceptable and sustainable solutions for cooperation over shared water resources, the countries of Central Asia need to develop their inter-State relations on the basis of international law and best practices in the management and protection of water resources and transboundary cooperation. This being said, solid legal frameworks and a great body of experience are offered by the UNECE environmental conventions, in particular by the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes — an effective legal framework fostering transboundary water cooperation all over the UNECE region.

This publication aims to strengthen the understanding and application of the UNECE environmental instruments in the countries of Central Asia, and shows the value of these instruments as an appropriate overarching legal framework for water management and transboundary water cooperation in the subregion.

Strengthening Water Management and Transboundary Water Cooperation in Central Asia: the Role of UNECE Environmental Conventions also demonstrates the synergies between the UNECE environmental instruments, thus providing useful information for States, international partners, non-governmental organizations and academia, including those outside of the Central Asia subregion. □



The publication is available under:
<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=28204>.
Copies can be requested from:
bo.libert@unece.org.

Information Service
United Nations
Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)
CH-1211 Geneva 10 - Switzerland

Tel.: +41 (0) 22 917 44 44
Fax: +41 (0) 22 917 05 05
E-mail: info.ece@unece.org
<http://www.unece.org>



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