

**WHITE PAPER ON EFFICIENT AND SUSTAINABLE INLAND WATER  
TRANSPORT IN EUROPE**

**I. WHITE PAPER: BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

1. In 1996, the then UNECE Principal Working Party on Inland Water Transport published the first “*White Paper on trends in and development of inland navigation and its infrastructure*”. This document became a benchmarking publication on the European inland waterway infrastructure and the economic and legal aspects of inland navigation. The White paper presented an analysis of:

- Situation of inland navigation in Europe
- Performance in individual countries and inland navigation fleets;
- Regime of navigation on European inland waterways and access to market  
Legal regimes, technical and safety requirements in inland navigation, the need for the unification of the regimes of navigation and access to the market;
- Basic factors having an impact on the perspectives for inland navigation  
Advantages and shortcomings of inland navigation, trends in the development of inland navigation in Europe, development of a logistics network including inland navigation ports and national transport policy with respect to inland navigation;
- Development of the network of European inland waterways: Present situation and European Agreement on Main Inland Waterways of International Importance (AGN).

2. In 2006, Transport Ministers at the Bucharest had the third Pan-European Conference on Inland Water Transport (13 and 14 September 2006) as a follow up to their earlier meetings in Rotterdam and Budapest. In 2006 they confirmed that the regular (once every ten years) publication of the White Paper to be prepared by the UNECE in close cooperation with the European Commission, River Commissions and other interested parties, would contribute to overcoming the fragmentation of the inland water transport market in Europe and establishing the principle of free navigation on inland waterways at the pan-European level. The publication of a

second edition of the White Paper was included in the Action Plan for implementation of the decisions of the Pan-European Conference.

3. In 2007, the ITC endorsed this decision in Resolution No. 258 entitled “Supporting Further Development of Inland Water Transport” (ECE/TRANS/192, Annex II).

## **II. SECOND WHITE PAPER ON INLAND WATER TRANSPORT**

4. In order to provide a basis for consideration at the forthcoming session of the Working Party on Inland Water Transport, the secretariat has prepared a first outline of the issues and elements to be addressed in the second edition of the White Paper. Without deviating substantively from the structure of the first White Paper and in line with the mandate and decisions taken at the Bucharest Conference and the ITC, it is proposed to address the following five main areas:

- I. Present situation of inland water transport in the UNECE region
- II. European regulatory architecture for inland navigation
- III. Institutional framework of inland navigation
- IV. Challenges and opportunities for inland water transport (trends in transport and logistics)
- V. A Pan-European vision for efficient and sustainable inland water transport

5. The coverage of this second edition of the White Paper may also be extended to inland water transport in North America and Central Asia being part of the UNECE region. Furthermore, the White Paper could also address pertinent issues that have arisen since publication of the first White Paper in 1996, such as protection of the environment, security of inland water transport and global supply chains. A preliminary outline of the proposed White Paper is enclosed in the annex.

6. Given the new context and subject areas proposed to be covered in its second edition, the White Paper could be renamed, such as “White Paper on Efficient and Sustainable Inland Water Transport in Europe”.

7. To ensure inclusive and efficient preparation of the White Paper, the secretariat proposes to create a special Peer Review Board, composed of representatives of interested member States, European Commission, River Commissions and other competent organizations. This peer review board could lead and guide the preparations of the White Paper as well as any research activities that may need to be undertaken in its context. First preliminary discussions on this subject with River Commissions could be held at an informal meeting organized in conjunction with the forthcoming thirty-third session of the Working Party on the Standardization of Technical and Safety Requirements in Inland Navigation (16-18 June 2008, Geneva).

## Annex

# WHITE PAPER ON AN EFFICIENT AND SUSTAINABLE INLAND WATER TRANSPORT IN EUROPE (UNECE Region)

2009

- Draft outline -

### **Executive summary**

### **Introduction**

#### **I. Present situation of inland water transport traffic in the UNECE region**

- (a) Inland waterway networks and investment policies
  - a. Western and Eastern Europe
  - b. Northern America and Central Asia
- (b) Inland water transport performance
  - a. Western and Eastern Europe
  - b. Northern America and Central Asia
- (c) Inland water transport and transport policies
- (d) ...

#### **II. Institutional framework of inland navigation**

- (a) Western and Eastern Europe
  - a. International and regional organizations
  - b. European Union
  - c. River commissions
- (b) Northern America and Central Asia
  - a. International and regional organizations
  - b. River commissions

#### **III. European Regulatory architecture for inland navigation**

- (a) Main legal regimes and access to market
- (b) Technical and safety requirements
- (c) Traffic rules for inland water vessels
- (d) Recognition of ship's certificates and boatmaster's licences
- (e) Environmental aspects of inland navigation
- (f) Protection of inland waterway network from intentional external influence
- (g) ...

#### **IV. Challenges and opportunities for inland water transport: trends in transport and logistics**

- (a) Economics and supply chains (markets, globalization)
- (b) Ecology
- (c) Transport policies (liberalization, privatization, etc.)

**V. A Pan-European vision for efficient and sustainable inland water transport**

- (a) Transport policies
- (b) Regulatory framework
- (c) Institutional framework
- (d) A process towards making this vision work

**VI. Concluding remarks**

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