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Inland Transport Committee

Working Party on Inland Water Transport

Working Party on the Standardization of Technical and Safety Requirements in Inland Navigation

Forty-ninth session

Geneva, 22-24 June 2016

Item 5 (b) of the provisional agenda

Inland waterways infrastructure: Inventory of Main Standards and Parameters of the E Waterway Network (“Blue Book”)

Development of the E 40 international waterway on the Dnieper-Vistula Section

Note by the secretariat

I. Mandate

1. This document is submitted in line with cluster 5: Inland Waterway Transport, paragraph 5.1 of the programme of work 2016-2017 (ECE/TRANS/254), adopted by the Inland Transport Committee at its seventy-eighth session (23-26 February 2016).
2. At its fifty-ninth session, the Working Party on Inland Water Transport chose the state of progress of the restoration of the E 40 waterway by the Commission on the Development of the E 40 Waterway on the Dnieper-Vistula section as a subject for discussion. The Working Party took note of the progress made in eliminating bottlenecks on the Dneprovsko-Bugskiy canal and requested the Commission to keep it informed of the implementation of the project (ECE/TRANS/SC.3/201, para. 21).
3. At its forty-eighth session, the Working Party on the Standardization of Technical Safety Requirements in Inland Navigation (SC.3/WP.3) was informed about the results of the Commission’s concluding conference, held on 15 and 16 December 2015 in Lublin, Poland, and asked the secretariat to invite the Commission to its forty-ninth session (ECE/TRANS/SC.3/WP.3/96, para. 18).

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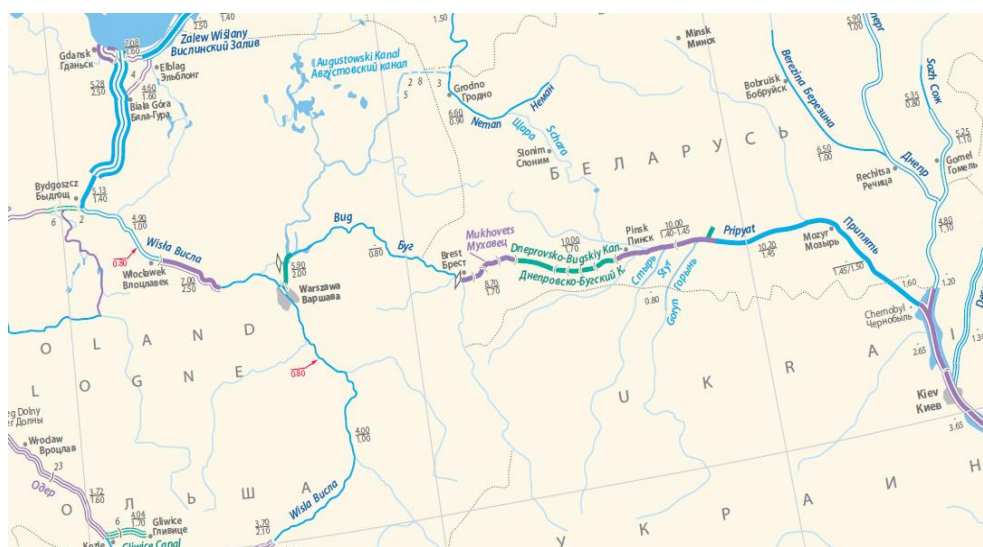
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4. The present document provides information on further activities related to the development of the E 40 waterway on the Dnieper-Vistula/Dnepr-Wisła section and the resolution adopted by the participants at the concluding conference.

II. The main stages in the restoration of the E 40 waterway

5. If fully navigable, the E 40 waterway, linking the Baltic and the Black Sea, would allow freight to be transported from Belarus and Ukraine through Poland to the European countries, particularly the Nordic countries. Once the main bottlenecks on the Oder-Vistula/Odra-Wisła section have been removed and class Va requirements are met, it will be possible to transport freight by river between Western and Eastern Europe, and South-Eastern Europe via Poland. It is estimated that about 20% of goods currently carried by rail and about 10% of goods carried by road could be transferred to water transport on that route.



E 40 waterway.

6. The delegations of Belarus and Poland have provided detailed information about the restoration of the Brest-Warsaw section of the E 40 Dnieper-Vistula-Oder/Dnepr-Wisła-Odra waterway to the Working Group's sessions since 2004. In order to determine the feasibility of restoring the route, meetings of experts from Belarus, Ukraine, Germany and Poland have been held since 2006. With the support of the European Union, a project entitled "Restoration of the E 40 waterway on the Dnieper-Vistula section: from strategy to planning" was initiated in 2013.

7. Under the project, a cross-border standing commission composed of representatives of regional governments, ministries, research institutes and transport, logistics and environmental organizations from the three countries was set up in 2014.

8. In October 2014, a consortium of five organizations, headed by the Maritime Institute of Gdansk, Poland, was selected to develop a feasibility study. The consortium also included: the Institute of Shipping Economics and Logistics (Bremen, Germany), the ChernomorNIIProekt State Maritime Transport Project Development and Research Institute (Ukraine), the European-Ukrainian Business and Innovation Agency (Germany) and the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus.

9. The outcome of the consortium's work was discussed in Lutsk, Ukraine, from 15 to 17 June 2015 and in Lublin, Poland, on 15 and 16 December 2015. From eight initial

scenarios, including the possibility of “straightening” the Western Bug section between Warsaw and Brest, the choice was narrowed to three:

- Option I, northern route: Dęba reservoir (Zegrze Lake) — Western Bug lower course valley — Wołomin plain — Siedlce upland — Łuków plain — Łomazy hollow — Kodeń plain — Brest Polesye — Western Bug river near Terespol — mouth of Mukhavets river (207.8 km);
- Option II, intermediate route: fork of the Wilga and the Vistula/Wisła rivers — middle Vistula/Wisła valley — Garwolin plain — Żelechów upland — Łuków plain — Wieprz river ancient valley — Bystrzyca — Pereszcówka plain — Wieprz — Krzna canal — Łomazy hollow — Kodeń plain — Brest Polesye — Western Bug river near Terespol — mouth of Mukhovets river (195.9 km);
- Option III, southern route: fork of the Wieprz and the Vistula/Wisła rivers — middle Vistula/Wisła Valley — Wieprz ancient valley — Pereszcówka plain — Łomazy hollow — Kodeń plain — Western Bug river near Terespol — mouth of Mukhovets river (159.6 km).

For option I, the canal consists of 11 locks; for option II, 9 locks; and for option III, 7 locks.

10. Taking projected and current traffic into account, and with the aim of minimizing environmental damage in determining the optimal technical solution, including the construction of an artificial canal and hydrotechnical infrastructure, water supply system, etc., option III was chosen.

11. In addition to the analysis of technical solutions for the restoration of the E 40 waterway between Warsaw and Brest, the feasibility study also offers general recommendations for the three countries on developing the route chosen:

(a) In Poland, the proposal is to carry out restoration work on the Vistula/Wisła river along the section of the E 40 waterway from Gdansk to Warsaw;

(b) In Ukraine, it is proposed to develop the water supply systems and reclamation works, to increase the potential energy of the reservoir and to carry out repairs;

(c) In Belarus, it is proposed to continue the reconstruction of the eastern bank of the Dneprovsko-Bugskiy canal, dredge the channel and build retaining structures on the Pripyat river, as well as an additional reservoir.

12. Given the magnitude of the above-mentioned hydraulic works, the major task in the next phase of restoration of the E 40 waterway should be to study possible environmental impacts by means of appropriate environmental assessments.

III. Future work

13. As a result of the discussion, the Commission plans to implement a road map with short-, medium- and long-term activities.

14. Short-term activities (2016-2017):

- Agreement with the consortium on the final version of the feasibility study;
- Design and printing of informational materials on the main results of the feasibility study and the work of the Commission on the E 40 waterway;

- Sending the feasibility study to international organizations, ministries and government departments, civil society organizations and experts interested in the restoration of the E 40 waterway;
 - Assessment of the final version of the feasibility study by experts from the relevant ministries and departments;
 - Continued incorporation of the provisions of the feasibility study in international, national and regional development strategies in the transport sector;
 - Exhibition on the feasibility study during the Eastern Partnership Days at the European Parliament, Brussels;
 - Two meetings of the Commission to discuss the outcome of its work and to draw up a plan of activities;
 - Joint meeting of representatives of the ministries of Belarus, Poland and Ukraine on issues related to the E 40 waterway;
 - Drafting of funding proposal for a comprehensive environmental impact assessment for the E 40 restoration project in Belarus, Poland and Ukraine.
15. Medium-term activities (2016-2017):
- Comprehensive assessment of the environmental impact along the E 40 waterway with public discussion;
 - Work on an intergovernmental agreement between Belarus, Poland and Ukraine on the status of the E 40 waterway and the establishment of an intergovernmental commission;
 - Work on inclusion of the E 40 waterway in the Trans-European Transport Network in the context of the expansion of the transport network by 2023 pursuant to Regulation No. 1315/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2013;
 - Search for sources of funding for the development of project documents.
16. Long-term activities (post-2020-2025) include the development of planning and construction documentation.

Annex

Resolution adopted by the participants of the International Conference and third session of the Commission on the Development of the E 40 Waterway on the Dnieper-Vistula Section (16 December 2015, Lublin, Poland)

Representatives of international organizations, ministries and government agencies of Belarus, Poland and Ukraine responsible for transport and infrastructure, nature conservation and environment, water management, regional and local authorities on whose territory the E 40 waterway runs, business and employers' associations, research institutions, civil society organizations that participated in the International Concluding Conference and third session of the Commission on the E 40 waterway in Lublin on 15 and 16 December 2015,

I. Preamble

Aware of the importance of the E 40 waterway to the socioeconomic development of Belarus, Poland and Ukraine, and of the European Union target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the transport sector by 60% by 2050 and of developing inland waterways at the pan-European level,

In view of the findings of the feasibility study on the development of the internationally important E 40 Dnieper-Vistula/Dnepr-Wisła waterway,

Hereby express their support for the work of the Commission on Development of the E 40 Waterway on the Dnieper-Vistula Section and recognize the importance and relevance of the following activities to promote the development of the internationally important E 40 waterway.

II. Continuation of the activities of the Commission on Development of the E 40 Waterway on the Dnieper-Vistula Section with working groups and the secretariat

1. The Conference welcomes the continuation of the activities of the Commission on Development of the E 40 Waterway on the Dnieper-Vistula Section through a permanent secretariat until the signing of an intergovernmental agreement between Belarus, Poland and Ukraine on the status of the waterway and the establishment of an intergovernmental commission.

2. The Conference welcomes the willingness of the Dnieper-Bug waterway company to provide financial and organizational support for the work of the Commission and of the main partners in the "Restoration of the E 40 waterway on the Dnieper-Vistula section: from strategy to planning" project to continue working with the Commission secretariat to draw up and implement joint initiatives and projects aimed at developing the E 40 waterway.

3. The Conference calls upon all stakeholders, including Governments and ministries in the countries concerned, the European Commission, the Council of Europe, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and the regions to facilitate the work of the

Commission, including through active participation by experts in the activities of the Commission, and the provision of information and advice and support for projects initiated by the Commission.

III. Continued environmental impact assessment measures along the E 40 waterway

1. The participants note that some areas that could potentially be adversely affected during the restoration of the waterway are of outstanding natural importance in terms of biodiversity conservation in continental Europe, as is highlighted by the large number of conservation areas they host, including some with international status (NATURA 2000, Emerald Network Europe, the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance). In this regard, the Conference encourages the Commission to conduct a comprehensive environmental impact assessment throughout the length of the E 40 waterway before embarking on the planning stage.
2. The Conference encourages the Commission to pay particular attention to ensure that activities planned in connection with the restoration of the E 40 waterway comply with the European Union Directive on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, the European Union Water Framework Directive and the Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats.
3. The Conference calls for the best possible set of measures to be drawn up to limit the negative impact on the environment, together with a list of compensatory measures for the development of the E 40 waterway.
4. The Conference welcomes the involvement of civil society and environmental non-governmental organizations, as well as the willingness of the Commission to hold open discussions on the restoration of the E 40 waterway with the general public.

IV. Continuation of work to promote the restoration of the E 40 waterway

1. The Conference calls upon Governments and ministries in the countries concerned, the European Commission and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe to highlight the results of the feasibility study and include the E 40 restoration project on the agenda of meetings of bilateral and multilateral intergovernmental working groups on transport and transport development strategy at the national and international levels.
2. The Conference calls on the Government of Poland to initiate the planning work for the Polish section of the E 40 waterway, to begin incorporating the relevant section of the Vistula/Wisła and the Vistula/Wisła-Mukhovets section of the E 40 proposed for restoration into the Trans-European Transport Network as part of measures to expand the transport network by 2023, pursuant to the Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council (EC) No. 1315/2013 of 11 December 2013 on Union guidelines for the development of the Trans-European transport network.
3. The Conference urges the Governments of Belarus and Ukraine to continue to plan further development of the Belarusian and Ukrainian sections of the E 40 waterway and to incorporate the relevant sections of the waterway into the Eastern Partnership Network and other European Union programmes and instruments aimed at the integration of the Trans-European Transport Network and the Eastern Partnership Transport Network.

4. The Conference supports the Commission's intention to continue its public information activities on the priority option for the restoration of the E 40 waterway, as well as further initiatives and projects aimed at the development of the E 40 waterway.

V. Continued measures to enhance cooperation among regions located along the E 40 waterway

1. The Conference supports the initiative to set up an international partnership network between the regions of Poland, Belarus and Ukraine located along the E 40 waterway with the aim of promoting ideas and knowledge, economic cooperation, sustainable use of river and water resources, environmental protection, training and educational programmes, social initiatives and projects.

2. The Conference encourages the regions to implement further initiatives aimed at developing the E 40 waterway, to exert their utmost efforts to preserve the natural and cultural heritage and to continue exchanging experiences and best practices in the preparation and implementation of projects and initiatives.
