

DECISION 2000/5 ON THE PREVENTION OF ACCIDENTAL WATER POLLUTION

The Conference of the Parties,

Stressing that major industrial accidents may cause far-reaching transboundary effects and may lead to accidental water pollution,

Recalling the decision of the Signatories to the UN/ECE Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents and the Parties to the UN/ECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes to cooperate closely on issues related to the prevention of accidental pollution of transboundary waters,

Acknowledging the work already done, in particular the outcome of the workshop and the Seminar on the prevention of chemical accidents and limitation of their impact on transboundary waters 1/ held in Berlin (7-9 May 1998) and in Hamburg, Germany (4-6 October 1999), respectively, as well as the results of two meetings of a joint ad hoc expert group on water and industrial accidents,

1. Endorses the conclusions and recommendations of the Seminar in Hamburg (CEP/WG.4/SEM.1/1999/3, annex I); 2/
 2. Requests the Parties and encourages other UN/ECE member countries to implement these recommendations;
 3. Extends the mandate of the joint ad hoc expert group on water and industrial accidents 3/ to support and provide guidance in the implementation of the above recommendations; 4/
 4. Welcomes the nominations of experts from the following Parties to the Convention: Finland, Germany, Hungary, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation and Switzerland, and from the following other UN/ECE member countries: France, Italy, Netherlands and Poland, to participate in the work of this group and invites experts from other UN/ECE countries to participate as well;
 5. Decides that the joint ad hoc expert group will be co-chaired by experts representing the two Conventions 5/ and that the frequency of its meetings will be decided by the two Chairpersons, in consultation with the Bureaux of the governing bodies;
 6. Entrusts the Bureau to schedule the next meeting of the joint ad hoc expert group in conjunction with the Bureau of the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes;
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7. Agrees on the following elements, proposed at a consultative meeting held in Budapest on 6-7 April 2000, 6/ as the work programme for the joint ad hoc expert group on water and industrial accidents:

- (a) Drawing up an inventory of already existing safety guidelines/best practices for the prevention of accidental transboundary water pollution and making these guidelines/best practices available to the competent authorities and focal points designated under this Convention;
- (b) Assisting in the adaptation of these guidelines/best practices to the specific needs and circumstances of river basins in the UN/ECE region;
- (c) Drawing up safety guidelines/best practices concerning installations or activities for which they are not available so far, such as: tailing dams, pipelines and the navigation of ships on rivers, to be used by UN/ECE member countries and/or joint bodies;
- (d) Facilitating the exchange of information on the functioning of existing alarm and notification systems at national, regional and local levels within the framework of this Convention and the international river commissions (Rhine, Elbe and Danube) through joint consultations of points of contact and river alarm experts;
- (e) Initiating an international response exercise within the framework of this Convention and one of the international river commissions;
- (f) Drawing up guidelines for establishing model cross-border contingency plans and disseminating them widely among UN/ECE member countries. This work will be based on experience gained with the pilot study to draw up a joint contingency plan for the Samos river shared between Hungary and Romania;
- (g) Drawing up guidelines to identify dangerous facilities handling smaller amounts of hazardous substances than specified in annex I to the Convention.

Notes

1/ These events were organized under the joint auspices of the Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes and the Meeting of the Signatories to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents.

2/ At their second meeting (The Hague, Netherlands, 23-25 March 2000), the Parties to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International

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Lakes adopted the report of the Hamburg Seminar (CEP/WG.4/SEM.1/1999/3), including its conclusions and recommendations. It underlined the importance for the Parties to both Conventions and, when applicable, joint bodies to implement the recommendations.

3/ The joint expert group will report to the Parties to both Conventions.

4/ It was suggested by the Meeting of the Parties to the Water Convention that a joint reporting scheme should be drawn up by the Parties to both Conventions. This would be a task for the joint ad hoc expert group on water and industrial accidents.

5/ The joint ad hoc expert group will elect the two chairpersons at its next meeting.

6/ Consultative meeting of the joint ad hoc expert group on water and industrial accidents, organized on the initiative of the secretariats of both Conventions.