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INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS TRANSPORT CHALLENGES IN 2011



The challenges facing the transport sector and the role that UNECE can play in overcoming them will be at the heart of the discussions of the 73rd annual session of UNECE's Inland Transport Committee (ITC) that will take place on 1-3 March 2011.

The debates will gather high-level officials from the 56 UNECE member States, the European Commission, international and European transport organizations and non-governmental organizations.

The session will include a special high-level policy segment on the transport of dangerous and hazardous materials, such as explosives, acids and other chemicals, an issue of increasing global concern and interest.

The ITC will also discuss two key topics:

■ Climate change and transport. This includes the development of environmentally friendly and sustainable transport systems, such as innovative engine technologies to increase fuel efficiency and reduce CO₂ emissions, more widespread use of less polluting transport modes and intelligent transport systems, as well as improved and resilient transport infrastructure. One initiative in this field is the establishment of a new Group of Experts on the impacts of climate change on international transport networks and the related

adaptation requirements. The Group, consisting of experts from governments, international organizations and scientists, is expected, in the course of the next two years, to prepare appropriate policy recommendations and share best practices around transport infrastructure vulnerability and adaptation needs - a complex set of issues that have so far received little attention.

■ The launch of the Decade of Action (2011-2020) for Road Safety. Every year more than 1.3 million people lose their lives on the world's streets and roads. Though overall fatality rates in the UNECE region have been declining over the past decade, in certain subregions numbers are still high or even increasing. The ITC will discuss its contribution to the Decade, including the Conference to be held in Belgrade on 27-29 April 2011 that will mark its launch in the UNECE region, as well as how road safety is featured at the 2011 Commission session of UNECE. The launch of the Decade will bring this challenge to the forefront of developments, with most UNECE countries taking action towards effective road safety policies and the international community coordinating its efforts to ensure that the Decade leads to real improvements. Europe's responsibility to share its experience and expertise with other parts of the world is high

Other transport matters that will be discussed and decided upon include activities related to inland transport security; supply chains and transport competitiveness; border-crossing facilitation; rail – road – inland navigation and combined transport; Euro-Asian transport links; Trans-European Motorways and Trans-European Railways projects' Master Plan and assistance to countries with economies in transition. □

The agenda is available at:

<http://www.unece.org/trans/main/itc/itc.html>

For more information, please contact: infotransport@unece.org.

POSITIVE ASSESSMENT OF UNECE WATER PROJECTS UNDER ENVSEC INITIATIVE

Two of UNECES' projects on transboundary water cooperation have recently been assessed by international consultants mandated by Finland, the main donor. Both projects were launched under the Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC), a partnership of six international organizations (UNEP, UNDP, UNECE, OSCE, REC and NATO as an associated partner) and aim to reduce environment and security risks and strengthen cooperation among and within countries in Eastern Europe, South Eastern Europe, Southern Caucasus and Central Asia.

The assessment found that the project Capacity Building for Cooperation on Dam Safety in Central Asia was "integrally building confidence and trust in a region where the respective five countries rarely cooperate on concrete matters". The project "has established an important forum for regional cooperation on dam safety, allowing the representatives from the five countries to share information, also debate controversial issues and learn from each others". The project also "establishes more permanent outputs (legislation, standards), identifies institutions responsible for dam safety and builds capacity and expertise, which serve as concrete vectors for confidence building and practical cooperation". As a result, "dam safety has been identified by the heads of states in the region as a priority concern and reportedly will be included into the



third IFAS Aral Sea Basin Programme for 2011-2015".

The assessment noted however, that "the overall technical capacity, the level of expertise and procedures and in particular the level and sharing of information needs considerable further improvements in the region".

Looking at the future, the assessment found that "several international partners (such as GTZ, USAID, European Commission) have expressed their interest to fund activities related to dam safety, transboundary management of water resources and peace building, regional cooperation (in the water and energy nexus)". It outlined that "many stakeholders would encourage including a local level and/or practical dam safety component (a "pilot dam" component). Several stakeholders suggested that through including e.g. a hydraulic structure case study, putting into practice "in the field" the step-wise improved legislation and procedures for assessing, monitoring and communicating about dam safety, would provide valuable further benefits, strengthen the respective experts and institutions (where already existing), show tangible benefits and also strengthen motivation".

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This recommendation has already started to be put in practice with the establishment on 4 February 2011 of a bilateral Kazakh-Kyrgyz working group in charge of reviewing the safety of the Kirov dam (situated on the Talas River, on Kyrgyz territory upstream of the major Kazakh city of Taraz).

The assessment found that the project Transboundary cooperation and sustainable management in the Dniester river basin, phase 3, had "undoubtedly contributed to sustained confidence building and generation of trust between environment officials in both Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and in the region of Transdnistrie".

From the interviews with stakeholders "there is clear evidence of improved communications, which reduces potential tension in the region." "It seems clear that tension in the region, including the conflict area where tanks are still present to patrol the "border", has been significantly reduced over recent years with normalization of border

The assessment report is available at: http://www.envsec.org/docs/envsec_evaluation_17112010_final_report.pdf.

LONDON WORKSHOP HIGHLIGHTS ROLE OF UNFC AS GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS TOOL

The European Office of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists (AAPG-Europe), in cooperation with UNECE, organized a two-day Workshop on UNFC Resource Classification for Oil, Gas and Minerals in London, 7-8 February. A series of presentations interspersed with wide-ranging debate concluded that the United Nations Framework Classification for Fossil Energy and Mineral Reserves and Resources 2009 (UNFC) provided a global communications tool that could be applied easily to classify and report fossil energy and mineral reserves and resources. However, the UNFC still needs to be used and tested, and then improved based on experience.

More than 45 experts from Australia, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Norway, Mozambique, Poland, Romania, Switzerland, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom participated, with over half being new to the UNFC and the UNECE Expert Group on Resource Classification, which is responsible for promotion and further development of the system.

The objectives of the workshop were to (i) review the current state-of-the-art in petroleum resource classification, (ii) explain and discuss the potential for the UNFC to provide a global communications tool that can be applied easily without undermining or replacing the Society of Petroleum Engineers Petroleum Resources Management System (SPE-PRMS) or the equivalent system in the mining sector (the CRIRSCO Template), and (iii) to critically assess the application of SPE-PRMS to unconventional petroleum

Workshop presentations are available at: http://unece.org/energy/se/docs/unfc_london_feb11_pp.html

For more information please contact Charlotte Griffiths at: reserves.energy@unece.org.

UNECE's Statistical Division has been working with Google to bring key statistics on our member countries to a wider audience using new data visualization techniques.

As a result of extensive collaboration over the last year to develop data content, format and transmission mechanisms, UNECE data are now available on a new Google application called "Public Data Explorer". This application features data from various organizations, including 27 key indicators from the UNECE Statistical Database on topics such as economic and social development, gender equality, computer use, transport and forestry.

Users can create a range of graphs and maps to help them better understand differences over time and between countries.

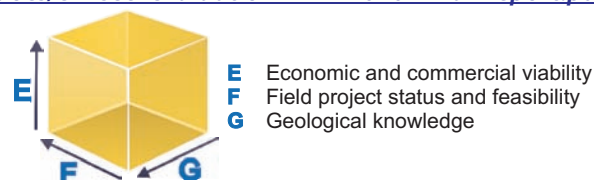
The collaboration between UNECE and Google will continue, as Google plans to add more features to the application, and UNECE will introduce a wider range of indicators over the next year. □

For more information please check UNECE data on the Google Public Data Explorer at: <http://www.google.com/publicdata/overview?ds=alp1i5f0htq8h>.

crossing, trade and recently opened train transport links from Chisinau to Odessa through Tiraspol".

The assessment therefore concluded that the project had "reached the right target groups and used the environmental agenda effectively". It stressed that "all stakeholders emphasized the quality of the input from the participating partners and the staff from UNEP, UNECE and OSCE".

The assessment however noted that "the environmental sustainability of most of the project interventions is also likely, but undocumented. There are some concerns, however, that the efforts to ensure integrated water resource management have not yet reached a sustained level, that biodiversity concerns are not yet integrated at field level interventions and that the sanitary epidemiological monitoring would only be able to continue with the range of sampling if project funding continues". □

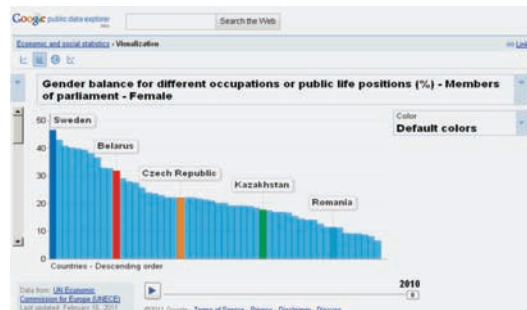


resources, including both shale gas and solid petroleum resources that are extracted using mining techniques, which has led to a blurring of the traditional boundary between conventional petroleum resources (produced as fluids) and mineral resources (extracted as solids).

Examples of direct application of the UNFC were provided by DONG Energy, Norwegian Petroleum Directorate (NPD) and RWE Dea AG. Among the conclusions of these case studies was that the three dimensional UNFC system can on first sight seem more complicated, however it ensures good flexibility and enhanced granularity; a common system such as the UNFC makes comparison and communications easier and statistics more reliable; minimal effort is required to apply UNFC-2009 if a proper evaluation is available; and the different classes of SPE-PRMS can be matched with the 3-digit UNFC code.

The NPD noted that mapping to the UNFC is an integral part of the maintenance and development of the NPD classification and that it plans to engage with companies operating on the Norwegian Continental Shelf so that targeted fields can be mapped. NPD plans to deliver a presentation on the status of this significant mapping exercise at the Second Session of the Expert Group on Resource Classification to be held in Geneva, 6-8 April 2011. □

UNECE AND Google BRING STATISTICS TO A WIDER AUDIENCE



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