

**Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary
Watercourses and International Lakes**



BUREAU/2010/1

BUREAU OF THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES

Thirteenth meeting
Geneva, 27 – 28 September 2010

ANNOTATED PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE THIRTEENTH MEETING

Prepared by the secretariat

The thirteenth meeting of the Bureau will take place in the Palais des Nations in room S-1. It will start on 27 September 2010 at 10 a.m. and finish on 28 September at 4 p.m. The meeting will be held in English.

Bureau members should be in possession of a long-duration badge to enter the Palais des Nations. If this is not the case please contact: olga.carlos@unece.org.

- 1. Adoption of the agenda**
(27 September, 10.00 - 10.10)
- 2. Implementation of the work plan**
(10.10 - 12.30 and 14.00 – 16.45)

(a) Support to implementation and compliance

This important area of the Convention workplan is receiving increased attention through the work on a possible future mechanism to facilitate and support implementation and compliance and the preparation of a preliminary study on the applicability of the Convention to transboundary groundwaters. The secretariat will update the Bureau on the preparations for the open-ended drafting group which will meet on 4 and 5 October 2010 in Geneva to prepare a working document on the options for a possible future facilitative implementation mechanism.

The secretariat will also inform the Bureau on the capacity-building activities to support efforts to promote the Convention in Central Asia based on the Guide to Implementing the Convention. In this regard, the Bureau will be updated on the preparatory activities for a national seminar to be held on 18-19 October in Kazakhstan as well as the preparatory planning for similar events in Tajikistan and Turkmenistan.

(b) Status and finalization of the second assessment of transboundary rivers, lakes and groundwaters in the UNECE region

The preparations for the second Assessment are progressing well; however, input from countries is still slow which delays the process and finalization of subregional assessments. The Bureau will be informed about the ongoing finalization of the subregional assessments for the Caucasus and for Eastern and Northern Europe as well as about the preparations for the subregional workshop for Central Asia, scheduled for 13-15 October in Almaty.

The Bureau will discuss about the next steps for finalizing the second Assessment and for preparing its executive Summary in time for the Astana Ministerial Conference as well as about how to ensure an appropriate place on the agenda in Astana. In addition, the Bureau will consider possible next steps following the finalization of the second Assessment, including the need for a third Assessment.

(c) Pilot projects on joint monitoring and assessment of transboundary waters, including data management and information exchange

The French GEF has approved the funding for a pilot project on the Dniester and one for Central Asia; currently, contract negotiations are ongoing between IWAC, the French GEF and the International Office for Water.

The Bureau will be informed by IWAC about the progress and future plans for these pilot projects.

(d) Amendments to the Water Convention opening it beyond the region:

Opening the Convention beyond the region is considered one of the strategic areas of future work of the Convention. The Bureau will discuss how to ensure entry into force of the amendments by the next session of the Meeting of the Parties in 2012. Considering the recent attempt to ratify the Convention by Guinea-Bissau it will also discuss about how to involve non-UNECE countries in the Convention.

In particular the Bureau will discuss the organization of a workshop to exchange experience between UNECE and non-UNECE countries in 2011, as decided by the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management.

(e) Sharing of experiences and capacity-building, in particular workshop on transboundary groundwater within the Capacity for Water Cooperation (CWC) project

There have been increasing demands for sharing of experience and capacity-building under the Convention. These can only be addressed at different levels and with direct support of Parties which is reflected in the new structure of the workplan programme area 4.

The Bureau will discuss about Seminars/ workshops to be implemented by the Secretariat, in particular the proposed workshop on transboundary groundwaters within the Capacity for Water Cooperation (CWC) project.

The Bureau will also discuss how to motivate countries to organize themselves workshops within the framework of the Convention or how to link anyway planned activities to the Convention.

(f) Projects on the ground, in particular pilot projects and platform for exchanging experience on water and adaptation to climate change

With the programme of pilot projects on climate change adaptation in transboundary basins the Convention has started a new and innovative type of work on the ground which requires however significant human and financial resources as well as intensive cooperation with partner agencies and the concerned countries. The secretariat will inform the Bureau about the latest developments regarding the pilot projects on the Sava, Dniester and Chu Talas rivers as well as the preparations for an additional pilot project on the Neman. The Bureau will also be informed about the plans for the platform for sharing experience on climate change adaptation in transboundary basins and on the promotion of the climate change work as well as the Water Convention's involvement in global processes on water and climate change adaptation. The Bureau will discuss these activities.

The Chairperson will present her proposal to organize a workshop on transboundary flood management in Central Asia in 2011.

The Bureau will be briefed on the progress of other projects supporting implementation of the Convention in South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Caucasus as well as Central Asia..

(g) Ecosystem services and payments for such services in integrated water resources management

The Chairperson will present Switzerland's plans for organizing a workshop on forest and water in low-forest cover countries, to be held on 16-17 February 2011 in Geneva.

The Bureau will also discuss additional activities in this area, in particular potential additional pilot projects.

(h) European Union Water Initiative and National Policy Dialogues

The National Policy Dialogues have become a very successful tool for promoting implementation of the Convention and the Protocol on Water and Health in countries with economies in transition which is proven by the interest of almost all EECCA-countries in continuing their NPDs or starting up an NPD.

However, within its current capacity the secretariat is not able to respond to all the demands received. Moreover the continuation of the process is under threat as the future of the funding by the European Commission is uncertain beyond 2011.

The Bureau will be informed on the latest developments regarding the NPDs and will discuss how to ensure appropriate support and continuation of the NPDs.

3. International Water Assessment Centre (IWAC)
(27 September, 16.45-17.30)

The Bureau will be informed on the latest developments and future plans related to IWAC by its Director. Since the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties, IWAC has intensified its activities mainly by supporting the preparation of the second Assessment and the subregional workshops for Eastern and Northern Europe (Kiev, 27-29 April 2010) as well as for Central Asia (Almaty, 13-15 October 2010). IWAC has also offered technical support to the pilot projects on climate change adaptation in transboundary basins as well as to the National Policy Dialogues.

The Bureau will discuss how IWAC can work most effectively for the benefit of the Convention and its Parties.

4. Cooperation with the Protocol on Water and Health

(28 September, 09.00-9.30)

The Bureau will be informed about progress made in the implementation of the programme of work under the Protocol on Water and Health and about the preparations for the second session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol, to be held in on 23-25 November 2010 in Bucharest. The Bureau will consider ways and means how to strengthen cooperation on work and activities under the Convention and the Protocol and its possible involvement in the Meeting in Bucharest.

5. Water and Industrial Accidents

(28 September, 9.30-11.00)

Following the results of the questionnaire on future work of JEG sent to focal points as well as the suggestions of the Bureau of the Industrial Accidents Convention the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management at its fifth meeting in July 2010 proposed that the JEG should focus its work on contingency planning and on the organization of a workshop at the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Sandoz accident.

Regarding the Civil Liability Protocol it was suggested to combine the proposed pilot project on the Civil Liability Protocol to be carried out in Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova and the preparation of a study comparing the potential results of applying EU legislation and the Protocol, using concrete examples. The Bureau will discuss the modalities, exact focus, timelines and fund-raising options for these new activities.

From 10.00 to 11.00 a.m. a telephone conference will take place with members of the Bureau of the Industrial Accidents Convention.

6. Preparations for the Seventh Ministerial Environment for Europe Conference

(28 September, 11.00-12.30)

Kazakhstan will be invited to brief the Bureau on the preparations for the Seventh Ministerial Environment for Europe Conference (Astana, 21-23 September 2011). The secretariat will inform the bureau on the preparations, in particular related to the conference agenda and the preparation of a draft extended outline of the official substantive document on the water theme prepared for the next session of the Committee on Environmental Policy (Geneva, 2–5 November 2010).

The Bureau will discuss how it can contribute to the preparations for the water theme in order to ensure that the water sector is adequately represented in the preparations for and the actual conference itself. In this regard, the Bureau will discuss the strategy paper for involvement of the Convention in the Conference prepared by the chair as well as its follow up and implementation. A special focus will be laid on the upcoming CEP meeting in November 2010 and the cooperation with the CEP Bureau.

7. Promotion of the Convention and its Protocols

(28 September, 13.30- 14.30)

The Secretariat will inform the Bureau of its efforts to promote the Convention. The Bureau will discuss how to further increase awareness and visibility of the Convention and its products, for example at international events and on how to further involve the focal points in the promotion.

8. Resources to implement the workplan and management of the Water Convention's trust fund

(28 September, 14.30-15.30)

On the basis of a report by the secretariat on contributions and expenditures (BUREAU/2010/3), the Bureau will overview the management of the Water Convention's trust fund and take appropriate action to raise missing funds according to the Bureau's mandate (see decision III/1 on the establishment of a trust fund under the Convention, ECE/MP.WAT/15/Add.1, annex II).

The Bureau will also discuss ways and means to maintain and strengthen the human resources in the secretariat, in particular with regard to extrabudgetary staff members and general service staff.

9. Next Bureau meetings and calendar of meetings under the Convention for 2011

(28 September, 15.30-15.45)

The Bureau will preliminarily schedule its next meeting taking into account the options for holding it back-to-back with the Protocol bureau, including a joint session. The secretariat will present the draft calendar of meetings under the Convention and the Protocol foreseen for 2010 (BUREAU/2010/4).

10. Other business

At the time of writing, the secretariat had no points to propose under this agenda item.

11. Closing

The Chair will close the meeting on 28 September 2010 at 16.00.