



REPORT¹
UN Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA)
18th session of the SPECA Project Working Group on Water and Energy Resources
30 September 2010, Astana, Kazakhstan

A. ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING

1. The 18th session of the SPECA Project Working Group (PWG) on Water and Energy Resources took place in Astana, Kazakhstan on 30 September 2010. The meeting was organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).
2. 24 participants took part in PWG session, including delegations from Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, with observers from the Russian Federation and the United States. Representatives from UNDP, Eurasian Bank of Development, EurAsEC, the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (IFAS), Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and the Zoi environmental network. The list of participants is attached. (Annex 1)
3. The Meeting was chaired by Ms. Anara Dzhumagulova, Head of International Cooperation Division, Ministry of Energy, Kyrgyzstan, and opened by Mr. Andrey Vasiliev, Deputy Executive Secretary of UNECE.
4. Participants approved the following agenda:
 1. Opening of the session
 2. Selection of officials
 3. Adoption of the agenda
 4. Review of the implementation of the work plan for 2009 and possible future priority activities
 5. Adoption of the work plan for 2011
 6. Other matters
 7. Adoption of conclusions and recommendations.
5. The Programme of the 18th session of the Project Working Group on Water and Energy Resources is attached. (Annex 2)

B. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

¹ This report has been issued without official editing

1. Participants approved the following conclusions and presented the following recommendations for consideration by the SPECA Coordinating Committee and the SPECA Governing Council:

Agenda item 4: Review of the implementation of the work plan for 2009 and possible future priority activities

2. Having heard the report by UNECE on the activities under the project “Financing Energy Efficiency for Climate Change Mitigation”, the PWG noted that only Kazakhstan was participating in the project from the SPECA region, and that opportunities should be found to expand these activities to other SPECA countries. The participants of the PWG suggested that a similar project be developed by ESCAP to cover other Central Asian countries in cooperation with UNECE.
3. Participants of the PWG welcomed the presentations by UNECE on the “Development of the Renewable Energy Sector (RES) in the Russian Federation and in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries” and “Methane Capture and Use: Best Practice Guidance for Effective Methane Drainage and Use in Coal Mines”. For the Renewable Energy project, it was noted that the first International Workshop on RES in the Russian Federation and CIS Countries was held on 22 and 23 July, 2010 in Minsk, Belarus, and that national Reports from 10 participating countries have been elaborated and commissioned by UNECE. Participants requested that the final strategy to promote an enhanced investment climate for renewable energy technologies for dissemination to national and regional authorities in participating countries be circulated to SPECA member states for their information.
4. For the “Methane Capture and Use” project, the participants noted that the guidelines were launched in March 2010 and that a number of regional workshops have been held in 2010 to disseminate the information.
5. The PWG participants noted the progress in implementing the Baku Initiative on Energy Efficiency and Conservation and welcomed the initial draft of the SPECA Region Concept on Energy Efficiency (Annex 3). It was recommended by ESCAP that participants attend the workshop on this Concept which is organized directly after the PWG meeting. It was suggested that comments on the draft can be sent to ESCAP within a month.
6. In addition, a summary of the International Energy Efficiency Forum was reported (Annex 4) and noted that the International Energy Efficiency Forum would be valuable as a regular event. The summary of the Forum also stressed that cooperation between various organizations of the UN system involved in the work on energy efficiency and renewable energy is crucial for making the most of the available resources, avoiding duplication and finding areas for joint activities.
7. The progress of implementation of the programme for “Dam Safety” was noted, including the model national law on safety of large hydraulic facilities, the draft of the regional agreement on cooperation on dam safety and negotiations towards this agreement, along with the training held on this issue among experts in the region. The participants noted that a Technical Regulation for all five participating countries is being developed, and requested that this be circulated once available.

8. The participants were advised of the progress of implementation of the projects on “Central Asian Regional Water Information Base” (CAREWIB) and “Cooperation and policy related to water quality in Central Asia”. It was noted that the second phase of the CAREWIB project the focus will be on developing national water information systems. In addition, it was noted that the project related to water quality involves the establishment of common principles for measurement, exchange of information and joint assessment, and the development of more efficient national policies, including the standards and principles applied in the permitting of environmentally harmful activities.
9. The PWG participants welcomed the progress report on the “Development of Cooperation on the Chu and Talas Rivers”. It was noted that the establishment of the Kazakh-Kyrgyz Chu and Talas Rivers Commission created a mutually beneficial way for Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan to share responsibility for water infrastructure used by both countries. A further project which started in 2008 supports the further broadening of cooperation to improve the joint management of the Chu and Talas rivers, to include, among other things, protection of ecosystems and stakeholder participation in the river management.
10. The progress of the “Regional dialogue and cooperation on water resources management” was also noted which includes work on regional institutions, international water legislation and regional Guidelines/Principles for water management as well as development of monitoring and information exchange.
11. The PWG participants took note of the activities and findings of the Forum on Eco-efficient Water Infrastructure Development for Green Growth in Asia and the Pacific (Part II) jointly convened by ESCAP and UNECE in cooperation with Government of Kazakhstan as a side event of MCED 6 as reported by ESCAP. The PWG participants also noted the relevance and importance of the development of eco-efficient water infrastructure in Central Asia. They welcome opportunities to further enhance cooperation on water resources management among Central Asia countries as well as with countries in other subregions of Asia-Pacific as part of the implementation of the Astana Initiative on Green Bridge. The PWG participants also welcomed the opportunities to strengthen capacity to forecast extreme weather events in Central Asia as part of the ongoing project implemented by ESCAP on this subject in collaboration with the ESCAP/WMO Typhoon Committee and the WMO/ESCAP Panel on Tropical Cyclones. The PWG participants also took note of the proposal to support the development and replication of eco-sanitation in Central Asia as recommended by the Forum.
12. The PWG participants supported the proposal to link activities of PWG on water and energy to the implementation of the Astana Initiative on Green Bridge and called on ESCAP and UNECE to assist in the development of concrete projects for implementation within the framework of the Astana Initiative on Green Bridge.
13. The PWG welcomed interventions from both participants from SPECA countries and other organizations advising of activities related to water and energy resources at the national and SPECA region level. The need for a regional institute on energy efficiency and how this institute would be supported was raised. One suggestion is that it could be supported initially by international organizations, though it was highlighted that when the funding finished often institutes cannot sustain themselves. Alternatively, another suggestion was that member countries could allocate some resources to a shared institution.

14. Participants from Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan also voiced the need for greater regional cooperation and dialogue with respect to energy and water resources. It was also recommended that the project on the Coordinated Energy System for the SPECA region should seek funding for implementation.

Agenda item 5: Adoption of the work plan for 2011

15. The PWG reviewed the proposed work plan for 2011 and endorsed its implementation (Annex 5). It was noted that the implementation of some activities are subject to funding availability.

Agenda item 6: Other matters

14. No other matters were raised under this agenda item.

Agenda item 8: Adoption of conclusions and recommendations.

15. The PWG adopted its report on 30 September 2010.

Ms. Anara Dzhumagulova, Head of International Cooperation Division, Ministry of Energy
Chairperson, 30 September 2010, Astana