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WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION  
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**Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health to  
the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary  
Watercourses and International Lakes**

**Working Group on Water and Health**  
Geneva, 27–28 May 2010

Item 5 of the provisional agenda

Information paper 4

**SETTING TARGETS AND REPORTING UNDER THE PROTOCOL**

**Report of the third meeting of the Task Force on Indicators and Reporting  
(Geneva, 16-17 February 2010)**  
held in the Palais des Nations.

**Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda**

1. The Third meeting of the Task Force on Indicators and Reporting took place in Geneva on 17- 18 February back-to-back with the workshop on setting targets and reporting (16-17 February).
2. The meeting was attended by experts from the following countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland and Ukraine.
3. Representatives of the following international organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were also present: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Health Organization (WHO), Armenian Women for Health and Healthy Environment, ECO-TIRAS International Environmental Association of River Keepers, MAMA 86, Women in Europe for a Common Future and Women in Sustainable Development of Moldova.
4. The Chair of the Task Force on Indicators and Reporting opened the meeting, recalling the mandate of the Task Force and the meeting's objective.
5. The Task Force adopted its agenda as set out in document WH/TFIR 03-01.

## **Conclusions of the workshop and setting targets and reporting**

6. The chairperson of the Task presented the main conclusions of the workshop on reporting. He underlined the fact that all countries represented in the workshop –Parties and non Parties alike confirmed that they would submit their reports to the secretariat by 31 March 2010. Cross sectoral coordination continued to be one of the main challenges in reporting. It was stated that reporting under the Protocol was straightforward when targets had been set. However, it was very difficult, if not impossible, when there was no cooperation on the implementation of the Protocol. The same intersectoral coordination group or platform that was responsible for target-setting should also be responsible for reporting. Reporting was complex but useful and Parties should take advantage of the process to review the targets they had set or to make progress in setting targets if the exercise had not yet been completed.

7. Many Parties were behind in setting their targets, causing problems for reporting. However, it was generally considered important to report even if targets had not been set or formally adopted. In their reports, countries which had not set targets tended to focus on the common indicators. However, that was not in line with the principle of the Protocol. It was not intended to be a data-gathering tool but a governance and management tool promoting the integration of sectoral policies and continuous progress. The full list of workshop's conclusions is presented in the document (ECE/MP.WH/WG.1/2010/6- EUR/10/56335/VI).

## **Guidelines on setting targets, evaluation of progress and reporting**

8. The secretariat presented proposals for amendments on the guidelines submitted by the Czech Republic (doc. WH/TFIR 03-02) following the call for comments made by the chair of the Task Force at the second meeting of the Working Group on Water and Health (2-3 July 2009). The comments were mainly linked to the case studies from Czech Republic and included proposals for additional references to the EU directives. The participants of the Task Force welcomed the proposals and agreed on their incorporation into the guidelines on setting targets.

9. Additional comments on the guidelines on setting targets were provided during the meeting by ECO-TIRAS. The proposals were related to waters used for aquaculture or for the production or harvesting shellfish. The Task Force meeting endorsed the proposal.

10. The representative of Germany informed that the guidelines on setting targets created substantial interest among different authorities/agencies and Germany might provide additional comments after the Task Force meeting.

11. The chair of the Working Group on Water and Health, pointed out that the guidelines were already presented to the participants of the second session of the Working Group on Water and Health and the feedback was positive, thus the document might need some further improvement, however it should not be “redrafted”.

12. The secretariat informed that comments on the guidelines could be provided by first of May 2010. Moreover, it was explained that for the upcoming third meeting of the Working Group on Water and Health (27-28 May 2010) the guidelines on setting targets evaluation of progress and reporting will remain unchanged. Due to the procedural matters, translation and time constrains, all comments on the guidelines will be presented to the Working Group on Water and Health as

separate document. The received feedback, comments and suggestions, once endorsed by the Working Group, will be incorporated into the guidelines after the Working Group meeting.

### **Guidelines for summary reports in accordance with article 7 of the Protocol on Water and Health**

13. The secretariat presented the guidelines and the template for reporting under the Protocol and the floor was opened for additional comments.

14. The participants provided additional comments on the part two of the template for reporting (common indicators). The representative of Women in Europe for the Common Future (WEFCF) proposed to divide data into urban and rural areas, provide additional information on frequency of monitoring and the number of monitoring points of as well as include access to sustainable sanitation.

15. Some comments on the methodology used for the effectiveness of fresh water resources management already mentioned during the workshop on reporting under the Protocol (see document: ECE/MP.WH/WG.1/2010/6-EUR/10/56335/VI) were echoed.

16. The secretariat informed that the suggested amendments would be taken into account and the revised version of the guidelines for summary reports will be submitted for endorsement by the upcoming, third session of the Working Group on Water and Health. After the endorsement by the Working Group, the revised version of the guidelines together with the template will be submitted to the second session of the Meeting of the Parties for possible adoption as an official reporting format for the third session of the Meeting of the Parties.

17. On the basis an outline of the regional implementation report prepared by the joint secretariat the Task Force's participants discussed and commented on the format, structure, issues to be covered and degree of details and analysis to be included in the regional implementation report.

18. The majority of comments received were positive. It was stated that the draft outline would enable to assess the degree of Protocol's implementation, identify the main challenges in its implementation and predictions for future trends. The Task Force agreed on the general structure of the draft outline, which to large extent followed and reflected the structure of the template for summary reports. The inclusion of a chapter to identify the trends and common problems/ approaches by sub-region was also welcomed.

19. Since when reporting on common indicators (part two of the template for reporting) Parties were allowed to use different methodologies and definitions it was suggested that this part of the report should summarize the methodologies used to measure the indicators and the capacity of countries to provide the required data under the common indicators

20. A representative of Hungry proposed to inclusion of an additional part into the regional implementation report. Under this part, different themes related to water and health would be addressed during each reporting cycle. The possible topics would be decided by the Working Group on Water and Health and all the Parties and interested countries would provide additional information accordingly. Assess to water and access to sanitation from the economic point of view was given as an example. This part would make the report more valuable and provide an additional source of reference for identification of future areas of work.

## **Future work of the Task Force on Indicators and Reporting in the Protocol's programme of work for 2011-2013**

21. On the basis of a document prepared by the Chairperson and following the request from the Working Group on Water and Health, the Task Force assessed the work achieved and discussed the future activities in the area of setting targets and reporting under the Protocol, to be incorporated into the programme of work 2011–2013.

22. The participants recognized the importance of this Task Force as crucial body assisting Parties in implementation of the Protocol. The Task Force agreed that its main objectives should be support Parties' in compliance with articles 6 (targets and target dates) and 7 (review and assessment of progress) and assist Parties to demonstrate progress towards its overarching objectives, in particular the prevention, control and reduction of water-related disease.

23. In the consequent discussion the participants agreed that the future areas of work should continue to focus on the implementation of the Protocol. It was stated that implementation could be strengthened by promoting exchange of experiences within small groups of countries with similar conditions and challenges. Sub-regional workshop could be organized, where experts from neighboring countries could exchange their lessons learned while implementing the Protocol. The implementation and setting targets, especially at the local level were considered as an important area for future work.

24. Lack of public involvement when setting targets was also recognized as an important issue to be addressed in the future. Raising awareness about the Protocol among the public and civil society and developing mechanisms for NGOs involvement and contribution to implementation was considered an important issue. It was stated that in some countries civil society need to put extra pressure on the public authorities in order to initiate the implementation work under the Protocol and involving NGOs was crucial.

25. A number of proposals for potential areas of work were made. One of them, which received a strong support by participants, was the issue of small scale water supply which should be taken into account when setting targets, especially at the local level. There was a general consensus that this was an important topic of relevance for most of the countries across the UNECE region.

26. Proposals for the future also included work on bathing waters, pools and spas. It was explained that the EU approach towards bathing waters was changing from monitoring to management and the Protocol could help countries to follow to adjust to the new legislation. Other technical issues included: technology in the areas of water supply and sanitation, economic impacts of water related diseases, pollutions (Nitrate and Arsenic) and their impact on human health.

27. The chair summarized the discussion stating that it provided good basis for further work and would be considered when elaborating the draft programme of work 2011-2013. At the same time it was explained that the programme of work to be adopted by the Meeting of the Parties should be as concrete as possible, would be corresponding to the needs of Parties, responding to the most urgent priorities and take would into account the financial implications.

**Closing of the meeting**

28. The Chair closed the meeting at 12.30 p.m.

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