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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

**WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR EUROPE**

**MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION
ON THE PROTECTION AND USE OF TRANSBOUNDARY
WATERCOURSES AND INTERNATIONAL LAKES
and
MEETING OF THE SIGNATORIES TO THE PROTOCOL
ON WATER AND HEALTH TO THE CONVENTION**

Working Group on Water and Health
Fourth meeting
Geneva, 9-10 December 2004

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE FOURTH MEETING*
to be held at the Palais des Nations**

* Late submission to take into account the outcome of the Oslo Roundtable on Water and Health as well as the 5th meeting of the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment, held end of September 2004.

** New accreditation procedures have been introduced for all delegates attending meetings held at the Palais des Nations. Delegates are therefore requested to complete the attached registration form also available from the Water Convention's web site (<http://www.unece.org/env/water/meetings/registrationmeeting.htm>) and to transmit it to the UNECE secretariat, at the latest 10 days prior to the meeting, i.e. by **29 November 2004**, either by fax (+ 41 22 917 0107) or by e-mail (water.convention@unece.org with a copy to francesca.bernardini@unece.org). Prior to the meeting, delegates are requested to present themselves at the Pass and Identification Unit of the UNOG Security and Safety Section, located at the Villa Les Feuillantines, 13, Avenue de la Paix (a map is attached) for the issuance of an identification badge.

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Adoption of the report of the third meeting.
3. Progress in the ratification process.
4. Legal and administrative aspects of the Protocol's implementation.
5. Coordination of resource mobilization.
6. Technical meetings under the Protocol.
7. Burden of water-related diseases and surveillance.
8. Performance of collective systems.
9. Review and assessment of progress.
10. Monitoring and assessment of transboundary watercourses and international lakes.
11. Education and training.
12. Activities of the United Nations on water and sanitation.
13. Fourth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health.
14. Further preparations for the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol.
15. Work Plan.
16. Election of officers.
17. Date and venue of the fifth meeting of the Working Group.
18. Other business.
19. Closure.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

The meeting of the Working Group on Water and Health will be held in Geneva at the Palais des Nations (see the annex for the venue of the meeting, registration and other contact information).

The Working Group meeting will start on 9 December at 10 a.m. and close on 10 December at 6 p.m.

At the third meeting of the Working Group, Mr. Mihaly Kadar (Hungary) and Mr. Thomas Kistemann (Germany) have been elected Chairman and Vice-Chairman, respectively.

The working languages will be English, French and Russian. Meeting documents and working papers can be downloaded from the Convention's web site at <http://www.unece.org/env/water/meetings/documents.htm> and/or WHO/EURO's web sites at <http://www.euro.who.int> and <http://www.who.dk/watsan>.

Participants may wish to note that two other meetings, which are of relevance to the activities of the Working Group on Water and Health, will be held in the Palais des Nations: the Seminar on the role of ecosystems as water suppliers (13-14 December 2004) and the first meeting of the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management (15 December 2004).

Item 1: Adoption of the agenda

The Working Group is expected to adopt its agenda as set out in the present document.

Item 2: Adoption of the report of the third meeting

The Working Group is expected to adopt the report of its third meeting, held in Budapest on 11-12 March 2004 (MP.WAT/WG.4/2004/3-EUR/5047016/2004/3). The report can be downloaded from the web site of the Water Convention at: <http://www.unece.org/env/documents/2004/wat/wg.4/mp.wat.wg.4.2004.3.e.pdf>

Item 3: Progress in the ratification process

As of September 2004, the following 13 countries have ratified the Protocol: Albania, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Norway, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia and Ukraine. Representatives of the other countries will report on the progress in the ratification process. Upon request by these delegations, the Working Group may wish to make arrangements for assistance in the ratification process.

The Working Group will take this information into account when evaluating the opportunity of organizing the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol in the course of 2005 (see item 14 of the provisional agenda).

Item 4: Legal and administrative aspects of the Protocol's implementation

(a) Draft compliance review mechanism under the Protocol

The Working Group will examine a revised draft compliance review mechanisms (MP.WAT/WG.4/2004/7 - EUR/5047016/2004/7), prepared by the Legal Board on the basis of an earlier draft discussed at the third meeting of the Working Group, and invite the Legal Board to finalize the document for submission to the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol.

(b) Draft rules of procedure

The Working Group will examine the draft rules of procedure for the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (MP.WAT/WG.4/2004/6 - EUR/5047016/2004/6), prepared by the Legal Board on the basis of an earlier draft discussed at the third meeting of the Working Group, and invite the Legal Board to finalize the document for submission to the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol.

(c) Focal points for activities under the Protocol

Following established procedures and methods of work under the Convention, the Working Group will invite countries, if they have not already done so, to nominate their representatives, who would carry out the functions as focal point for activities under the Protocol.

Item 5: Coordination of resource mobilization

The delegation of Norway will inform the Working Group about the outcome of the Roundtable on Water and Health in Europe (Oslo, 28-29 September 2004). The Working Group will evaluate the opportunity for follow-up activities, based on a document by the secretariat (MP.WAT/WG.4/2004/8 - EUR/5047016/2004/8).

The Working Group will also evaluate the opportunity of establishing alternative or additional financing mechanisms, such as a trust fund under the Protocol, or making earmarked contributions to the Water Convention's trust fund to support activities under the work plan of the Protocol, taking into account the decisions of the third meeting of the Parties to the Convention (see ECE/MP.WAT/15/Add.1).

Item 6: Technical meetings under the Protocol

(a) Preparations for the Conference on Enclosed Recreational Waters

The Working Group will examine the progress made in the preparations for the Conference on Health Risks in Enclosed Recreational Water Environments (Budapest, 10-11 March 2005). A leaflet on the Conference will be made available

and additional information will be posted at WHO/EURO's website at <http://www.euro.who.int/watsan>.

The Working Group will invite countries to widely disseminate information about the Conference and submit national contribution and expert papers.

(b) Conference on Cyanobacteria

The Working Group will examine the progress made in the preparations for the Conference on Cyanobacteria and their Implication for Drinking-water Production, proposed by the delegation of Portugal at the third meeting of the Working Group tentatively scheduled to be held in Portugal in early 2005.

The WHO European Centre for Environment and Health has undertaken a literature study and is working closely with the German Federal Environmental Agency and with the WHO Water, Sanitation and Health department in Geneva to develop updated guidelines on this problem, particularly with the assistance of Russian speaking countries. A website has been created to gather information on the current problems (see https://extranet.who.int/datacol/survey.asp?survey_id=40, user name – Cyano, password – bluegreen).

Participants will be invited to encourage their national water companies to access the above site and participate in the assessment. They will also be invited to communicate to the secretariat information on published findings and existing non-English literature on the occurrence of, and problems posed by, cyanobacteria to water resources and drinking-water supply in their countries. This will allow for an in-depth discussion on the possible programme for the Conference and on future action.

The Working Group will also invite countries to identify possible members for the scientific steering committee of the Conference, help the host country in the drafting of the Conference programme and disseminate information about the Conference.

(c) ECWATECH-2004 and Conference “Clean Water in Russia”

The secretariat will inform the Working Group about the outcome of the second workshop on sustainable water management and health, which was held on the occasion of the Trade Fair and Conference “Water, Ecology and Technology: ECWATECH-2004” on 1-2 June 2004 in Moscow.

The Working Group is expected to make arrangements for participation in the conference “Clean Water in Russia” (Yekaterinburg, Russian Federation, April 2005). Upon request by the host country, the Working Group may wish to assist the secretariat and the Russian Federation in the further elaboration of arrangements for this event.

Item 7: Burden of water-related diseases and surveillance

Under the Protocol, Parties are required to establish and publish national and/or local targets for the standards and levels of performance that need to be achieved or maintained for a high level of protection against water-related diseases.

The Working Group will consider a working paper, including a draft recommendation, to complement the current WHO surveillance and monitoring systems by providing data on: [Cholera]¹, [Malaria], [Hepatitis A], Gastro-enteritic events, Amoebic dysentery, Bacillary dysentery, Cryptosporidiosis, Giardiasis, Typhoid fever, EHEC O157 infections, Campylobacteriosis and Calicivirus infection. The Working Group will also consider the inclusion of diseases linked solely to the chemical composition of water, such as methemoglobinaemia and arsenicosis.

A draft recommendation on the monitoring of priority water-related diseases will be prepared for endorsement by the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol. The draft recommendation will contain two alternatives: it could either call for the inclusion of surveillance data on water-related diseases into the ongoing WHO surveillance networks, in line with the current update of the European Health-for-All policy framework, or could call for the creation of a dedicated network.

Item 8: Performance of collective systems

Article 6 of the Protocol calls for the setting of targets and target dates. It is therefore essential to consider ways and means to establish a baseline, set criteria for the determination of targets, and adopt indicators by which progress towards the achievement of these targets can be measured.

(a) Quality of drinking water supplied.

The meeting will consider the reporting mechanism under the EU Drinking Water Directive, and exchange views on whether the criteria stipulated under this mechanism are sufficient for the needs of the Protocol.

(b) Reduction of the scale of outbreaks and incidents of water-related diseases

The meeting will consider the current reporting mechanism operated by WHO against the list of priority diseases identified during earlier sessions of the Working Group, as well as against current national programmes, and consider whether to accept current reporting mechanisms or to call for a more informative compilation of national reporting mechanisms.

¹ Data between square brackets are priority diseases already taken up by WHO.

(c) The area or territory, or the population sizes or proportions which should be served by collective water supply systems

The Working Group will review the current reporting system applied under the UNICEF/WHO Joint Monitoring Program (JMP), and decide on its appropriateness for the purposes of the Protocol.

A report applying the JMP methodology in the assessment of progress made towards the MDG on both water supply and sanitation may be downloaded from http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/monitoring/jmp2004/en/.

(d) Performance of water-supply systems

The Protocol calls for the 'levels of performance' to be achieved by collective systems and by such other means of water supply (and sanitation), respectively. The implementation of this obligation requires consideration of different options by the Working Group, especially since the term 'performance' is not defined in the Protocol. The Working Group will consider a working paper, which will describe a possible method for drinking-water production performance assessment, taking into account the work of OECD in the analysis of operational and financial indicators of water and sewerage utilities, the options of assessing environmental performance against established procedures such as ISO and EMAS, and other options to assess service to users and management and assessment of drinking water supply services.

(e) Performance of waste-water treatment systems

The monitoring of the performance of waste-water treatment plants has been discussed at the second meeting the Working Group, whereby the participants suggested to recommend to the Meeting of the Parties to use the methodology developed under the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP).

The Working Group is expected to consider information by the participants on the current level of waste-water treatment, final target setting targets taking into account relevant national legislation and EU Directives, and monitoring programs as implemented by one of the Parties.

The Working Group will discuss current policies in the setting of national targets, and evaluate the applicability of the proposed methodologies. The Working Group will also consider ways and means to establish a data-gathering procedure under the Protocol in order to present to the Meeting of the Parties information regarding: (i) baseline performance of waste-water treatment plants; and (ii) the evolution in performance since the adoption of the Protocol.

Item 9: Review and assessment of progress

The second meeting of the Working Group reviewed the implications of article 7 of the Protocol on "Review and Assessment of Progress". In the meantime, WHO/EURO and its partners have developed a framework plan for a pan-European

Environment Health Information System, published under <http://www.euro.who.int/EHIndicators>. Pilot studies have been undertaken in selected countries, and the calculation mechanism has been tested using data collected from six European countries with a population of about 92 million (see <http://www.euro.who.int/Document/E81285.pdf>). Indicators related to water and health include: waste-water treatment, compliance with recreational water guidelines, compliance with drinking-water guidelines, access to piped regulated water supply and outbreak of water-related diseases.

The Working Group will invite the participants to share experience in the use of the different progress-review programmes, provide information on current reporting programmes, and evaluate the applicability of the above indicators for the purposes of article 7 of the Protocol. Based on the information provided, the Working Group will consider ways and means of establishing the reporting scheme to assess progress.

Item 10: Monitoring and assessment of transboundary watercourses and international lakes

The Working Group will be informed by the UNECE and Finland as lead country about the drafting of guidelines on monitoring and assessment of transboundary waters as well as the drawing up of a report on the status of transboundary waters in the UNECE region (see <http://www.unece.org/env/documents/2004/wat/wg.2/mp.wat.wg.2.2004.3.e.pdf> and <http://www.unece.org/env/documents/2004/wat/wg.2/mp.wat.wg.2.2004.4.e.pdf>).

Based on the report of the fifth meeting of the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment (see <MP.WAT/WG.2/2004/1>), held in St. Petersburg, Russian Federation, on 30 September – 1 October 2004, the Working Group on Water and Health will make arrangements for participation in both activities.

Item 11: Education and training

The second meeting of the Signatories to the Protocol on Water and Health reviewed the challenges of education and recommended the development of distance learning programmes for public health professionals. While several distant learning programmes exist on either public health or environmental sciences, an integrated programme that deals with all aspects of water and health is still lacking. Responding to this need, the WHO Collaborating Centre for Water Quality and Human Health in collaboration with the University of Staffordshire (United Kingdom) and the University of Athens are proposing to develop a postgraduate course in Water Management and Health.

The Working Group may wish to provide its advise for the development of such a post-graduate distant learning programme.

Item 12: Activities of the United Nations on water and sanitation

A representative of UNECE will inform the Working Group about activities undertaken at the regional level to prepare for the 13th session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, which includes policies, strategies and actions on water and sanitation, based on the deliberations at the 12th session and the outcome of the Regional Implementation Forum in Geneva on 19-20 January 2004 (see <http://www.unece.org/env> and select "[Regional Implementation Forum, January 2004](#)").

UNECE will also inform the Working Group about progress made in the drafting of the second edition of the World Water Development Report under the leadership of UN-WATER and activities of UNECE to guide the work of the United Nations system organizations on indicators for the water sectors.

The Working Group is expected to take this information into account when discussing agenda items 14 and 15.

Item 13: Fourth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health

The Working Group will be informed by WHO/EURO about the outcome of the Ministerial Conference (Budapest, 23-25 June 2004), which unanimously adopted the Children Environment and Health Action Plan for Europe (CEHAPE) that includes the provision of clean water and adequate sanitation to the children of Europe as the first regional priority goal.

The Working Group is expected to take this information into account when discussing agenda items 14 and 15.

Item 14: Further preparations for the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol

Give the current ratification status, the Working Group will make arrangements to prepare for the first meeting of the Parties. It will also agree on the venue of the meeting and the tentative meeting dates.

Item 15: Work plan

Based on the decisions on the above items of the provisional agenda, the Working Group will update its work plan for the period 2005-2006 (see ECE/MP.WAT/15/Add.2).

The Working Group will also consider a working paper by the secretariat, which will set out possible short-term and long-term activities to be undertaken by the Working Group for the purposes of the protocol, particularly its articles 8, 9, 12, 14 and 17.

Item 16: Election of officers

The Working Group will elect its officers for the fifth meeting.

Item 17: Date and venue of fifth meeting of the Working Group

Following the outcome of the discussion under items 14 and 15, the Working Group will set the indicative dates for its fifth meeting.

Item 18: Other business

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

Item 19: Closure

The Chairman will close the meeting of Working Group on 10 December at 6 p.m.



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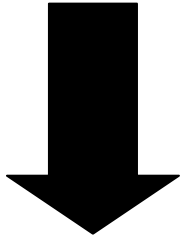
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