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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

Fifth meeting

Geneva, 5-7 December 2005

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE FIFTH MEETING

to be held at the Palais des Nations*

and starting on Monday, 5 December 2005, at 10 a.m.

* 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 that is also available from the Water Convention's website (<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 **25 November 2005**, 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.

Following earlier decisions, the Working Group on Water and Health is responsible for the preparations for the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol, which shall take place not later than eighteen month after the entry into force of the Protocol. The Protocol entered into force on 4 August 2005. Given that the fifth meeting of the Working Group is in December 2005 and the follow up activities needed by the secretariat, the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol could be convened in May 2006 at the earliest.

In order to finalize Working Group's documents for submission to the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol, ad hoc groups could be established during the December meeting, if need be, to work further work on the draft workplan and other documents.

Meeting documents, working papers and other relevant information can be downloaded from the Convention's web site at <http://www.unece.org/env/water/meetings/documents.htm#wh> and/or WHO/EURO web sites at <http://www.euro.who.int/watsan>.

1. Adoption of the agenda

2. Adoption of the report on the fourth meeting

When adopting the report (MP.WAT/WG.4/2004/5-EUR/5047016/2004/5), the Working Group may wish to note that the Bureau of the Water Convention endorsed, at its meeting on 26-27 April 2005, the proposed amendments to the Working Group's workplan as contained in annex IV to the above report.

The Working Group may also recall its decisions to examine the other annexes to the report at the present meeting (see agenda items 7 and 11).

3. Progress in the ratification process

For the following 16 Parties (Albania, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Norway, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Ukraine) the Protocol entered into force on 4 August 2005.

Representatives of the other countries will report on their progress in the ratification process. Upon request by these delegations, the Working Group may wish to make arrangements for assistance in the ratification process.

4. Legal and administrative aspects of the Protocol's implementation

(a) Draft compliance procedure under the Protocol

The Working Group will examine a revised draft compliance procedure (MP.WAT/WG.4/2005/3-EUR/05/5047554/3), finalized by the Legal Board at its third meeting (MP.WAT/AC.4/2005/2, paragraphs 8-22) on the basis of earlier drafts discussed at the third and fourth meetings of Working Group. The Working Group may wish to note that the proposed text is a revised compromise solution by the members of the Legal Board.

The Working Group is expected to finalize its work on the document, including the draft decision, and request the secretariat to submit this document to the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol.

(b) Draft rules of procedure

On the basis of the draft rules of procedure for the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (MP.WAT/WG.4/2004/6-EUR/5047016/2004/6) and the outcome of the fourth meeting of the Working Group, the Legal Board re-examined the text at its third meeting. The Working Group may wish to agree on the proposed amendments and additions, set out in the report on the third meeting of the Legal Board (MP.WAT/AC.4/2005/2, paragraphs 23-29), and request the secretariat to submit this document to the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol.

(c) Focal points for activities under the Protocol

The secretariat will inform the Working Group about the role and functions of the focal points under the Protocol, given established practice and procedures under the Convention. The Working Group will invite Parties and non-Parties, if they have not already done so, to nominate their representatives, who would carry out the functions as focal points for activities under the Protocol. It may also wish to request the secretariat to prepare a draft decision on the terms of reference for the focal points under the Protocol to be submitted to the first meeting of the Parties.

(d) Mainstreaming activities and priorities of work under the Protocol into the policy making of the World Health Organization (WHO)

The secretariat will inform the Working Group on ways and means to ensure coordination of the activities and priorities under the Protocol with the work under other WHO bodies, in particular the WHO Regional Committee for Europe, its Standing Committee and the European Environment and Health Committee. The Working Group may wish to request the secretariat to prepare a draft decision on this issue for submission to the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol.

5. Meetings under the auspices of the Working Group

(a) Conference on Enclosed Recreational Waters

The Working Group will take note with appreciation of the outcome of the Conference on Health Risks in Enclosed Recreational Water Environments, which took place at the invitation of the Government of Hungary in Budapest on 10-11 March 2005. The Working Group may wish to agree on the wide dissemination of the outcome of the conference, and consider the inclusion of follow up activities, proposed at the Conference, into the draft workplan of the Parties to the Protocol (see agenda item 12 (a)).

(b) Conference on Cyanobacteria

The Working Group will take note that due to the calamity of forest fires, the host country, Portugal, was not in a position to convene the Conference on Cyanobacteria and their Implication for Drinking-water Production (MP.WAT/WG.4/2004/5-EUR/5047016/2004/5, paragraphs 30-33) in October 2005. The Working Group will examine the activities to be undertaken for convening the meeting in spring 2006. It will invite countries to identify possible members for the scientific committee, help the host country in the drafting of the conference programme and disseminate information about the conference.

6. Targets and target dates

The Chairman of the Working Group will introduce the agenda item and link activities on setting targets and target dates under the Protocol with the review and assessment of progress (agenda item 7).

Given the provisions of article 6 of the Protocol, the sixteen Parties to the Protocol may wish to inform the Working Group about relevant targets and target dates, which they have already adopted, and the mechanisms followed to establish and adopt these targets and target dates. The Parties may wish to highlight gaps that still exist, and inform the Working Group about possible ways and means to establish and publish by August 2007 the national and local targets as required by the Protocol.

Following the provisions of article 12, the Working Group may wish to consider promoting cooperation in international action regarding the development of commonly agreed targets. Non-Parties are encouraged to share their views with the Parties.

The Working Group is expected to take the outcome of the discussion into account when discussing agenda item 12 (a) on the draft workplan. The Working Group may also wish to invite the countries to provide the secretariat with written information on current targets on water and health, so that the secretariat can compile a document on common approaches and gaps, for consideration by the Parties at their first meeting.

7. Review and assessment of progress

Referring to the outcome of the discussion under agenda item 6, the Chairman will recall the Protocol's provision on review and assessment of progress.

On the basis of document MP.WAT/WG.4/2005/4 - EUR/05/5047554/4, the Working Group will review the progress accomplished in the development of a guidance document for reporting on the progress made in achieving the targets under article 6, paragraph 2 of the Protocol. It will in particular examine the outcome of the consultation on target setting and progress monitoring of water and wastewater services, held in Copenhagen on 9-10 May 2005 (report available at <http://www.who.dk/document/wsn/protMtgMay05.pdf>).

The Working Group may wish to consider relevant countries' reporting commitments under the Commission on Sustainable Development, the Millennium Development Goals

(MDGs) and other global programmes and activities as well as reporting obligations under EU legislation.

The Working Group is expected to discuss how to complete a guidance document on reporting and how to ensure that reporting under the Protocol is harmonized with, and supplement, other reporting mechanisms and data collection exercises for existing databases. It will take the outcome of this discussion into account when dealing with agenda item 12 (a) on the draft workplan.

8. Response systems

Response depends on the capacity of surveillance networks to detect disease outbreaks and generally monitor the burden of water-related diseases. In many countries, sanitary surveillance systems suffer from a diminished capacity to fulfil this role. The Working Group may wish to examine possible procedures for the assessment of surveillance systems, which have been developed by WHO (MP.WAT/WG.4/2005/5 - EUR/05/5047554/5).

The Working Group may also wish to consider the inclusion of an assessment of surveillance networks as an element of the work plan, and to identify possibilities for international cooperation (see also agenda items 12 (a)).

9. Links between activities under the Protocol and the Water Convention

(a) Extreme weather events and health

Recent extreme weather events in the UNECE region caused severe floods and droughts, which were accompanied by a significant and somehow unexpected toll of deaths and diseases. Such events may continue to pose additional challenges to current and future populations, in terms of risk management and reliability of infrastructure, including health services, power supply and others. Following information by WHO, the Working Group is invited to support the scientific communities and decision-makers to take action to put in place evidence-based interventions, or precautionary measures, to limit the impacts on the environment, in particular to reduce effects on human health and ecosystems.

The Working Group may wish to include this activity in the draft workplan of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (see item 12 (a)), noting the supplementary activities on flood protection, prevention and mitigation carried out under the workplan of the Convention (see MP.WAT/SEM.3/2004/3).

(b) Guidebook on the Protocol on Water and Health

With reference to the outcome of the third meeting of the Legal Board (MP.WAT/AC.4/2005/2, paragraphs 30-31), the Working Group may wish to examine the opportunity of developing, jointly with bodies under the Water Convention, a guidebook on the legal, administrative and technical provisions of the Protocol, and agree on the insertion of this activity into the workplan of the Parties to the Protocol (see item 12 (a)).

(c) Health aspects of monitoring and assessment of transboundary waters

The Working Group may wish to consider its contribution to the Water Convention's activities on monitoring and assessment of transboundary waters, in particular: (i) the water-and-health related aspects of strategic guidelines on monitoring and assessment of transboundary waters; (ii) pilot projects on the implementation of guidelines on monitoring and assessment of transboundary rivers, lakes and groundwaters; and (iii) the assessments of the status of transboundary waters in the UNECE region (see report on the sixth meeting of the Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment, MP.WAT/WG.2/2005/2). The Working Group may wish to agree on the insertion of this activity into the draft workplan of the Parties to the Protocol (see item 12 (a)).

10. Partners in cooperation

The Working Group may wish to invite representatives of international governmental and non-governmental organizations to share views on possible joint activities at the transboundary, regional, national and local levels for the purpose of the Protocol, taking into account the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Decade "Water for Life" and preparations for global and regional ministerial conferences.

The Working Group is expected to take this information into account when discussing agenda item 12 (a) on the draft workplan.

11. Coordination of resource mobilization

(a) Roundtable on Water and Health in Europe

The delegation of Norway will inform the Working Group about follow up activities to the Roundtable on Water and Health in Europe, which was held at the invitation of the Norwegian Government on 28-29 September 2004 at the Soria Moria Conference Centre near Oslo (see MP.WAT/WG.4/2004/8-EUR/5047016/2004/8), and to the decisions taken at the fourth meeting of the Working Group (see annexes I and II to the report on the fourth meeting MP.WAT/WG.4/2004/5-EUR/5047016/2004/5).

The Working Group may wish to recall that: (i) it agreed in principle with the two draft decisions, contained in the above annexes, to be submitted for adoption at the first meeting of the Parties; and (ii) it invited countries to submit their comments to the secretariat by 31 March 2005. By that date, the secretariat did not receive any objections.

(b) Alternative or additional financing mechanisms

The Working Group will continue its deliberation on the establishing of alternative or additional financing mechanisms, including the creation of a trust fund under the Protocol (MP.WAT/WG.4/2004/5, paragraphs 26-27).

12. Further preparations for the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol

(a) Draft workplan for the Parties to the Protocol

On the basis of document MP.WAT/WG.4/2005/6-EUR/05/5047554/6, the decisions on the above agenda items and any additional proposal by Parties and non-Parties, the Working Group will draw up a draft workplan for activities under the auspices of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol, covering the period 2006-2009, for submission to the first meeting of the Parties. To this end, it may wish to establish an ad hoc group, which during and after the Working Group's meeting further elaborates the draft proposals contained in the above document.

(b) Draft declaration of the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol

At its fourth meeting, the Working Group entrusted the secretariat with the assistance of the Working Group's Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, to prepare a draft declaration. Given the entry into force of the Protocol on 4 August 2005 and the likelihood that the first meeting of the Parties would take place in mid-2006, the Parties may wish to agree on their role and contribution to the drafting of the declaration.

(c) Date and venue of the first meeting of the Parties

The Working Group is expected to set the tentative meeting dates and agree on the venue of the meeting.

13. Other business

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

14. Closure

The Chairperson will close the meeting of Working Group on 7 December at 5.30 p.m.



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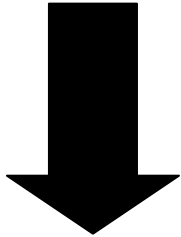
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