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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

Item 12 of the provisional agenda

**DRAFT WORKPLAN FOR ACTIVITIES UNDER THE AUSPICES
OF THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE PROTOCOL**

Prepared by the secretariat

1. Under programme element 4.2.3, the Working Group entrusted the secretariat, with the assistance of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, to draw up elements for a draft work plan of the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health (annex). The secretariat's proposal is based on the outcome of the discussions at previous meetings of the Working Group and includes possible follow up activities to its ongoing work.

2. The Working Group may wish to:

(a) Examine the proposals contained in the annex and agree on those elements, which should be further elaborated to become part of the draft workplan under the Protocol;

(b) Draw up additional elements for the workplan, following proposals by Parties and non-Parties;

(c) Inform the secretariat about the willingness of Parties and non-Parties to lead or participate in the implementation of the various workplan elements;

(d) Entrust the secretariat to make an assessment of possible costs involved in programme implementation, including travel assistance to eligible participants;

(e) Establish an ad hoc group to finalize, with the assistance of the secretariat, the draft workplan for submission to the first meeting of the Parties.

Annex

POSSIBLE ELEMENTS OF THE DRAFT WORKPLAN

Rationale:

The objective of this Protocol is to promote at all appropriate levels, nationally as well as in transboundary and international contexts, the protection of human health and well-being, both individual and collective, within a framework of sustainable development, through improving water management, including the protection of water ecosystems, and through preventing, controlling and reducing water-related disease.

The rationale of the workplan elements is to assist the Parties in the implementation of the Protocol. The activities will promote the setting of targets, and the establishment of systems for monitoring progress towards these targets on disease burden and causative factors. This includes sustainable water supply and management in cities and especially rural areas. It also includes the minimization of the adverse impact of human activities (e.g. wastewater discharges, water resources development projects) on human health and safety. The programme elements also aim to reduce health problems and diseases due to poor water quality.

Following the outcome of the Oslo Roundtable on Water and Health in Europe, assistance will be provided in the improved formulation of projects in pursuance of water-management plans in transboundary, national and/or local contexts. Assistance will also cover schemes for improving water supply and sanitation, and the rehabilitation of defective water supply and sewage systems, particularly in urban areas. These activities aim to facilitate access to sources of finance.

Bodies to implement the work plan:

- Working Group on Water and Health;
- Working Group on Resource Mobilization and Management;
- Compliance Committee.

1. Promotion and dissemination of information

Objectives:

- Disseminate information on activities carried out under the Protocol or related to it, raise the profile of the Protocol, and provide Parties and non-Parties with information to help them implement the Protocol;
- Promote the Protocol and its success in all possible contexts, including meetings and workshops organized under the workplan.

Work to be undertaken: Activities will include presentations of the Protocol at high-level meetings in the region and at international meetings, the development of a communication strategy, including tools to raise the profile of the Protocol (e.g. CDs, web site); and the publication of leaflets in English, French and Russian, and, if possible, in Arabic, Chinese, German and Spanish. The commitment and action of focal points under the Protocol will be increased, and a meeting of focal points under the Protocol will be convened. The links with the Convention and with joint bodies, such as international river commissions, will be strengthened.

Lead Party: To be implemented by the Bureau and all focal points with the assistance of the secretariat. The Parties will inform the secretariat about any changes of the coordinates of the national focal points.

2. Guidelines, methodologies and scientific evidence for action

Objectives:

- Examine the technical and scientific aspects of the Protocol's provisions and draw up appropriate guidance documents;
- Seek the assistance of WHO Collaborating Centres as well as the International Water Assessment Centre (IWAC), established under the Convention to implement the following programme elements.

2.1 Guidelines for harmonized reporting

Work to be undertaken: ¹

Lead Party: [to be decided]

2.2 Health assessment, outbreak detection and response systems

Work to be undertaken: ²

Lead Party and partners: [to be decided]

2.3 Extreme weather events

Work to be undertaken: The Working Group on Water and Health will provide support to the scientific communities and decision-makers to limit the impacts of extreme weather events on the environment, in particular to reduce effects on human health and ecosystems.

Lead Party and partners: [to be decided]

2.4 Water safety plans

Work to be undertaken: The Working Group on Water and Health will examine effective means of consistently ensuring the safety of a drinking-water supply through the use of a comprehensive risk assessment and risk management approach. Advice will be provided on the use of existing guidelines on water safety plans to ensure the applicability of good practices to the management of drinking-water quality in the region.

¹ At its fifth meeting, the Working Group on Water and Health will consider document MP.WAT/WG.4/2005/4-EUR/05/5047554/4 and decide on possible follow up by the Parties to the Protocol as proposed in paragraph 5 (e) of that document.

² In line with the issues raised in document MP.WAT/WG.4/2005/4 - EUR/05/5047554/4, Parties at the fifth meeting of the Working Group may wish to assess their monitoring and surveillance systems and, based on existing WHO guidance documents, examine their suitability to respond to outbreaks of water-related diseases. Parties with satisfactory outbreak detection and monitoring systems may wish to reflect on possibilities for international cooperation in line with the provisions in the relevant

Lead Party and partners: [to be decided]

2.5 Integrated water resources management

Work to be undertaken: The Working Group on Water and Health, in cooperation with working groups established under the Convention, will provide advice on the development and implementation of water management plans, encompassing the development, management, protection and use of water within a basin/catchment or groundwater aquifer, including the protection of the associated ecosystems. Guidance will be drawn up to assess the effectiveness of systems for the management, development, protection and use of water resources, including the application of recognized good practice to the control of pollution from sources of all kinds.

Lead Party and partners: [to be decided]

3. Facilitating compliance with the Protocol's provisions

Objectives:

- Provide guidance to facilitate the implementation of the Protocol's provision related to the setting of targets and target dates as well as a non-confrontational, non-judicial and consultative compliance review;
- Provide guidance on specific legal and administrative aspects of the Protocol's provisions.

3.1 Setting targets and target dates

Work to be undertaken: The Working Group on Water and Health will provide assistance to Parties in setting target and target dates as stipulated in articles 6 and 8 (3) of the Protocol and provide draft guidelines for the review and assessment of progress as stipulated in article 7 for adoption by the Parties at their second meeting. This may include assistance in the further development of a set of indicators that are designed to show how far progress towards the achievement of the targets referred to in article 6 has contributed towards preventing, controlling or reducing water-related disease.

articles of the Protocol. Parties may wish to draft a proposal for follow up activities by the Meeting of the Parties.

Parties will also contribute to other international activities, such as the Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) and the Health for All Database, and assist the secretariat in the preparation of regional reports as requested by regional ministerial conferences, UNECE and WHO bodies and other entities of the United Nations.

Lead Party and partners: [to be decided]

3.2 Compliance review mechanism

Work to be undertaken: The Compliance Committee, with the assistance of the secretariat, will perform its activities as laid down in document MP.WAT/WG.4/2005/3-EUR/05/5047554/3. The Compliance Committee, in consultation with the Bureau of the Meeting of the Protocol Parties and the Water Convention's Legal Board, will evaluate the experience gained under the Compliance Procedure (see MP.WAT/WG.4/2005/3, annex) in order to enable the Parties at their second meeting to review the compliance procedure with special regard to the provisions of chapter VI on communications from the public.

Lead Party and partners: Members of the Compliance committee; Bureau; Water Convention's Legal Board.

3.3 Guidebook on the Protocol on Water and Health

Work to be undertaken: The Working Group on Water and Health will provide assistance on the legally sound interpretation and practical implementation of the Protocol's provision in clear and unambiguous terms. Guidance will also be provided on the measures or actions (legal, administrative, economic, financial, technical), which national and local authorities should undertake in order to fulfill their countries' commitments. A guidebook will be prepared, which would be an advocacy tool for countries within and outside the region and would raise awareness of the Protocol among wider stakeholders groups.

Lead Party and partners: [to be decided] in cooperation with the Convention's Legal Board.

4. Training and capacity building

Objectives:

- Organize a series of workshops, provide training and organize other capacity building measures to assist particularly countries in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) and in South Eastern Europe (SEE) to implement the Protocol;
- Link the training and capacity building activities to the work under existing training programmes, such as the Water Convention's Capacity-for-Water-Cooperation programme and the GEF IW: LEARN activities, and partnership arrangements, such as the EU Water Initiative and the Partnership on Water, Environment and Security in Central Asia.

4.1 Health Risks in Enclosed Recreational Water Environments

Work to be undertaken: ³

Lead Party and partners: Hungary in cooperation with [to be decided]

4.2 Cyanobacteria and their implication for drinking-water production

Work to be undertaken: ⁴

Lead Party and partners: [to be decided after the Conference]

4.3 Sustainable water management and health

³ The Working Group at its fifth meeting will examine the outcome of the Conference on Health Risks in Enclosed Recreational Water Environments (Budapest, 10-11 March 2005) and propose follow up activities that will become part of the workplan of the Meeting of the Parties.

⁴ Environmental emergencies in Portugal prevented the holding of the Conference in autumn 2005 as originally intended. Following the presentation during its fifth meeting, the Working Group will invite Parties and non-Parties to contribute to the work of the Scientific Steering Committee and the Organizational Committee. The Conference will also consider follow up activities to be included in the draft workplan of the Meeting of the Parties.

Work to be undertaken: The Working Group on Water and Health with the assistance of the secretariat will prepare and undertake international workshops and other events, including workshops to be held during the Russian conference series on ecology, water and technology (ECWATECH and CLEAN WATER – RUSSIA). It will also provide inputs into relevant workshops under the Water Convention's Capacity-for-Water-Cooperation programme.

Lead Party and partners: [to be decided] with the assistance of the secretariat and working groups under the Convention.

5. International support for national action including project preparation and implementation

Objectives:

- Provide assistance in the improved formulation and effective implementation of projects for national and local action on such issues as improving access to safe water for children in EECCA and SEE countries; disadvantaged areas; governance – legislation, standards and guidelines; surveillance and laboratories; and health aspects of water resources management.

Work to be undertaken: The Working Group on Resource Mobilization and Management will make assessments of priority needs, provide advice for the development of implementation projects, and establish and maintain networking to facilitate and develop cooperation and facilitate access to sources of finance. The Working Group's activities will be based on requests for assistance, national reports, countries' compliance reviews and other performance reports.

Lead Party and partners: [to be decided]