

UPDATE

on National Policy Dialogues

in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia



EUWI
EU WATER INITIATIVE



February 2012, Issue 3

Dear Colleagues,

I am happy to present the third update on activities of the European Union Water Initiative (EUWI) National Policy Dialogues (NPDs) in the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA). NPDs are underway in the following countries of the region: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. This issue covers events and activities of the end of 2011 and describes plans for 2012.

With the work in the countries intensifying it is very rewarding to note that the EU has made funding available for the continuation of the programme until 2015. This, together with renewed efforts from our regular partners, puts us on a solid basis to deliver in the coming years.

The **Sixth World Water Forum in Marseille, France** on 12-17 March will also highlight the EECCA EUWI. Our joint work will be presented on **12 March 2012** by Mr. László Borbély, Minister of Environment and Forests of Romania, in the high-level session "EU12: develop European cooperation with the third countries in the water field". This is a great opportunity to raise awareness of our work under the EUWI.

Gheorghe Constantin

*Chairman of the EECCA EUWI Working Group
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About National Water Policy Dialogues

NPDs are the main operational instrument of the EECCA Component of the EU Water Initiative. It is through the successful implementation of NPDs that the vision of the EUWI will materialise.

The objective of each NPD is to facilitate the reform of water policies (covering both water supply and sanitation, and integrated water resources management) in a particular country/region. Each NPD involves high level representatives of all key partners, including national and basin authorities, representatives of relevant international organisations, civil society (NGOs) and the private sector.

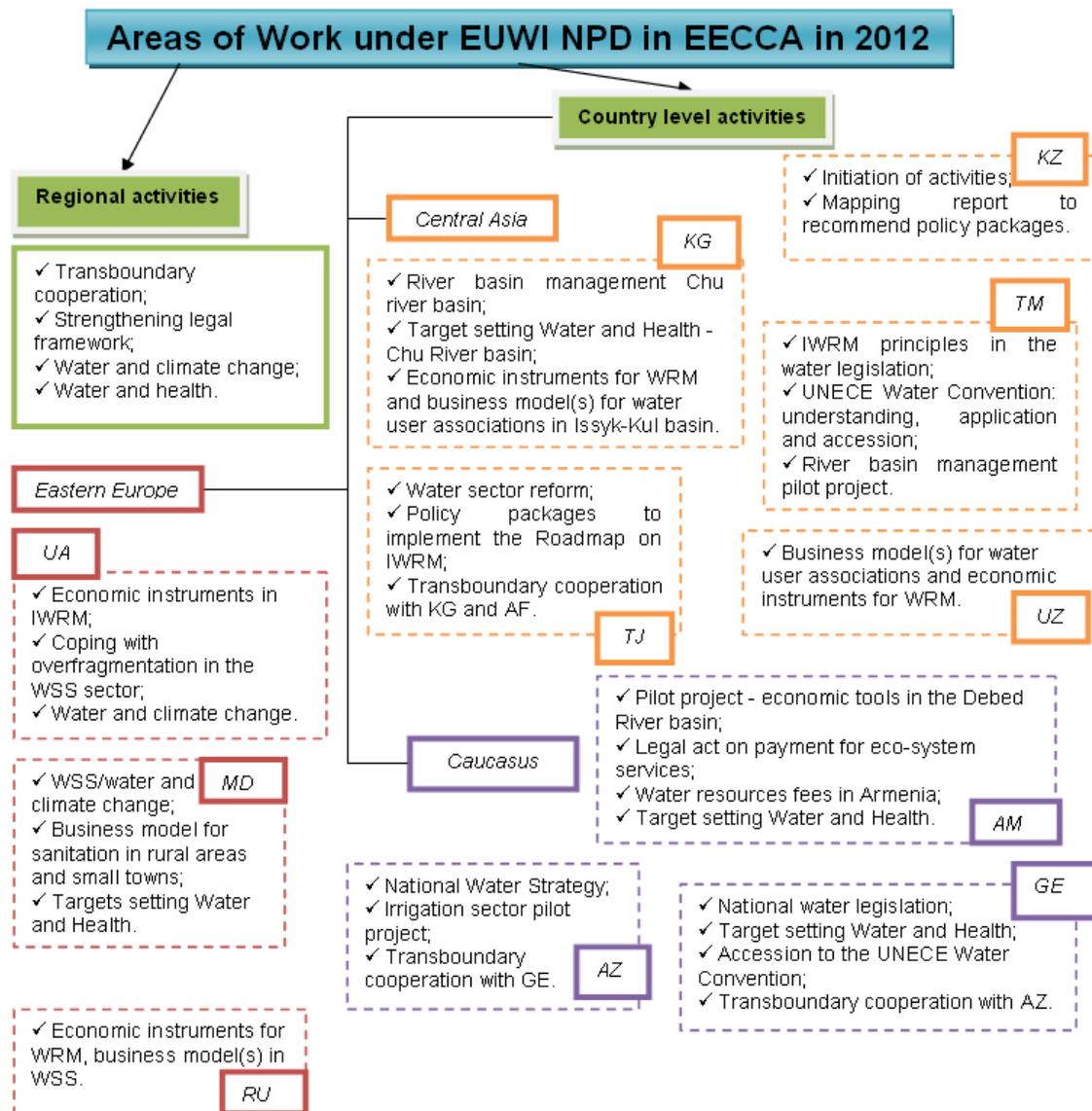
As of today, the OECD and UNECE act as strategic partners of the EUWI in EECCA. The OECD specialises in the economic and financial dimension of water policies, and UNECE focuses on legal and institutional reforms for IWRM.



<http://www.unece.org/env/water/npd>

<http://www.oecd.org/water>

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¹ Country codes: AF – Afghanistan, AM – Armenia, AZ – Azerbaijan, GE – Georgia, KZ – Kazakhstan, KG – Kyrgyzstan, MD – the Republic of Moldova, RU – the Russian Federation, TJ – Tajikistan, TM – Turkmenistan, UA – Ukraine, UZ - Uzbekistan. IWRM – Integrated Water Resources Management. WSS – Water Supply and Sanitation. WRM - Water Resources Management.

EU Water Initiative NPD activities in EECCA in October-December 2011

Workshop on UNECE/WHO-Euro Protocol on Water and Health and Steering Committee meeting in Chisinau, the Republic of Moldova

Chisinau, 5-6 October 2011 - A Workshop on the Protocol on Water and Health and the NPD Steering Committee meeting were held in the Republic of Moldova. The meetings: (1) reviewed the progress achieved in Moldova since the approval of the targets and target dates and of measures carried out under the Protocol; (2) engaged the Ministries of Health and Environment as well as selected stakeholders in a discussion and review of their capacity and requirements for further support; (3) defined immediate priorities for the Ministries; (4) discussed the possibility of a 2nd phase of the UNECE-SDC project to support implementation of targets under the Protocol. Moldovan Ministry of Health and Ministry of Environment committed to the further implementation of targets on water and health, but also stressed the need for further financial and in-kind support. Proposals were made to pursue priority issues such as the establishment of a Clearing House on the Protocol on Water and Health, Water Safety Plans in rural areas, capacity building for operators, and norms for small water operators, water user associations, training of local experts, awareness building campaigns.

EUWI NPD Steering Committee in Tajikistan establishes an inter-ministerial Working Group on IWRM



Dushanbe, 18 October 2011 - The 2nd meeting of the NPD Steering Committee reviewed the progress of the water sector reform and transboundary water cooperation. A decision was taken to establish an inter-ministerial working group that will meet on a regular basis between the Steering Committee sessions. The Committee also adopted an NPD/IWRM Roadmap. A mapping of major stakeholders and programmes as well as several projects on transboundary cooperation with Afghanistan and Kyrgyzstan were also presented. The meeting took place back-to-back with the PrepCom Conference "Towards Rio+20: Water Cooperation Issues". (The photo above)

UNECE signs Memorandum of Understanding with Georgia under the EUWI

Tbilisi, 19 October 2011 - UNECE signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of

Environment Protection of Georgia on NPD/IWRM that will be carried out in the framework of the EUWI. (The photo below: Mr. George Khachidze, Minister of Environment Protection of Georgia, and Ms. Francesca Bernardini, Secretary of the Water Convention)



The Memorandum of Understanding provides specific terms of reference for the NPD that will focus on: (1) Institutional reform to approximate national legislation to the EU Water Framework Directive, including through the preparation of a new National Water Law; (2) Improving the water and health situation through development of targets and target dates in accordance with the Protocol on Water and Health; (3) Strengthening transboundary water cooperation with Azerbaijan and supporting Georgian efforts to prepare for accession to the UNECE Water Convention.

Water policy reform in the Republic of Moldova

Vienna, 21 October 2011 - A mid-term Action and Investment plan for the water supply and sanitation sector was developed through the National Policy Dialogue in the Republic of Moldova. The plan was presented in Vienna on 21 October 2011, with the key objective to attract additional resources for its implementation. Activities in the Republic of Moldova are co-sponsored by Austria, the Czech Republic, EC/Aidco and the OECD/EAP Task Force.

Working Group discusses improved water resources management in countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia owing to NPD process

Bucharest, 7-8 November 2011 — Participants of the 15th meeting of the Working Group of the EUWI component for Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia noted significant progress by the countries of the subregion in meeting their commitments through the NPD process. The meeting reviewed the implementation of the NPDs,



exchanged experiences between the countries, established priorities and endorsed the Working Group workplan for 2012. The use of economic instruments in water management was stressed as an important aspect of NPD to promote a more efficient, productive and equitable water allocation.

National Workshop on IWRM in Ashgabat

Ashgabat, 12 November 2011 - A National Workshop on IWRM was held in Turkmenistan by the Ministry of Water Economy in cooperation with UNECE and with the assistance of UNDP-Turkmenistan. At the workshop, there were in-depth discussions of IWRM principles and their application as well as how these principles are reflected in legislation of the EU, and in the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. It was proposed to revise the existing national Water Code of Turkmenistan already in 2012 to include IWRM principles. It was also suggested to develop and implement demonstration projects in cooperation with research and higher education institutions to build the capacity of experts on the practical application of IWRM. During the workshop, participants noted the importance of transboundary water cooperation. In that connection the value of Turkmenistan's accession to the UNECE Water Convention, as well as to other important international legal instruments in the field of the environment, was stressed.

NPD Steering Committee discusses management plan for the Chu River Basin in Kyrgyzstan

Bishkek, 28 November 2011 - The NPD Steering Committee met for the 6th time in Kyrgyzstan. A national expert group informed participants about the development of the Chu River Basin Management Plan. The opportunity to coordinate the development of management plans in the Kazakh as well as Kyrgyz part of the basin was discussed. The participants also discussed progress in setting targets on water and health in the context of the Protocol on Water and Health, for which the Chu River Basin serves as a pilot area.

Expert meeting on NPD/IWRM in Azerbaijan discusses draft National Water Strategy

Baku, 29 November 2011 - A consultation with international experts from the Finnish Environmental Institute (SYKE) on the draft National Water Strategy for Azerbaijan was held at the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources. The experts and the main national stakeholders discussed the further development of the National Water Strategy for submission to the Steering Committee, tentatively to be held in May 2012. A workshop on the National Strategy will be held back-to-back to this meeting.

Seventh Steering Committee meeting under the EU Water Initiative NPD in Armenia



Yerevan, 8 December 2011 - The Seventh meeting of the Steering Committee of the NPD on IWRM stressed the importance of national and regional projects that support implementation of IWRM in Armenia and highlighted the improved coordination among ongoing projects. A pilot project in the Debed River basin was presented. This project reviews the use of economic instruments in the river basin and water management plan, and aims to explore ways to strengthen their use for managing water demand, promoting low costs options, and raising additional revenues for water policies in the basin. The main outcomes of the Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) pilot project in the upper Hrazdan River basin of Armenia were presented by the "Geoinfo" LLC.



Future plans of work in 2012 (the schedule is tentative, meeting dates may change)

21 Feb	Working group meeting in Tbilisi, Georgia
29 Feb	Regional Meeting in Tbilisi on the Kura river basin (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia)
23 March	NPD meeting on preliminary findings from OECD project in Chisinau, Republic of Moldova
30 March	Workshop organised by the Ministry of Water Economy with the participation of UNECE in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan
11 April	Steering Committee meeting in Yerevan, Armenia
17 April	Steering Committee meeting in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan
18 April	Steering Committee meeting in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic
2 nd half of May	Steering Committee meeting and a seminar back to back in Tbilisi, Georgia
22 May	Workshop on National Water Strategy in Baku, Azerbaijan
23 May	Steering Committee meeting in Baku, Azerbaijan
25 May	Steering Committee meeting in Dushanbe, Tajikistan
31 May-1 June	NPD meeting on impacts of climate change on WSS and on sustainable business model(s) for operating and financing water sanitation systems in rural areas and small towns in Chisinau, Republic of Moldova
12-14 June	Stakeholder and expert group meetings in Yerevan, Armenia
Mid June	Steering Committee meeting in Kiev, Ukraine
6 July	EUWI NPD EECCA component Core group meeting in Geneva, Switzerland
Sept	Steering Committee meeting in Astana, Kazakhstan
18 Sept	Steering Committee meeting in Baku, Azerbaijan
17 – 19 Sept	Steering Committee meeting in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic
21 Sept	Steering Committee meeting in Tbilisi, Georgia
Early Oct	Steering group meeting in Moscow, Russian Federation
16-17 Oct	Steering Committee meeting in Dushanbe, Tajikistan

19-20 Oct	Steering Committee meeting in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan
November	Steering Committee meeting in Tbilisi, Georgia
29 Nov	Steering Committee meeting in Yerevan, Armenia
End of November	Steering group meeting in Tashkent, Uzbekistan
Early December	Workshop (or Steering Committee meeting) in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic

Publications and reports

The **EUWI NPD IWRM programme brochure** in English and Russian is available at

<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=20848>

The report on **Introduction of Payment for Ecosystem Services schemes in Upper Hrazdan Pilot River Basin of Armenia** (October 2011) is available at

<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=27213>

The **Roadmap on NPD on IWRM in Tajikistan** (December 2011) is available in Russian language at

<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=27204>

Other publications related to the process are available at Publications page

http://www.unece.org/env/water/npd_publications

and at Meetings and Events page

http://www.unece.org/env/water/npd_meetings

Under the **OECD-led NPDs on WSS** the following publications have been **issued in 2011**:

Ten Years of Water Sector Reform in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia, OECD, 2011;

Proceedings from the Regional Meeting on Private Sector Participation in Water Supply and Sanitation in EECCA, OECD, 2011;

National Policy Dialogue on Financing Urban and Rural Water Supply and Sanitation in the Kyrgyz Republic, OECD, 2011;

Establishing a Dynamic System of Surface Water Quality Regulation: Guidance for Countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia, OECD, 2011;

Guidelines for Performance-based Contracts between Water Utilities and Municipalities: Lessons Learnt from Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia, OECD, 2011.

All OECD publications are available at <http://www.oecd.org/water>

Contact us

Ms. Gulnara Roll, the previous manager of the UNECE National Policy Dialogue programme, has moved to another position within the organization. We thank her for her great efforts and appreciate very much that she will continue to be involved in some NPDs in Central Asia. On questions concerning NPD/IWRM at UNECE please contact Mr. Bo Libert and Ms. Iulia Trombitcaia who are taking over the responsibility until the replacement of Ms. Roll is in place. Ms. Trombitcaia will focus on the Central Asia and Mr. Libert on countries of Eastern Europe and Caucasus. Ms. Elina Mirzoeva will continue to support the work and be part of the NPD team. In OECD the contact persons for NPDs are Mr. Xavier Leflaive (Head of the Water Team), Ms. Tatiana Efimova and Mr. Alexandre Martoussevitch.

Dear colleagues, we would be happy to include your contributions in the next issues of this newsletter. Please send your contribution, up to 300 words, in English and/or Russian by 6 April 2012 to npd@unece.org. Photos are very welcome!

Please also feel free to post your information on our [Facebook](#) page! Yours, EU Water Initiative NPD Team at UNECE.

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