

Annex I.

Annotated agenda of the Second Meeting of the Coordination Group on a Regional Space for Water and Environmental Information

Almaty, 18-19 February 2016

18. February

10.00 Opening of the meeting

Opening statement by the UNECE and GIZ

The statements summarize the outcomes of the first meeting and outline the objectives of the second meeting of the Group

Opening statement by other participants (optional)

10.30 Presentation of the results of the questionnaire on challenges to the development of a regional space on water and environmental information

The questionnaire listed twenty challenges and problems that may complicate / hinder the development of the regional information space. Answers to the questions are expected to help focus the work of the Coordination Group on areas where progress would support the development of the information space in the most efficient manner.

Discussion

11.00 Agreed indicators, methodology and procedures

a) Presentation of existing practices

- SIC ICWC / BVO Amudarya / BVO Syrdarya
- SIC ICSD / CAREC
- Regional Centre of Hydrometeorology
- CDC "Energy"

The SIC-ICWC supported CAWATER-info.net provides key indicators and a knowledge base, including analyses. At the same time proposals to further improve the scope of agreed indicators and the financing and stability of the service have been on the table in recent years. The ICSD's Ecoportal has significantly improved the scope and quantity of available environmental information but it needs to improve further, e.g. identify and use a greater number of reliable sources of information and present more substantive data / information on the state of the environment in Central Asia, using selected environmental indicators. Recent programmes to improve hydro meteorological services included among others

infrastructure development and improved communication and IT but shortcomings remain, including lack of easy to find websites offering operative information on water resources and the energy sector besides meteorological forecasts. Websites offering substantive information on the energy sector are difficult to find at the country or at the regional levels.

11.30 Coffee break

11.45 Continuation of the discussion: developing recommendations for harmonized indicators, methodology and procedures

Introductory remarks by UNECE and CAREC

Participants of the first meeting of the Coordination Group emphasized that no single information system is able to provide the very broad range of complex data, analysis and forecast that is required by various stakeholders and various levels of decision makers working in different areas. Providers of information need to work together in a coordinated way to develop the unified information space.

Participants will discuss how to achieve the provision of sufficient quality and quantity of substantive information (data and analysis) in all areas covered by the information space, how to ensure complete, harmonised coverage and eliminate potential overlaps through the use of agreed, comprehensive sets of indicators in all relevant areas (water, energy, hydro meteorology and environment). It will also be discussed how to create a user friendly and easy to navigate space and avoid duplication by the introduction of a network of links among websites. The need for involving additional information providers (websites) to better cover such issues as soil degradation, desertification or climate change could also be discussed.

Need for capacity building (e.g. on methodology for analysis and modelling, etc.) could also be addressed by participants. Indicators identified by SEIS could be used to complement the presently used indicators and to achieve complementarity with other international websites.

13.00 Lunch break

15.00 Improving information flows

Review of existing practices: information flows among key producers and users of data

Introductory remarks by EC IFAS, ICWC and ICSD Secretariats

Participants of the first meeting pointed to insufficient information flows and coordination both among ministries and agencies at the national level (water, energy, environment, hydro meteorology) and among regional organisations and institutions as well as international organisations and donors. Experience of collecting information from IFAS member states, donors and partners on implementation of projects contained in ASBP3, information flows between governments and BVO-s as well as among IFAS organisations and institutions, donors and international organisations will be discussed.

16.30 Coffee break

16.45 Continuation of the discussion

Proposals to develop recommendations on improving information flows will be discussed.

18.00 End of the meeting

19.00 Reception

19. February

10.00 Developing a modern, harmonized legal basis for information management

Introductory remarks by UNECE, the Regional Centre on Hydrometeorology and SIC ICWC

*A modern legal basis for information management (e.g. protocols or agreements) could cover harmonised monitoring requirements, agreements on data sharing and management as well as harmonisation of the scope, content and links among websites that constitute the information space. The session should start with a review of existing practices. **Participants are encouraged to circulate the legal documents (or links to websites where they are accessible) that regulate information management in their area of responsibility.***

Participants of the first meeting of the Coordination Group could discuss the following options:

a) Developing terms of reference for a comparative analysis of the existing legal basis and recommendations for its modernisation and harmonisation

b) Developing a model (or draft) data exchange protocol

c) Developing conceptual elements for a regional agreement on information exchange

11.15 Coffee break

11.30 Continuation of the discussion

13.00 Lunch

15.00 Defining the scope and format of information for decision support

Introductory remarks by ICWC and ICSD Secretariats and EC IFAS. Presentation of existing practices: use of information to prepare work plans, meetings, decisions of regional organisations and institutions

As a first step towards strengthening decision support through the provision of comprehensive, agreed, easy to interpret sets of information to decision making bodies, these bodies need to define their own information needs. The group will be invited to develop recommendations on decisions by these bodies on the scope and format of information that is used to prepare work plans, agendas, draft resolutions, etc. and for the monitoring of their implementation. The idea of regular consultations on cross-sector

issues (e.g. IWRM) and long-term strategies, using a comprehensive set of data and analysis could also be discussed.

16.30 Continuation of the discussion

Participants will be invited to discuss the development of a long-term plan (road map) for regional cooperation on information management.

17.30 Summary by the Chair, next steps

18.00 end of the meeting