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Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

**Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic
and Environmental Activities**

Vienna, 5 March 2007

To: All OSCE Delegations
Partners for Co-operation
Mediterranean Partners for Co-operation

Subject: **Second Preparatory Conference to the 15th OSCE Economic
and Environmental Forum, Zaragoza, Spain, 12-13 March
2007 – Introductory Note**

Please find attached an **Introductory Note** for the Second Preparatory Conference to the 15th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum: “Key challenges to ensure environmental security and sustainable development in the OSCE area: Water Management”, to be held in Zaragoza, Spain, on 12-13 March 2007.



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

**Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE
Economic and Environmental Activities**

Vienna, 5 March 2007

Second Preparatory Conference to the 15th OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum

“Key challenges to ensure environmental security and sustainable development in the OSCE area: Water Management”

Zaragoza, Spain, 12-13 March 2007

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

The Human Development Report of 2006 “Beyond Scarcity: Power, Poverty and the Global Water Crises”¹, points out that the world is not, in a meaningful sense, running out of water. However, the report notes that water insecurities pose a threat to development. “Competition, environmental stress and unpredictability of access to water as a productive resource are powerful drivers of water insecurities for a large proportion of the global population”.

The challenges related to the management of water resources are complex and require integrative approaches that take into account the multiple functions of water which span from supplying clean drinking water, serving as a marketable commodity and as a key input to agriculture, industry and maintenance of ecosystems. With this in mind, it is important to note the political dimension of water. The 4th World Water Forum² in Mexico in 2005 concluded that: “Water is a political issue. It is a tremendous vehicle for enhancing democracy, public participation and for empowering local stakeholders. (...) When politicians disregard their responsibilities over water, water becomes at risk.”

Within the OSCE region there are 180 watercourses extending over the territory of more than one country.³ Moreover, due to the increase of countries, thus Participating States, within the OSCE region, from 35 to 56 in the span of the last 15 years, rivers once governed by authorities of one single country are now subject to the sovereignty of two, three or more countries. Hence, improving governance of water resources is of high priority for the OSCE and is a prerequisite for achieving the goals as set out in the Maastricht Strategy Document for the economic and environmental dimension

¹ <http://hdr.undp.org/hdr2006>

² <http://www.worldwaterforum4.org.mx/home/home.asp>

³ UNECE

that calls on the OSCE to, through co-operation, enhance development, security and stability. Good governance principles, transparency, combating corruption and the enhancement of public and private co-operation are furthermore areas highlighted in the Maastricht document and particularly relevant to the water sector, both at a national and international level.

Choosing water management as a subtopic of the 15th Economic and Environmental Forum enables the organisation to take stock of previous experience and to build on the results of previous Economic Fora. The 2002 Economic Forum on Sustainable use and protection of the quality of water was the stepping stone to develop several projects and initiatives in the area. After five years, it is time to evaluate the experience and the knowledge obtained.

Water, conflict and co-operation

Although water historically has been seen as an issue of concern in terms of conflict, it is now widely recognized that water issues largely foster cooperation, rather than the opposite. Comprehensive research by Aaron Wolf of Oregon State University has firmly established that international violent conflict is seldom, if ever, caused by, or focused on, water resources.⁴ However, the research showed that water-related conflict tended to be internal – between local groups and not between states. Access to water and water allocation can lead to tensions which may potentially spill over into conflict, within or even between states.

Although population growth leads to an increased demand for water and poses pressure on water resources, it is important to note that often it is not the actual lack of water that leads to tensions but rather the way in which water is governed and administered. Water scarcity is usually rather a result of supply difficulties than a matter of physical availability. “Whether water is scarce or not, the highly complex and sensitive nature of its availability, use, and allocation requires strong, capable mechanisms and institutions to negotiate and balance competing interests and to manage this vital resource.”⁵

For these reasons, it may be advisable to foster both water strategies as well as drought management plans where needed. These should, in turn be integrated into general hydrological planning, together forming tools for managing the resource and the possible lack of it, minimizing potential conflicts and promoting efficient management and use of water in all water availability situations.

In short, the mutual need to share water resources can serve as an incentive to forge peaceful co-operation between societal groups and support stakeholder dialogue. Broad participation in decision-making at different levels, facilitated by strengthened civil society groups, helps to mitigate tensions arising from the allocation of water resources and is essential for smooth democracy. Between states, improved data and

⁴ See Water, Conflict and Cooperation, by Aaron Wolf
http://www.ifpri.org/2020/focus/focus09/focus09_14.htm

⁵ OECD (2005), Water and Violent Conflict - <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/26/5/35785565.pdf>

information sharing and joint water management institutions, as well as harmonized legal frameworks are crucial for sustaining efforts to reduce the risk of conflict.

Mechanisms for addressing the above concerns can be improved through multilateral and bilateral agreements and national plans. At the national level integrated water resource management and integrated watershed management are essential tools, in tandem with draught management plans. Integrated water resource management takes into consideration that water has more than one use or function, such as irrigation, potable water and industrial use. Integrated watershed management, on the other hand, encompasses the entire watershed system, with a focus on the water budget of an entire basin. However, it is important to note the international aspects of a water basin, thus the need for international cooperation, also on the level of integrated water resource and watershed management.

In sum, water issues present a ripe opportunity for proactively employing, above all, the transboundary and non-substitutable qualities of water as a cornerstone of confidence building, including between different groups within society. With this in mind, the work of the OSCE may play an important role in employing water issues as a strategic factor of development and peace. In particular, the cooperation with the UNECE, within and outside of the ENVSEC initiative, using the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes as a standard, may be strengthened, both through cooperation between the organisation and through signing and ratification by those countries that have not yet ratified the convention. Implementation should also be improved.

The Economic Dimensions of Water

The economic dimension of water is a further concern. The World Bank estimates that 20-40% of water sector finances are presently being lost to dishonest and corrupt measures.⁶ Biased decisions on the allocation and location of water service point, pipe systems and waste water treatment, often result in inefficient delivery of water supply and inefficient management of water resources, thus reducing economic growth and discouraging further investment.

Due to the high precedence of monopolies with high potential for discretion and the non-standardised procedures of procurement and tendering, the water supply and sanitation sector is particularly prone to corruption. Such corruption does not only hinder economic development but also undermines democratic quality and increases social injustice. In other words, corruption in the water sector promotes excessive use of water resources and thereby undermines sustainable development.

Another factor that often leads to mismanagement and misallocation of water is the absence of information in relation to ecosystem values. Due to the high value of ecosystems in improving water supply, reducing water-related disasters and providing goods and services for consumption and production, it is important to include the value of ecosystems in water related policies and price settings. Otherwise, water

⁶ Water Integrity Network, 2006 - <http://www.waterintegritynetwork.net/>

decisions will be economically and ecologically sub-optimal and result in degradation of these ecosystems and loss of their economic value.

The Importance of Data and Value

Integrity of the water sector also points towards the scientific community and the integrity of data. Not only need it be accurate, it needs to be shared. In particular, there is a concern with upholding scientific integrity in issues which relate to policy making as well as the health of the public. There is a need for joint bodies for compiling and evaluating water pollution sources likely to cause a transboundary impact, as well as establish joint monitoring programmes regarding water quality and quantity. Finally, the access to such information ought to be available to citizens of a country and is dealt with under the Aarhus Convention. The OCEEA therefore supports and promotes the principles of the Aarhus Convention.

Emergency response and disaster preparedness

The security dimension of water governance constitutes an essential topic of information and experience exchange within OSCE participating States. Therefore it ought to remain one of the priorities of research activities, leading to sound emergency plans and thus ensuring security aspects of consequences to any downstream areas.

In this context, both quantity and quality issues, in terms of disaster management, are to be taken into account. Security implications of flooding and pollution disasters can for example, be dealt with using Early Warning Systems, which translate into disaster preparedness and quick responses. Complementing this, emergency plans for dams aim at minimising risks in order to offer secure and uninterrupted services.

Concluding remarks/Expected outcomes

Water issues, being complex in nature, are highly challenging to comprehensively cover them in a few days. It is also not the aim of the OCEEA to do so. However, with the above issues in mind, the Economic and Environmental Forum of 2007 will examine and evaluate former and future actions of the OSCE, related to the water sector.

- Has the work, so far, fostered cooperation, reduced risks of conflict and adhered to the Maastricht document?
- What needs and could be done better?
- Are there areas and issues where the organisation would have an added value in further engaging in? What would they be?
- Where may further dialogue need to take place, and at what level (national, regional)?

- Would it be important to engage in dialogue in the OSCE region, on corruption practises in the water sector?
- Are there areas of hot-spots, both thematic and geographical, where the organisation may wish to assist through its activities?
- So far, the organisation has supported institutional frameworks, networks, legislation and data gathering in terms of water issues. Should the OSCE further engage in supporting institutions, data gathering and handling and/or strategic national planning, such as national water plans, drought management plans?
- How would this involvement tie into international cooperation and transboundary plans?
- Who would be our most relevant partners?
- How do we encourage, and should we, field offices to engage in water issues?

These are all questions, answers to which will steer the work of the Secretariat for the forthcoming years and we rely on the participating States to guide us in this respect. Your active participation in the Forum process is thus highly appreciated.

OSCE experience in fostering transboundary water co-operation

1) *South Eastern Europe – Sava River*

The Sava River is shared by Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia. Prior to the disintegration of Yugoslavia, the entire Sava River Basin fell within the boundaries of one country and was managed through national institutions. Today it is shared by four states and represents an international river. This poses a challenge to jointly creating a state-of-the-art river basin management regime.

In December 2002, the four countries entered into a process of co-operation for the sustainable management of the water resources of the Sava River basin. The International Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin, signed by the Sava countries on December 3, 2002, provides the principles and mechanism for this regional co-operation. The OSCE has provided continued support to the Sava Process and offered a neutral ground for discussions and developed in co-operation with the UN Institute for Training and Research a project on creating a network of local actors concerned about water resource management (Municipalities, NGOs, Associations, Water Services Companies, etc). Regularly organized national workshop enabled representatives of stakeholders from each municipality to discuss the common problems and the possibilities of co-operation.

2) *Eastern Europe – Dniester River*

OSCE played a crucial role in the international support for increasing co-operation of the governments of the riparian States, Moldova and Ukraine, in the management of the Dniester River.

Working under the platform concept, OSCE developed the project idea together with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), which provided its extensive expertise in international river management. The project consisted of a diagnostic study of the river basin produced by national and international experts, aimed at enhancing regional cooperation between Moldova and Ukraine. In the diagnostic study it was concluded that the transboundary cooperation between Moldova and Ukraine needs to be developed. A narrow scope of the institutions involved in cooperation, lack of public participation and limited access to and exchange of information are examples of bottlenecks. At the request of the Ministries of Environment of Moldova and Ukraine, a follow-up project is currently being implemented, with the key output being an agreed Action Programme. A new Dniester River Basin Agreement, cooperation on information exchange and on sanitary-epidemiological cooperation, are topics to be included in the Action Programme.

3) *Central Asia – Chu Talas*

In Central Asia, the OSCE has in co-operation with the UNECE and the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) supported the project in establishing an intergovernmental transboundary water commission

between the governments of Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan, including developing the Commission statute and other actions aimed at effective implementation of a bilateral agreement on Chu-Talas, signed in 2000.

In parallel, the OSCE developed a project aiming at supporting public participation in transboundary water management of Chu and Talas rivers through communication with major stakeholders and promoting the awareness of the Commission and water authorities in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan about interests and needs of the local stakeholders.

4) South Caucasus –OSCE/NATO South Caucasus River Monitoring Project

Water management issues are one of the key environmental issues in the South Caucasus countries as well as an important confidence-building activity in a region with protracted political conflicts. In this regard, the OSCE and NATO (Security through Science Program), as a direct consequence of the Baku Preparatory Seminar for the 2002 Economic Forum, developed the OSCE/NATO South Caucasus River Monitoring Project. One of the few truly regional projects of its type in the South Caucasus, it has facilitated a cooperative transboundary water management and monitoring project between the scientific communities of each of the three South Caucasus countries utilizing the Kura-Araks Watershed. Beyond the initial objective of re-establishing a systematic monitoring system, the project has managed to defuse tensions resulting from claims from countries on contamination and misuse of water resources.

Water related activities, initiatives and organizations (selected examples)

United Nations Economic Commission in Europe (UNECE)

Comprising 56 member countries, the UNECE strives to foster sustainable economic growth by providing a forum for communication, conducting economic analysis, and developing and promoting international legal instruments addressing trade, transport and the environment; supplying statistics and economic and environmental analysis.

As regards the area of water management, the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes has proved to be a viable tool to strengthen national measures for the protection and ecologically sound management of transboundary surface waters and groundwaters. The Convention provides a legal framework for regional cooperation on shared water resources (rivers, lakes and groundwaters). Several bilateral or multilateral agreements are based on the principles and provisions of this Convention, as for instance the Danube River Protection Convention from 1994, which developed the Convention's provisions in a more specific subregional context. Other examples are the agreements on the rivers Bug, Meuse, Rhine and Scheldt, on Lake Peipsi, as well as on Kazakh-Russian and Russian-Ukrainian transboundary waters.

Among others, the Convention also lays the responsibility for setting up joint bodies on the Parties which are riparian to the same transboundary waters. Such bodies can be bilateral or multilateral river or lake commissions. It is up to these joint bodies to identify pollution sources, to monitor and assess transboundary waters and to draw up concerted action plans and put them into practice. Joint bodies also help to develop integrated water resources management and water efficiency plans in a transboundary context as stipulated in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in September 2003.

A particular challenge for joint bodies is to provide a forum for sharing information on best available technology and on existing and planned uses of water and related installations. Joint bodies are responsible, in particular, for establishing warning and alarm systems and for mutual assistance. They also participate in environmental impact assessments following, for example, the provisions of the UNECE Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context.

<http://www.unece.org/>

Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI)

The Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI) is a policy institute advocating future-oriented, knowledge-integrated water views in decision making, that lead to sustainable use of the world's water resources and human progress. SIWI has several spheres of activity, as for instance organising the annual World Water Week in Stockholm, a global water forum bringing together water experts and decision-

makers. Through different commissioned assignments, SIWI is also involved in a number of international water projects, above all within the policy area.

<http://www.siwi.org/>

World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD)

The World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) is a CEO-led, global association of some 190 multinational companies dealing exclusively with business and sustainable development.

The Council provides a platform for companies to explore sustainable development, share knowledge, experiences and best practices, and to advocate business positions on these issues in a variety of forums, working with governments, non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations.

Members are drawn from more than 35 countries and 20 major industrial sectors. The Council also benefits from a global network of 55+ national and regional business councils and regional partners.

The Council's objectives are to:

- Be a leading business advocate on sustainable development;
- Participate in policy development to create the right framework conditions for business to make an effective contribution to sustainable human progress;
- Develop and promote the business case for sustainable development;
- Demonstrate the business contribution to sustainable development solutions and share leading edge practices among members;
- Contribute to a sustainable future for developing nations and nations in transition.

The WBCSD Water and Sustainable Development Program aims to:

- Clarify and enhance business understanding of key water issues and drivers,
- Promote mutual understanding between the business community and non-business stakeholders on water management issues, and
- Provide tools and models to support effective business action.

www.wbcsd.org

Fundación Entorno - Business Council for Sustainable Development, Spain, is a private organization founded, in 1995, by some of the most important Spanish companies.

Its mission is to work with business leaders in helping them approach the challenges of sustainable development through a variety of business opportunities.

Fundación Entorno-BCSD Spain is the Spanish member of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD).

Its goals are two-fold and mutually reinforcing:

- To provide better business leadership as a catalyst for a change toward sustainable development.
- To support the business license to operate, innovate and grow in a world increasingly shaped by sustainable development issues.

Their Work Program addresses sustainable development at different levels, from a policy of development to its implementation, and is built on different Focus Areas, Sector Projects and Initiatives.

In Spain, 19 companies such as Acciona, Adif, Cemex Spain, Consulnima, DuPont Ibérica, Endesa, Elcogas, Ericsson Spain, FCC Construcción, Fundación Grupo Eroski, Gas Natural, Grupo Empresarial ENCE, Grupo Ferrovial, Holcim Spain, Philips Ibérica, Repsol YPF, Red Eléctrica, Telefónica and Unilever Spain participate in some of the existing working groups:

- Climate Change and Energy.
- The role of business in tomorrow's society.
- Sustainable Construction.

www.fundacionentorno.org

Human Development Report (HDR)

Though commissioned by UN Development Programme (UNDP), the Human Development Report (HDR) represents an independent report which main objective is, going beyond income, to assess the level of people's long-term well-being. Each Report focuses on a highly topical theme in the current development debate, providing in-depth analysis and policy recommendations. The HDR 2006 has chosen "Beyond scarcity: Power, poverty and the global water crisis" as subject and analyses the challenges we face today in the water and sanitation sector and looks at the scope for international cooperation to resolve cross-border tensions in water management . The report includes research and analysis by international experts and staff across the UN system and is intended to stimulate debate and dialogue around a set of issues that will have a profound bearing on progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals⁷ and human development.

<http://hdr.undp.org>

Water Integrity Network (WIN)

The Water Integrity Network (WIN), formed in 2006, stimulates anti-corruption activities in the water sector at local, national and global level. It promotes solutions-oriented action and coalition-building between civil society, the private and public sectors, media and governments. WIN founders are the International Water and Sanitation Centre (IRC), Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI), Swedish

⁷ <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>

Water House (SWH), Transparency International (TI), and Water and Sanitation Program-Africa (WSP-Africa) but WIN is open to any organisation and individual that put anti-corruption on their agendas. WIN is committed to accountability, transparency, integrity, honesty, mutual support and knowledge exchange among its members.

WIN's focuses on other sectoral anti-corruption, good governance and reform experiences and makes them water-specific. Specifically, WIN members foster awareness and deeper understanding of corruption; diagnose the extent and map the breadth; identify concerns and issues; research and disseminate information, methodologies and best practices; promote practical tools and interventions; develop monitoring mechanisms; encourage individuals to coordinate and collaborate; and build capacity.

<http://www.waterintegritynetwork.net/>

Global Water Partnership (GWP)

The Global Water Partnership (GWP) was established in order to meet the need of a new coordinating organisation as identified at the Dublin Conference on Water and the Environment in 1992 and the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. By pulling together financial, technical, policy and human resources, the GWP aims at promoting a comprehensive approach to water management based on the principles of integrated water management. The GWP represents a comprehensive partnership that includes a wide range of members: government agencies, public institutions, private companies, professional organizations, multilateral development agencies and others committed to sustainable development principles in the water sector. Today, GWP is mainly concerned with identifying knowledge needs at global, regional and national levels and helping to design programs for meeting these needs. Furthermore, the partnership provides a viable mechanism for alliance building and information exchange on integrated water resources management.

<http://www.gwpforum.org/>

World Water Assessment Programme (WWAP)

The World Water Assessment Programme is an UN-wide programme that seeks to develop the tools and skills needed to achieve a better understanding of those basic processes, management practices and policies that will help improve the supply and quality of global freshwater resources.

Specifically, the goals of WWAP are to:

- assess the state of the world's freshwater resources and ecosystems;
- identify critical issues and problems;
- develop indicators and measure progress towards achieving sustainable use of water resources;
- help countries develop their own assessment capacity;

- document lessons learned and publish a World Water Development Report (WWDR)⁸ at regular intervals.

The United Nations World Water Development Report (WWDR) is published every three years and coordinated by WWAP. It is the result of collaboration between 24 UN agencies and convention secretariats. Through a series of assessments, the Reports provide a mechanism for monitoring changes in the resource and its management and tracking progress towards achieving targets, particularly those of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), and assists in the development of standardized methodologies for those activities. The first report, Water for People, Water for Life (WWDR1), was published in 2003, and the second report, Water a Shared Responsibility (WWDR2), was presented at the 4th World Water Forum in Mexico on March 22, 2006.

The WWDR seeks to answer the questions being asked by the international community: how far have we come towards meeting the targets of sustainable development? How far have we yet to go? What actions can we take to make the path smoother, and faster? In today's changing world, the Report takes stock of past actions, present challenges, and future opportunities in order to provide decision-makers with up-to-date, reliable information that can help to change the ways in which we use water.

In addition to an overview of the world's water, the WWDR also provides several case studies in order to assist countries in undertaking their own national assessments and it also helps to inform the process of setting priorities for international action at all levels.

<http://www.unesco.org/water/wwap/>

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

The Development Assistance Committee (DAC, www.oecd.org/dac) is the principal body through which the OECD deals with issues related to co-operation with developing countries. The DAC Network on Conflict, Peace and Development Co-operation (CPDC, www.oecd.org/dac/conflict) is the international forum that brings together conflict prevention and peace-building experts from bilateral and multilateral development agencies, including from the UN system, EC, IMF and World Bank. These experts meet to define and develop common approaches in support of peace. The CPDC is a subsidiary group of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC). The CPDC Network is producing concise and accessible guidance on a range of topics, for use by development agency staff, diplomats and state and non-state partners. These issues briefs aim to:

- Help individuals working in, and on, conflict prone and conflict affected countries and extend their understanding of the inter-relationship between their activities and the dynamics of conflict and peace;

⁸ http://www.unesco.org/water/wwap/wwdr1/table_contents/index.shtml

- Outline entry-points and provide programme advice to address the challenges faced when implementing projects at field level;
- Gather good practices by agencies and other international actors in different contexts;
- Suggest sources for working in partnership and for further information.

A recent Issue Brief on Water and Violent Conflict can be accessed at:

<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/26/5/35785565.pdf>

European Commission – the European Water Framework Directive

European Water Policy has undergone a thorough restructuring process, and a new Water Framework Directive (WFD) has been adopted in 2000 as an operational tool, setting the objectives for water protection for the future. The WFD provides an innovative approach since the Framework Directive:

- Protects all waters - rivers, lakes, coastal waters, and groundwaters.
- Sets ambitious objectives to ensure that all waters meet “good status” by 2015.
- Sets up a system of management within river basins that recognises that water systems do not stop at political borders.
- Uses a combined approach of emission limit values and quality standards.
- Requires cross border co-operation between countries and all involved parties.
- Ensures active participation of all stakeholders, including NGOs and local communities, in water management activities.
- Ensures reduction and control of pollution from all sources like agriculture, industrial activity and urban areas, etc.
- Requires water pricing policies and ensures that the polluter pays.
- Balances the interests of the environment with those who depend on it.

The WFD argues that the best model for a single system of water management is management by river basin - the natural geographical and hydrological unit - instead of according to administrative or political boundaries. Initiatives taken forward by the States concerned for the Maas, Schelde or Rhine river basins have served as positive examples of this approach, with their cooperation and joint objective-setting across Member State borders, or in the case of the Rhine even beyond the EU territory. For each river basin district - some of which will traverse national frontiers - a “river basin management plan” will need to be established and updated every six years, and this will provide the context for the co-ordination requirements identified above. The plan is a detailed account of how the objectives set for the river basin (ecological status, quantitative status, chemical status and protected area objectives) are to be reached within the timescale required. The plan will include all the results of the above analysis: the river basin's characteristics, a review of the impact of human activity on the status of waters in the basin, estimation of the effect of existing legislation and the remaining “gap” to meeting these objectives; and a set of measures designed to fill the gap. One additional component is that an economic analysis of water use within the river basin must be carried out.

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/index_en.html

The European Union Water Initiative (EUWI)

At the 2002 World Summit for Sustainable Development in Johannesburg (WSSD), the EU launched a Water Initiative (EUWI) designed to contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and WSSD targets for drinking water and sanitation, within the context of an integrated approach to water resources management. The EUWI is conceived as a catalyst and a foundation on which future action can be built to contribute to meeting the water and sanitation MDGs.

The goals of the EUWI are:

- To halve by 2015 the proportion of people who are unable to reach or afford safe drinking water and the proportion of people who do not have access to adequate sanitation
- To establish national water resource management plans by 2005

The EUWI uses a modular or building block approach. It puts together a cluster of building blocks that assist in bringing different stakeholder activities within a common framework. The EUWI aims to add value to ongoing activities within the EC and EU Member States to improve collaboration with partners in other regions. It seeks to provide an enabling environment for complementary actions within the thematic areas. A set of demonstration projects helps to provide examples of good practice.

The EUWI is based on a participative multi-stakeholder approach. Various strategic partnerships in specific regions draw together government, civil society, private sector and other stakeholders. A number of working groups has been established. Working groups have either a regional/thematic focus (e.g. Water Supply and Sanitation in Africa) or they concentrate on cross-cutting issues (e.g. Research, Finance). An advisory board and a steering group ensure coherence of all EUWI activities.

<http://www.euwi.net>

International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR)

The International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) works to ensure the sustainable and equitable use of waters and freshwater resources in the Danube River Basin. The work of the ICPDR is based on the Danube River Protection Convention, the major legal instrument for cooperation and transboundary water management in the Danube River Basin.

The International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR) is a transnational body, which has been established to implement the Danube River Protection Convention. The ICPDR is formally comprised by the Delegations of all Contracting Parties to the Danube River Protection Convention, but has also established a framework for other organisations to join. Today national delegates, representatives from highest ministerial levels, technical experts, and members of the

civil society and of the scientific community cooperate in the ICPDR to ensure the sustainable and equitable use of waters in the Danube River Basin.

Since its creation in 1998 the ICPDR has effectively promoted policy agreements and the setting of joint priorities and strategies for improving the state of the Danube and its tributaries. This includes improving the tools used to manage environmental issues in the Danube basin, such as:

- the Accident Emergency Warning System,
- the Trans-National Monitoring Network for water quality, and
- the information system for the Danube (Danubis).

The goals of the ICPDR are:

- Safeguarding the Danube's Water resources for future generation
- Naturally balanced waters free from excess nutrients
- No more risk from toxic chemicals
- Healthy and sustainable river systems
- Damage-free floods

<http://www.icpdr.org>

The Petersberg Process and the Athens Declaration

The **Petersberg Process** is an initiative jointly coordinated by the German Government and the World Bank, launched in March 1998. Under Phase I of the process a ministerial level roundtable was held at Petersberg, Germany, that resulted in the "Petersberg Declaration" which supports "water as a catalyst for cooperation." This was followed by roundtables of senior level experts on transboundary river basin and lake management (Berlin), lessons learned from management of transboundary waters in the Baltic Sea Region (Vilnius), experience in the Rhine River Basin (Bonn); and a special meeting on transboundary water management to support preparation of the World Bank Water Resources Strategy (Berlin). The Petersberg Process is intended to provide support to translate into action the current developments and opportunities for future cooperation on transboundary river, lake and groundwater management in SEE. The Petersberg Process is a joint effort of the German Federal Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety and the World Bank. The Petersberg Process is currently entering its Phase II.

The **Athens Declaration Process** is a joint effort of the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the World Bank, launched at the International Conference on "Sustainable Development for Lasting Peace: Shared Water, Shared Future, Shared Knowledge", 6-7 May 2003, Vouliagmeni/Athens, Greece. The Athens Declaration Process is intended to assist SEE countries, in cooperation with relevant stakeholders, to prepare IWRM and water efficiency plans for major river basins and lakes, including a range of complementary interventions, with a coordinated mechanism to allow for exchange of information and experience between activities.

The two, Petersberg Process and Athens Declaration, processes have been linked in order to generate synergies and maximize the outcomes for the benefit of the SEE region, rather than duplicate activities and consequently efforts.

The Petersberg Process Phase II / Athens Declaration Process has become a reference for many other processes and activities in the region. The Process would complement European Union (EU) integration processes, the Stabilisation and Association process of the European Union and other ongoing initiatives in the region. It contributes directly to the scope and objectives of the Mediterranean Component of the EU Water Initiative (MED EUWI).

Interstate Coordination Water Commission (ICWC) of Central Asia

On February 18, 1992 five Ministers of Water Resources of Central Asian states signed in Almaty the “Agreement on cooperation in joint management, use and protection of interstate sources of water resources”. Actually, this agreement founded a united body – the Interstate Coordination Water Commission (ICWC). This Agreement was confirmed by the Decision of the Presidents, Kzyl-Orda, March 26, 1993, and their “Agreement on joint actions on resolving the problems related to the Aral Sea and its coastal zone on environmental sanitation and social-economic development in the Aral Sea region”, and later by Agreement of the region's five countries of April 9, 1999 “On status of IFAS and its organizations”.

The Interstate Commission for Water Coordination (ICWC) is celebrating its 15th anniversary this year and is a parity collective body of Central Asian States acting on the basis of equity, equality and consensus. According to the Decision by the Heads of State of March 23, 1993, ICWC was included in the International Fund for saving the Aral Sea (IFAS) and has the status of an international organization.

ICWC from the very outset had 3 executive bodies newly established Secretariat and earlier existed two basin water organizations (BWO); BWO “Amudarya” and BWO “Syrdarya”, which were engaged in water resources allocation and head structures, interstate canal beds and structures serviceability maintenance and solved all issues, related to efficient water resources management in five countries and water supply to the Aral Sea and its coastal zone.

The Scientific-Information Center (SIC), which would fulfil planning, development, informing and other functions and brings together more than 16 scientific and project organizations of Agreement member countries, and its national branches were established. Coordination Metrological Center (CMC) was started up in 2000.

Main directions of ICWC and its executive bodies' practical work are:

- River basin management;
- Non-conflict water allocation;
- Organization of water conservation on transboundary water courses;
- Interaction with hydro meteorological services of the countries on flow forecast and account;
- Introduction of automation into head structures;

- Regular work on ICWC and its bodies activity advancement;
- Interstate Agreements preparation;
- International relations;
- Scientific researches;
- Training.

<http://www.icwc-aral.uz>

The International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (IFAS)

To overcome the ecological crisis and to improve the socio-economic situation in the Aral Sea basin is recognized by world community to be one of the greatest catastrophes of the XX century, the Heads of the Central Asia Governments in year 1993 created the International Fund for saving the Aral Sea. IFAS is an interstate organisation established in order to fund and credit joint regional environmental and research programmes and projects aimed at saving the Aral Sea and improving the environmental situation in the areas affected by the disaster as well as solving regional socio-economic problems.

The basic directions of the Fund's activity are:

- financing and crediting of joint interstate ecological and scientific - practical programmes and projects aimed at the Aral sea saving and the recovery of the ecological situation in the districts subject to the Aral sea disaster, and also the solution of the general socio — ecological problems of the region;
- financing of the joint fundamental and applied researches, scientific - technical developments on the rehabilitation of ecological balance, rational natural resources use and environment protection;
- creation and maintaining of the functioning of the interstate ecological system of monitoring, database and other systems on the conditions of the Aral sea environment;
- mobilisation of funds for joint measures on the air basin, water and land resources, flora and fauna protection;
- financing of joint scientific - technical projects and developments on transboundary water resources management;
- participation in the implementation of international programmes and projects on Aral sea saving and Aral sea basin ecological recovery.

The International Fund for saving the Aral Sea carries out the activity on the basis of Council of the Heads of states decisions, IFAS Board, IFAS Regulation, Agreements on the status of the International Fund for saving the Aral Sea and its organizations, etc.