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Caspian Environment Program Regional Center for Pollution Control (RCPC)

Workshop on Scope of Work and Work Programme

Summary and findings of the workshop

1. Scope of Work and Work Programme

The RCPC Scope of Work and Work Programme for the initial assessment of pollution control needs of the Caspian Region were discussed during a 2-day workshop the 15-16 December 1998 held in Baku, Azerbaijan. Representatives from the 5 riparian Countries: Azerbaijan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia and Turkmenistan participated in the workshop, and fruitful discussions and exchange of viewpoints were undertaken. The following main topics were discussed under the following headings during the workshop:

Major environmental problems of the Caspian Sea
Links and areas of co-operation of the thematic centres/overlapping activities
Scope of Work and Work Programme of the RCPC

1. Major environmental Problems of the Caspian Sea related to Pollution Control

The major environmental problems envisaged by the representatives of the countries were presented and discussed among the participants. The presentation of the environmental problems by the delegates of the Riparian countries revealed a keen interest of solving the environmental problems of the Caspian Sea in a co-ordinated effort and under the umbrella of the Caspian Environment Programme.

2. Links to other centres/overlapping activities

The links and areas of co-operation with other thematic centres were discussed during the workshop, and especially the links and areas of co-operation of the following centres:

- Regional Centre for Pollution Control
- Regional Centre for Pollution Monitoring
- Regional Centre for Legal Aspects and Economic Instruments

The role and functions of the RCPC is described in the Scope of Work and Work Programme of the RCPC (October 1998) and was subjected for discussions at the workshop.

The scope of work of all of the mentioned centres is in the progress of preparation. It was recognised that because the progress of the centres have not been developed time wise in parallel, some activities undertaken in the initial assessment of pollution control needs of the Caspian region

will be the responsibility of other centres. It was clear from the discussions that the Regional Centre for Pollution Control can not undertake its tasks without having e.g. ambient monitoring and emission control data, data and information of legal and regulatory aspects, as well as other data. The mentioned data should on the long-term perspective be obtained from the other thematic centres under the CEP. At present sufficient data is not available in the thematic centres, which all is in the process of establishment.

The results of the initial assessment will further develop the Scope of Work and Work Programme of the RCPC and be presented to all thematic centres for discussion. It were further recognised by the participants that the development of the Scope of Work for the centres is a process, which will developed with the technical progress of the centres.

The major future functions of centre are expected to be the promotion of improved Pollution Control measures and cleaner production, development of pollution control strategies, preparation of a programmes for pollution control and cleaner production, preparation of guidelines for improved environmental management, public awareness raising, implementation of pilot projects, and other issues related to pollution control.

The RCPC was recommended to take an active role (in due time) to support Regional Centre for Legal Aspects and Economic Instruments by preparing guidance documents, technical reports, recommendations and other technical input as required.

From the exchange of views it was clear that especially the areas of co-operation, as well as the division of work among the RCPC and the Regional Centre for Pollution Monitoring, would need to be developed further and that a co-ordinated effort is needed in order to reach the common goal - the protection of the Caspian Sea.

3. Scope of Work and work plan

The following comments, recommendations and revisions were given:

Objectives, outputs and activities of the RCPC

The objectives, outputs and activities of the RCPC were discussed and it was agreed that the scope of work and work programme for the initial assessment were comprehensive covering a variety of environmental issues. A number of the issues require close co-operation with the Regional Centre for Pollution Monitoring Centre in Islamic republic of Iran, the Regional Centre for Legal Aspects and Economic Instruments, Russia, as well as other thematic Centres under the CEP. Upon description of the Scope of Work and Work Programme for all thematic centres a more detailed mechanism of co-operation of the activities undertaken under the CEP would be developed even further.

It was eventually concluded that the described objectives, outputs and activities were an appropriate starting point for the initial assessment and could serve as starting point for further discussions for the scope of work of the among other thematic centres. A special effort by the RCPC and the Regional Centre for Pollution Monitoring needs to be taken in order to co-ordinate their scope of work and activities.

The mode of operation of the centre

The following points were discussed and agreed upon:

In each country the Government of the country should identify a counterpart institution/working group to the Regional Centre for Pollution Control. The counterpart then represent their respective governments on issues related to Pollution Control and Prevention, through participation in workshops, comment on the results produced by the Center, etc. The counterpart for the regional Centre for Pollution Control should preferably be identified within the structures of the "Ministry (State Committee) of Ecology", or structures which has the responsibilities of Pollution Control and Prevention. The counterpart institutions in each country will liase with the national focal point of the country, as appropriate.

In each country the technical work to be undertaken will be agreed with the National Focal Point or the designated counterpart institution. The technical work will be undertaken on a contractual basis. For each country, the technical work will most probably be organised differently taken into account local conditions in order to obtain a high quality result and an efficient organisation of the technical work

It was agreed that all countries should identify a counterpart institution/working group to the RCPC, as soon as possible. The centres future activities should be undertaken through the identified counterpart institutions or the National Focal Point in each country, as appropriate.

4. Co-ordination of the activities of the Thematic centres.

As a result of the seminar it was agreed that a task force with participants from the RCPC and the Regional Centre for Pollution Monitoring should be established for the co-ordination of the Scope of Work of the 2 centres. The Regional Centre for Pollution Monitoring will initiate the preparation of their Scope of Work and Work Plan, as soon as possible. Based on the Scope of Work and the Work Plan of the 2 Centres a meeting will be held in Islamic Republic of Iran in early February with participation of the 2 centres, preferably before the Steering Committee Meeting also in February 1999.

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