

# **Terms of Reference of the Monitoring and Assessment (Water Quality) Expert Group (MA EG) of the ICPDR<sup>1</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> adopted at the 9<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Meeting of the ICPDR in Vienna, 11/12 December 2006

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The MA EG is an Expert Body of the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR).
- 1.2 The ToR provide a mandate to the MA EG to take action in the subject areas described below. The ToR also provide guidance to the work, which the MA EG is expected to undertake, and to its general working arrangements.

## **2. Objective**

The overall objective of the MA EG is to provide the ICPDR with information on the state of the waters in the Danube River Basin and, in line with the DRPC and the relevant EU legislation, to organize the monitoring programmes (or compilation of monitoring information) necessary to ensure that the appropriate information is available.

## **3. Responsibilities**

- 3.1 The MA EG is responsible for initiating, guiding and ensuring the successful completion of the work required under its ToR.
- 3.2 The MA EG will report regularly to the ICPDR and its Standing Working Group on the implementation of ongoing activities, on proposed activities and the results achieved.
- 3.3 Proposed activities with policy or financial implications for the ICPDR must be approved, in advance, by the ICPDR.

## **4. Main tasks of the MA EG**

The MA EG is entrusted to carry out the following main tasks:

- 4.1 steer the joint operation of the TNMN by coordinating the relevant monitoring and assessment activities carried out in each Contracting Party;
- 4.2 maintain the TNMN database, in particular the quantity and quality of data collected in cooperation with national (hydrological) services, and continuously upgrade its structure as necessary (in particular it should be ensured that the database is compatible with and supports the information requirements under the WFD).
- 4.3 develop the TNMN reporting format and upgrade it as required to ensure its compatibility with reporting formats used within EU (EEA);
- 4.4 improve the setup of the monitoring systems within the TNMN for the assessment of chemical, physico-chemical, biological and hydromorphological quality elements in line with WFD requirements and based on practical experience gained;
- 4.5 improve understanding and develop of criteria for assessment of status and impacts and assessment trends of status and impacts, including those for hydromorphological impacts and the designation of heavily modified water bodies;
- 4.6 review and update the monitoring methodologies and analytical procedures for the determinants monitored within the TNMN;

- 4.7 ensure performance tests of analytical and monitoring methods, as agreed and used within laboratories participating in the TNMN, are carried out using appropriate quality assurance procedures (ISO/EN compatible); improve the quality assurance procedures of laboratories (the selected national reference and regional laboratories) in order to improve the comparability of data;
- 4.8 evaluate training requirements related to the TNMN operation and organise trainings on relevant subjects (monitoring, intercalibration, analytical methodologies, reporting) for target audiences (national reference laboratories, national information centres, etc.);
- 4.9 prepare yearbooks on the state of waters;
- 4.10 report annually on the Danube loads discharged into the Black Sea in line with the MoU between the ICPDR and BSC, and cooperate with the Danube-Black Sea Joint Technical Expert Group in assessing the overall impact of the Danube to the status of the Black Sea;
- 4.11 support basin-wide harmonisation in characterisation of surface water body types according to Annex II of the WFD;
- 4.12 give guidance and scientific advice to the assessment of ecological and chemical status of surface waters leading to the overall ecological and chemical classification of water bodies for the purposes of the WFD;
- 4.13 harmonise the approaches used by the Contracting Parties for the assessment of the susceptibility of the status of surface water bodies to the relevant pressures (assessment of impacts);
- 4.14 guide the process of establishing the comparability of biological monitoring results in the Danube River Basin District by performing and managing a basin-wide intercalibration exercise, and cooperation with the EC (JRC) therein;
- 4.15 coordinate, at the level of the Danube River Basin District, the activities towards characterisation of the status of relevant transboundary groundwater bodies;
- 4.16 develop, in line with WFD requirements, transboundary groundwater monitoring in the Danube River Basin District;
- 4.17 if needed, organise, in line with WFD and DRPC requirements, basin-wide monitoring surveys (Joint Danube Surveys) focussed primarily on filling the data gaps and strengthening basin-wide harmonisation;
- 4.18 maintain, operate and further develop the Accident Emergency Warning System (AEWS) in the Danube River Basin;
- 4.19 report annually on the performance of AEWS as well as on the accidents which triggered AEWS;
- 4.20 review its ToR on a regular basis and propose amendments for approval by the ICPDR;
- 4.21 prepare a Work Programme for future activities of the MA EG. This will be prepared according to the requirements of the ICPDR and should include action(s) planned for the following year (in detail), and for subsequent years (in outline);

- 4.22 establishment - subject to the approval of the ICPDR or its Standing Working Group - and guidance of time limited Task Groups to provide needed input to fulfil the tasks listed above;
- 4.23 prepare appropriate information about MA EG activities for dissemination to interested bodies and the public.

## **5. Cooperation with other ICPDR bodies**

The MA EG will collaborate closely with all other EGs, in particular the RBM EG and PM EG.

## **6. Membership**

- 6.1 The MA EG consists of the representatives as nominated by the Contracting Parties to be a standing member of the MA EG. Additional experts may also participate in meetings if their particular specialist knowledge is required.
- 6.2 Each Contracting Party may propose candidates (one or more) to participate in time-limited Task Groups organised to address specific issues.
- 6.3 Representatives of other organisations may become accredited observers to the MA EG and/or its Task Groups by following the relevant procedures of the ICPDR relating to observer status.

## **7. Working Arrangements**

The general working arrangements for the MA EG are provided by the ICPDR Rules of Procedure.