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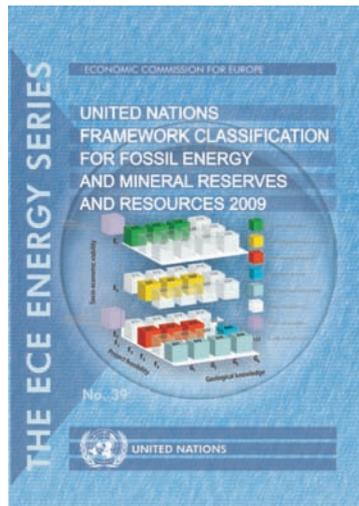
Economic Commission for Europe

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EU COUNCIL ENCOURAGES ENDORSEMENT OF UNECE'S WORK ON STANDARDIZATION

Following its Competitiveness (Internal, Industry, Research and Space) Council meeting in Brussels on 10 March, the Council of the European Union encouraged "the Commission to act as a facilitator in the exchange of best practices and to ... endorse the work of UNECE on standardization and reporting of reserves and resources". The Commission had noted in its Communication of 2 February 2011 to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions Commission its intent to "promote the work of UNECE in the area of standardization concerning reporting of reserves and resources at EU-level".

UNECE's work on this topic is carried out by the Expert Group on Resource Classification, whose key focus is the further development and global promotion and implementation of the United Nations Framework for Fossil Energy and Mineral Reserves and Resources (UNFC). UNFC is the only modern classification system in the world that has been developed to address the minerals, petroleum and uranium sectors using a single set of definitions.



EuroGeoSource, an EU co-funded project, also announced on 10 March at its international conference in Budapest that it will use the UNFC to harmonize energy and mineral resource data. The aim of the project is to develop the EuroGeoSource web GIS system – a multilingual application that will allow users to identify, access, use and re-use aggregated geographical information on geo-energy and mineral resources from ten EU project partner countries (other EU countries are also likely to offer their data). Of the ten participating countries, three are using the UNFC of 1997 (Bulgaria, Portugal and Romania), four are using a version based on the Russian classification system (Estonia, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia); and three are using the SPE-PRMS for petroleum and national systems for minerals (Belgium, Denmark and the Netherlands). Bulgaria, Portugal and Romania are undertaking work to update to 2009 version of the UNFC. As a result of this project all ten countries will either use the UNFC directly or be mapped to it. The Expert Group on Resource Classification has offered assistance with this. The next meeting of the Expert Group will be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on 6-8 April. □

For more information, please visit:
<http://unece.org/energy/se/reserves.html>
or contact Charlotte Griffiths at:
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UNECE CO-ORGANIZES NATIONAL POLICY DIALOGUE ON INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN TAJIKISTAN

The First Steering Committee meeting of the European Union (EU) Water Initiative National Water Policy Dialogue on integrated water resource management (IWRM) in Tajikistan will take place in Dushanbe on 16 March. The National Policy Dialogue on IWRM Steering Committee meeting is organized by the Tajik Ministry of Land Reclamation and the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), with the support of the United Nations Development Programme in Tajikistan.

The meeting will be opened by the Minister of Land Reclamation and Water Resources of Tajikistan, Rahmat Bobokalonov, and Special EU Representative to Central Asia, Ambassador Pierre Morel.

The main focus of the National Policy Dialogue is the development of the Government of Tajikistan Water Sector Strategy based on IWRM principles, including the river basin management approach. Transboundary water cooperation with neighbouring Kyrgyzstan, as well as

Afghanistan (management of the Upper-Amu Darya Basin), is another important issue on the National Policy Dialogue agenda.



Radical reforms in the agricultural and water sectors are ongoing in Tajikistan. It is expected that as an outcome of the ambitious Water Sector Reform, water management in Tajikistan will be transferred from administrative units to river basin authorities, which should be created during 2011–2013. Further on, a long-term IWRM strategy is planned to be developed. To oversee development of the Tajikistan Water Sector Strategy, the long-term IWRM policy and their implementation, the Government of Tajikistan has established an inter-ministerial National Policy Dialogue on IWRM Steering Committee consisting of high-level officials representing 20 ministries and agencies.

The National Policy Dialogue on IWRM activities in Tajikistan are supported by the EU through the EU Water Initiative, UNECE and the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. □

For more information, please visit: www.unece.org/env/water/npd.

Not an official record - For information only

UNECE SEMINAR ON INTERNATIONAL WATER COOPERATION IN TAJIKISTAN, 14-15 MARCH



A two-day national seminar on international water cooperation was organized on 14-15 March in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, to discuss the role of international law, including the UNECE Convention on

the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention), in strengthening international cooperation on water resources management.

The seminar was held in the wider context of the upcoming International Year of Water Cooperation (2013), declared by the United Nations General Assembly's resolution initiated by Tajikistan.

Water from Tajikistan represents 55 per cent of the total flow in the Aral Sea basin, which is shared by the five Central Asian States — Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan — as well as by Afghanistan. This puts Tajikistan at the core of Central Asia's political stakes surrounding the use and allocation of water resources.

Few countries in the world can match the hydropower potential of Tajikistan, and hydropower is Tajikistan's greatest economic resource. At present, however, only 5 per

cent of its economically feasible potential is exploited through large and small hydropower plants. Tajikistan's plans to develop new hydropower stations are the central focus of the regional debate over the use of water and energy resources. The impacts of climate change and the expected increase in water use by Afghanistan is a challenging background for developing long-term solutions for regional cooperation over shared waters.

Seminar participants discussed the mechanisms of international water law, and the place and role of the UNECE Water Convention in facilitating the effective transboundary water cooperation of Tajikistan and the promotion of cooperation over shared water resources in the Central Asian region. The seminar will deepen understanding of the Convention's provisions and of its benefits for the region. Participants also had an opportunity to find out about the role of the UNECE Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention) in ensuring cooperative and sustainable management of shared water resources.

The seminar was organized in cooperation with the Ministry of Melioration and Water Resources of the Republic of Tajikistan. It took place in the framework of the programme "Regional Dialogue and Cooperation on Water Resources Management in Central Asia", financed by the Government of Germany through Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH under the Berlin Water Process, with additional financial support from Switzerland. □

For further information please visit: <http://www.unece.org/env/water/npd.htm> or contact Bo Libert at: bo.libert@unece.org.

ELECTRONIC CONSIGNMENT NOTE OFFERS ROAD TRANSPORT INDUSTRY 21ST CENTURY SOLUTION



With growing trade volumes and increasingly complex supply chain procedures, ensuring the efficient movement of goods is crucial. To this end, Governments are adapting traditional legal instruments to new technologies by implementing "e-governance" solutions. The latest development is the possibility of using electronic consignment notes in international road transport.

On 7 March 2011, the conditions for the entry into force of the "Additional Protocol to the Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Goods by Road (CMR) concerning the Electronic Consignment Note" — also known as the e-CMR — were met as Lithuania became the fifth State to deposit its

The entry into force of the Protocol is of particular importance as it establishes the legal framework and standards for using electronic means of recording and storing consignment note data, thus making information transfer faster and more efficient than with paper-based systems. In particular, the consignment note, as well as any demand, declaration, instruction, request, reservation or other communication relating to the performance of a contract of carriage to which the CMR Convention applies, may be carried out by electronic communication. The e-CMR will reduce the scope of error in dealing with identification and authentication of signatures.

The CMR agreement, of which the Protocol is part, regulates the contracts for the transport of goods by road. It was established in 1956 and currently has 53 Contracting Parties. In view of the importance of e-CMR, it is hoped that all Contracting Parties to the CMR will adhere to the Protocol, for smooth implementation of its provisions in all 53 countries. Discussions about the electronic consignment note for international road transport started in 1997 at the UNECE and the Protocol was signed on 27 May 2008. □

instrument of ratification (together with Bulgaria, Latvia, the Netherlands and Switzerland). As a result, the Protocol will enter into force on 5 June 2011, in accordance with article 8(1).

For more information please visit: <http://www.unece.org/trans/main/sc1/sc1.html?expandable=99> or contact: infotransport@unece.org.

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