



SAVE WATER, GROW GREEN!
ENVIRONMENT FOR EUROPE
7th MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE
ASTANA, KAZAKHSTAN 21-23 SEPTEMBER 2011

Newsletter

GETTING CLOSER TO ASTANA

The preparations for the Astana-2011 Environment for Europe Conference enter their final stage

On 24 May 2011 the Committee on Environmental Policy will open in Geneva for a special session to discuss the final preparatory activities for the Seventh "Environment for Europe" Ministerial Conference to be held in Astana, Kazakhstan on 21-23 September 2011.

The Committee is expected to approve the Conference agenda as well as the two substantive documents prepared on the Conference's two main themes, i.e., on sustainable management of water and water-related ecosystems, and on greening the economy: mainstreaming the environment into economic development.

The Committee will establish a drafting group to prepare the draft ministerial declaration and will agree on its composition. Furthermore, the Committee will discuss other possible outcomes of the Conference, in particular the draft Astana Water Action for sustainable management of water and water-related ecosystems prepared by interested stakeholders under the leadership of the Chair of the Water Convention Bureau and a draft partnership programme of the "Green Bridge" Initiative developed by Kazakhstan jointly with interested partners.

The special session is the last formal step in the preparatory process for the Astana Conference, and a lot of work still has to be done. This includes agreeing upon the ministerial declaration, launching and committing to various initiatives to be announced at the Conference, preparing for multi-stakeholder roundtable discussions, developing inputs for the Conference exhibition and side events, and many other substantive and practical issues. It is important that at this final stage all partners mobilize their efforts and resources to make an effective contribution to the Ministerial Conference.

More information on the work of the Committee on Environmental Policy is available at:
<http://www.unece.org/env/cep/welcome.html>.

"Assessment of Assessments" report is open for consultations

The Committee will be briefed on progress in preparing the "Europe's Environment: An Assessment of Assessments" (EE-AoA) report. A prototype report of the EE-AoA will be circulated among the delegations by the European Environment Agency prior to the Committee's session. The UNECE Steering Group on Environmental Assessments (SGEA) will hold its third meeting in Geneva on 23 May 2011, in order to proceed with finalization of the EE-AoA report.

The draft prototype report of EE-AoA in English and Russian is available for consultation at

<http://aoa.ew.eea.europa.eu/europe-s-environment-assessment-assessments/europe-s-environment-assessment-assessments/>

The report presents the broad strategic implications of the EE-AoA for assessment activities and for Shared Environment Information System (SEIS) to support environmental governance and green economy priorities in the pan-European area and globally. It also presents a broad overview of the context, methodology and results of the EE-AoA exercise focused on the two broad priorities of the Astana conference and draws out some main conclusions and recommendations.

Comments can be made on-line on the AoA portal chapter-by-chapter, and paragraph-by-paragraph as necessary.

The EE-AoA findings build on the information provided by the countries and organisation and collected through the extensive review of literature made via the Virtual library/Review template and on country fiches.

These consultations will contribute to reaching a consensus on common areas for action on which to build concrete recommendations.

The consultation is open until 31 May 2011.

Four sub-regional AoA reports covering Eastern Europe, Caucasus, Central Asia and Russian Federation have also been posted at the AoA portal. The consultation process of these reports was organised separately and findings from these sub-regional reports have also been used in preparing the EE-AoA report.

ASTANA WATER ACTION

A supporting tool for Governments

The "Astana Water Action" is an initiative proposed by the Bureau of the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) as a possible outcome of the Astana Ministerial Conference. It is a collection of possible actions for improving the status of water and water-related ecosystems through their sustainable management. A draft version was developed in spring 2011 by the Chairperson of the Water Convention Bureau, assisted by the Bureau, the Water Convention secretariat and a drafting group composed of nominated members.

The actions are meant to serve as a supporting tool with concrete suggestions for Governments for an improved implementation of their past commitments in water management, assessing the current status of actions in support of sound water management and identifying priorities. Due to the different situations in countries of the UNECE region in terms of the status and management of their water and water-related ecosystems, the actions are not ranked or evaluated in a systematic way. The Astana Water Action recognizes that priorities for actions differ among countries reflecting the current state and actual challenges to water management.

The actions include measures for a more effective valuation and protection of water-related ecosystems; policies and measures to address human health issues related to water quality and quantity; priority actions for adapting water management to extreme weather events and to climate change; recommendations for improving transboundary water management and for increasing water efficiency by different users and finally ways to encourage investments to take into account the impacts on water quantity and water quality, energy and resource efficiency and vulnerable populations.

The initiative is an invitation to Governments and other stakeholders to commit on a voluntary basis to implement some specific actions contained in the Astana Water Action and to report on their successes and

further challenges on water issues at the next "Environment for Europe" Ministerial Conference.

See draft Astana Water Action at:

<http://www.unece.org/env/documents/2011/ece/cep/ece.cep.s.2011.l.4.e.pdf>

THE "GREEN BRIDGE" PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME

Kazakhstan, as the host country of the Seventh EfE Ministerial Conference, intends to present for the attention of the Conference a "Green Bridge" Partnership Programme for the period 2011–2020. The main aim of the programme is the development of partnership between countries of the European and the Asia and Pacific regions to contribute to transitioning from traditional economic models to green economy.

The Partnership Programme builds on and further develops the Astana "Green Bridge" Initiative endorsed at the sixth Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific (MCED-6), organized by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in Astana from 27 September to 2 October 2010. The key thematic areas of the Initiative include: (a) eco-efficient use of natural resources and investment in ecosystem services; (b) low carbon development and adaptation to climate change; (c) promotion of sustainable urban development; (d) promotion of green business and green technology; and (e) promotion of sustainable lifestyles and improvement of the quality of life.

The proposed Partnership Programme was discussed at a meeting on 5th of May 2011 in Astana, Kazakhstan. The outcomes of the discussion that took place during this meeting will be presented during the Special Session of the Committee of the Environmental Policy in Geneva.

THE SECOND ASSESSMENT IS CLOSE TO BEING FINALIZED

The twelfth meeting of the Water Convention's Working Group on Monitoring and Assessment (WGMA, 2-4 May 2011, Geneva) under the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) reviewed the different parts of the second Assessment of Transboundary Rivers, Lakes and Groundwaters in the UNECE region which is being prepared as a major input document for the Astana Ministerial Conference. The second Assessment provides an up-to-date overview of pressures, status and trends in managing transboundary waters of the region, highlighting joint priorities for strengthened knowledge base for further action. More than 150 transboundary rivers, 40 lakes and some 200



transboundary groundwater occurrences have been assessed in close cooperation with the national environment and water administrations in the European and Asian parts of the UNECE region.

The assessments prepared for all the subregions, i.e., South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, Eastern and Northern Europe, Central Asia and Western and Central Europe were endorsed. On 4 May 2011, the second Assessment was also discussed at the joint session of the WGMA and the Working Group on Integrated Water Resources Management under the Water Convention, where the two groups focused on the main findings and messages for the different subregional assessments as well as the executive summary of the Assessment.

The secretariat presented the maps and graphics to be included in the second Assessment which were commented on by the participants.

More information is available at:

http://www.unece.org/env/water/assessment_activ.htm
and

http://www.unece.org/env/water/meetings/documents_WGMA.htm.

Name of the meeting	Dates	Venue
Steering Group on Environmental Assessments, 3 rd meeting	23 May 2011	Geneva
Committee on Environmental Policy, Special Session	24–27 May 2011	Geneva
Meeting of the CEP Bureau	24 May 2011	Geneva
Committee on Environmental Policy	20 September 2011	Astana

Deadlines for Registration

13 June 2011	Submission of the registration forms for conference to the UNECE secretariat
21 August 2011	Submission of the registration of media representatives to the host country secretariat

Practical information

Registration

The registration for government delegations, representatives of intergovernmental organizations and the private sector for the Astana Conference is open at <http://www.unece.org/env/efe/Astana/participation.html> until 13 June 2011.

Information for non-governmental organizations

Up to 200 representatives of NGOs may attend the Conference. Delegates from NGOs should contact the European ECO-Forum (by email to european.eco.forum@gmail.com with a copy to NGOregistrationEfe@wecf.eu) who is organizing the nomination process and forming the NGOs delegation (the registration form will be available on the website of the European ECO-Forum). The list of NGO delegates should be submitted to the UNECE secretariat by 13 June 2011.

Mass media

Representatives of the mass media should submit an accreditation form directly to the host country secretariat in Astana by 26 August 2011.

Information about side-events, exhibition and business fair can be found at the host country website www.eng.efe.kz

The logistical information about hotels, visas, transportation and other practical arrangements will soon be posted on the host country website.



The screenshot shows the website for the Seventh "Environment for Europe" Ministerial Conference in Astana, Kazakhstan, 2011. The page features a banner with the conference title and dates, a navigation menu, a main menu, a registration button, and a map of the conference venue.

English/Русский

Main page Photo gallery Contacts search... Search

Main menu

- Conference News
- History
- Side events
- For participants
- Publications
- Press Center
- Organizers
- Partners and Sponsors
- Useful links

Partners and Sponsors

September 21-23, 2011
Astana, Kazakhstan
The Palace of Independence

Registration

- REGISTRATION
- EXHIBITION
- SIDE EVENTS

Conference venue

conference venue

Organizers

The Seventh "Environment for Europe" Ministerial Conference
Astana, Kazakhstan, 2011

At the Seventh Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" held in Astana (Kazakhstan) on 21-23 September 2011, will be discussed two main themes:

More information on the "Environment for Europe" process and preparations for Astana Conference is available at: <http://www.unece.org/env/efe/welcome.html>.

For enquiries, please contact: efe@unece.org.



UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE



GOVERNMENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN