



European Union Water Initiative Plus for Eastern Partnership Countries

Quarterly Information Update

(September 2016 – March 2017)

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1. GENERAL OVERVIEW

1.1 Introduction

This is the first quarterly information update on the implementation of the EUWI+ project; it covers an extended reporting period from September 2016 to the end of March 2017. The update has been prepared in consultation with each implementing partner.

Quarterly updates aim to provide key information on the project to the European Commission, EU Delegations and the key stakeholders of the six Eastern Partnership countries. The updates are intended to be published on the project website to provide access to a wider audience including international projects and interested stakeholders.

1.2 Current Project Status

The EUWI+ project is currently in its inception phase which started on 1 September 2016. The project was kicked off through a high level regional meeting held on 19-20 September 2016 in Kyiv, Ukraine. The kick-off meeting aimed to close the EPIRB project and introduce the EUWI+ project. National kick-off meetings in all 6 EaP countries followed in November-December 2016. The inception phase will culminate with the first EUWI+ regional Steering Committee on 15-16 May 2017 in Brussels.

1.3 Objectives of Quarter

This extended first quarter of the project had the following objectives:

- Mobilisation of resources for the implementing partners;
- Extensive consultations with key stakeholders, including government agencies in EaP countries, EU Delegations and NGOs;
- Identification and prioritisation of country needs jointly with key local stakeholders in each EaP country;
- Drafting of an Inception report;
- Organisation of First Regional Steering Committee Meeting.

1.4 Timeline

The work flow in the reporting period followed a timeline as outlined below:

- High level regional kick-off meeting (September 2016);
- Specific in country missions (November – December 2016);
- Exchange of country needs and priorities (January – February 2017);
- Follow up country missions (January – March 2017);
- Analysis of country priorities and development of draft national and regional work programmes (January – March 2017); and
- National level presentation of draft work programmes (March – April 2017);

In addition, drafting of the project inception report began in February 2017 and this draft will be circulated for comment at the end of April 2017.

The dates were agreed for presentation of the inception report at the first EUWI+ Regional Steering Committee on 15-16 May 2017.

2. COUNTRY QUARTERLY REPORTS

Part 2 contains country specific chapters which provide further details on the activities in each country.

2.1 Armenia

2.1.1 Meetings held in September 2016 – March 2017

2.1.1.1 High-level kick-off meeting

The EUWI+ project high level-kick off meeting was organised in Armenia on December 13 2016. The meeting was attended by about 50 representatives of beneficiary organizations, diplomatic representations and international organisations, journalists, TVs and news agencies. Opening remarks were made by H.E. Mr. Piotr Switalski, Ambassador, Head of the European Union Delegation to the Republic of Armenia and by H.E. Mr. Artsvik Minasyan, Minister of Nature Protection of the Republic of Armenia. The event was widely covered by First Armenian Public TV, as well as other TVs, news agencies¹, and corresponding press releases were issued in the websites of the Ministry of Nature Protection and the State Committee on Water Systems of the Ministry of Energy Infrastructures and Natural Resources of Armenia.

2.1.1.2 Bilateral meetings with beneficiary organisations

Several missions of the representatives of the EUWI+ project team were organized during the inception phase of the project, to coordinate the preparation of country workplan for Armenia for the period 2017-2020.

- On November 14, 2016, a bilateral meeting between representatives of UNECE and the Ministry of Nature Protection (First Deputy Minister Mr Khachik Hakobyan and Head of Water Agency Mr Vahan Davtyan) was held in Geneva to discuss the preliminary list of national priorities.
- On December 14-15, 2016 bilateral meetings were held with the representatives of the Water Resources Management Agency (Ministry of Nature Protection), State Committee on Water Systems and the monitoring organizations, as part of the project kick-off mission to Armenia, with participation of the representatives of OECD, UNECE and EU Consortium Member States.

1)<http://www.1tv.am/hy/videos/2016/12/13/Առաջին-ըրատվական-17-00/51787>,

http://yerkirmedia.am/haxordumner/?list=PLaidpbWcSRG6pyR4pgeZETJQHTgQSecVH&id=3YAw_HumVt8,<http://www.mnp.am/?aid=5821>,<http://nt.am/am/news/231184/>, <http://www.tert.am/am/news/2016/12/13/waterResourcesManagement/2221776>,

<https://blognews.am/arm/news/425169/jrayin-resursneri-ardyunavet-karavarmann-yndaraj.html>, <https://www.facebook.com/ՀՀ-Բնապահպանության-նախարարություն-1379452678970091/>,

<http://www.slaq.am/arm/news/1145875/>, <http://www.aysor.am/am/news/2016/12/13/Արձվիկ-Մինասյան/1183640>

- On January 31-February 3 2017, representatives of the French International Office for Water had bilateral meetings on river basin management and planning issues, including field visits to the selected pilot river basins in Armenia. As part of the mission the project organised a small workshop with participation of beneficiary organizations and USAID Advanced Science and Partnership for Integrated Resource Development (ASPIRED) program on data management and data sharing issues.
- On February 15, 2017 representatives of UBA visited Armenia and had bilateral meetings on groundwater issues.
- On March 6-7, 2017, the Team Leader and Technical Advisor for Results 2 and 3 of the EUWI+ project visited Armenia as part of the second round of high-level kick-off missions. As part of the mission, a meeting with the First Deputy Minister of Nature Protection of Armenia was held.

2.1.1.3 Coordination with donors

Periodical coordination meetings were held with the USAID ASPIRED project, UNDP, ENPI-SEIS project, as well as the representative of KfW Bank in Armenia.

2.1.2 EUWI+ implementation and relevant recent developments in Armenia with implications for the EUWI+ project

2.1.2.1 EUWI implementation

- Based on written input by the Armenian focal point and bilateral meetings held, the EUWI+ team prepared a 2017-2020 summary work plan which was sent to national stakeholders for comments in late March 2017.
- Based on an urgent request by the Ministry of Nature Protection, UNECE hired two national consultants in January 2017 to start implementing proposed national priority #1, “Support to the working group of revising the Water Code of Armenia, particularly in development of a separate chapter on sanitation.”
- Preparations for the April 6, 2017 and April 7, 2017 NPD Steering Committee meetings were conducted.

2.1.2.2 Recent developments in Armenia with implications for the EUWI+ project

- On December 15, 2016, the Government of Armenia Resolution 1277-N was adopted on the merger of the 4 State Non-Commercial Organizations of the Ministry of Nature Protection of Armenia (Environmental Impact Monitoring Centre, Information-Analytical Centre, Waste Monitoring Centre and Hydrogeological Monitoring Centre) into one organisation – Environmental Monitoring and Information Centre, which, among other things, is in charge of surface and groundwater quality and groundwater quantity monitoring.
- On March 9, 2017 the River Basin Management Plan for Akhuryan River Basin District, developed with the support of the EU “Environmental Protection of International River Basins” project, was formally adopted through a Government of Armenia Resolution No 240-N.
- On March 21, 2017 Armenia and the European Union formally initialled the text of the new Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement, which among other things, includes obligations for Armenia to approximate its legislation to the following 5 Directives in the field of water quality and resources management: Water Framework Directive, Floods Directive, Urban Wastewater Directive, Drinking Water Directive and Nitrates Directive.

2.2 Azerbaijan

2.2.1 Meetings held in September 2016 – March 2017

2.2.1.1 High-level kick-off meeting, 28-29 November 2016

On November 28 2016 in Baku, Azerbaijan the EUWI+ project high level-kick off meeting was held. The meeting was attended by over 40 representatives of the EUWI+ project beneficiary and other national organizations, representatives of different international organizations in Azerbaijan, mass media, NGOs, scientific institutes, universities and others. Opening remarks were made by Mr. Firdovsi Aliyev, Deputy Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan Republic. It was noted that Azerbaijan currently in close cooperation with International organizations is implementing different programs on improvement of environment, including protection of water resources. Starting from 2010 in cooperation with UNECE and OECD within the NPD framework, work has been carried out to develop a national water strategy and this work will be continued in partnership with the new EUWI+ project to develop and implement water program of Azerbaijan Republic. Azerbaijan is located downstream of transboundary rivers and in order to solve existing problems related to water quality, water scarcity and other aspects of water management, Azerbaijan will be closely cooperating with international organizations and donor supported projects. Therefore MENR welcomes the new EUWI+ project initiative and thanks all members of implementing consortium for their intention to support Azerbaijan and other project countries to improve water management.

The EUWI+ Team welcomed meeting participants and briefly informed them about the purpose of the meeting and on program of 2 days discussions

The EUWI+ Team informed participants about activities to be implemented to support national level reform with regard to water management under the project.

Representatives of different beneficiary organizations thanked the project team for the presentation of project activities and actively participated in discussions on planning of project future work in Azerbaijan.

2.2.1.2 Meetings with beneficiary organizations

The EUWI+ project team meet with different beneficiary organizations during the inception phase of the project. The main focus of meetings were discussions of different aspects of preparation of the country work plan for Azerbaijan for the period 2017-2020.

On November 29-30, 2016 meetings were held with the representatives of different divisions of MENR working in water sector, Water Resources State Agency of Ministry of Emergency Situations, Azersu JSC, Amelioration JSC, laboratories and scientific organizations, as part of the project kick-off mission to Baku, with participation of the representatives of OECD, UNECE and EU Consortium Member States.

On February 2-3 2017 EUWI+ project team representatives of IOWater from Result 2 and Result 3 visited Baku to continue discussions on the inception phase and met with representatives of different organizations.

On February 22-23, 2017 the EUWI+ project team representatives for the Results 2 and 3 visited Azerbaijan as part of the second round of kick-off missions. As part of the mission, a meeting with representatives of MENR of Azerbaijan Republic and other beneficiary organizations to discuss pro-

ject activities and work plan took place. Meetings were also conducted in the EU Delegation, UNDP and WB missions in Baku to discuss project activities and also issues on cooperation and combining of efforts to assist Water Sector Reforms in Azerbaijan.

During February 22-24, 2017 representatives of UBA and French IOW visited different laboratories in Azerbaijan and met with the team of the EU funded Twinning project related to support of MENR for Atmosphere air quality monitoring system improvement to discuss issues related to improvement of performance of laboratories and different aspects of data management.

2.2.1.3 Coordination with donors

Periodical coordination meetings were held with the EU Twinning project related to support of MENR for Atmosphere air quality monitoring system improvement, EU SEIS project and UNDP-GEF Kura II project.

2.2.2 National Policy Dialogue in Azerbaijan

The NPD as a high-level multi-stakeholder meeting will be held in the next quarter on 26 April 2017 with participation of the team of EUWI+ project, UNDP GEF Kura II, EU Twinning project and different stakeholders.

2.2.3 EUWI+ implementation and relevant recent developments in Azerbaijan with implications for the EUWI+ project

2.2.3.1 EUWI+ implementation

Based on written proposals of beneficiary organizations on priority needs for support of the EUWI+ project for Azerbaijan and bilateral meetings held, the EUWI+ team prepared 2016-2020 summary work plan which will be sent to national stakeholders for comments in April 2017.

The draft EUWI+ work plan will be discussed during the upcoming NPD meeting .

2.2.3.2 Recent developments in Azerbaijan with implications for the EUWI+ project

MENR organised discussions with beneficiary organizations issues on updating of water legislation according to international practices, including adoption of Water and Sanitation Law, Law on Irrigation, Water Code and etc. Main attention was paid to close cooperation and work with EUWI+ and UNDP GEF Kura project(which also has started recently) project to make their work effective and avoid duplication in areas related to supporting to address issues on transboundary with Georgia and national level water management.

2.3 Belarus

2.3.1 Meetings held in September 2016 – March 2017

2.3.1.1 High-level kick-off

The EUWI+ High level-kick off meeting in Belarus was held on 21 November, 2016. The meeting was hosted by the key beneficiary ministry - the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment Protection (hereinafter – Minprirody) of Belarus, chaired by Ihar Kachanovskiy (deputy Minister) and attended by the EU Delegation in Belarus (project manager Philippe Bernhard), EUWI+ Implementing partners, and several officers representing Minprirody and its subordinated bodies. Specifically, Minprirody was represented by Svetlana Utochkina (deputy head of the Republican center for analytical control in the field of environmental protection), Ludmila Nupriyonok (head of division of the Republican center for analytical control in the field of environmental protection), Olga Vasniova (deputy head of Institute for geology of the Research and production center for geology), Alexandr Stankevich (director of Central research institute for complex use of the water resources) and Vladimir Korneev (head of the unit of water monitoring and cadaster of Central research institute for complex use of the water resources).

Opening remarks were made by Mr. I. Kachanovskiy, Deputy Minister, Minprirody of Belarus and by Mr P. Bernhard, project manager, EU Delegation in Minsk.

2.3.1.2 Bilateral meetings with beneficiary organizations

Several missions for the representatives of the EUWI+ project implementing partners were organised during the inception phase of the project to coordinate the preparation of country work plan for Belarus. The mission dates and key meetings are detailed below:

- On November 22, 2016, representatives of the Implementing partners visited:
 - Republican center for analytical control in the field of the environmental protection;
 - Republican center for hydrometeorology, radioactive control and environmental monitoring;
 - Central research institute for complex use of the water resources;
 - Institute for geology of the Research and Production Center for Geology.
- On January, 16-20, 2017, representatives of the Implementing partners visited:
 - Ministry natural resources and environmental protection;
 - Ministry of economy;
 - Ministry of food and agriculture;
 - Ministry of energy;
 - National Committee for statistic;
 - Ministry of housing and communal services;
 - Central research institute for complex use of the water resources.
- On February 14, 2017, representatives of the Implementing partners visited Institute for Geology of the Research and Production Center for Geology.
- On February, 27- March, 3, representatives of the Implementing partners visited:
 - Central research institute for complex use of the water resources;
 - Republican Centre of Hygiene, Epidemiology and Public Health;
 - National Committee for statistic;
 - Republican center for hydrometeorology, radioactive control and environmental monitoring, information and analytical center for surface water monitoring;

- Ministry natural resources and environmental protection.

2.3.1.3 EUWI+ project registration in Belarus

Three key documents are needed for project registration to progress in Belarus:

1. ToRs (in English and in Russian) - exist;
2. Project characteristic (in Russian) – draft characteristic prepared;
3. Project budget for Belarus – in process of preparation by representatives of UBA.

Once documentation is complete, the full package will be submitted by Minprirody and plans for the first National Policy dialogue will commence after registration.

2.3.1.4 Coordination with donors

Periodic coordination meetings were held with the project “Green economy for Belarus”.

2.3.2 EUWI+ implementation and relevant recent developments in Belarus with implications for the EUWI+ project

2.3.2.1 EUWI+ implementation

- Based on a written proposal of national priorities from *Minprirody* of Belarus, EUWI+ Implementing partners started drafting a summary work plan for 2017-2020 which was sent to national stakeholders for review and comments in April 2017.
- The local representative of Result 1 in Belarus was selected as the Central research institute for complex use of the water resources and the contract was signed on March 1, 2017.
- Central research institute for complex use of the water resources commended early preparatory work for consideration by Minprirody on a ToR for development the new Water Strategy of the Republic of Belarus till 2030.

2.3.2.2 Recent developments in Belarus with implications for the EUWI+ project

- On 01 March , 2017, an Inter-ministerial Coordination Council for use and protection of the water resources was established by the ordinance of Minprirody RB № 55-OD . The first meeting of Council is planned for June, 2017.
- Central research institute for complex use of the water resources with cooperation of the department of the regulation the pressure on air and water resources of Minprirody developed the document titled “Requirements for the design, development and compilation of River Basin Management Plans” – the document was approved by Minprirody on 26 April, 2017.

2.4 Georgia

2.4.1 Meetings held in September 2016 – March 2017

2.4.1.1 High-level kick-off meeting

The EUWI+ high level kick-off meeting for Georgia was conducted on December 01, 2016 in the Tiflis Palace Hotel. The meeting was attended by about 45 participants from key beneficiary organizations – Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection (MENRP) and the National Environmen-

tal Agency (NEA), as well as other government institutions, international project implementation teams, NGOs, academic institutions. Welcoming remarks to the meeting participants were made by Deputy Minister Ms. Ekatherine Grigalava - on behalf of the MENRP and by Mr. Alvaro ORTEGA APARICIO - on behalf of the EU Delegation to Georgia. In their speeches both speakers highly appreciated importance of the project for addressing Georgia's obligations towards EU-Georgia Association Agreement, particularly for approximation of water legislation and water management standards towards EU Water Framework Directive principles. The meeting was widely covered by several TV companies and electronic media, as well as MENRP and NEA official website and Facebook pages.

2.4.1.2 Bilateral meetings with beneficiary organisations

Several EUWI+ project team missions and meetings were organized during the inception phase in terms to define the country specific priorities and coordinate preparation of the Georgian workplan for the period of 2017-2020.

- On December 01-02, 2016 bilateral meeting were held in the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources between the Minister Mr. Gigla Agulashvili, Deputy Minister Ms. Ekatherine Grigalava, Head of International Relations and Environmental Policy Department, Head of Water Resources Management Service, Department of Environmental Impact Permits, Department of Environmental Inspectorate and the representatives of the EUWI+ project team: OECD, UNECE and EU Member States Consortium.
- On December 02, 2016 bilateral 'fact-finding' meeting was held in the National Environmental Agency of Georgia between the representatives of Department of Environmental Pollution Monitoring, Department of Hydrometeorology, Department of Geology, Laboratory of Air, Water and Soil and the EU Member States Consortium representatives of the EUWI+ project responsible for Laboratory Assessment and Monitoring activities, the Austrian Environmental Agency.
- On December 02, 2016 meeting was held with the EUWI+ project team and the MENRP partner institutions/NGOs experienced on River Basin Planning and Water Legislation: National Water Partnership - NWP, Georgia's Environmental Outlook – GEO, Regional Environmental Centre for Caucasus – RECC, Greentecs, LTD.
- On January 30-31, 2017 thematic inception follow-up mission was organised in Georgia with the participation of representatives of the French International Office for Water. The mission focused on the identifying priorities for the River Basin Planning, initial findings for data management needs and requirements for Stakeholder Involvement and Communication. The following bilateral meetings were held in the Georgian key beneficiary and partner institutions:
 - **MENRP** Environmental Policy and International Relations Department, Division of Sustainable Development and EU Integration
 - **MENRP** Head of International Relations Division
 - **MENRP** Head of Integrated Management Department and Head of Division of Water Resources Management
 - **NEA** Hydrometeorology Department, Environmental Pollution Monitoring Department
 - National Statistics Office – **GeoStat**
 - Environmental Information and Education Centre - EIEC
 - Regional Environmental Centre for Caucasus - RECC
 - Georgia's Environmental Outlook - GEO
 - Teleconference with the Head of Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture and Environment of Adjara AR

- On February 20-22, 2017 thematic inception follow-up mission was organised in Georgia with the participation of data management expert of the French International Office for Water. The mission was focused on data management issues and more specifically - strengthening and enhancement of the planned Water Cadastre Information System for Georgia. In terms to gather necessary information and propose further actions to be included in the country workplan for 2017-2020, the following bilateral meetings were organized during the mission:
 - **NEA** Department of Environmental Pollution Monitoring and Laboratory of Air, Water and Soil: data on surfaces water quality, chemical and biological monitoring
 - **NEA** Department of Hydrometeorology: data on hydrology/hydro-morphology, hydro-meteorological Early Warning System
 - **NEA** Department of Geology: data on groundwater monitoring
 - **MENRP** Water Resources Management Division: data on water use - abstraction, discharge, energy and irrigation use
 - **MENRP** Department of Environmental Permits: data on permits for water uses and discharge
 - National Statistics Office of Georgia – **GeoStat**
 - **MENRP** Environmental Information and Education Centre and **UNDP/GEF Project: Enhancing Environmental Monitoring and Reporting in Georgia**
- On February 27 - March 03, 2017 another follow-up thematic mission was organised to Tbilisi and Batumi, with the participation of UBA experts and the EUWI+ project Technical Advisor. The mission intended to further discuss/agree on the country priorities in Georgia and initial laboratory technical assessment of the NEA Tbilisi and Batumi labs. The following bilateral meetings were organized during the mission:
 - High level meeting at **MENRP** with the Dep. Minister Ekaterine Grigalava, Head of Integrated Management Department, Head of Water Resources Management Division, Head of Environmental Policy and International Relations Department to discuss the country priorities for 2017-2020
 - High level meeting at **NEA** with the Agency Head Ms Tamar Bagratia, Head of Hydrometeorology Department, Head of Environmental Pollution Monitoring Department, Head of Geology Department to discuss the country priorities for 2017-2020
 - Meeting with Austrian Development Agency (ADA) Head of Delegation and Austrian Embassy
 - **NEA** Chemical and Biological Laboratory in Tbilisi
 - **NEA** Department of Fishery and Black Sea Monitoring in Batumi
 - **NEA** Chemical Laboratory of the Black Sea Monitoring in Batumi
 - High level meeting with the Head of Parliamentary Committee of Agriculture and Environment of Adjara AR, Mr Vakhtang Tsuladze and Head of Environmental Directorate of Adjara AR, Mr Jambull Nakashidze
 - Field visit to the NEA chemical and biological monitoring locations of the Black Sea coastal area, Batumi-Poti

2.4.1.3 Coordination with donors

Periodical coordination meetings were held with the other water/environment related projects in Georgia, particularly UNDP/GEF Kura-2 project, UNDP/GEF Enhancing Environmental Monitoring and Reporting project, UNDP/AF Development of Resilient Flood and Flash Flood Management Practices in the Rioni Basin project, EU/EEA SEIS-II East project National Focal Point, etc.

2.4.2 National Policy Dialogue in Georgia

The 5th Steering Committee meeting of the National Policy Dialogue for Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) - the UNECE/OECD-assisted water policy process - took place on 11 April 2017 in Tbilisi, Georgia. Some 30 participants from key stakeholder organizations, NGOs and academic sector attended the high-level meeting to discuss challenges that Georgia faces in harmonizing its water policy and practice towards the relevant EU directives, as well as the obligations that Georgia has to fulfil according to the EU-Georgia Association Agreement. The meeting was chaired by MENRP Deputy Minister Ms Ekaterine Grigalava and Head of Integrated Management Department Mr Gizo Chelidze. The comments and discussion outcomes of the meeting on the on-going legal and institutional water reforms, provision of clean water and sanitation, preparation of river basin management plans, measures for flood risk management, sustainable agriculture, clean and efficient energy policy, protection of the marine environment, etc., will be reflected by various donor organizations through the on-going, or planned activities.

2.5 Moldova

2.5.1 Meetings held in September 2016 – March 2017

2.5.1.1 High-level kick-off

The High level-kick off for the EUWI+ project in Moldova was organised in the form of a dedicated key session at the 2nd NPD Coordination Committee meeting (24th NPD meeting under the EUWI) held on 17 November, 2016. The meeting was attended by about 50 delegates representing the Government of Moldova (State Chancellery, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Regional Development and Constructions, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry, Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family, National Bureau of Statistics, National Energy Regulatory Agency), as well as by representatives of civil society, expert community and academia, representatives of international financing organisations and bilateral donors.

Opening remarks were made by Mr. Victor Morgoci, Deputy Minister of Environment of the Republic of Moldova. He mentioned that the European Union Water Initiative National Policy Dialogue has been a mechanism the Republic of Moldova has been using since 2006 to facilitate efficient water resources management in the country. The Republic of Moldova has assumed stringent obligations to implement the provisions of the European Union *acquis* as required by the EU-RM Association Agreement, having thereby undertaken to align its national water-related legislation and standards with *acquis communautaire* of the European Union where water is one of the most regulated areas.

Mr. Henno Putnik, from the European Union Delegation to the Republic of Moldova in his opening speech mentioned about the goals and the actual context of cooperation between the European Union and the Republic of Moldova. Beneficiaries and participants of the meeting welcomed the official launch of the EUWI+ project in the Republic of Moldova and expressed their gratitude to the European Union and to development partners for their continuous support to the water sector in the Republic of Moldova. A press release was posted on the websites of the Ministry of Environment of Moldova ².

²) <http://www.mediu.gov.md/index.php/serviciul-de-presa/noutati/2575-sedinta-comitetului-coordonator-al-dialogului-national-privind-politica-in-domeniul-gestionarii-integrate-a-resurselor-de-apa-lansarea-proiectului-euwi-in-republica-moldova>

2.5.1.2 Bilateral meetings with beneficiary organizations

Several missions of the representatives of the EUWI+ project Implementing partners were organised during the inception phase of the project, to coordinate the preparation of country work plan for Moldova for the period of 2017-2020.

- On November 15-16, 2016, the representative of the OECD visited the State Chancellery of the Republic of Moldova, met the Deputy Secretary General of the State Chancellery and officials from the Academy of Public Administration. Other important visits were organized with high level officials from the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industry.
- On 16 November 2016 an expert meeting on enhancing the economic regulatory system for water supply and sanitation services in Moldova was held in Chisinau where the Interim Report delivered under the previous EUWI project was presented and discussed by the expert community.
- On November 15-16, 2017, several preparatory meetings were organised with relevant actors from the Ministry of the Environment, community of experts and civil society (SEAM non-governmental organisation).
- On November 18-19, 2016, several bilateral meetings were held with officials from the Ministry of the Environment (deputy Minister and State Secretary, EU High Level Counsellor on environment, as well as specialists from the Water Management Division and Agency „Apele Moldovei”). Implementing partners had bilateral meetings on river basin management and planning, as well as on communication issues with representatives from Agency “Apele Moldovei”, State Hydrometeorological Service as well as the Agency for Geology and Mineral Resources.

2.5.1.3 Coordination with donors

- A dedicated donor coordination session was held as part of the 2nd NPD CC meeting. Relevant initiatives were presented by other stakeholders, in particular the synergy between the on-going ADA-SDC project on strengthening the institutional framework in the water and sanitation sector in the Republic of Moldova was analysed.
- Meetings were held in order to assure a good coordination of the EUWI+ Project, the above mentioned ADA-SDC water project as well as the UNDP-GEF Moldovan-Ukrainian project “Enabling transboundary cooperation and integrated water resources management in the Dniester River Basin”.
- The activities under EUWI+ Project related to national indicators for water-related SDGs were analysed in order to assure a good coordination also with the EU project „Shared Environmental Information System for Eastern Partnership” (SEIS East).

2.5.2 EUWI+ implementation and relevant recent developments in Moldova with implications for the EUWI+ project

2.5.2.1 EUWI+ implementation

- Based on a written proposal on national needs and priorities from the Ministry of Environment of Moldova, EUWI+ Implementing partners in co-ordination with the Ministry drafted a summary work plan for 2017-2020 which was sent to national stakeholders for comments in late March 2017.
- Upon the request from the Ministry of Environment made at the 2nd NPD CC meeting, the OECD has continued two studies launched under the EUWI EECCA component with the view to complete the work in H1 2017. Specifically, it concerns the work on establishing a sound economic

regulatory system for WSS in Moldova and the study on developing new norms for small-scale WSS systems design and construction in Moldova.

- Preparations for the 3rd NPD coordination committee meeting on 11 April, 2017, were made.

2.5.2.2 Recent developments in Moldova with implications for the EUWI+ project

- On September 16, 2016, the Government of the Republic of Moldova by Decision nr. 1063 approved the National programme for implementation of the Protocol on Water and Health in the Republic of Moldova for 2016-2025. The Programme, at this stage, represents a key instrument for cooperation between stakeholders in line with social and economic development of the country, as well as the environment protection and protection of human health. The idea promoted by the approved Programme allows the responsible authorities, not least the Government, to stress the attention on the importance of this document for eventual future risks that could affect the human health associated to water scarcity, quality and other emerging challenges associated with water and functioning of water ecosystems.
- In 2016, the Ministry of the Environment of the Republic of Moldova decided to modify and to complete the Law nr. 303 of 2013 on public service for water supply and sanitation. This activity is on-going, with the support from ADA-SDC project on strengthening the institutional framework in the water and sanitation sector in the Republic of Moldova. The OECD-led study on economic regulatory system for WSS provided useful suggestions on several adjustments to the law.
- 2 drafts of River Basin Management Plans (draft Management Plan for the Nistru District and draft Management Plan for the Danube-Prut and Black Sea District) were elaborated, consulted with all relevant institutions and civil society. At the moment, the 2 documents are additionally revised for their improvement and will be repeatedly presented to the State Chancellery for their promotion and further approval by the Government of the Republic of Moldova.

2.6 Ukraine

2.6.1 Meetings held in September 2016 – March 2017

2.6.1.1 High-level kick-off meeting

The EUWI+ project high level-kick off meeting was organised in Ukraine on November 8, 2016. The meeting was attended more than 40 representatives of beneficiary organisations, international organizations, scientific organizations and NGOs. Welcoming remarks by the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine (MENR) was made by Mr Igor Yakovlev, Adviser of Minister. He expressed the best wishes the project's mission on behalf of Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources Mr. Ostap Semerak. He noted the very important role of the project in the implementation of the provisions of the Water Framework Directive and other EU directives. He also briefly described the vision of the ministry in reforming the system of environmental protection, water resources management in Ukraine. Mr Olexander Klitko from EU delegation in Ukraine noted that assisting the EaP countries to improve their water and environmental governance is a key EU priority and implementation of the WFD a major tool in the realization of the objective. Beneficiaries supported the main tasks of EUWI+ project and announced own proposals to includes in Inception Report of project.

2.6.1.2 Meetings with beneficiary organizations

Several missions of the representatives of the EUWI+ project team were organised during the inception phase of the project, to coordinate the preparation of the country work plan for Ukraine for the period 2017-2020.

On November 9-10, 2016 bilateral meetings were held with the representatives of the State Water Agency of Ukraine (SWA), State Geology Services, Hydrometeorology centre and scientific organisations, as part of the project kick-off mission to Ukraine, with participation of the representatives of OECD, UNECE and EU Consortium Member States.

On January 20, 2017, a meeting between representatives of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine (Deputy Minister Mr Mykola Kuzio, Head of Water Division Mr Olexander Bon and Head of International Division Mr Vladislav Marushevskiy) and a representative of EUWI+ project Mrs Yunona Videnina (International office of Water, France) was held in Kyiv to discuss national priorities on the 3rd component of the project and a common vision of project.

On February 6 - 10 2017, a second inception phase mission to Ukraine took place. Representatives of the Austrian Environment Agency, the French International Office for Water and the Technical Advisor had bilateral meetings on river basin management and planning issues with representatives of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources and the State Water Agency. This included visits to the hydrobiology and hydrochemistry laboratories in Geology State Enterprises, Geophysical observatory, Hydrobiology institute.

On February 14 – 16 2017, a second mission was organised for the representative of EUWI+ project on Result 3, Mrs Yunona Videnina (International office of Water, France), for discussion with representatives of the State Water Agency and NGOs regarding River basin management planning processes in Ukraine.

A discussion of the work plan with key beneficiaries of Ukraine and the EUWI+ project team took place via the National Coordination Board meeting on 27 of March in Kiev. There were 20 participants from MENR, SWA, EU Delegation in Ukraine, APENA project, UNECE, OECD, Environment Agency of Austria and France International Office of Water. This meeting aimed to refine the work plan ahead of presentation at the national Policy Dialogue meeting.

2.6.1.3 Coordination with donors

Periodical coordination meetings were held with the EU project APENA (preparing legislation acts) and UNDP-GEF (Sustainable development of the Dniester river basin bilateral project).

2.6.2 National Policy Dialogue in Ukraine

In Kiev, a high-level multi-stakeholder meeting on 28 March 2017 marked the restart of the UNECE-OECD assisted national policy dialogue process. Some 50 people attended the meeting of the newly formed NPD Steering Committee to discuss challenges that Ukraine faces in harmonising its water policy and practice with relevant EU Directives according to the Association Agreement signed in 2014. The meeting was chaired by the Deputy Minister of MENR, Mr. Mykola Kuzio.

2.6.3 EUWI+ implementation and relevant recent developments in Ukraine with implications for the EUWI+ project

2.6.3.1 EUWI+ implementation

Based on written input by the Ukraine focal point and bilateral meetings held, the EUWI+ team prepared a 2017-2020 summary work plan which was sent to national stakeholders for comments in late March 2017.

Preparations for the March 28, 2017 NPD Steering Committee meetings were conducted.

2.6.3.2 Recent developments in Ukraine with implications for the EUWI+ project

The Ministry, with the support of the APENA project, continues to develop secondary acts to the new Water Code of Ukraine, which was approved in 2016. The normative acts on the hydrographic zoning of Ukraine and the standards for water quality control according to the WFD have already been approved. Also approved was the provision of the Basin Councils in river basins in Ukraine. Waiting the approval of the minister or other ministries, there are drafts of the Regulations on the content of the River Basin Management Plan, assessment the ecological status of waters in terms of the hydrobiological and hydrochemical state and the draft of State water monitoring program.

3. OVERVIEW OF KEY ACTIVITIES PLANNED IN NEXT QUARTER

Part 3 lists key activities and priorities for the coming quarter of 1 April – 30 June 2017.

3.1 Key Activities for Next Quarter

Key activities are identified below:

- National Policy Dialogue in Armenia – 7 April 2017
- National Policy Dialogue in Georgia – 11 April 2017
- National Policy Dialogue in Moldova – 11 April 2017
- National Policy Dialogue in Azerbaijan – 25 April 2017
- Finalisation of draft Inception Report – by end of April 2017
- First Regional Steering Committee – 15-16 May 2017