



EPIRB 4th National Coordination Committee Meeting for Georgia

**Tbilisi, Georgia
19 December, 2014**

Venue: Conference Hall
5, Marjanishvili Street
Tbilisi, Georgia

Meeting Report

Workshop background and objectives

EPIRB 4th National Coordination Committee Meeting for Georgia was held on December 19, 2014 in Tbilisi, Georgia. The main objective of the meeting was to report to the NCC members and other national stakeholders on the results of the project implementation since the last reporting period - June 2014. The meeting was also aimed to present planned activities for the next reporting period and up to the end of the project and to present the progress of implementation of the Pilot Projects in Georgia.

The meeting agenda, list of participants and presentations, are attached to the documents as Annexes.

Session 1: Opening and Project Progress Status

Ms Mariam Makarova, Deputy Head of Water Resources Management Service of the Ministry of Environment Protection and Natural Resources (MEPNR) of Georgia, made opening statements and highlighted importance of activities implemented by the project, particularly emphasising progress towards the development of river basin management plan and monitoring program for a pilot basin, as well as development of secondary legislation in support of a new Water Code of Georgia. Ms Makarova introduced a new Head of the MEPNR Water Resources Management Service, Ms Nino Gvazava, who will serve as Head of the EPIRB National Coordination Committee after this NCC meeting and will represent Georgia in the project Regional Steering Committee.

Opening remarks on behalf of the EPIRB Project were made by Mr Timothy Turner, the project Team Leader. Mr Turner welcomed the participants and presented objectives of the meeting. He underlined the importance of holding consultation meetings between the beneficiary institutions and the project to discuss future steps related to the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive. In his presentation, Mr Turner briefly overviewed the project overall progress and the results achieved during the last 6 months, as well as the challenges that the project faced during the implementation period (Annex 3, pg. 1-13).

Presentation of Mr Turner was followed by questions and discussion among the participants. Ms Makarova raised an issue related to the follow up RBMP Programme of

Measures (PoMs) and financial means for their implementation; Methodology and issues related to the specific monitoring plans in the pilot basin was raised by Mr Vakhtang Tsuladze, Head of Directorate of Environmental and Natural Resources of Adjara AR; Questions regarding the further field surveys and the data gap filling for water bodies identified as 'possibly at risk' not covered by the previous surveys were asked by Ms Mariam Shotadze, representative of the EPIRB sub-contractor organization responsible for drafting the Chorokhi-Adjaristkali RBMP.

On response to the raised questions Mr Turner and Mr Jincharadze pointed out that some additional funds from the project Incidental budget will be allocated for pilot project in all 6 countries that, in some degree, can be used for implementation of prioritised PoMs (mostly for soft measures); In response to Mr Tsuladze's concerns it was mentioned that the results of the field surveys will be used in the RBMPs, along the detailed monitoring plan developed to reflect necessary steps for covering first six-year-cycle of the RBMP implementation. As to the follow-up to cover still existing data gaps, the project will allocate additional funds to extend the agreements with the contracted companies and to implement this activity.

After the discussions session Mr Zurab Jincharadze, the project Deputy Team Leader and River Basin Management Key Expert, presented results of the activities conducted in Georgia since the last NCC meeting (Annex 3, pg. 13-33), particularly emphasising progress towards the RBMP development phases and of field surveys for collecting much needed information for identifying preliminary status of water bodies in the pilot area. He also described the process of developing programme of measures, including prioritizing the selected measures, with cost-effectiveness analysis and progress towards implementation pilot projects in Georgia.

Session 2: Presentations of the Contractors

Second part of the meeting was dedicated to the presentations of the contractors on two pilot projects implemented in Georgia.

The Pilot Project on development of secondary legislation in support of a new Water Code and implementation of EU WFD in Georgia was delivered by Mr Giorgi Dzamukashvili, Project Coordinator of the National Water Partnership - Georgia (NWP-G) and independent law expert, Ms Ekaterine Otarashvili. Mr Dzamukashvili made an introduction to the process of development the new water legislation, about stakeholders and donor organizations involved and expected timeline of adoption of the new Water Law and subsequent Normative acts necessary for enforcement of the law. He also mentioned that other than four legislative acts being developed under the EPIRB contract, the NWP-G will prepare two additional legislative acts sponsored by UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). Presentation of Ms Otarashvili (Annex 3, pg. 43-51) focused on the progress in the development of the following secondary legislation prioritized by MEPNR:

1. Resolution of the Government of Georgia on "The rules of identification of water bodies and their delimitation" (Section III, Chapter 13, article 43, 1 b);
2. Resolution of the Government of Georgia on "Approval of borders of territorial units of integrated river basin management" (Section III, Chapter 13, article 43, 1 f);
3. Resolution of the Government of Georgia on "Approval of Regulations on river basin management plans" (Section III, Chapter 13, article 43, 1 e);
4. Resolution of the Government of Georgia on "Approval of Rules on composition and activities of river basin management consultation-coordination councils" (Section III, Chapter 13, article 43, 3a).



Ms Otarashvili has also presented the following scheme of territorial units for WFD compliant management of river basins that was proposed by the MEPNR Water Management Service and independent hydrology experts (Annex III, pg. 43):

1. Alazani-Iori River Basin
2. Mtkvari River Basin
3. Khrami-Debeda River Basin
4. Enguri-Rioni River Basin
5. Chorokhi-Kintrishi River Basin
6. Bzipi-Kodori River Basin

Presented version of the Basin Territorial Units raised high interest among the participants. Expected challenges, including difficulty to receive reliable monitoring data for some river basins and restricted access to uncontrolled territories (South Osetia and Abkhazia), were mentioned among others.

Ms Eliso Barnovi, representing consortium of REC Caucasus and Greentecs LTD, made a presentation on the progress towards development of the draft River Basin Management Plan for the Chorokhi-Adjaristkali Pilot Basin (Annex 3, pg. 52-84). She emphasised ongoing progress, specifically focusing on the results of Risk Assessment for identifying overall ecological status of identified Water Bodies, setting Environmental Objectives and proposing Programme for achieving these objectives for the first six-year cycle of the RBMP.

Progress in identifying locations to design and construct hydrological and water quality monitoring stations in the Chorokhi-Adjaristkali basin, another Pilot Project implemented in Georgia, was presented by Mr Jincharadze and Mr Besik Kavtaria, Deputy Head of Field Expeditions Division of the National Environmental Agency of Georgia (NEA). According to the results of pre-feasibility study by NEA, the following locations were selected to design four (x4) primary water quantity/discharge monitoring stations, as well as two additional gauging stations specifically for flood risk assessment on the upstream Adjaristkali River:

1. Chorokhi River at village Kirnati (*combined with WQ Sensor*)
2. Adjaristkali River at village Adjaristkali
3. Machakhela River at village Adjarisaghmarti
4. Kintrishi River at village Kokhi
5. Adjaristkali River at town Keda (*for flood risk assessment*)
6. Adjaristkali River at town Shuakhevi (*for flood risk assessment*)

The detailed list of required construction works and design schemes were also presented to the audience.

Results of the meeting and suggestions made by steering committee to the project team and the contractors were summarised by Deputy Head of the MEPNR Water Resources Management Service, Ms Mariam Makarova, who highly appreciated the progress made by the project during the last six months. Concluding remarks were also made by the Project Team Leader and Deputy Team Leader. They thanked the NCC and the audience for very active and productive work and reminded about the upcoming public consultation meeting to be conducted in Batumi on March 24, 2025 to present first version of the final draft RBMP for the Chorokhi-Adjaristkali pilot basin of Georgia.