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**Environmental Protection of
International River Basins (EPIRB)**
Contract No 2011/279-666



This project is implemented by a Consortium led by Hulla & Co. Human Dynamics KG

**Minutes
of
EPIRB project 5th National Coordination Committee (NCC) meeting for
Azerbaijan**

Caspian Plaza, 52, J. Jabbarly str. Baku, Azerbaijan

March 15 2016 ,

Languages: Azeri and English, interpretation provided

Agenda

Agenda of the 3rd NCC meeting and Stakeholder Consultation meeting is attached to the minutes (Annex 1).

Participants

Signed List of Participants from the meeting is attached to the minutes (Annex 2).

Summary of Discussions

Welcome – Opening remarks

Mr. Mutallim Abdulhasanov, Head of Sector in Environmental Policy Department, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources warmly welcomed participants and informed that the priority areas for cooperation which have been agreed by the Government of Azerbaijan and the European Commission in the country Strategy Paper under the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument include protection of water environment according to principles identified in the Water Framework Directive.

Then he noted that Azerbaijan Government pays high attention to country's water resources management and protection as a priority sector, through huge investments and policy actions reflected in State Development Programs and other documents. Now Azerbaijan closely cooperates with UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), EPIRB project and other international organizations to manage water resources of the Country according to international standards

Mr Timothy Turner EPIRB Project Team Leader In his introductory notes welcomed participants and expressed highly importance of joint NPD and NCC meeting as an opportunity

to discuss together priority water issues in Azerbaijan outlined the role of EPIRB project in this process .

Mr Mutallim Abdulhasanov, Head of Subdivision in Environmental Protection Policy Unit of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources informed participants about main purpose of joint EU WI NPD and EPIRB NCC meeting and presented them the draft agenda.



Mr Timothy Turner informed participants about project activities in all 6 countries for each of project components He noted that "Environmental Protection of International River Basins" project has been implemented according to its implementation plan in close cooperation with main beneficiaries and all stakeholders of project countries and has played significant role towards its aim to improve water quality in the trans-boundary river basins of the wider Black Sea region and Belarus.

He told that the project has maintained its momentum and in the past nine months consolidated the past achievements in the development and implementation of monitoring systems and tools and WFD compliant RBMPs. The project remains on budget and to programme with only minor adjustments. A number of the highly technical tasks including the Ecological Status Classification System and the GIS database have been delayed but they are now complete and will be finalised by the end of February 2016. There has also been some delay in the implementation of the pilot projects in one or two countries but this has now been addressed and implementation will continue through the extension period.

In summary Mr Turner noted below issues:

- The project is on programme and delivered all products in original ToR by January 2016 with the exception of implementation a small number of pilot projects in Azerbaijan which will continue into the extension period. .
- The project is on budget and the incidental expenses will be fully spent by the end of the project.
- Significant advances have been made in development of the ESCS and GW monitoring and information management systems. Draft RBMPs are being revised in preparation for adoption at different levels.
- The project has developed a good working relationship with the beneficiaries and will continue to be flexible in helping meet their objectives.
- The project has granted a nine month extension which will enable it to finalise the main activities, test new initiatives and provide overlap with the EUWI+ follow-on project.

Mr Rafiq Verdiyev CWME of EPIRB project presented detailed results and specific project activities as well implementation in Azerbaijan for the reporting period since the last NCC meeting He informed participants about developed by project water Monitoring Programmes for surface and groundwater, as well as drafting River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) for Central Kura pilot area and upcoming Joint Field Surveys in the pilot river basin, as well as data 'gap filling' exercise to obtain missing monitoring data.

Mr Rafiq Verdiyev also informed participants that by support of EPIRB project following pilot projects have been successfully implemented in Azerbaijan in close cooperation and coordination with beneficiary institutes and work is ongoing for their adoption:

- Assistance to preparing secondary legislation in support of the Water Code to introduce the concept and principles of IWRM and approximation and application of the WFD and UWWTD.
- Draft RBMP for Central Kura will be finalised and submitted to beneficiary for approval

By information of Rafiq Verdiyev currently in Azerbaijan 5 pilot projects are being implemented

- Water resource studies are ongoing in selected transboundary tributaries in the pilot basin demonstrating IWRM and WFD concepts and objectives, through the establishment of environmental flows and EQOs.
- Implementation of EU Flood Directive in Zayamchay River sub-basin (Central Kura Basin District) on the territory of Azerbaijan.
- Support for finalization of development of Azerbaijan Water Strategy
- Rehabilitation of Gazakh regional Laboratory of MENR
- Rehabilitation of Ground Water Monitoring Network of MENR in Central Kura Basin District

Then the flow was given to following contractors and beneficiary representatives to present situation with implementation of above pilot projects: .

Mr. Vafadar Ismayilov , PERIOD LLC , about pilot project "Water resource studies are ongoing in selected transboundary tributaries in the pilot basin demonstrating IWRM and WFD concepts and objectives, through the establishment of environmental flows and EQOs".



Mr. Mirzaxhan Mansimov, Iqlim LLC about "Implementation of EU Flood Directive in Zayamchay River sub-basin (Central Kura Basin District) on the territory of Azerbaijan".



Mr. Ramil Ibrahimov,Period LLC who was followed by supporting speech of Mr. Mutallim Abdulhasanov to inform participants about status of implementation of project “Support for finalization of development of Azerbaijan Water Strategy “



Then representative of EKVATOR LLC Mr. Rasim Mammadov, who was followed by supporting speech of Mr. Pasha Karimov, Chief Hydrogeologist of Geological Service of MENR to inform participants about status of implementation of project “ Ground Water Monitoring Network of MENR in Central Kura Basin District”



Then representative of Azsan LLC Nazakat Samadova who was followed by supporting speech of Mr. Vasif Aliyev ,Head of Center of National Monitoring Department of MENR to inform participants about status of implementation of project “ Rehabilitation of Gazakh regional



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Then Mr. Turner informed participants about project activities during the extension period which will be between February – October 2016 and will have an additional budget of 1M euros. Main work during this period are:

- Some extension activities have already commenced in order to ensure implementation by October 2016, for example the pilot projects..
- The activities will focus on existing tasks and no new tasks will be initiated.
- The extension activities have been designed so that they link with anticipated activities under the EUWI+ project.
- The project management structure will remain the same and there will be no change in the project team

Then main planned activities have been delivered to participants and at the end below program of future work has been presented to participants:

- National Consultation meetings – February/March 2016
- Identification and implementation of pilot projects – November 2015 – September 2016
- WISE development and training – February/April 2016
- Finalization of WFD strategies and QA/QC training. February – June 2016
- Design and development of coastal pilot and plan – February – July 2016
- Adoption of RBMPs – January 2016 – July 2016
- Design of SW and GW Surveys – February 2016
- SW and GW surveys – April- June 2016

- Analysis and reporting of SW/GW surveys – August 2016
- Development of ESCS – September 2016
- SCM – September 2016
- Final Report – October 2016

In his presentation Mr.Rafiq Verdiyev described ways how above activities will be implemented in Azerbaijan. It was particularly noted that work is ongoing to finish in needed time implementation of pilot projects and submit results to beneficiaries for approval.

Then Mr.Mutallim Abdulhasanov thanked participants , project Team and consulting companies for their active work in project implementation in Azerbaijan and sad that project has high priority fro all beneficiary institutes in Azerbaijan and MENR will be fully cooperating and supporting of application of project recommendations and other documents.

In the closing part also Mr. Turner said warm words to representatives of all beneficiary institutes and all participants for their active participation in project work.

Annex I. AGENDA

9:30 -10.00	Registration and coffee
10.00-10.20	<p>Opening. Adoption of the agenda. Mr. Mutallim Abdulhassanov, Head of Subdivision in Environmental Protection Policy Unit of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcoming remarks -Mr Timothy Turner , TL/, EPIRB - Ms Ulviya Abdullayeva , EC Delegation • Purpose of the meeting and adoption of the agenda Mr. Mutallim Abdulhassanov, Head of Subdivision in Environmental Protection Policy Unit of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources Dr. Rafiq Verdiyev, CWME , EPIRB project
10.20-11.00	<p>SESSION I. STATUS OF THE EPIRB PROJECT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project outline, objectives and results of activities undertaken 2015-2016. Mr Timothy Turner , TL/, EPIRB • Status of Project Implementation in Azerbaijan Dr. Rafiq Verdiyev , CWME,
11.00-11.15	Discussion
11.15-11.30	Coffee Break
11.30 – 12.30	<p>SESSION II. EPIRB project pilot projects in Azerbaijan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status of Refurbishment of Gazakh regional Laboratory in Azerbaijan Ms.Matanat Avazova- Deputy Head of National Environmental Monitoring Department, MENR Mr. Vasif Aliyev , Head of Center, National Environmental Monitoring Department, MEN

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status of Refurbishment of Ground Waters Monitoring Network in Central Kura Dr. Pasha Karimov- Chief Hydrogeologist, Complex Hydrogeology and Engineering Geology Expedition of National Geological Exploration Service, MENR • Status of Adoption of Central Kura RBMP and Development of secondary legislation on application of EU Directives Rafiq Verdiyev, CWME EPIRB project Vafadar Ismayilov, Project expert, SADIG LLC
12.30-12.50	Discussion
13.00-14.00	LUNCH
14.10 – 15.00	SESSION III. Plans for next reporting period <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project on going activities and plans for the next reporting period <i>Mr Timothy Turner, Team Leader, EPIRB.</i> • Project on going activities and plans in Azerbaijan for the next reporting period <i>Mr Rafiq Verdiyev, CWME, EPIRB.</i>
15.00-15.30	Discussion
15.30-15.50	Coffee Break
15.50-16.15	NCC meeting Summary
16.15	Closing of meeting

Annex II. List of Participants

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