



Dear colleague,

I have the honour of informing you that a workshop on **Equitable access to water** will be held on 5-6 July in Paris, at the Athènes Conference Center. The workshop is organized by France within the programme of work of the Protocol on Water and Health, under the auspices of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the Regional Office for Europe of the World Health Organization (WHO-EURO).

The Protocol on Water and Health to the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes includes several provisions on non-discrimination and equity aspects. In particular, article 5 requires that “equitable access to water, adequate in terms both of quantity and of quality, should be provided for all members of the population, especially those who suffer a disadvantage or social exclusion”.

To support implementation of these provisions, Parties to the Protocol agreed at their first meeting (Geneva, 17-19 January 2007) to include an activity in their programme of work for 2007-2009 aiming to support access to water and sanitation for poor, vulnerable and socially excluded people. Under this activity, UNECE countries will exchange information on relevant experience in the region related to: (a) targeted measures to overcome water affordability issues; and (b) solidarity measures to improve access to water and sanitation in rural areas. On the basis of this information, a document on good practices to enhance solidarity will be prepared for consideration by the Parties at their second meeting.

Within this framework, the Workshop on equitable access to water has two objectives:

- Work towards a common understanding of the issue of equitable access and exchange views and experience on measures implemented in the UNECE region;
- Examine and finalize a questionnaire aiming at collecting systematic information on existing solidarity mechanisms from all UNECE countries. The replies to the questionnaire will be the basis of the document on good practices and national “success stories” for the second meeting of the Parties to the Protocol.

I would like to invite you to cooperate in this activity and ensure that one or more experts from your country in this area of work participate in the workshop.

A draft of the questionnaire for consideration at the workshop and the registration form are attached for your convenience. Practical information can be found in annex. The workshop agenda will be directly distributed to registered participants.

All participants will be expected to contribute to the discussion. To facilitate the exchange of experience, experts are kindly invited to prepare in advance a contribution describing what is implemented in his/her country in order to promote equitable access to water. The organizers would appreciate receiving such inputs by 8 June 2007.

The workshop will be held in English, Russian and French; interpretation will be available in the three languages.

France will support the travel and accommodation expenses of eligible experts from countries with economies in transition. Requests for financial support should be submitted, together with a CV of the applicant, by 4 June 2007 to Ms Elodie Carmona (elodie.carmona@sante.gouv.fr). Due to limitation of funds available, preference will be given to experts providing a substantial contribution to the workshop.

The contact person for the workshop in France is Ms. Elodie Carmona (elodie.carmona@sante.gouv.fr).

The joint secretariat UNECE/WHO-EURO secretariat of the Protocol can be contacted as follows:

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I believe that this activity will help us to move forward in implementing the Protocol on Water and Health and in putting into practice the human right to water.

I look forward to the active participation of your expert(s) in this endeavour.

Pr. Didier Houssin
Director General for Health



Annex

Practical information for the Workshop on equitable access to water

- Venue of the meeting and local transport:

The Athènes Conference Center is located on 8, Rue d'Athènes, in the heart of Paris, near the Saint Lazare station (metro lines 3,12,13,14, RER E). Further information can be found in the following website: <http://www.ratp.info/informer/anglais/index.php>

- Hotel accommodation:

Rooms have been pre-booked in the following two hotels. Upon request, the organizers can take care of hotel booking for participants who register by 8 June. After that date, participants will have to take care themselves of their hotel booking.

- Hôtel Brescia (6 single rooms already booked), fees: 95 €VAT
16 rue d'Edimbourg
75008 Paris
Tel : +33 1 45 22 14 31
reservation@hotel-brescia.com
- Hôtel Rochambeau (15 single rooms already booked) fees: 121 €VAT
4 Rue la Boétie
75008 Paris
Tel : + 33 1 42 65 27 54 (Mme Masschelein)
Fax : + 33 1 42 66 03 81
rochambeau@copatel.com

Other hotels are located in the neighbourhood of the conference center:

- Hotel Elysées
100 rue La Boétie
Tel + 33 1 43 59 23 46 Fax + 33 1 42 56 33 80
- Confort St Augustin
9 rue Roy
Tel + 33 1 42 93 32 17 Fax + 33 1 42 93 27 51
- Mercure Saint Augustin
20 rue Roquepine
Tél + 33 1 42 68 11 64 Fax + 33 1 42 68 11 63
- Hotel Pavillon Saint Augustin
16 rue de la Pépinière
Tel + 33 1 53 04 96 96 Fax + 33 1 40 08 07 77
- Confort Malesherbes
11 place Saint Augustin
Tel + 33 1 42 93 27 66 Fax + 33 1 42 93 27 51

- Visa support:

For information on visa requirements for France, please consult the website of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs (http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/france_159/entering-france_2045/index.html). Participants requiring a visa should address the French Embassy or Consulate in their countries.

To receive an invitation letter, please fill in the relevant information in the registration form and return it as soon as possible and in any case not later than 4 June to Ms Elodie Carmona (elodie.carmona@sante.gouv.fr).

Data requested to fill the visa form are:

- Identity (surname, first names)
- Sex
- Address
- Date, place and country of birth
- Identity card number (optional)
- Nationality at birth / current Nationality
- Passport type, passport number, passport expiration date, passport place of issuance
- Current occupation
- Employer's address and telephone number
- Destination and duration of stay
- Purpose of travel
- Name of host (Health's General Directorate)
- Who is paying for the cost of travelling and the costs of living