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Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

Committee on Water Resources
Ninth session
Beirut, 23-25 March 2011

Item 3 of the provisional agenda

PROVISIONAL AGENDA AND ANNOTATIONS

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7. Review of actions taken in the field of water resources since the eighth session of the Committee on Water Resources:
 - (a) Implementation of recommendations made by the Committee on Water Resources at its eighth session;
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ANNOTATIONS

1. Opening of the session

The opening session will begin at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, 23 March 2011, at the headquarters of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the United Nations House, in Beirut. As representative of the country which assumed the chairmanship of the eighth session of the Committee on Water Resources, Mr. Hilal El-Harhi, Head of the Division of Water Research and Studies of the Directorate of Water Resource Development in the Ministry of Water and Electricity in Saudi Arabia, will make a welcome statement. Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCWA, Ms. Rima Khalaf, will deliver the inaugural address.

2. Election of officers

Rule 18 of the Rules of Procedure of the Commission states: "Member countries shall assume the chairmanship of the sessions of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission on a rotating basis, in the Arabic alphabetical order employed by the United Nations. Unless the Commission decides otherwise, those bodies shall elect all their other officers".* Pursuant to that rule, Yemen, upon which the rotation by alphabetical order has fallen, shall assume the chairmanship of the ninth session of the Committee on Water Resources, succeeding Saudi Arabia, which assumed the chairmanship of the eighth session. The Committee shall elect two vice-chairmen and a rapporteur among its member country representatives.

3. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

Rule 8 of the Rules of Procedure of the Commission, which apply to subsidiary bodies, states: "At the beginning of each session, once the Chairman has assumed his duties in accordance with rule 12, the Commission shall adopt the agenda for that session on the basis of the provisional agenda". Pursuant to that rule, the Committee on Water Resources will have before it the provisional agenda and annotations in document E/ESCWA/SDPD/2011/IG.1/L.1. It will also have before it the proposed organization of work in document E/ESCWA/SDPD/2011/IG.1/L.2. The Committee shall adopt the agenda and organization of work as submitted or in amended forms.

4. Status of the vulnerability assessment of the Arab water sector to climate change (E/ESCWA/SDPD/2011/IG.1/3)

Under this item, the Committee will review the progress achieved in conducting a vulnerability assessment study of the water resources sector in the Arab region to climate change impact. The vulnerability assessment shall be useful in the formulation of regional and national strategies of adaptation to the effects of climate change on water resources, especially that those effects will in turn have a direct or indirect impact on the social and economic sectors.

5. Regional initiative for the development of a mechanism to monitor the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals related to water and sanitation in the Arab region (MDG+) (E/ESCWA/SDPD/2011/IG.1/4)

Under this item, the Committee will review the action taken to launch a regional initiative for the development of a mechanism to follow up the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals related to water and sanitation in the Arab region, including consultations, coordination and cooperation with partners. The report on the subject presented to the Committee indicates that

* ESCWA member countries in the Arabic alphabetical order are as follows: Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Sudan, Iraq, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Kuwait, Lebanon, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

ESCWA, which was entrusted to lead that initiative, has yielded the consultation process to the stage of identifying additional indicators on the basis of regional specifications, data availability, the need to address substantive issues, and the level of water and sanitation services. The report underlines the importance of additional indicators and of setting definitions of terms used in the context of the Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) of the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Health Organization. That process will result in the preparation of a standard sample of basic and additional indicators which shall serve as reference in data collection, monitoring and reporting.

6. Integrated management of shared water resources (E/ESCWA/SDPD/2011/IG.1/5)

Under this item, the Committee will be presented with two reports:

(a) Development of a regional legal framework for shared water resources in the Arab region (E/ESCWA/SDPD/2011/IG.1/5(Part I))

In this document, the Committee will review the process of developing a regional legal framework for shared water resources in the Arab region, including the definition of delegation of authority, the institutional development at the regional level, and the two-stage method proposed for the formulation of the legal framework. The document stresses the importance of formulating the framework by taking into account the specifications of the Arab region, the stand of the international law on shared water, and the impact of climate change on already scarce water resources in the region.

(b) Lessons learned from the experience in shared water resources management in the region of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) (E/ESCWA/SDPD/2011/IG.1/5(Part II))

In this document, the Committee will review The Protocol on Shared Watercourse Systems ratified by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the related river basin management institutions, with a view to benefit from that experience in the ESCWA region. Member country representatives are invited to present their experience in relation to the institutional and legal measures taken for the management of shared water resources in their respective countries.

7. Review of actions taken in the field of water resources since the eighth session of the Committee on Water Resources (E/ESCWA/SDPD/2011/IG.1/6)

Under this item, the Committee will be presented with two reports:

(a) Implementation of recommendations made by the Committee on Water Resources at its eighth session (E/ESCWA/SDPD/2011/IG.1/6(Part I))

In this document, the Committee will review the activities implemented in the field of water resources pursuant to the recommendations made at its eighth session (Beirut, 17-19 December 2008). Member country representatives are invited to take note of what has been implemented and make suggestions and recommendations in that regard.

(b) Implementation of water resources-related activities under ESCWA programme of work (E/ESCWA/SDPD/2011/IG.1/6(Part II))

In this document, the Committee will review the progress achieved in implementing water resources-related activities under ESCWA programme of work since its eighth session. Member

country representatives are invited to take note of what has been implemented and make suggestions and recommendations in that regard.

8. Proposed programme of work for the biennium 2012-2013 in the field of water resources (E/ESCWA/SDPD/2011/IG.1/7)

This document contains the activities and outputs which will be undertaken by ESCWA in the biennium 2012-2013 in the field of water resources. The proposed programme of work was prepared in line with subprogramme 1, “Integrated management of natural resources for sustainable development” of the revised strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013 which was adopted by ESCWA at its twenty-sixth session (Beirut, 17-20 May 2010). Member country representatives are invited to review the proposed programme of work in the field of water resources and provide comments and suggestions thereon.

9. Date and venue of the tenth session of the Committee on Water Resources

The Committee will decide the date and venue of its tenth session.

10. Other matters

This item shall cover any other matters that the members of the Committee may wish to discuss.

11. Adoption of the report of the Committee on Water Resources on its ninth session

The Committee will consider the draft report on its ninth session, which includes the recommendations, for adoption.
