



## ROADMAP FOR AN ACTION

**Priority Area 5** - To manage environmental risks

**Action 6** - “To develop rapid response procedures and plans in case of industrial accidental river pollution”

### **Milestone n°1: AEWS system upgrade and refining**

- *Work:* Rebuilding the AEWS system using then open-source software framework Drupal. Using open-source software will eliminate the risk of dependency from specific software companies and provide increased flexibility to adapt the system to future needs. Migrating new system to the new ICPDR virtual server to have a stable platform and minimize maintenance costs.
- *Output n° 1:* Danube AEWS based on an open-source software platform (2012);
- *Output n° 2:* Upgrade of AEWS design improving its applicability (2013).
  - *Responsible:* APC EG
  - *Deadline:* end 2013

*Output n° 1:* The AEWS 2.0 has been developed and the ICPDR at its 15<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Meeting agreed with bringing it into full operation by 1 March 2013. The system is built on the open source software Drupal and mostly on available modules, no license costs are required. Backup communication is available in the event that the Internet does not work.

Since its launch, the AEWS 2.0 has been in full operation, no alerts except for testing purposes were raised, several informal messages were exchanged and no malfunctions were recorded.

*Output n° 2:* The AEWS design has been upgraded. It includes among others (i) updatable reports (one report instead of a number of separate messages) which provide consolidated information on an incident and a good overview of changes in report revisions; (ii) one simplified form minimizing the risk of selecting a wrong form or incident; (iii) simplified navigation and better overview on home page; (iv) possibility of comments (using a simple text form) on reports by other PIACs. A quick reference sheet and system usage tutorials for AEWS 2.0 were prepared by the Secretariat and received very positive feedback from the APC EG. Therefore, four additional tutorials were prepared by the Secretariat and are available as an on-line help on the AEWS site: <https://www.icpdr.org/aews/help>.

### **Milestone n°2: Regular AEWS maintenance**

- *Work:* The AEWS tests will be organized with a view of checking the performance of the Danube AEWS. The major attention will be given to checking the preparedness (response

time) of the Communication Units of the national PIACs as the recent tests revealed weakness in this aspect. Two unannounced tests will be organized each year out of which one will be targeting 24/7 preparedness while the second test will be more technical, checking an overall management of an accident including assessment of the threshold levels and thus involving the Expert Units.

Every year during a meeting of the ICPDR AEWS experts a practical hands-on training on AEWS operation takes place, at which the Secretariat presents the AEWS system in detail, highlighting the frequently encountered problems and evaluating the performance of PIACs in the AEWS tests. The AEWS experts have then to disseminate the updated know-how on the system operation at the national level to the PIACs staff. To maintain high level of PIAC staff preparedness, organization of regular trainings on an annual basis will be continued.

- *Output n° 1*: Organization of regular performance tests of the Danube AEWS.
- *Output n° 2*: Regular training of AEWS Operators.
  - *Responsible*: APC EG
  - *Deadline*: end 2015

*Output n° 1*: The test took place on 21 January 2013 and was intended to prepare PIACs for the official launch of the upgraded system. The test was divided into five incidents in order to involve all PIACs. All PIACs participated actively in the test and were able to carry out their essential tasks during an accident. Some minor problems in use of the system during the test provided useful inputs for further optimization of the user interface. The updated system proved to be ready for use and was officially launched on 1 March 2013. The APC EG appreciated the new system considering it to be better than the previous AEWS and very convenient for the purpose. The APC EG agreed that a 24/7 preparedness test will be organized in autumn 2013. In spring 2014 a comprehensive test will be carried out simulating the case when a pollution plume in a river moves down-stream through the territory of several countries.

*Output n° 2*: At the 5<sup>th</sup> APC EG meeting in April 2013 the Secretariat reviewed AEWS 2.0, presented the key features and demonstrated the system operation providing thus a basic regular training in the AEWS operation. The next training will be organized at the 6<sup>th</sup> APC EG meeting in April 2014.

### **Milestone n°3: International standardization of AEWS**

- *Work*: In the Danube River Basin there are numerous independent international activities addressing the emergency response (e.g., UN/ECE IAN, CECIS EC MIC, ICPDR AEWS, NATO Disaster Response, IAEA system for reporting on nuclear accidents in cooperation with EC IRIX - International Radiation Information Exchange and ECURIE - European Community Urgent Radiological Information Exchange). Running all these activities, in parallel, leads to overloading the staff at the national alarm centres (established usually under the Civil Protection / Ministry of Interior). To strengthen the operational cooperation between the emergency response authorities, the UNECE proposed to adopt common standards by all existing warning systems to ensure their full compatibility. It also should be made sure that there is only one point of contact in a given country. This approach would eliminate any potential confusion during an accident management and, at the later stage, it could avoid using of parallel overlapping systems by making them fully compatible & complementary so that triggering one system would be recognized by the others. The ICPDR has been invited by the UNECE to join this standardization process and mandated at its 8<sup>th</sup> StWG meeting the Secretariat to participate in the process of standardization in notification

on chemical accidents upon request of UNECE with the view of maintaining the Danube AEWS as the key warning system in the DRB.

- *Output n° 1*: Danube AEWS based on an international Europe-wide standard.
  - *Responsible*: APC EG
  - *Deadline*: 2015 and beyond

*Output n° 1*: The APC EG asked the Secretariat to contact the EC to explore the ongoing strategies and plans concerning development of integrated warning systems at the EU level and possibilities of linking such systems with AEWS. The Secretariat met in July 2012 with the Emergency Response Unit at DG ECHO to discuss the modalities of transferring AEWS information to DG ECHO MIC. It was suggested that such message sent to MIC by the Danube AEWS would be only considered as information about a major pollution accident and not as a formal request for assistance as this competence would stay with the national civil protection units. For MIC such message would serve as a pre-warning on potential future assistance needs in the affected region. The APC EG at its 4<sup>th</sup> meeting did not support this option of sending the AEWS message to MIC because PIACs in some countries have no authorization at the national level to inform MIC.

The ICPDR wrote a letter to the UNECE expressing its willingness to join the standardization process proposed by the UNECE aiming at adoption of common standards by all existing warning systems to ensure their full compatibility. So far no feedback has been received from the UNECE in reaction to the ICPDR proposal.

GAPS:

1. No gaps.