



## Press Release

### National Policy Dialogue on Integrated Water Resources Management in the Republic of Azerbaijan: working together

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*Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan*

#### **The National Policy Dialogue Steering Committee on Integrated Water Resources Management in the Republic of Azerbaijan discussed recent developments in reforming water policies and took stock of achievements under the NPD over the past 10 years of EU Eastern Partnership**

At its eighth meeting, held on 12 July 2019 in Baku, the Steering Committee of the National Policy Dialogue (NPD) on Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) in the Republic of Azerbaijan discussed recent changes in the institutional set up and developments in water policies and legislation in the Republic of Azerbaijan. Meeting participants also took stock of achievements under the National Policy Dialogue on IWRM in Azerbaijan over the 10 years of EU Eastern Partnership.

Furthermore, participants discussed progress in implementing the European Water Initiative plus (EUWI+) programme in Azerbaijan. The meeting also provided a platform for intersectoral coordination and co-ordination of donor activities in the water sector.

The Steering Committee discussed the status of adoption of the draft national water strategy, reviewed the work on the elaboration of a methodology on environmental flows calculation and welcomed the official adoption of the national targets under the Protocol on Water and Health. In the domain of river basin management planning, the Steering Committee reviewed the draft first part of the plan for the Kura upstream of the Mingachevir Reservoir River Basin District and invited all Committee members and other stakeholders to submit their comments. The Committee welcomed progress in the technical assistance provided by the EU under the EUWI+ in the field of monitoring. The matters of transboundary water cooperation were also discussed, specifically in the context of the draft Kura Agreement between Azerbaijan and Georgia. Finally, the Committee reviewed progress under other relevant projects in the water sector presented by partner organizations and welcomed synergies and cooperation between different projects supporting the development of the water sector in the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The meeting was attended by 44 participants representing various national ministries and agencies, NGOs, and representatives from the European Union, International Organizations and International Financial Institutions.

The EUWI+ programme is funded by the European Union and is implemented by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, and an EU Consortium comprising the Austrian Environment Agency (Austria) and the International Office for Water (France). The project supports the Republic of Azerbaijan in enhancing water resources management with the overall aim to contribute to improved access to and good quality of water for the citizens of the country. It also contributes to the development of river basin management plans and the sustainable use of transboundary water resources

by facilitating cooperation at the national and transboundary level and by promoting public participation in river basin management planning.

The 8th Meeting of the Steering Committee of the National Policy Dialogue was hosted by the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan and was organized with the support of the “European Union Water Initiative Plus for the Eastern Partnership” programme.

**Background info:** Launched in September 2016 for a duration of four years, the European Union Water Initiative plus for the Eastern Partnership programme (EUWI+) is the biggest commitment of the EU to the water sector in the EaP countries. It supports the six partner countries (Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine) to align their legislation with EU policy on water management, with a focus on transboundary rivers. It provides support to the development of a long-term vision of water sector reforms in the Partner Countries. The project is implemented by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), and an EU Consortium comprising the Austrian Environment Agency (Austria) and the International Office for Water (France). [www.euwipluseast.eu](http://www.euwipluseast.eu)

**National Policy Dialogues (NPDs)** are the main operational instrument under the European Union Water Initiative in the countries of Eastern Europe and the Caucasus. The objective of National Policy Dialogues is to facilitate the reform of water policies in a particular country. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe is the strategic partner for NPDs on Integrated Water Resources Management; the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is the strategic partner for NPDs on Water Supply and Sanitation and also works on the economic and financial dimension of water policies.

<http://www.unece.org/env/water/npd>

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