

RESOLUTION

of the Practical National Conference on “Integrated Water Resources Management in Armenia”

The participants of the practical national conference on “Integrated Water Resources Management in Armenia”, financed by the Global Water Partnership and supported by the Standing Commission of National Assembly on Social, Health Care and Nature Protection Issues, Ministry of Nature Protection, and State Committee on Water Systems of the Ministry of Territorial Administration,

Having discussed the issues of integrated water resources management in Armenia,

Have identified several problems, and as a result of discussions came to the following conclusion.

1. To apply to the Standing Commission on Social, Health Care and Nature Protection Issues of the National Assembly, Ministry of Nature Protection and Ministry of Territorial Administration, calling their attention on the following problems:

Problems in Water Resources Management

- a) Contradictions between RA Water Code, Code on Subsoils, and Concession Law,
- b) Absence of coordination and regulatory framework for flood-control structures,
- c) Absence of methodology for development integrated water resources management plans,
- d) Lack of technical equipment and unsatisfactory staffing policy in water sector organizations and agencies,
- e) Insufficient financial means for implementation of tasks assigned by legislation,
- f) Absence of decision-making support system in water resources management,
- g) Insufficient cooperation and absence of coordination among water sector organizations and agencies,
- h) Insufficient implementation of data management and exchange related to water resources,
- i) Insufficient monitoring of surface and underground water resources quantity and quality,
- j) Insufficient coordination among projects implemented by international organizations, absence of their sustainability and clear strategy, duplications,
- k) Absence of inter-relationship of underground and surface water resources characteristics,
- l) Increase of groundwater level and obstacles to sustainable development of those territories.

Problems in Water Economy Systems Management

- a) Inefficient use of underground water resources and land resources in Ararat Valley,
- b) Low regulating level of water use processes from water infrastructure for the purposes other than irrigation,
- c) Incomplete legal and regulatory framework for maintenance and operation of water infrastructure,
- d) Improper compliance with RA norms, absence of technical solutions and project coordination during the design, construction and operation of water systems financed by various international organizations,
- e) Unsatisfactory water supply to rural settlements not-served by specialized organizations,

- f) Absence of realistic strategy for wastewater treatment, strict norms assigned to wastewater treatment,
 - g) Low level of service provision in maintenance and operation of water systems, and absence of high-qualified personnel,
 - h) Absence of economic incentive mechanisms for waste supply and irrigation services,
 - i) Insufficient implementation of existing rules on water supply and services for customers using water supply and wastewater treatment services in the territories under their ownership.
2. To suggest the Standing Commission on Social, Health Care and Nature Protection Issues of the National Assembly, Ministry of Nature Protection and Ministry of Territorial Administration, implementation of the following corresponding measures in solving the above-mentioned problems:

Water Resources Management

- a) Clarification of legislation related to management of underground water resources (RA Water Code, Code on Subsoils and Law on Concession),
- b) Development of legal framework for flood-control structures (establishment/identification of authority, clarification of responsibilities and functions, development of flood protection plan),
- c) Development, adoption and application of methodology for preparation of integrated water resources management plans,
- d) Improvement of technical equipment, involvement of new qualified staff and training for water sector organizations,
- e) Evaluation of financial needs, identification of possible financing sources and development of financing mechanisms,
- f) Establishment of a decision-making support system for water resources management,
- g) Improvement of cooperation between water sector organizations and agencies, development and application of clear mechanisms for collaboration,
- h) Clarification of authorities and responsibilities related to water resources data management and exchange,
- i) Formation of demand for surface and underground water resources quantity and quality monitoring, rehabilitation and/or improvement of the system,
- j) Clarification of strategy of projects, ensuring sustainability and avoiding duplications of projects financed by international donor organizations,
- k) Study of unified characteristics of underground and surface water resources,
- l) Study and identification of causes for groundwater level increase, and development of appropriate measures.

Water Economy Systems Management

- a) Revision and clarification of water use conditions and land use categories from Ararat Valley deep wells (including self-fountains),
Revision of resources fees for water use, other than water supply and irrigation sectors,,

Revision of quantity and scheme for deep wells (existing, constructed, new) in Ararat Valley, development and adoption of optimal distribution scheme,

b) Revision of water use permitting procedures, revision of permit conditions and improvement of enforcement,

c) Revision of safety requirements for hydro-technical structures and hydro-mechanical equipment installed there, support to their safe exploitation, revision of term of reference for staff operating the hydro-technical structures,

Development of exemplary rules for reservoirs with volume above 10 million m³,

d) Revision of norms related to water supply, wastewater treatment and irrigation, their integrated with the norms and standards of European Union,

Clarification and regulation of programs targeted to improvement of water supply, wastewater treatment and irrigation systems,

e) Development and implementation of measures for improvement of water supply systems operated by rural communities,

f) Development of realistic strategy for wastewater treatment, including adoption of the idea of phased treatment of wastewater, and adoption of corresponding standards,

g) Preparation of specialized staff (design, construction, maintenance and operation) for the sector, rehabilitation of specialized education institutions, periodical training of engineering and technical staff,

h) Definition of differentiated tariffs for water supply, wastewater treatment and irrigation services in order to support social tension in boundary and high-mountain communities,

i) Revision of the functions and rules for operation and maintenance of water meters and internal pipeline of consumers using water supply and wastewater treatment services.

1. 3. To apply to international organizations, financing projects in water sector of Armenia, to take into consideration the identified priorities and proposed solutions during development and implementation of water sector projects.

2. 4. To call the non-governmental organizations in the Republic to take more active participation in resolving the above-mentioned problems.

At the same time, the network of County Water Partnership expresses its readiness to introduce its specialization skills and experience to support the process of solution of the above-mentioned problems.

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