Mr Ari Mäkelä's presentation for Ashkabad preparatory meeting on "Maritime and inland water ways co-operation in the OSCE area: Increasing security and protecting the environment", March 6-7 '08

Title:

Preventing the transport of aquatic nuisance species into lakes situated in the land locked OSCE countries

Abstract:

All water craft are potential vectors for spreading aquatic nuisance species. Given the ability of plants and organisms to attach to hard surfaces and even survive out of water, many infestations have already taken place at different places in the world, and the problem is increasing. When using trailered boats and the road network is improving and extending many kinds of aquatic pests --- both plants and animals --- will be carried from one water-body to another, if preventive measures are not undertaken.

The combination; boats on trailers and invasive species pose a high risk even to isolated water bodies in land locked countries, even though we might think that they are safe from problems coming up the major inland waterways.

The risk is evolving in pace with improving road network and increasingly people learn to use their water craft (boats) more efficiently. The risk extends even to mountain lakes in Central Asia due to their high recreational value (like Issyk-Kul lake in the Kygyz Republic). In addition, climate change may provide additional push for the colonization of alien nuisance species like making shorter or even deleting the ice cover period from high altitude lakes.

Preventing the transport of aquatic nuisance species and their spread and colonization into isolated and land locked lakes having access through road network calls for cooperation to find the most effective preventive ways to tackle with this upcoming problem. The OSCE cooperation provides a good platform for that.

What to do;
- Increase awareness and competence of personnel working at road checkpoints;
- Provide information at boat launches

Method to clean water crafts or boats;
- Remove any visible mud, plants, fish or animals before transporting equipment
- Eliminate water from equipment before transporting
- Clean and dry anything that came in contact with water (boats, trailers, equipment)
- Never release plants, fish or animals into body of water unless they came of that body of water

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