

"EUROPE-INBO" PARTICIPATED IN THE 6TH "BALTIC SEA DAY"



The Baltic Sea is reputed to be the most polluted sea of the planet. Victim of a particularly serious eutrophication, the marine ecosystem is so highly imbalanced that exporting certain fish species which are fished there, like herring or salmon, is prohibited in the European Union.

In the 1970s, the riparian countries of the Baltic Sea (Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Poland, Finland, Russia, Esto-

nia, Latvia and Lithuania) decided to act together to protect the environment.

This interregional mobilization appeared in particular through "Helcom", the **Helsinki Commission for the Protection of the Baltic Sea**.

Since 2000, an International Conference has been organized every year in St. Petersburg to give a progress report on the achievements made.

The 6th "Baltic Sea Day" took place on 22 and 23 March 2005 in St. Petersburg. Today, this yearly forum has become one of the main mechanisms that enable the development of a cooperation between riparian countries of the Baltic Sea.

Among the many topics included this year in the program of the Conference, there were: trilateral cooperation for the Gulf of Finland, strategy for collecting data on dangerous substances in Russia, the European Maritime Strategy and the European Water Framework Directive.

This last point is significant, because of the political changes resulting from the enlargement of the European Union.

The existence of a common environmental legislation, from now on applicable in all the Coastal States of the Baltic Sea, apart from the Russian Federation, has necessarily impacts on regional environmental priorities.

It is in such a context that "HELCOM" wished to involve the International Network of Basin Organizations in the work of its 6th "Baltic Sea Day".

Messrs. Mieczyslaw Ostojki, President of the "EUROPE-INBO" Group, Jean-François Donzier, INBO Permanent Technical Secretary and Jean Claude Vial, French Water Director, came and presented the activities of the Network and particularly the work undertaken for the implementation of the Water Framework Directive.

It was also an opportunity to demonstrate how INBO is involved in the preparation of the next World Water Forum of Mexico City.

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"EUROPE-INBO" WORKSHOP: FLOOD PREVENTION IN EUROPE WROCLAW - POLAND - 19 - 21 OCTOBER 2005

The members of EUROPE-INBO (Group of European Basin Organizations for the implementation of the Water Framework Directive) met in Wroclaw in Poland from 19 to 21 October 2005 to participate in a workshop on flood prevention.

Organized with the support of the Polish Ministry of the Environment, this event allowed the participants to draw up a

report on their knowledge of flood prevention.

Several topics were included in the program:

- The legal framework on the protection against floods and its relations with the Water Framework Directive and Natura 2000;
- The systems for flood forecasting, the management of flood-prone areas, regional

planning, collective awareness of the risks and measures for the prevention of damage;

- Technical actions, especially flood storage areas, which can be implemented in the basins to reduce flood volumes.

The work was opened by the Polish Minister for the Environment.

Messrs. Jean Marie Wauthier and Mieczyslaw Ostojki, Presidents of EUROPE-INBO, and Jean-François Donzier, Technical Secretary of the Network, gave the introductory addresses of this workshop.

**"EUROPE-INBO"
MEETING
Megève - France
20 - 22 Sept. 2006**



"EUROPE-INBO 2005": 2ND INTERNATIONAL ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WATER

More than 175 representatives of governmental administrations in charge of water resources management, of Basin Organizations or District Authorities coming from 36 countries met in Namur, Walloon Region in Belgium, from 29 September to 1st October 2005, at the invitation of Mr. Benoit LUTGEN, Walloon Minister for Agriculture, Rural Areas and the Environment, under the auspices of the Group of European Basin Organizations for the WFD implementation (EUROPE-INBO) and of the International Network of Basin Organizations (INBO).

This important meeting especially fitted in with the European cycle of the preparation of the 4th World Water Forum of Mexico City in March 2006.

The "EUROPE-INBO" Group of European Basin Organizations is member of the Common Strategy Coordination Group (CIS) for the WFD implementation process.

The work of the "EUROPE-INBO" Group aims at enriching the common strategy (CIS) by presenting different approaches, very operational results or field experiments.

The implementation of the European Water Framework Directive (WFD) in the 25 countries of the enlarged European Union and in the Countries applying for accession, seems a major fact for the dissemination of the principles of good governance, recommended by INBO, which is indeed a priority topic for mobilizing its members.



PROCEEDINGS

Two main topics were dealt with during the plenary assembly:

➤ the implementation of the Framework Directive in transboundary river basins and International River Basin Districts (IRBDs), with a significant participation of the European international commissions, among them those concerning the Walloon region,



➤ the participation of the populations in the definition of water policy, responsibilities of the local elected officials and of the professional and association representatives, the "Basin Committees", consultation of the "general public" for the implementation of the Framework Directive. This topic has widely opened the work of the assembly to our partners working in the field.

51 papers were presented during the Namur meeting.

FINAL RESOLUTIONS

The organizations participating in the "EUROPE-INBO" Group reaffirmed their wish to continue exchanging their experiences through four complementary activities:

■ The organization of regular meetings, yearly plenary sessions or thematic workshops.

■ The launching of the "EUROPE-INBO" website: this website will allow a wider dissemination of guidelines and documents prepared within the European framework of the CIS.

It will also gather case studies of other pilot river basins and the documents produced by the European Basin Organizations and District Authorities.

■ The development of twinning agreements between Basin Organizations of different countries facing

It is essential to clarify the environmental objectives and the definition of the good status at the European level.

It is recommended:

- to promote a bottom-up approach, using the work done by various countries to prepare the program of measures and to formulate the management plan of an International District,
- to develop exchanges on the methods used and tools,
- to conceive an iterative and dynamic approach for the formulation of the program of measures, taking the existing and future data into account without delaying the actions to be carried out in the short term.

But also:

- ◆ to make the monitoring/follow-up systems coherent, harmonization of the data and Geographic Information Systems in the transboundary basins as a priority,
- ◆ to analyze the compatibility of the developed GIS tools with the European WISE reporting system,
- ◆ to ensure comparability between the results of the national monitoring programs planned for 2007.

The delegates also proposed:

- To strengthen the action of the existing international bodies (international commissions, bilateral cooperation, etc.),
- To support the creation of new International Commissions and to strengthen cooperation for shared basins with the countries neighboring the EU,

Generally, the significance and dynamism of any very practical cooperation that has existed for a long time and that develops in transboundary basins are still not well-known and should be better enhanced and disseminated.

The Framework Directive is an opportunity for strengthening these kinds of cooperation.

common problems, especially within the TWIN-BASIN project.

■ The promotion of training and professional capacity building programs for the executives and staffs of Basins Organizations, especially with the start of the WFD-LEARN project.

AS REGARDS TRANSBOUNDARY BASINS AND INTERNATIONAL RIVER BASIN DISTRICTS:

● Taking into account the results of the characterizations undertaken by each country in 2004 and the sharing leading to the roof report, it appears that homogenization of the methods is not compulsory, but that transparency is essential for a good common understanding of the methods used and a comparability of the obtained results.

MEETING FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE

AS REGARDS PUBLIC CONSULTATION FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE:

For promoting consultation it is necessary:

- to raise the awareness and inform the general public, to explain the stakes, so that the people can give their opinion,
- to identify precisely the issues of interest for the general public in each local context,
- to prepare strong arguments for raising the awareness and motivating the public, with a simple and adapted vocabulary, evidencing the positive results of achieving good ecological status,
- to make more room for references and cultural practices,
- to develop a real citizen management of water,

It seems that original approaches, based on the local organization of events or on the use of local communication supports, are sometimes more effective for mobilizing the citizens than the use of the media for a wide dissemination to the general public, the cost of which is high for a return which is sometimes disappointing. The passage by the relay of local authorities and of NGOs may be very useful.

- It is also recommended to rely, as much as possible, on participative bodies already existing in the various Member States (river committee, local water commission, river contracts, etc.) which are the ideal support to develop the participation of the public on its territory.

Generally, it appears that the consultation will require the use of specialists in communication and public enquiries in order to tend to maximum effectiveness and better participative interactivity, to define the most suitable methods,

most of which still remaining to be tested.

It is necessary to adopt a language adapted to the targeted publics while avoiding too technical or bureaucratic terms which would be inaccessible to the greatest number of citizens. The language should be clear, simple, understandable by everyone with strong and recognizable visual documents.

Attention was also paid to the cost of these consultations and to the need for planning significant budgets to conform to the new obligations in this field.

THE MAIN MEETING OF 2007 SHOULD NOT BE MISSED!

Messrs. Jean-Marie WAUTHIER and Mieczyslaw OSTOJSKI



Eastern Europe and in the Balkans, and within the neighborhood policy in the Mediterranean and in the Caucasus.

The Namur assembly was aware of the specificities of islands regarding WFD implementation.

Mr. Jean Marie Wauthier, Director at the Ministry of the Walloon Region, will chair the "EUROPE-INBO" Group until its next plenary assembly in 2006.

The delegates congratulated Mr. Mieczyslaw Ostojki, Water Director of Poland, for the effectiveness with which he held the Presidency of the "EUROPE-INBO" Group in 2004 and 2005.

The delegates retained the French proposal to organize the next meeting of "EUROPE-INBO" in Megève in Upper Savoy from 20 to 22 September 2006.

www.inbo-news.org

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

As regards the WFD and agriculture:

- considering financial compensations for the farmers who changed their behavior,
- ensuring better compatibility between the CAP and the environmental directives.

And also:

- underlining the "upstream-downstream" common cause as the basis for consistent management on the scale of river basins and sub-basins,

- taking into account all the aspects of water management and their impacts, and not only the problems of quality of water and the environments, as everything is linked in each water body,
- underlining the importance of having interfaces between the Framework Directive and navigation, power production, the prevention and protection against floods and droughts,
- taking into account the quantitative problems, and obviously the issues related to droughts and floods,
- ensuring the continuity of rivers to restore or guarantee the upcoming and circulation of fish species,

- introducing reflexions and prospects on climate change,
- developing international and standardized methods for the early tracking of the invading aquatic species and standardized processes for fighting against these species,
- planning sub-basin plans and programs of measures to be implemented at local level by mobilizing participative bodies either already existing or to be created,
- strengthening cooperation programs with the neighboring countries of the enlarged European Union, in



Mrs Madeleine JOUYE de GRANDMAISON
INBO President

INBO, PARTNER OF THE WEEK OF EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY FOR WATER STRASBOURG - FRANCE - 15-21 OCTOBER 2005



No doubt that water management is a sector that transcends the concept of States and borders. Since millennia, all the inhabitants of the large Europe have shared this resource. Interdependence is a reality. Transboundary management becomes the only way to envisage the future, based on river basins.

In some regions of Europe, challenges linked to water management are still there, either related to the water of streams or rivers, to access to drinking water and sanitation, to groundwater, wetlands, to risk management, to water to be saved and shared, or to water as a factor of economic and social development (navigation, industry, agriculture, dams, etc.).

There are solutions, know-how has been developed and practices have been proven to be reliable, but it is necessary to know about them, to share them, to adapt them to the various contexts and to organize common cause for local, sustainable and equitable development.

World Water Forum
Mexico - 18 March 2006



INBO BASIN IWRM

For such a purpose, the Week of European Solidarity for Water was organized and held in Strasbourg from 15 to 21 October. This event was managed by the Solidarity-Water Europe program and the International Secretariat of Water, with the support of the Council of Europe, the local Authorities of Strasbourg and the World Water Council.

On their side, the International Network of Basin Organizations (INBO) and the International Office for Water were particularly mobilized to support and promote this event in which they were partners.

The overall objective of the Week of European Solidarity for Water consisted in mobilizing the European citizens before the 4th World Water Forum of Mexico City.

More precisely, it was about offering to the European stakeholders of local water management a place for exchange and dialogue and allowing them:

- to formulate European recommendations, which will be submitted to the 4th World Water Forum, Mexico City, on the topic "local action for global challenges";
- to intensify exchanges and common cause in Europe between the various partners of water management;
- to accentuate and develop field projects in Europe especially focusing on the most underprivileged populations;

- to raise the awareness of the general public and elected officials on "water realities" in Europe and on the (human and financial) investments necessary for their management.

In order to achieve these ambitious objectives, the Week of European Solidarity for Water was structured around four strong sets of activities:

- ▣ a forum on the water right topic in Europe,
- ▣ field visits,
- ▣ workshops and exchanges on the topics of water and the Civil Society,
- ▣ conferences at the Council of Europe.

The Forum on water rights in Europe

This forum allowed:

- to introduce a small number of case studies on the implementation of water rights in some European countries (Bulgaria, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Romania and the Ukraine);
- to think about an approach to water rights as an instrument to increase the availability, quality, and physical and economic accessibility of water and sanitation services.

Workshops and exchanges on water and the Civil Society

Four workshops were organized during two days, they dealt with the following topics:

- management of water-related risks;
- the implementation of the European Water Framework Directive in Central and Eastern European countries;
- access to drinking water and sanitation for everyone;
- decentralized financing for water management in small towns and rural areas of Central and Eastern Europe.

The President of the International Network of Basin Organizations (INBO), Mrs. Madeleine Jouye de Grandmaison, chaired the workshop on the topic: "implementation of the European Water Framework

Directive in Central and Eastern European countries: At which speed? Under which social, cultural and structural conditions? With what tools for decision-making support?".

From their part, Mr. Jean-François Donzier, General Manager of the International Office for Water and INBO Permanent Secretary and Mrs. Anne-Marie Ciurea, Romanian Ministry of the Environment, jointly presented an analysis of the "lessons learned from 10 years of implementation of basin management in Eastern Europe".

The conference at the Council of Europe: "water management: a shared responsibility"

On 20 and 21 October, the Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe jointly organized a conference on the topic: "water management, a shared responsibility".

Recent natural disasters such as floods, forest fires, droughts, underlined the extreme importance of a good water management plan, and the need for coordinating water policies in Europe. Integrated water management is a critical prerequisite to sustainable development and for the future of Europe.

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EUROPEAN RIVERS NETWORK

"BIG JUMP", THE GREAT RETURN OF MAN TO THE RIVERS



FIRST EUROPEAN BATHING DAY IN RIVERS

- 22 participating countries,
- 31 rivers and streams,
- 216 spaces of official actions and approximately 240 spontaneous "Big Jumps",
- 250,000 participants, 150 exhibitions, 120 debates, etc.,
- 22 major associative, institutional and private partners,
- 450 local partners,
- Broadcast on 12 national TV channels and 18 regional TV channels,
- Articles in the New York Times, GEO, National Geographic, etc.



"Big Jump" aims to reconcile man with rivers.

By encouraging citizens to discover and recover the space of rivers and lakes, the objective of the project is to involve them in the restoration of the European aquatic environments. Without citizens' adhesion, the policy of the European Community on water protection (Water Framework Directive) will never be able to achieve its goals!

"Big Jump" is a project organized by the European Rivers Network over 10 years and which will culminate in 2015. In the entire Europe, on its 50 large river basins, hundreds of thousands of Europeans will discuss, get information and express themselves all together.

During these various events they will show their will to see the quality of the rivers improving before 2015, the dead-

line given by the European Union to the Member States to achieve the goals of good ecological status laid down by the Water Framework Directive.

First analysis of events in 2005

For its first event on a big scale, "Big Jump" went further and stronger than expected. The enthusiasm of our organizing partners, the delighted astonishment of the public and the hopes raised by this event may lead us to think that the generated waves announce bigger ones to come... The popular and media plebiscite that this event raised, evidenced the formidable potential of such an action.

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WFD-COMMUNITY

A VIRTUAL WATER UNIVERSITY

The project consists in creating a Continuous Education and Training scheme for water professionals, based on collaboration between peers, working together on the implementation of the Water Framework Directive (WFD), through a Virtual Learning Community.

The partnership gathers the International Office for Water (France), Apele Romane (Romania), the University of Bucharest (Romania), the Gdansk Water Foundation (Poland), Hydrocontrol (Italy), and the International Network of Basin Organizations.

The project will last 36 months (until mid-2006), and its budget (Euro 380,000) is 75 % supported by the European Leonardo da Vinci program, and 25 % by the consortium members.

The corpus of knowledge needed for WFD implementation has been described by the partnership, leading to the

identification of 6 modules in addition to an introduction to the European WFD:

- **M1: Good status in 2015**, to understand the status of surface and ground waters;
- **M2: Characterization, pressures and impacts**, to assess the impact of human activity on water status;
- **M3: Monitoring**, to undertake a monitoring program to determine water status;
- **M4: River basin management plan and programs of measures**, to formulate the river basin management plan;
- **M5: Public participation**, to implement the WFD requirements for public participation;
- **M6: Economic analysis**, to understand the role of the economic analysis in the WFD and undertake the studies.

The pilot phase:

- The topic M1 module concerning good ecological status is completed and was tested with 20 participants during a demonstration course (4 from France, 12 from Romania, 3 from Poland and 1 from Italy), within 5 working teams, working in their own language and in English for inter-teams exchanges.

This first test was evaluated by an external consultant, and analyzed by the partners during a Steering Committee in early July in Gdansk in Poland.

Improvements were developed during the second test, from September to November 2005.

- The topic M2 module on characterization, pressures and impacts was introduced by the trainer with students and tutors during a web conference on 8 September 2005.

It was presented to water professionals on 10, 17 and 24 November 2005.

The outcomes of this work will then be disseminated among INBO members to get professionals' feed-back.

The last Steering Committee of the "WFD-Community" project took place in Rome, Italy, on 12 and 13 December 2005.

All the process is available on the project website:

www.mayeticvillage.com/wfd-community

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EXCIFF

EUROPEAN EXCHANGE CIRCLE ON FLOOD FORECASTING

EXCIFF, the European Exchange Circle on Flood Forecasting, was established by the European Union's Water Directors in December 2004.

EXCIFF gathers several national centers and organizations operating in the field of flood forecasting to allow them to share their experiences.

The work done so far by EXCIFF members has first allowed to draw up an overview of the current practices of flood forecasting in Europe.

Future actions

Six actions were approved by the EU Water Directors at their last meeting in June 2005 in Luxemburg.

First set of three actions (2005 and 2006)

- ❖ implementing an Internet site devoted to flood forecasting,
- ❖ improving "flood-related information for the general public".

The objective is to write a guide of good practices regarding the provision of flood-related information to the general public.

To undertake this action, EXCIFF will cooperate with the sub-group on flood forecasting of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO).

- ❖ organizing training workshops on flood forecasting methods.

Second set of three actions

Three more actions will be undertaken in 2006 or later:

- ❑ hydrological data quality and exchange standards;
- ❑ agreement between hydrological and meteorological communities concerning the use of data;

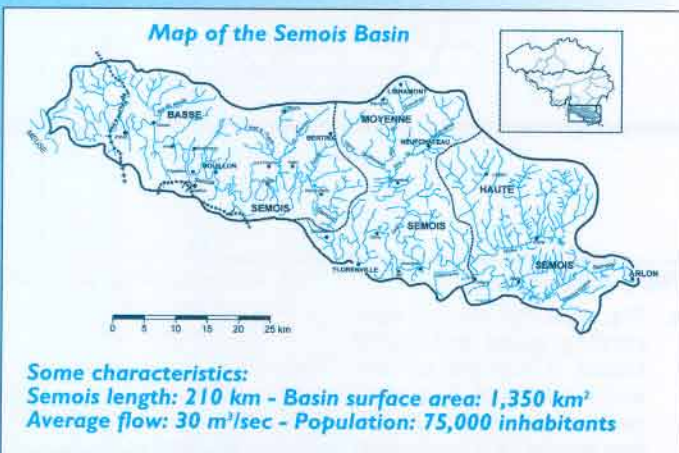
- ❑ training and exercises about river basin behavior and forecasting organization.

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BELGIUM

THE RIVER CONTRACT OF THE SEMOIS RIVER



The Walloon model of River Contracts

In the Walloon Region, river contracts started at the beginning of the 1990s, taking as a model the French experiments initiated 10 years before.

The institutional recognition of the Walloon model of river contracts, through the ministerial circular of March 1993 on the conditions of acceptability and on the methods for the development of river contracts in the Walloon Region and their confirmation by the circular of March 2001, led in 2005 to a good cover of the Walloon Region. With 16 projects being prepared and implemented, 60% of the territory has now a river contract.

More than 60% of the Walloon Municipalities are involved.

The river contract aims at restoring water uses and functions to meet the needs of the population of a river basin while preserving potentialities for future generations.

The river contract of the Semois basin

This approach is illustrated concretely with the contract of the Semois basin. Starting with a Walloon initiative supported by the 12 main Belgian municipalities of the basin, a first contract, signed in December 1996, could be prepared and implemented successfully. It concerns the Belgian section of

the basin.

Thanks to the Interreg II Walloon Region - Champagne - Ardennes program, the project could be extended to the French side. Since September 2002, a second Walloon action plan has been under way, simultaneously with its French counterpart. From now on, the entire transboundary basin of the Semois is covered by a river contract.

A first river contract from 1994 to 2001 ...

Three years were necessary to lead to the signing of a first river contract in December 1996. These three years correspond to the three main stages of contract preparation:

- ❑ 1994: findings with data collection, basin characterization, identification of the stakes.
- ❑ 1995: charter of the Semois basin, 12 objectives for sustainable management.
- ❑ 1996: the river contract, the action plan.

A second action plan: from 2002 to 2005 ...

Using the lessons learned in the first contract, this second plan allowed to refocus the objectives and actions on water functions and uses in the sub-basin, while better measuring the range and the consequences of the commitments made by each stakeholder.

This contract now benefits from the support of the Interreg III France - Walloon Region - Flanders program.

After more than 10 years of experimentation, the river contract of the Semois practically illustrates the Walloon model implementation. Combined with a transboundary approach, it shows the possibility of building European unity on the local scale of a sub-basin.

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FRANCE

WATER IN MOUNTAINS PILOT SITE - "HELP"

SAVOY - ANNECY - MOUNT BLANC - LEMAN

Gathered in Megève on 9 September 2005, the enlarged Steering committee of the "Water

in Mountains pilot site: Savoy - Annecy - Mount Blanc - Leman" has:

- approved conventions with structures representative of the five "founder" basins, for integrated management of the upper river basins,
- validated the 2005 - 2007 action plan and the proposed organization,
- defined the baselines of the international "Megève II" conference, which will take place at the end of September 2006, under

the aegis of UNES-
CO (HELP)
and which will
host a general assembly of EURO-
PE-INBO for the implementation of the
Water Framework Directive (WFD) in mountains.

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Next Meeting
"EUROPE-INBO 2006"
Megève - France
20 - 22 September 2006

EUROPEAN WATER FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE FORMULATION OF MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR INTERNATIONAL RIVER BASIN DISTRICTS - IRBDs

Article 13 of the European Water Framework Directive (WFD) indicates that the Member States must coordinate themselves to produce a single Management Plan for International River Basin Districts.

In line with the huge work completed for characterization, roof characterization in particular, the Management Plan of an International River Basin District should include a roof section and national sections:

The roof section will deal with the significant issues jointly identified by the concerned Partners of the international district.

The national management plans will deal with the sections of the international river basin district located on the territory of each Member State.

France considers useful to prepare baselines for the roof part of the management plan for an International River Basin District.

This project is presented in the International River Basin Commissions of which France is member.

Development of the roof section of a IRBD Management Plan

The roof section of a IRBD Management Plan is prepared according to two complementary and interactive approaches:

- ❖ One "Top down": using international stakes identified in the roof characterizations, measures suited to the solving of the problems encountered are proposed;
- ❖ The other "Bottom up": using the national management plans, measures of prime importance for the entire IRBD are identified.

According to these principles, the roof section of the Management Plan should describe in particular:

- ◆ the coordination of the monitoring means necessary at the level of the IRBD;
- ◆ for each selected water body requiring a common approach, the roof section of the management plan describes the objectives to be achieved.

As regards the programs of measures, the plan will present:

- the measures, that aim at meeting the common challenges between the district partners,
- the criteria for evaluating the measures' effectiveness, their technical feasibility and their cost,
- the complementary measures to be implemented and the cost/benefit and cost/effectiveness analyses for these measures.

The roof section of the Management Plan could include:

- an introduction reminding the context given by the WFD, the formulation process for the Management Plan;
- the presentation of the International River Basin District: a summary of the roof characterizations, the significant IRBD issues and the selection of the water bodies concerned;

- the international coordination of the monitoring networks and a presentation of the data from the existing networks;
- the environmental objectives for the selected water bodies;
- the register of the protected areas designated by a directive for transboundary implementation;
- the program of measures selected for each significant issue in the IRBD;
- the coordinated action plans for flood control in the IRBD;
- the public information and consultation process for the formulation of the Management Plan.

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"GRAIE"

"SEDIMENTS OF THE RHONE" - VALENCE (FRANCE) - 10 JUNE 2005

The second topical conference of the Rhone Basin Workshop Area, organized by the GRAIE on 10 June 2005 in Valence, allowed to make a progress report on research regarding the sediments of the Rhone.

About 140 people participated. The audience was essentially

made up of technicians from local authorities, representatives of the State services, consulting firms, large companies and scientists.

This Topical Day confirmed the acquired knowledge, dealt with various solved problems, or problems that cannot be

solved, and highlighted some gaps.

As always when complex natural processes are dealt with, scale diversities reveal different realities. For example a rather stabilized low water channel, or in an erosion phase, on the scale of the en-

tire Rhone, does not exclude local sections, even reaches, in a silting phase.

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FRANCE

ARTOIS-PICARDY

WATER PRICES AND HOUSEHOLDS' INCOME



The investigations carried out for the implementation of the Water Framework Directive have undertaken a specific analysis of the weight of the water services bill for the households of the Artois-Picardy River Basin.

In this basin of 5,000,000 inhabitants, the mean price for a cubic meter of water was 3.28 euros in 2004 (drinking water supply, wastewater collection and treatment and environmental taxes), but this price can reach 5 Euros and more in some specific areas of the basin.

Unfortunately in these areas, these high prices can be combined with low mean income per inhabitant (in the Artois-Picardy basin it is 20% lower than the national average).

In 1994, the Artois-Picardy Water Agency undertook a specific survey in order to create an

annual "record" of the prices paid by households to public water utilities in the 2,448 municipalities of the river basin, as compared to the mean available income per household for each municipality.

The data on "fiscal income" from the National Statistics Office (INSEE) were used and the mean income per household is 23,796 euros per year in the basin, to be compared with 25,563 euros, which is the mean value for France.

The data of the Water Agency's Information System enabled the calculation, for each

municipality, of the following ratio: mean water bill for 120 cubic meters per year on the average household income, with results which vary between 1.51 and 1.94 depending on the areas.

The European Commission considers a 2% ratio as suitable.

Beyond 3%, the water invoice is considered as a heavy burden on the income of a household.

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ADOUR-GARONNE

MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR LOW WATER LEVELS (PGE)

Low flow in the Gave d'Oloron in Navarrenx



The Master Plan for Water Development and Management (SDAGE) of the Adour-Garonne Basin, adopted in 1996, introduced these tools for local water management in time of scarcity.

The Management Plans for low water levels (PGEs) result from local initiatives and, therefore, are adapted to a sub-basin territory, on which there is common cause among users (farmers, municipalities and industries in particular), who thus participate, together with the public services, in the definition of water management rules concerning:

- sufficient flows to be maintained in their rivers, 8 years out of 10;

- a reasonable distribution of abstractions not to be exceeded;

- methods for collective management of surface and ground water resources and of man-made reservoirs, either existing or to be built.

The purpose of the PGEs is also to reconcile the meeting of various economic needs with the protection of aquatic environments.

They are thus invaluable tools for joint local management respectful of the future.

Once negotiated by the interested parties, each PGE is submitted to the approval of the Basin Committee, then enforced by the Prefect concerned.

There are seven PGEs being implemented in the Adour-Garonne Basin.

THE STATUS OF WATER RESOURCES

In France, many indicators have favorably evolved since the creation of Basin Organizations and the implementation of a national ... and decentralized water policy, but much remains to be done, within the "framework" of the WFD.

Substantial progress has been made since the 1970s:

- knowledge of the resources and of the problems they raise or are being raised by economic and human activities,
- the practice of dialogue in current Local Commissions,
- the investments have allowed the stopping of pollution progression since 1980 and then a "selective" or targeted regression,

- the building of water reservoirs,
- the evolution of the main categories of water needs, for:
 - populations,
 - agriculture,
 - industry and energy,
- the quantitative and qualitative status of surface water and aquifers.

Much remains to be done, within the framework of the new water policy.

Indeed, the WFD will direct the further recovery of water resources quality and availability, with in particular:

- ☐ the objective of "good ecological status" of "water bodies";
- ☐ the taking into account of the economic data;
- ☐ public participation.

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RHINE-MEUSE

OUTCOMES OF THE "CHARACTERIZATION" IN THE MOSELLE - SAAR SECTOR



This "characterization", made compulsory by the European Water Framework Directive (WFD, was carried out within the framework of the International Commissions for the Protection of the Moselle and the Saar Rivers (CIPMS) and implemented by the Rhine-Meuse Water Agency.

Four countries are involved: Belgium, Germany, France and Luxembourg.

It consisted in delimitating and describing the surface and ground "water bodies", identifying pressures and assessing their impacts, and assessing, for each water body, the probability of achieving or not the WFD objectives by 2015.

The probability of not achieving the "good ecological status" of the WFD objectives by 2015, without further measures, is 42% for the surface water of 600 "water bodies" and 40% for the groundwater of 65 identified "water bodies".

The common analysis carried out by the different Countries, concerning the main issues for the Moselle-Saar sector, led to the **identification of six transboundary challenges:**

- usual pollution, especially the nitrogen and phosphorus nutrients, is significant,
- the continuum of the Moselle and Saar is not ensured, which disturbs fish migration,

➤ the water uses and the land planning policies are not always coherent with the WFD environmental objectives, especially concerning navigation, hydroelectric production and protection against flood,

➤ diffuse inputs deteriorate groundwater (plant protection substances, nitrates, historical pollution and metals),

➤ the balance of the aquatic environments is disturbed by the mining activity,

➤ the pollution caused by hazardous substances is still high in some parts of the basin.

The outcomes are considerable: several thousands of data concerning activities, pressures, impacts and water status, several hundreds indicators, a platform for a Geographic Information System (GIS), a simulation model for the quality of freshwaters (PEGASE).

The WFD implementation on the scale of the international Moselle-Saar river basin allowed for successful technical coordination and a first harmonization between water policies and challenges in the basin Countries.

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CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

"IWAN"

TRANSBOUNDARY WARNING AND ALARM PLAN FOR NEMAN/NEMUNAS

In May 2005, the 3rd meeting of the Project Steering Group of the International Warning and Alarm Plan for the Neman river basin (IWAN) took place in Minsk (Belarus) with repre-

sentatives of Belarus, Lithuania, Russia and Germany and external experts.

Workshops had been arranged in February and March 2005 in Kaliningrad, Vilnius and Minsk.

The current IWAN version was presented, discussed and confirmed by the Group.

Lithuania, the Russian Federation and Belarus conducted a registration of industrial plants with potential of causing hazardous incidents.

A permanent working group on "Warning and Alarm System of accidental pollution of water bodies in the Neman/Nemunas basin" was created.

The first alarm training was carried out in June 2005. The main purpose of this training was to test the IWAN communication means.

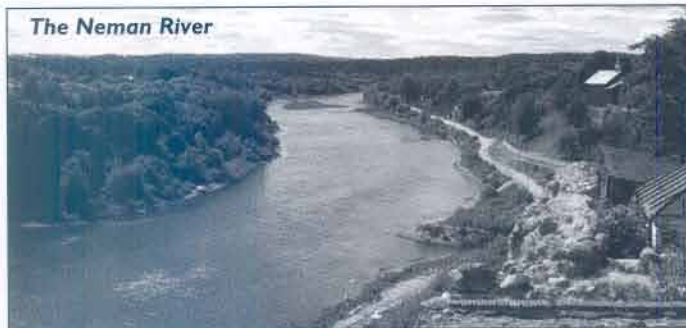
A study tour to several European Transboundary River Commissions was organized at the end of September 2005.

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The Neman River

GEORGIA - AZERBAIJAN

THE TRANSBOUNDARY AQUIFER BASIN OF ALAZANI-AGRICHAI

The Alazani-Agrichai aquifer represents the transboundary groundwater resources shared by Georgia and Azerbaijan.

The Alazani-Agrichai basin comprises the north-east part of Georgia and the north-west region of Azerbaijan with a total surface area of 6,300 square kilometers.

The groundwater of the basin comes from the Great Caucasus and the Tsvigombori ridge (south).

The main groundwater discharge points are threatened by high pollution.

The groundwater of the Alazani-Agrichai aquifer is of vital importance for the populations of Azerbaijan and Geor-

gia and the regional use of the basin water resources should take groundwater recharge into account.

The program should include the creation of a database on identified water reserves, as well as the creation of an appropriate monitoring network to avoid the depletion of water reserves and desertification.

A regional legal document should be written, taking into consideration the economical, political and strategic interests of the neighbor Countries.

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CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE RUSSIA - KAZAKHSTAN

TRANSBOUNDARY MANAGEMENT OF THE IRTYSH RIVER BASIN

A first stage of the project "Transboundary management of the Irtysh River Basin water resources" was implemented in 2001-2003 in Russia (Omsk region) and Kazakhstan (Pavlodar and East-Kazakhstan regions) with financial support from the French Global Environment Fund (FFEM).

It enabled us to obtain some important practical outcomes, for example, to create a hydrological model of the Irtysh river in order to forecast the Irtysh physico-climatic conditions and human activities, with various options of flow diversion between China and Kazakhstan.

This experience proved the necessity of collaboration between the Russian and Kazakh regions located in the Irtysh Basin. French experts from IOWater, SAFEGE, ANTEA played a very important role in the project.

In May 2004, an international conference on Irtysh resources management took place in Omsk. It was initiated by the Omsk region Governor and involved representatives from the Russian and Kazakh Authorities, regional Governments and French colleagues.

The conference confirmed the necessity to continue the activities which had been started.



Child Meeting "Help River", Omsk, Russia

Since then, the concept of a "complex Irtysh Basin Management System" has been developed in the region. It was based on the Conference recommendations. It includes three main issues that should be dealt with in the near future:

- 1 development of the hydrochemical model of the Irtysh River Basin,
- 2 monitoring on the Russian-Kazakh border,
- 3 creating a mechanism of development and implementation of the complex Irtysh Basin Management Program with the forming of a Basin Council.

The outcomes of the Irtysh project can be used in other transboundary river basins of the region (Tobol, Ishim).

A Steering Committee

The 13th session of the Russian-Kazakh Commission on joint use and protection of transboundary waters, held in Uralsk on 28.10.2004, made a decision of creating a special project management body, **the Irtysh River Steering Committee**, which will be supervised by the Nizhne-Ob Basin Water Department, with its home office in Tumen and representatives in each region of Russia.

Population involved

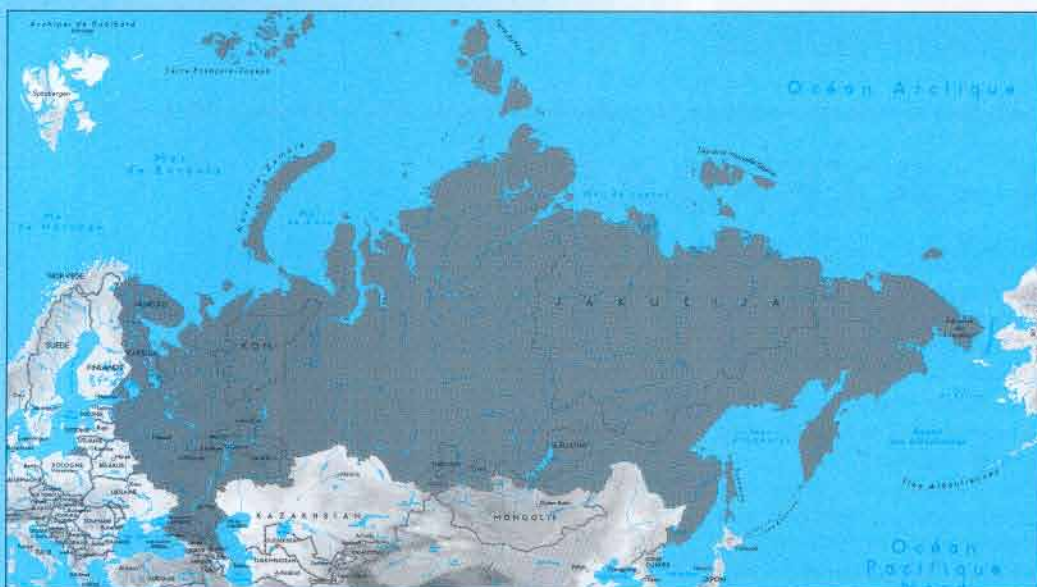
Another action, that has been developing due to activities of NGOs with financial support from regional authorities and international funds, is creating a partnership network and en-

couraging population activity in preserving water resources.

The activities are supported by the population and environmental organizations, the Russian Regional Environmental Center and Siberian Civic Initiative Support Center. The NGOs will be able to suggest coordinated activities on water resources protection to the Steering Committee.

Taking these proposals into account, the Steering Committee, with the support of regional Authorities and water users, will be able to develop an efficient action plan, which will become an example of implementation of basin management principles for neighboring regions and the entire country.

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THE BALKANS

MANAGEMENT OF THE LAKE OHRID AND DRIM RIVER BASIN

The Lake Ohrid Conservation Project (LOCP) has allowed the establishment of joint institutions for project management and the harmonization of the procedures for water monitoring in the Lake Basin and its tributaries (Joint Protocols for sampling, analysis and quality assurance). It also com-

plied with the environmental legislation, regulations, standards of the EU Directives.

The First Joint Report on the Status of the Environment in Lake Ohrid and its watershed has been published with a contribution of 50 scientists and experts from Albania, Greece

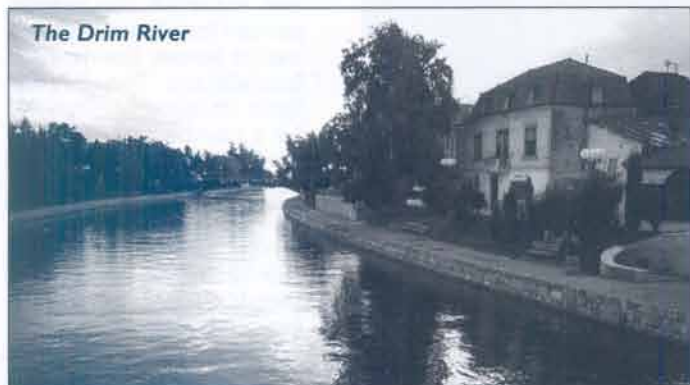
and Macedonia. A new Monitoring Laboratory was created on the Albanian side. It also initiated many Joint NGOs projects for public awareness and participation, including the establishment of 21 June as "Lake Ohrid Day" and allowed the twinning of Pogradec, Ohrid and Struga towns.

A Joint Agreement for the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Lake and its watershed, was signed to establish an International Lake Ohrid Management Agency, empowered with legal authority in Albania, Macedonia, and Greece. This agreement ensures integrated protection and sustainable development for the lake and its watershed, according to the European Union standards, and gives the Lake and its watershed the status of World

Cultural and Natural Heritage and the status of "Biosphere Reserve" of UNESCO.

Spreading this experience to the Drim River basin was deemed necessary, especially to foster the development of sub-basin organizations that could share information, identify demonstration projects, and assist in developing the Strategic Action Plan for the Basin.

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The Drim River

WORLD WATER FORUM
Mexico - 18 March 2006
11:00 - 13:00 Session
on the Implementation of the European
Water Framework Directive

POLAND

THE COUNCILS FOR WATER MANAGEMENT

Polish implementation of the Water Framework Directive, regarding public participation and the formulation of Management Plans, led to the creation of advisory bodies at national and regional levels: **the State Council for Water Management and 8 Regional Councils for Water Management.**

The State Council consists of 30 members, who have been proposed by the national organizations, by the academic, scientific and research institutions, and by social, economic and ecological organizations, involved in water management.

The activity of the State Council is to give advice to the Government on matters related to water management, protection against floods and droughts.

The Regional Councils are also made up of 30 members: Directors of the Regional Water Management Boards (RZGW) and representatives of local governments, of economic, agriculture, fishing and social organizations and also representatives of users of the concerned regions. They also give advice on matters related to water management in the concerned region.

The State Council was created in May 2002.



Session of the Council of Lower Oder and Western Coastal Rivers

The first Regional Council was created for the Lower Oder and Western Coastal Rivers, then other Councils came into life in the Polish river basins.

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GOOD PRACTICES OF STREAM AND RIVER MAINTENANCE IN THE CARPATHIANS

The status of the environment of most mountain streams and rivers on the Carpathian-side of the Vistula River Basin, even from a hydromorphological viewpoint, is far from balanced.

Throughout the 20th century, the Carpathian rivers and streams cut deep into the valley beds due to human activity (river training by channelling, sediment extraction), thus causing a number of adverse

economic and environmental effects.

The lowering of watercourse beds on the Carpathian-side of the Vistula River Basin resulted in an increasing filling of the channels and a considerable reduction in flood retention capability, in the transformation of alluvial channels into bed-rock and in the damming of numerous watercourses making fish movement impossible.

Today, it is necessary to recover flow retention capabilities in flood-prone areas to maintain good environmental status in watercourses while maintaining the current protection against floods and erosion in urbanized areas in the plains.

The Bojarski's guide of good practices, published in 2005, formulates a methodology for the evaluation of watercourses and provides a range of solutions to water managers.

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THE DANUBE RIVER BASIN

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN WATER FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE

The Danube River



The Danube River Basin, the largest of Central Europe, involves 18 riparian countries, which are mainly members of or candidates to the European Union (EU).

For this reason, the Water Framework Directive (WFD) of 2000 is applicable, including, within the framework of the Neighborhood Policy, in cooperation with the neighbor

countries concerned, not UE members.

A favorable context was generated by the significant work, structured, coordinated and supported by the **International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR)**, already carried out for WFD implementation.

The drawing up of the roof report in 2004 (Characterization), dealing with the problems in the entire Danube Basin, and the finalization of the national reports in March 2005, are the first successful outputs of this approach.

For drawing up the **Danube District Management Plan**, there are three alternatives (options):

- **Option A is to structure the Danube Basin into large sub-basins.** The overall Plan will be a combination of the Plans for the sub-basins. The sub-basins could belong to one, two or many countries;
- **Option B is to develop national plans within the national boundaries** and establish the means needed for bilateral coordination across the national boundaries. The overall Basin Management Plan will be a combination of National Plans;
- **Option C is to divide the Danube Basin into small sub-basins.** The sub-basins could also be transboundary. Existing bilateral agreements could be used for coordination in these smaller sub-basins. The overall plan will be a combination of the small sub-basins plans.

These options are being tested, in the Tisza Basin for instance.

www.icpdr.org

HUNGARY – ROMANIA

THE KÖRÖS/CRISURI TRANSBOUNDARY BASIN: A TEST FOR THE TISZA AND THE WHOLE DANUBE BASIN

The 1st Steering Committee of the Körös/Crisuri project, name of the transboundary river basin shared between Hungary and Romania and tributary to the Tisza, took place in Oradea on 13 September 2005, under the direction of Philip Weller, Secretary-General to the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR).

This ambitious technical assistance project, financed by the French Fund for Global Environment (FFEM), of a total budget of 3.7 Million Euros, is now well launched.

A French technical assistance, coordinated by the International Office for Water, is planned for:

- ▶ the setting-up of working groups: structure, follow up and general coordination;
- ▶ the prevention and fight against accidental water pollution;
- ▶ information analysis, general GIS of the basin;

- ▶ assistance for WFD implementation;
- ▶ a support for the future preparation of a harmonized Körös/Crisuri River Basin Management Plan with participatory process.

It was agreed to use a pragmatic approach for the Tisza region, based on the existing good bilateral coordination and on the same set of data needed for the basin management plan.

The dynamics of the project is used today not only for implementing the following stages of basin planning but also for testing to look further into the stage of the Tisza characterization. For this reason, the work started for the management and harmonization of the data on the Körös/Crisuri Basin in order to produce common topical charts, will be closely followed up by the Tisza working group, made up of Hungarian, Rumanian but also Ukrainian, Serbian and Slovak representatives.

A cross test of the participation of the Interested Parties in the two national sectors of the transboundary basin and of public consultation should also take place soon. The main basin stakes, determined during the first joint seminar in July should thus be further studied and presented to the Interested Parties for a later public consultation. As already done for data management, the French, Hungarian, Rumanian and ICPDR experts will work together for this first experiment to be successful in the Danube basin.

The year 2006 will thus be quite loaded with actions in the fields of accidental pollution, monitoring, preparation of the program of measures and economic analysis related to this last stage and to that of characterization.

The final objective of the project is thus to clarify the way for the preparation of a Transboundary Management Plan and to harmonize the plans for response to accidental pollution.

The experiments and outputs of the Körös/Crisuri project could be used for other rivers shared by Hungary and Romania, and by all the countries of the Tisza and Danube Basins.

The forwarding of the project outcomes to the regional levels will be ensured by the ICPDR, which is the ideal channel for information dissemination in this geographical area.

The ICPDR makes sure that the methodological approach, applied for the implementation of the WFD in the Körös/Crisuri Basin, is coherent with and complementary to the project dealing with the Tisza and Danube Basins.

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HUNGARY

AESN/OKTVF TWINNING

The French Seine-Normandie Water Agency (AESN) and the Hungarian National Directorate for Environment, Nature and Water (OKTVF) signed a new Twinning Agreement on 24 June 2005.

Within the framework of this new agreement, the representatives of the French and Hungarian Basin Organizations held a workshop in Budapest on the implementation of the Water Framework Directive.

The French delegation was headed by Mr. Guy Fradin, General Director of AESN. The workshop was opened by Dr. György Zoltán Kovács, General Director of OKTVF.

The audience was greeted by Dr. Miklós Varga, Deputy State Secretary of Water, who underlined the importance of the continuation of the cooperation between the French and Hungarian Basin Organizations. The workshop was attended by Mr. Sándor Kabay, Director of the Central Danubian Environment and Water Directorate (EWD) and Mr. Gáspár Bodnár, Director of the Upper Tisza Valley EWD. These two directorates are participating in the implementation of the AESN-OKTVF Twinning Agreement. The representatives of 4 additional Hungarian EWDs also took part in the workshop.

The Hungarian presentations were the following:

- ◆ the Hungarian Country Report on WFD implementation (Dr. László Perger),
- ◆ protection of vulnerable well fields in Hungary (Ms. Erzsébet Gulyás),
- ◆ assessment of the status of mining ponds on the Csepel Island (Ms. Noémi Harmathy),
- ◆ flood protection on the Danube river (Mr. András Korompay).

The French contributions dealt with:

- implementation of WFD in the Seine-Normandie Basin (Mr. Luc Pereira-Ramos),
- French experiences with wastewater treatment plants

in small communities (Mr. Jacques Lesavre),

- case study on the flood protection developments in Caen (Mr. Jacques Sicard).

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WWF INBO MEGA SESSION
4 Main Meetings in Mexico
18 March 2006 - 11:00 - 18:30
"For better IWRM at the basin level"

BULGARIA

PILOT PROJECTS



As Bulgaria is a Candidate Country for the next European Union enlargement in 2007, it is committed to implement the Water Framework Directive (WFD).

In accordance with the Bulgarian Water Act (adopted in 2000), the Ministry of Environment and Water (MoEW) is the main institution responsible for WFD implementation with the support of the newly established River Basin Directorates, as competent authorities in the four River Basin Districts of the country.

The ISKAR pilot project

The Iskar river is the biggest tributary of the Danube river on the Bulgarian territory.

The pilot project is included in the cooperation agreement between the Italian Ministry of the Environment and its Bulgarian counterpart with the aim of establishing an Action Plan for implementing the Framework Directive in the basin.

The Iskar River Basin, one of the sub-basins, was identified as a priority on a national scale, as it is the source of drinking water for about one-third of the Bulgarian population, including the capital city of Sofia, and marked by important industrial areas and other significant economic activities.

The main objectives to be achieved were:

- to collect and analyze the available data and information,

- to carry out a feasibility study for an integrated and coherent monitoring network for the surface and ground waters in the basin,
- to develop capacity building of the Authorities in charge of WFD implementation, and to promote the exchange of technologies, information and experiences,
- to allow public information and the population's participation in the project development.

The Project, initiated in January 2004 was successfully completed after 16 months, in compliance with the original schedule.

Integrated Water Management of the Mesta/Nestos River Basin

The objective of this project was to establish transboundary and integrated management of the Mesta/Nestos River Basin by applying a common approach to water quality and quantity objectives, a methodology for river basin management in compliance with the Water Framework Directive.

A technical and institutional support to the Western Aegean Basin Directorate and to the Joint Cooperation Committee for transboundary management allowed the identification and presentation to the public of the main issues for achieving and maintaining good water status in the Mesta/Nestos River Basin.

The specific objectives were in particular:

The specific objectives were in particular:

- ◆ to establish transboundary cooperation for river basin management,
- ◆ to implement the monitoring required by the WFD,
- ◆ to identify and present to the competent authorities and the public the main water and transboundary issues in the basin,
- ◆ to develop a hydrological model for the Mesta / Nestos,
- ◆ to finalize the technical and institutional requirements necessary for the preparation of the Draft River Basin Management Plan by December 2008.

Phase II of the project includes the purchase and delivery of equipment for the laboratory, the monitoring points, of hardware and software and the supply of off-road vehicles.

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THE MEDITERRANEAN - MENBO

3RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE MEDITERRANEAN MARRAKECH (MOROCCO) - 23 - 25 MAY 2005

The 3rd General Assembly of the Mediterranean Network of Basin Organizations (MENBO) was held in Marrakech (Morocco), from 23 to 25 May 2005, at the invitation of the Moroccan Authorities and Basin Agencies and under the presidency of Mr. Juan Jose Moragues.

An international seminar on IWRM in the Mediterranean Region and Africa was organized on this occasion.

His Excellency Mr. Mohamed Elyazghi, Moroccan Minister for Regional Planning, Water and the Environment officially opened the meeting.

158 top-level representatives coming from 31 countries (Albania, Algeria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Congo, Egypt, France, Greece, Guinea, Italy, Mali, Mexico, Morocco, Niger, Palestinian Authority, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Senegal, South Africa, Spain, Swaziland, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Uzbekistan) as well as representatives of the NBA, International Commission of the Scheldt, WWC, IME, European Commission, FAO, JRC, OMVS, of the Secretariat of the 4th WWF of Mexico and of the WSSCC, participated in the works.

Preamble

The application of the principles of integrated water resources management at the level of river basins, which are the basis of INBO action, has very widely progressed in the past ten years, in particular with the European Framework Directive, and it is thus very significant to disseminate our results to make known all advantages and to propose new bases for cooperation.

This is the reason why the INBO members marked their disappointment not to have seen these principles included in the conclusions of the 13th CSD of the United Nations, which was held last April in New York, in spite of the proposals especially made by the Countries and the Commission of the European Union in this direction, and they considered that it was a step backward as compared to the former progresses.

They hope that the next World Water Forum of Mexico will be the occasion of reaffirming the obvious advantage of integrated management at the level of river basins.

The two days of Technical Workshops allowed exchanges on issues related to floods and droughts and on the management of groundwater in the Mediterranean Basin:

As regards the prevention and control of floods and droughts, which heavily affect many countries of the Mediterranean region, the delegates confirmed that a better exchange of information and know-how was needed.

They were interested in the presentation of the European Water Directors' Initiative for the creation of the **European Circle for Exchanges on Flood Forecasting, EXCIFF**, and its planned future activities.

They support the proposal to initiate other circles of exchanges on other flood control components.

In particular the mapping of flood hazards is a current topic which should be taken into account.

In addition, creating a specific Circle of Exchanges devoted to flood control in the Mediterranean countries should be considered.

Consistency of the water monitoring and information systems, harmonization of data and Geographic Information Systems and the use of common models are essential for sharing information and following up actions.

In particular, the participants recommended to install reliable and effective systems for quick warning against floods and droughts and to establish prevention and action mechanisms to face the natural disasters caused by water and to protect human lives and properties.

It is essential to harmonize the flood control plans between the countries of Transboundary Basins.

With regard to aquifer management, the delegates insisted on the importance of having knowledge on aquifers: capacity, uses, recharge, fragility, measurement networks, models, studies, etc.

They underlined the irreversibility of the degradation that may affect some aquifers (such as pollution, sea water intrusion or overexploitation) and thus the need for concerted and comprehensive long-term management, involving all the stakeholders.

It is essential to inform the partners and organize an in-depth dialogue so that each one knows its responsibilities regarding the actions to be carried out together with the methods for financing them.

Among the other priority topics, one should include the establishment of networks for monitoring the aquifers to ascertain their sustainable use, especially in the Mediterranean region, knowing that the natural recharge regimes are insufficient. This would enable the taking of measures to avoid overexploitation. In coastal areas, which face a high concentration of populations and activities, these networks would also be used for knowing and controlling the status of sea water intrusions in the aquifers, while allowing the establishment of criteria for diversifying the exploitation of the groundwater resources of these areas, with guarantees of continuity and quality of the water supply.



The Minister, Mr. Elyazghi, and Mrs. Jouye de Grandmaison

NETWORK OF BASIN ORGANIZATIONS - MENBO

Regarding the European Water Initiative (EUWI) / European Water Framework Directive (WFD) Joint Process:

Some time was devoted to the overall presentation of EUWI and of its regional components, especially in the Mediterranean region.

Reminders of the general principles of the WFD and of its implementation timetable as well as the water-related research programs also contributed to the participants' general information.

The session focused on the Mediterranean working group on groundwater, created within the EUWI/WFD joint process.

This joint process, which, in its technical part, focuses on 3 topics (water scarcity, groundwater management and links between rural development and water management) in 2005/2006, aims at facilitating, through the sharing of experience and know-how, the implementation of water management policies adapted to the Mediterranean context and, in particular, of the WFD for the EU Member States.

Specifically regarding the work of the Group dedicated to groundwater management, the Group's mandate was presented and distributed in order to collect the participants' contributions.

Examples of the WFD implementation for groundwater management were presented as well as the example of a shared aquifer in North Africa.

The main goal of this working group is to prepare a document giving some recommendations for the implementation of the WFD as regards groundwater management in the Mediterranean context. Indeed, many regional features will require the implementation of adapted measures. The illustration with examples of groundwater management in non-European countries will enrich this document.

A first version of the chapter on monitoring and management of data on groundwater is already available. It is now a question of continuing the drafting on such topics as groundwater overexploitation and quality or transboundary aspects. The final version of the report is scheduled for June 2006 and should be used as a basis for discussion on the convergence of legislations which must be implemented in the neighboring countries of the European Union. A European report, integrating the Mediterranean recommendations, will be presented to the European Water Directors in June 2006.

The session ended with the presentation of twinning activities between basins of the Mediterranean region, especially the recent agreement signed by the French Seine-Normandie Water Agency and the Moroccan River Basin Agency of Sebou.

Regarding the Mediterranean basin in particular:

MENBO activities from October 2004 up to this date were reminded.

The Assembly particularly wished for a strong implication of the Network in projects which can bring additional financial resources for its operation (TWINBASIN, MELIA, the Med EUWI Initiative - WFD / EUWI JP, etc.).

The official yearly accounts of the Network for year 2004 were approved.

Within its cooperation in the European Joint Process, MENBO hopes to receive a support from the European Commission in order to promote IWRM at the Mediterranean level.

The Assembly approved the candidatures of new members (Spain, Greece, Morocco, Macedonia).

MENBO already has 24 members coming from 10 countries.

It reminded to all the members, and to those which we invite to join us, that registration to MENBO is free, in accordance with the new internal rules which were approved in Istanbul during the Bureau meeting in November 2004. The contributions thus remain voluntary and we encourage each member to contribute to MENBO activities by facilitating the organization of the Network meetings as the main objective is to obtain an active participation of all the Mediterranean Basin Organizations.

In accordance with MENBO statutes, Mr. Elyazghi, Moroccan Minister for Regional Planning, Water and the Environment will take the Presidency of the Regional Network up to its next General Assembly.

It is thus Morocco which will be the head of MENBO, relaying Spain which allowed the initial and successful launching of the Network.

The Minister announced his will to develop actions for collaboration and cooperation between the Mediterranean countries as a continuation of the Spanish Presidency.

The Assembly particularly thanked the former President: Mr. Juan José Moragues Terrades, President of the Júcar River Basin Authority, Spain, for the very positive action which he has achieved since the creation of the regional Network. Mr. Moragues was elected MENBO Vice-President for the new period.

MENBO Permanent Technical Secretariat remains entrusted to the Júcar River Basin Authority in Valencia, Spain, which was thanked for the efficiency of the work carried out.

Two twinning agreements were signed in Marrakech by the French Rhone-Mediterranean and Corsica Water Agency with the two Moroccan River Basin Agencies of Tensift and Souss Massa during the conference on 23 May 2005, in the Minister's presence.

A cooperation agreement was also signed on this occasion by the respective Presidents of EMWIS, INBO and MENBO.

All the working documents of these meetings, as well as the presented papers, are available on the website:

www.inbo-news.org

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World Water Forum
Mexico - 18 March 2006



INBO BASIN IWRM



158 top-level representatives coming from 31 countries

THE MEDITERRANEAN

EMWIS

النظام المعلوماتي الأورو متوسطي للمعرفة في مجال

15 COUNTRIES ON LINE ON THE WEB

World Water Forum
Mexico - 21 March 2006
Session on Water Information Systems
16:30 - 18:30



The Euro-Mediterranean Information System on Know-how in the Water Sector (EMWIS) now proposes direct access to the information managed by 15 countries of the Mediterranean region (Algeria, Cyprus, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Palestine, Portugal, Spain, Tunisia and Turkey).

EMWIS, through its National Focal Points (NFPs), offers unified access to the water-related information in each country (institutional structure, training and research organizations, data administrators, regulatory texts, documentation, news) and international services: trilingual monthly electronic flash, topical directory, follow-up of programs and regional initiatives (MEDA-Water, European Water Initiative, etc).

A significant part of the activities of EMWIS Technical Unit is dedicated to the building of the capacities of the National Focal Points especially for the management and development of the National Water Information Systems and for raising the awareness of the stakeholders on the advantages of sharing information.

A marked interest for the European Water Framework Directive

Within the framework of the topical studies initiated in 2004, EMWIS launched an enquiry on the interest of some concepts of the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) for the Mediterranean Partner Countries (MPCs). The first results show that there is a great interest for basin characterization and monitoring activities.

This underlines MPC requirements in terms of acquisition of a better knowledge of the basins. This preliminary stage is crucial before starting any planning work.

The Mediterranean Partners are highly interested in the follow-up of WFD implementation in the EU Member States. Thus, efforts are still needed to extend cooperation between the Member States and the Mediterranean countries, especially through the "Med-Joint Process" and its technical working groups but also, in a more general way, through the EU neighborhood policy (Twinning agreements, etc...).

EMWIS provides significant support to the collaborative work between the two shores of the Mediterranean with a Web section dedicated to the WFD and the working groups, on "groundwater" in particular.

The Conference of the 35 Water Directors of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership

The conference of the 35 Water Directors of the Partnership and the European Commission took place in Rome in Italy on 24 and 25 November 2005.

It especially:

- ◆ Reaffirmed the validity of EMWIS, the commitment of the countries to implement, adapt and appropriate it, according to the decisions made during the Ministerial Conferences of Marseilles in 1996 and Turin in 1999.

- ◆ Defined the strategy for the next 10 years, in particular the launching of feasibility studies for a regional mechanism for water observation, integrating inside EMWIS the follow-up of the evolutions towards the Millennium Goals related to water and sanitation in the Mediterranean region, as well as the implementation of the "water" component of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development.

- ◆ Approved a new four-year program (2007-2010), continuing without any discontinuity the ongoing phase, with financing, currently estimated at approximately 3.400 MEuros.

- ◆ Decided to increase support to the National Focal Points and to the implementation or strengthening of their National Water Information Systems, with support from the European Union.

- ◆ Opened EMWIS to the Mediterranean countries not signatories of the Barcelona declaration: Libya and Balkans countries.

- ◆ Proposed that EMWIS constitutes the tool for consistency between the policies of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership and Action plan for the Mediterranean, and that their Conference becomes an institutional support for the implementation of the European Water Initiative in the area.

- ◆ Renewed the composition of the Management Committee with the following countries: Algeria, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Malta, Morocco, Turkey, Spain and the Palestinian Authority.

French Water Director, Mr. Pascal Berteaud, was elected President of EMWIS and Mr. Walter Mazzitti (Italy) Secretary-General, responsible for the relations with the European Commission and the Partnership Countries.

INBO-MENBO-EMWIS agreement

The partnership agreement, initiated in 2002, between EMWIS, the International Network of Basin Organizations (INBO) and MENBO was renewed during the General Assembly of the Mediterranean Network of Basin Organizations (MENBO) in Marrakech in May 2005. Within this framework, the main cooperation actions will continue, especially the transfer of know-how, which started with the implementation of the concepts of the Water Framework Directive, or the development of a World Water Information System (WWIS) based on EMWIS approach in the Mediterranean and on similar systems in other parts of the world.

For more information:

www.emwis.org

SEMIDE EMWIS



ALGERIA

WATER IN THE SAHARA: WATER SAVING AND PROTECTION AGAINST POLLUTION



In the Sahara, apart from the areas located in the Saharan Atlas, Hoggar and the Tassili, the water resources are above all ground waters. All the groundwater resources are located in Northern Sahara in two aquifers, which extend beyond the Algerian borders: those of

the "Continental Intercalaire" (CI) and "Complexe Terminal" (CT).

Sound management of water resources and the control of agricultural hydro-techniques on this vast territory are today needed to ensure harmonious and sustainable development.

For such a purpose, the Sahara Basin Agency (ABHS) organized, during the first half of 2005 and in several cities of the basin, technical days whose main objective was to raise the users' awareness on

water saving and its protection against all kinds of pollution. These days gathered all the local Authorities (elected officials and representatives of the administrations and members of the basin committee), farmers and industrialists and all the water stakeholders of the Sahara basin.

In addition, the Sahara Basin Agency launched an awareness campaign related to water saving in professional environments, in schools and by the general public (Television, Radio, newspapers, water classes, conferences, etc.).

The Agency has also produced a documentary film of 26 minutes on water resources in the Sahara with the collaboration of the Algerian National Television Company.

An International Conference on Groundwater Resources in the Sahara (CIRESS) took place in Ouargla on 12 and 13 December 2005 to end this year of intense awareness campaign.

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NEW ASSIGNMENTS FOR THE RIVER BASIN AGENCIES

In Algeria, the Government has strengthened the role of the River Basin Agencies in the recovery of taxes on the use of the Water Public Domain.

The complementary Law of Finance of 2005 definitively confirmed the River Basin Agencies for the levying of water taxes on the territories under their jurisdiction.

The provisions of Article 99 of the Law of 24 December 2002 are amended, complemented and written as follows:

Art. 99 - The amount of the water tax, planned for in article 139 of the law of 16 July 1983, dealing with the water code, to be paid for the industrial, tourist and service use of the Water Public Domain is set at twenty-five (25) dinars per cubic meter of abstracted water.

"Art. 100 - The tax levied for the use of the Water Public Domain for water abstraction for its injection in oil wells or for other uses in the field of hydrocarbons, is set at eighty (80) DA per cubic meter of abstracted water.

The product of these taxes is distributed as follows:

- > 48% to the State budget;
- > 48% to the special appropriation account, the "National Fund for Drinking Water";
- > 4% to the Agency in charge of the levying.

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INBO BASIN IWRM

TWINBASIN: TWINNING WITH MOROCCAN ABHs

On 23 May in Marrakech, on the occasion of MENBO General Assembly and after 6 months of dialogue and mutual visits, Mr. Pierre Roussel, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the French Rhone-Mediterranean and Corsica Water Agency signed two twinning agreements with Mr. Madjid Benbiba, Director of the Tensift Agency (Marrakech) and Mr. Bendaoud Bouguenouch, Director of the Souss Massa Agency (Agadir), in the presence of the Moroccan

Minister for the Environment, Mr. Mohamed Elyazghi.

This agreement, signed for three years, gives the cooperation baselines:

- > Strategy for internal development of the Moroccan Agencies;
- > Users' involvement;
- > Design of the "Data and water taxes" information system;
- > Communication;

- > Assistance with the organization of water-related discussions, more specifically in the Tensift basin.

These twinning arrangements were approved within the European "TwinBasin" project.

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**WWF INBO MEGA SESSION
4 Main Meetings in Mexico
18 March 2006 - 11:00 - 18:30
"For better IWRM at the basin level"**



**International Network
of Basin Organizations
Europe-INBO
Regional Networks
ANBO - MENBO - CEENBO - LANBO
Transboundary Rivers**

Next INBO meetings: Mexico + Megève

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