

BACK TO OFFICE REPORT

Place	Bucharest, Romania
Dates	12-15 November 2014
Event	EUROPE-INBO 2014; 12th European conference on the implementation of the Water Framework Directive
Participants	Anja Potokar , Limnos Ltd., IDMP CEE project partner Sabina Bokal , IDMP CEE Programme Manager Liviu Popescu , GWP Romania

Main information about the event

The International Network of Basin Organizations ([INBO](#)) constitute out of 8 regional basin organizations. One of them is also [INBO-EUROPE](#) and one of the regions is Central and Eastern European Network of Basin Organizations (CEENBO). The 12th European Conference "Europe- INBO- 2014" which was organized from 12-15 November 2014 in Bucharest was dedicated to the discussion on the Water Framework Directive (WFD) implementation.

The meeting was organized around a preparatory workshop and 4 roundtables dealing with the updated issues of the field Implementation of the EU-WFD and other European water-related Directives. They put special focus on the means for better integration of the processes, new measures to cope with the main challenges that are non-point sources of pollution, hydro-morphological alterations, adaptation to climate change, prevention of droughts and floods, the need to get the stakeholders more involved in the implementation of these measures in the field, etc.

Meeting minutes & conclusions:

1. *Wednesday, 12 November:*

1.1. CEENBO Liaison Bureaus

Daniela Radulescu, permanent Technical Secretary, welcomed the members of CEENBO. She emphasized good cooperation and warm relations created by INBO and its partners in past years and how their results have been seen within special events, like World Water Forums, World Water Weeks and other inter- regional gatherings.

The Europe-INBO and CEENBO Chairman (2013-2014) Nikola Karnolski from Bulgaria East AEEGEAN District and Galina Balusheva from the Bulgarian Ministry of Water and Environment also expressed appreciations for active countries from the CEE and MED Regions.

1.2. Regional Europe Process 7th World Water Forum (WWF)

Participants were informed about the whole concept, thematic aims and subjects that will be treated during the days of the 7th WWF planned in 2015 in South Korea.

Within the European Regional Process 6 themes were agreed that will be organised and presented during the 7th WWF.

GWP Romania, Liviu Popescu presented "Positive outcomes of National Stakeholder Consultations on water in support of the post-2015 United-Nations Sustainable Development Agenda until 2030."

1.3. Preparatory workshop dealing with River Restoration and Natural Water Retention Measures

Main aim of this workshop was to exchange practices used by the various Member States, to highlight the multiple benefits of these approaches, and to prepare recommendations on the way of implementing them. This workshop was organized with the support of the European Centre for River Restoration (ECRR) and of the National Agency for Water and Aquatic Environments (ONEMA, France).

Main outcomes:

Regarding Theme 1: How to integrate European directives and policies:

- Promotion of river restoration projects and NWRM (integrated strategies covering each of the policies at play, promoting successful project in order to demonstrate concrete benefits, integration of compensation schemes, ect.);
- Cross-cutting and multiple benefits to promote NWRM and RR projects (in terms of policies and regulations and in terms of institutions, multi-benefits at basin scale, need to develop the legislative and regulative framework to better promote and support NWRM and RR projects' implementation ect.);
- Facilitating exchanges / Planning process (coordinating planning across sectors and at different hierarchical levels is a key success factor implementing NWRM and RR projects. involvement of the local actors/the public in the decision making process, ect.).

Regarding Theme 2: Better engagement with local communities in ecosystem restoration projects:

- Building local community issues/requests into the restoration plan;
- Use local knowledge to inform the planning;
- Local community 'ambassadors' from successful projects used to explain their initial concerns and the benefits they have seen;
- Clear roles and responsibilities between implementers and the local community – A 'river contract' e.g. France [SAGE] (examples also Morocco, Italy);
- Use established and respected locally based NGO to manage project;
- Establishment of a local coordinating body (required by regulation);
- Local environmental fund (work with local businesses/industry to financially support local projects);
- Avoid too much technical language, delivered too quickly. Explain well and take time for people to understand;
- Ensure a good gender balance across the project team – helps generate a wider audience.

2. Thursday, 13 November:

2.1. Introductory presentations:

There were three so called introductory presentations:

- From EU- DG Environment Mr. Jorge Rodriguez Romero emphasized that the Status of WFD and Water Management in Europe did not achieved all proposed and committed goals under the 1st RBMP started in 2009. 2nd RBMP was set up with the aims to identify causes of some less successful measures and to find a way to eliminate this causes in future. Peer Review Process was launched on the WFD and other EU Waters Directive implementation and INBO is responsible now for the leading of this works.
- From APELE ROMANIA General director Mr. Gabor presented briefly all 11 river basin organization in Romania and how they closely work with stakeholders in preparation of the RBMPs.
- Mr. Donzier (permanent technical secretariat INBO) presented objectives and actions of "EUROPE-INBO". He emphasized that 28 EU countries are following the same approach – WFD; but beside that they are also following different others directives (flood directive, nitrate directive, ground water directive, urban waste water directive, etc.). Beside this, they need to take into consideration also other work done by EU (for example, communication on water scarcity and drought). Main goal of INBO is therefore to collect ideas, suggestions for improvements and collect main messages on implementation of the WFD which are then forward back to EC. He also presented main problems in implementation of the WFD identified by EC:
 - hydromorphological alteration and diffuse pollution are the most significant issues leading to massive failure in WB status.

- to ambitious goals for the 2nd RBMP;
- cooperation with agricultural sector; agricultural policy as it is now, is not in line with WFD (it is difficult to obtain quality of the water & ecosystems);
- cooperation with energy sector; the same as above, HE policy is not in line with the WFD;
- climate change – floods and droughts (drought are “going” more north in the past few years);
- to have more science-policy interface, especially in water.

At the end he also invited all to “EUROPE-INBO 2015” conference which will be held in Thessaloniki, Greece.

2.3: ROUNDTABLE 1: Preparation of WFD 2nd Management Plans (2016 - 2021)

Main points: Integration of water quantity issues, adaptation to climate change, better integration with other EU Directives (Flood and Marine Strategy) and with other sectoral policies.

[Presentations](#)

Conclusions:

- there is a need for better coordination between the WFD and other EU policies;
- need of coordination of the various stakeholders
- main difficulty in the 1st phase of WFD implementation - quantitative aspect of water (flood & drought) is missing in most of the RBMPs

2.4: ROUNDTABLE 2: Natural Water Retention Measures / River restoration

Main points: Presentation of workshop results, guidance documents developed within the CIS, etc.

First Lucia Bernal Saukkonen from EC presented European NWRM Project. Among other things she emphasized that NWRM as one of the responses can:

- reduce impact of diffuse pollution,
- regulate the flow regime in natural pattern
- reduce vulnerability to Climate Change,
- restoring the deteriorated morphological element on the riparian area and the floodplain,
- improve water status (surface and groundwater) (incl. DW, BW),
- be a Better Environmental Option for Flood risk management supporting Natural Flood Risk Management.

After her presentation several examples of NWRM in France, Estonia, Romania, Netherland, Germany and in other international projects were presented. Among them also Anja Potokar (one of the partner in “[Small Water Retention Measures](#)” activity within IDMP CEE) had a presentation on CEE experiences. Before the presentation also IDMP CEE new video on Small Retention was introduced by Liviu N. Popescu as GWPCEE Regional Council member and then shown for the first time. More about this [here](#).

[Presentations](#)

Conclusions:

- catalogue of best practices which was established within [European NWRM project](#) is important and should be updated regularly;
- presentations showed a variety of tools how to implement measures; we gave guidelines, roadmaps, communities of practices, etc. and water committees should know and use these measures;
- multifunction, multi-institutional, multi-policy, etc. measures - integrated approach
- concept of ecosystem services should be more promoted.

3. Friday, 14 November:

3.1. ROUNDTABLE 3: Implementation and funding of Measures

Main points: Mobilization of funds and especially access to EU Structural Funds, principle of cost recovery, economic analysis for cost-effective combination of measures, etc.

[Presentations](#)

Conclusions:

After all presentations, it was emphasized that economic analysis is very important in implementation of the water related directives (as WFD) because in this way appropriate and most efficient measure can be selected. It was also announced that in the next cycle there will be new document from EC with the purpose to improve evaluation and economic analysis of the chosen measures.

3.2. ROUNDTABLE 4: Water governance in Transboundary Basins

Main points: WFD International Districts, role and means of International Commissions, bilateral and multilateral agreements and conventions, inclusions of all neighbouring countries in the implementation process of WFD principles and tools in EU rivers basins

[Presentations](#)

Conclusions:

- all countries have different structures, different legal system, organizational system, etc. but there is a cooperation between countries within bi and multi-lateral agreements and there is a strong international context (WFD, conventions, etc.)
- the main challenge for all are climate changes and how will they influence on transboundary rivers;
- effective cooperation is a solution;
- there is a need to establish/improve monitoring systems, better systems for environmental testing, and system to share important their results namely the environmental data, multiple assessment reports associated information, etc.
- key challenge - stronger international commitment; need for transparent data (all countries have to provide their data to multiple users, stakeholders and to the public)

3.3. Preparation for 7th World Water Forum (WWF), 2015 Daegu

Bart Fokkens from European River Restoration centre (ERRC) presented latest information on 7th WWF:

- ERRC will have two hours session on the WWF;
- they have identified 3 main themes which are priorities for EU to be presented at this event:
 - Transboundary issue (this is something what is unique for Europe – 40 transboundary basin which are part of EU)
 - Implementation of WFD (this is one of the main thing which EU can present to the world)
 - Adapting to climate changes
- next steps: they have to work to finalization the session – participants, presentations, etc.; and they will try to include in the programme also a round table on transboundary issues (big round table with some VIP guests)

Next steps:

- During the conference all participants had a chance to comment [“EUROPE-INBO Declaration of](#)

[Bucharest](#)” and they will finalize this declaration in the next few weeks.

- From IDMP CEE point of view conference was very useful:
 - NWRM – some of the good practices were presented, especially from Estonia (which is also part of GWP CEE) so we will try to include them in follow-up project on small retention
 - Status of RBMP – to see the current status of some of the RBMPs around the Europe and how in some cases Drought Management Plan is already incorporated into the RBMP (for example Greece – will communicate with them to show us how they did this and also ask for opinion if they consider our [Guidelines on preparation of the DMP](#) (draft version) useful)

3.4. The final event of the Conference was dedicated to the transfer of EUROPE-INBO presidency from Bulgaria to Romania and new elected president was Dr. Eng. Daniela Radulescu, General Director of National Institute for Hydrology and Water Management, part of National Water Administration “APELE ROMANE”.

[Programme](#) of the conference

2014-11-24/AP&SB&LP