

Petersberg Phase II / Athens Declaration Process

Protection and Sustainable Use of Trans-boundary Waters in South East Europe

International Roundtable on Trans-boundary Water Management

Zagreb, Croatia

15-16 December 2011

A. Main Conclusions

1. Priority Issues / Issues of concerns
2. Overarching Issues
3. Responses
4. Entry Points of Cooperation

B. Petersberg Phase II / Athens Declaration Process *– Activities Ahead*

1. Priority Issues / Issues of concern

- (i) Hydropower production
- (ii) Floods and droughts
- (iii) Pollution

(i) Hydropower production - 1

Facts

- Hydropower accounts for more than 40% of power generated in SEE
- Most of the SEE countries import electricity
- Hydropower is cheap comparing to other electricity production schemes
- The needs for electricity are expected to rise
- Countries have not used yet all their hydropower potential
 - Strong interest by investors

(i) Hydropower production - 2

Needs

- Protect the ecosystems downstream

(i) Hydropower production - 3

The need for energy security and development on the one hand and the need for sustainable natural resources use and environmental protection on the other should be balanced

(i) Hydropower production - 4

Possible Solutions

- Sustainable hydropower generation
 - multipurpose use of infrastructure
 - hydropower, where possible should be part of a mix of renewable sources of energy
 - need to look in real needs for energy and energy patterns
 - transboundary feasibility studies regarding the construction of hydropower infrastructure as well as environmental impact assessments would be beneficial
- Hydropower is not necessarily linked to dams - there are other technologies available and need to be used
- Planning of new infrastructure as well as operation of the available infrastructure should take into account the upstream-downstream needs and considerations

(ii) Floods and Droughts - 1

- Changing character of floods in terms of period of occurrence as well as intensity
- Exchange of information and data need to be improved as necessary to allow improved cooperation in the management of floods (including establishing of commonly accepted dam operational rules)
- Allocation of water among conflicting uses should be balanced taking into account the changing patterns of precipitation

(ii) Floods and Droughts - 2

- Preservation of floodplains should be an option for managing floods; possibilities for the rehabilitation of floodplains should be explored

2. Overarching issues

(i) Climate Change / Variability

(ii) Coastal and Marine Environment
Protection

(i) Climate Change / Variability - 1

- a factor of complexity in river basin management planning as it increases uncertainty
- a driver of change

(i) Climate Change / Variability - 2

A. Main Conclusions - 2. Overarching Issues

- Changing patterns of precipitation and water availability in time and space
 - Extreme phenomena, floods and droughts is expected to be intensified
 - The Mediterranean basin will be significantly affected if compared to other parts of the world
 - Models predict for SEE decrease of annual/seasonal discharges up to 40%

(i) Climate Change / Variability - 3

- Affects
 - Production of
 - food
 - energy
 - Hydrological regimes of rivers
 - Water transport

(i) Climate Change / Variability - 4

- According to some views the only way to deal with droughts and floods is the construction of dams
- It's late for mitigation - we need to move with adaptation. Action is needed as the effects of changing patterns of water availability in space and time are already evident

(i) Climate Change / Variability - 5

How to adapt?

- Work with demand management
 - e.g. Rehabilitate drinking supply networks to reduce losses
- Need to quantify the impacts of climate change in SEE in order to design adaptation measures
- Chose the measures that will have the major possible outcomes; invest in no regret measures and in cheap and feasible measures
- Integrated water resources management including demand management and improved spatial planning is needed
 - Need to bring in the management discussion the major water users
 - Knowledge of water supply and demand is needed to calculate the water balance in order to design measures in the framework of IWRM plans
 - Management of supply and demand at the regional scale should be considered

(ii) Coastal and Marine Environment Protection

- Rivers are important for the marine ecosystem of the Mediterranean - 25% of the fresh water input in the Mediterranean, comes from the SEE Adriatic Sea Basin
- Major Nutrients Input from the SEE transported mainly through rivers (Wastewater, Agriculture, Fertilizers manufacturing, etc.)
- Coastal and Marine Environment Protection should be part of the aims of TWRM planning efforts in SEE

3. Responses

- (i) Mix of “inter-sectoral” measures
- (ii) River Basin Management Plans

- (i) A mix of measures is necessary for addressing extreme events (floods and droughts); in an environment of increased uncertainty, in addition to any necessary structural measures, it should include:
- Improved Land use planning and management
 - Water Demand management

(ii) River Basin Management Plans

at the national and transboundary levels in accordance to Water Framework Directive are important tools towards Integrated Basin Management and a means to address the identified Priority and Overarching Issues

4. Entry points for cooperation

4. Entry points for cooperation

- Joint monitoring, analysis and assessment
 - cooperation in monitoring, analysis and assessment may provide an initiating point for cooperation between riparians since it creates the basis for establishing common understanding of water issues and their root causes leading in the (i) building of trust (ii) designing of solutions on the basis of commonly agreed objectives
- Joint development and establishment of integrated information systems such as flood forecasting/early warning systems

B. Petersberg Phase II / Athens Declaration Process *– Activities Ahead*

1. Sustain the regional dialogue on issues related to transboundary water resources management to bring up the benefits of cooperation with the aim to stimulate action (1)

- Continue the organization of **International Roundtables** and **Targeted Capacity Building** Workshops on identified issues; themes suggested: Stakeholders involvement; Tools of governance – enforcing the water legislation.
- **Study Visits** should be used as necessary to allow enhancing of capacities of national and regional institutions
- **Alternative Capacity building activities** including Experts from Donor countries working with national experts on planning and implementation of management measures should be piloted.

1. Sustain the regional dialogue on issues related to transboundary water resources management to bring up the benefits of cooperation with the aim to stimulate action (2)

- The **involvement of important stakeholders** in the Regional Dialogue such as insurance companies, hydropower companies etc. to **bring in their point of view and identify novel approaches to address issues, should be sought.**
- The **experience generated** in the area through the work of Joint Commissions as well as EU and GEF projects **should be used.**
- The dialogue should especially **address the issue of sustainable hydropower production.**

1. Sustain the regional dialogue on issues related to transboundary water resources management to bring up the benefits of cooperation with the aim to stimulate action (3)

- **Regional institutions**, such as the RCC, have an important role in this regard. The Process should actively seek cooperation opportunities.

RCC could assist in:

- communicating the conclusions of the technical meetings at the political level
- facilitating interaction between the water community and the hydropower community in the SEE
- coordination between SEE water community and international community in meeting regional water resources management needs

2. Assistance of the Process to the Drin Basin for the implementation of the MoU will continue with the aim of (i) establishing self-sustained institutions at transboundary level and (ii) improving basin and water resources management

3. The approach followed for the enhancement of cooperation in the Drin Basin has proven to be successful. This approach should be replicated elsewhere in the SEE area if respective interest is expressed by SEE countries.

5. Facilitate communication and exchange of experience among joint commissions, among projects addressing transboundary issues as well as among joint commissions and projects.

The latter will facilitate the outcomes of the projects being communicated to the countries.