



GREEN WEEK

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**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE: "WATER MANAGEMENT IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE:
PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES",
SOFIA, BULGARIA, 21-22 MAY 2012**



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On 21-22 May 2012 an International Conference took place in Sofia, Bulgaria. The conference was titled "Water Management in Central and Eastern Europe: Problems and Challenges" and labeled as a Green Week 2012 satellite event by the Directorate-General for the Environment of the European Commission (<http://ec.europa.eu>

The conference was organized by the Bulgarian Ministry of Environment and Water (MoEW) and supported by East Aegean River Basin Directorate - Plovdiv (EARBD) and the Central and Eastern Europe Network of Basin Organizations (CEENBO).

The conference was related to the 10 years of river basin management in Bulgaria and 10 years from establishment of CEENBO network. Before the conference



there was a meeting of liaison bureau of CEENBO with participation of President of CEENBO Mrs. Atanaska Tuntova, Director of EARBD – Plovdiv, Mrs. Josean Mongellaz, Director of International Cooperation, International office for water, France and a representative

of INBO, Mrs. Daniela Radulescu, Secretary of CEENBO and Bulgarian Deputy Minister of Environment and Water Mrs. Ivelina Vassileva. There was also a new observer of CEENBO Water Agency Artois – Picardie, France, represented by its General Director Mr. Olivier Thibault.

The main goal of the conference was to share knowledge and experience on implementation of EU water legislation and measures to improve the status of water, to discuss the problems and propose suitable decisions as well as to discuss practical implementation of the Pact for better river basin management from the 6th world water forum in Marseille.



At the opening of the conference there was special greeting to the participants from the youngest members of the Youth Water Parliament in Bulgaria with: "Water song".

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The Minister and the Deputy Minister of Environment and Water opened the conference underlying the importance of water and express their confidence that the best way of water management is river basin management, confirmed by Bulgaria's experience. Mrs. Nona Karadjova, Bulgarian Minister of Environment and Water, stressed on

the fact, that importance of water will grow in the next years, because of the impact of climate change and the extreme events – floods and droughts and it is important to use the existing regulator mechanisms as proper implementation of the European legislation, mainly WFD common implementation strategy, which is related to different aspects of water management. Mrs. Karadjova gave her expression, that the discussions during the conference will be useful and as result it will be few proposals, which could be an input of the Eastern Europe to the Blue print report, developed by European commission during this year.



In the days of the conference 101 participants from 10 countries shared their ideas and the experience of the countries they represent – Bulgaria, France, Greece, Turkey, Romania, Moldova, Belarus, Ukraine, Czech Republic and Russian Federation. The main topics was related to the implementation of the programs of measures, transboundary and

international cooperation, drought and floods problems, renewable energy policy, protection of the related to water ecosystems and biodiversity. The conference was organized in three thematic sessions and six panels, with plenty of presentations and interactive discussions. There was the two workshops: on Floods and Water Scarcity and Droughts and during the last day the café discussion focusing of RBMP planning of an imaginary river basin from the point of view of different stakeholders.

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During the workshops and café discussion was reached the following results:

Workshop A: European legislation on floods

Proposed solutions:

- 👉 Identification of the best practices in the countries and their adaptation to the possible implementation regarding the capacity and specifics of the countries.
- 👉 Development of the common methodology to be implemented in a similar way in the different countries
- 👉 Local authorities to be involved in the implementation of the measures related to the emergency situations
- 👉 To improve exchange of the information between countries
- 👉 To encourage countries to develop transboundary monitoring and to improve the forecasting in order to establish common early warning systems and automatically exchange of data.
- 👉 To develop additional models if needed in order to decrease the vulnerability of floods and of climate change in river basins.

Workshop B: European legislation on water scarcity and droughts

Proposed solutions:

- 👉 Development of methodology to identify minimum environmental flow based on assessments of the need of ecosystems
- 👉 To increase the control to ensure the availability of minimum environmental flow
- 👉 To increase the control to keep the limit of water use (by example the use of ground water for irrigation)
- 👉 Improving the environmental impact assessment for hydropower stations ;
- 👉 Development of the system for collecting data and surveying the risk of water scarcity and drought based on the key indicators
- Actualization and prioritization of water use in areas, related to drought problems

Water café: River basin management plan of the Great river



The task of the participants was to develop RBMP of an imagine river (The Great river) and to find the consensus between the different parties: local authorities, business, society and environmental protection non government organizations. Each of the parties have to develop 3 the most important priorities and to find solutions as measures in the plan.

It was interesting that the participants really enjoyed of the possibility to discuss familiar problems from the point of different role and in the same time to generate applicable solutions.



Below there are the results of the café discussion.

I. Priorities:

1. Local authority:



- Good status of water in the river as quality and quantity, to ensure water for drinking use and for irrigation in the area.
- Improving of the infrastructure to protect the town from floods, building new infrastructure to develop agriculture and energy production.

- To ensure new jobs through development of the tourism and forestation

2. Environmental protection non government organizations:



- To destroy the existing dam in order to improve conditions for fishes in the low part of the river
- To build new purification plan of the factory to improve water quality of the river
- To develop environmental agriculture and establishing of new protected area



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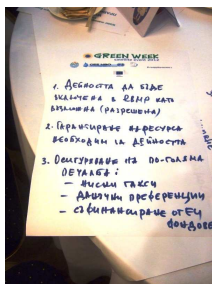
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3. Society:



- Pure water
- Place for recreation
- Low price of water

4. Business:



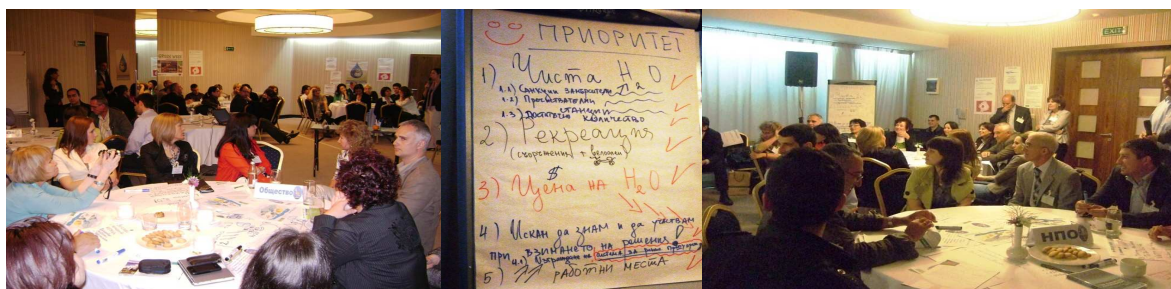
- To ensure higher possibility for profit (low taxes, tax preferences, possibilities for co-financing from the EU funds)
- Zoning of the areas for different activities and to ensure needed water recourse for business activities
- Business plans to be integrated into the RBMP

Goals

1. Good water status and enough water resource for different purposes
2. Good infrastructure
3. Environmental friendly agriculture
4. Protect biodiversity
5. Opening of new jobs

Measures

1. New monitoring station and as well monitoring of fishes
2. Change of the place of the discharge of the WWTP of the town or to not discharge
3. Build of new hydro power plan using the existing dam wall and build the new fish pass
4. Build of new bikeways and afforestation along the river banks
5. Supporting development of the environmental friendly agriculture
6. Establishment of the new protected area including the drinking source of the town in it and build of the new trails for the tourism in this area.





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After the negotiations there was successful found the consensus with following decisions:



1. Society to be informed for all processes.
2. To develop the project for establishment of a new protected area, supporting by the information campaign.
3. Building of a new hydropower plan on the existing dam with a new fish pass.

The opinion of the organizers and participants was that the event reached its preliminary defined goal – to be a platform for exchange of good practices in water management and a start of new international cooperation.



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