

“Water Contingency Management in the Sava River Basin-WACOM“

- Summary information -

The lack of coordinated response to emergencies in case of accidental pollution and floods on transboundary watercourses in Sava River Basin is our key challenge. The situation is a threat to people, environment and all water uses in the basin. It should be addressed by improved transboundary coping capacity. WACOM will enable development of response mechanisms, where some components were already implemented i.e. flood forecasting system for the Sava river basin, while the response component is still missing.

Transnational as well as cross-sectorial interaction between the water management and civil protection administrations is also identified as a necessity. They will be supported by improved operational response framework and rapid response toolbox. With the WACOM project, this will be implemented, leading to the coordinated response measures and improved interoperability of all involved institutions.

Background

With the harmonization process detailed cooperation procedures will be defined and operative toolbox developed. It will be tested and verified by pilot actions. Finally the strategy will be prepared for its implementation. In this way the platform will be set for improved cooperation, which will be harmonized with other agreements and EU procedures – i.e. EU Civil protection mechanism as well. The project will be based upon already adopted protocols, upgrading them with innovative toolbox supporting the cooperation and joint situational awareness and thus improving preparedness and implementation of transboundary response measures. With several stages of learning interactions this will be verified by pilot actions with implementation strategy defined at the final stage of the project.

The main objective of the project is the reduction of environmental risks related to accidental pollution and floods, especially with potential transboundary impact by improved cooperation of key actors and jointly developed common operational system for activating the accident management protocols within the Sava River Basin. Beside the reduction of risks, project will also bring overall improved transnational cooperation on the Sava River Basin which requires specific attention, developing improved ties among people, institutions and countries. This will result in the significant optimization of the resources applied. Sava river basin is an example of large river basin shared by several countries. With cooperation on such an important issue as accidental pollution and flood response mechanism, project will provide a demonstrative model for other river basins in the Danube Rive Basin and beyond. The objectives of the project are firmly based on the existing situation in the field of transboundary cooperation related to response mechanisms in the case of accidental pollution and floods on the Sava river basin, defined by bilateral protocols on cooperation between the civil protection authorities. The protocols are not disaster-specific and do not define specific procedures yet. In addition to bilateral protocols, the ISRBC as has protocols addressing accident management in SRB (on flood protection 2015, on prevention of water pollution caused by navigation – 2017, and on emergency management –2020). They are related to functional operational already functional (Sava GIS, Sava HIS, Sava Flood Forecasting and Warning System), defining a platform for the project. Project WACOM will provide a change from the bi- and multi-lateral protocols to operational system, activating these protocols, making them effective, focusing on dynamic situational awareness shared by all stakeholders, developed in the

Project main objective

transnational and transinstitutional environment of WACOM project.

The main result of WACOM project are reduced risks induced by the accidental pollution and floods of transnational dimension by strengthening the transnational and trans-sectorial cooperation among institutions, especially governmental institutions (responsible for water and flood management and the civil protection) managing the flood and accidental pollution preparedness and response stage. Recent events of floods (2014) in SRB and accidental pollution on Spreča River (2018) proved the high necessity for effective response, which is supported by transboundary protocols developed by ISRBC. In order to achieve the anticipated result the protocols require also development of detailed agreements, plans, tools and implementation strategy all leading to improved, more efficient and effective response in the case of natural (floods) and man-induced (accidental pollution) disasters. Improved coping capacity is often neglected component in the overall risk reduction always addressing hazards and vulnerability.

Project main result

This will lead to

- Improved preparedness and management of the response (coping capacity) of all involved stakeholder during the pollution and flood incidents with improved definition of roles, and response assignments.
- Capacity building and transnational stakeholder dialogue defining common operational environment of all stakeholders.
- Development of integrative tools enabling more efficient and therefore more effective transnational preparedness and response in the case of water disasters, especially by common situational awareness.
- Filling the identified gap between the two pillars of floods/accidental pollution response institutions – to the complexity of the transnational response on the same river basin an additional complexity – cooperation between water management institutions and disaster management institutions (e.g. civil protection) is imposing another challenge, which will be addressed by the project.

Project partners:

Univerza v Ljubljani (SI), Lead partner

Direkcija Republike Slovenije za vode, Hidroelektrarne na spodnji Savi (SI)

Hrvatske vode, Javna ustanova Lučka uprava Slavonski Brod (HR)

ISRBC (Int)

Asocijacija za upravljanje rizicima AZUR, Federalna uprava civilne zaštite, Republička uprava civilne zaštite Republike Srpske (BA)

Institut za vodoprivredu "Jaroslav Černi" (RS)

Project partners:

Associated Strategic Partners:

Hrvatski državni hidrometeorološki zavod (HR)

ICPDR (Int)

Agencija za vodno područje rijeke Save, Republički hidrometeorološki zavod Republike Srpske, Javno poduzeće Vode Srpske, Luka Brčko (BA)

JVP Srbijavode, Republički hidrometeorološki zavod Srbije, Ministarstvo za poljoprivredu, šumarstvo i vodoprivredu, Republička direkcija za vode (RS)

Duration

July 2020 - December 2022

Costs

1,570,581.00 EUR