

**SEVENTH MEETING OF THE PARTIES  
TO THE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT  
ON THE SAVA RIVER BASIN  
Bled (Republic of Slovenia), June 07, 2018**

**DECLARATION**



**SEVENTH MEETING OF THE PARTIES  
TO THE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT ON THE SAVA RIVER BASIN  
Bled (Republic of Slovenia), June 07, 2018**

**DECLARATION**

**WE, THE PARTIES TO THE FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT ON THE SAVA RIVER BASIN**, gathered at Bled on June 07, 2018, for our Seventh Meeting,

*Conscious* of the great importance of the Sava River, its environment and natural resources for the economic and social prosperity, as well as the crucial importance of regional cooperation and coordination of the Parties to the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin (hereinafter: FASRB), aiming at sustainable development of the Sava River Basin,

*Recognizing* the deliverables that the Parties can benefit from, and harms that can be avoided or mitigated as a result of the activities of the Parties through existing bilateral agreements and within the International Sava River Basin Commission (hereinafter: Sava Commission), through the implementation of the FASRB and its protocols,

*Reaffirming* our political commitment to making all efforts needed for the implementation of the EU directives and policies relevant for achieving the objectives of the FASRB and its protocols, especially the Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a framework for the Community action in the field of water policy (Water Framework Directive) and Directive 2007/60/EC on the assessment and management of flood risks (Floods Directive) as well as the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) policy,

*Re-emphasizing* the importance of the first Sava River Basin Management Plan (Sava RBM Plan), approved by the Parties on December 2, 2014 as a milestone for the cooperation of the Parties in the implementation of the FASRB,

*Being aware* of the necessity of joint actions in the field of flood management in accordance with the Protocol on Flood Protection to the FASRB as an effective international legal framework for the successful regional cooperation in this field, particularly in terms of the development of the *Sava Flood Risk Management Plan* and establishment of the *Sava Flood Forecasting and Warning System*,

*Emphasizing* the importance of rehabilitation and development of the Sava River waterway for further economic and social development of the region,

*Having considered* the Sixth Country Reports on implementation of the “FASRB” and the analysis made by the Sava Commission, and *bearing in mind* the commitment of the Parties expressed in the “Declaration from the Sixth Meeting of the Parties”,

**I. Coordination of Water Cooperation in the Sava River Basin**

1. *Welcome* all relevant documents, prepared by the Sava Commission, and *accept* the “Report on implementation of the Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin and work of the International Sava River Basin Commission for the period from April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2018”,

2. *Appreciate* the efforts of the Parties, Sava Commission, its Secretariat and expert bodies in the implementation of the FASRB and its protocols, and *acknowledge* the significant overall progress towards the achievement of the jointly agreed objectives set by the FASRB that has been made in the reporting period,
3. *Express* satisfaction that the Sava Commission has accepted “Joint Plan of Actions for the Sava River Basin” as a coordinated program of multipurpose and integrated interventions to strengthen overall river basin management planning, improve navigability, enhance flood risk management, develop sustainable tourism, protect the environment and adapt to climate change,
4. *Express* appreciation to donors, relevant partner organizations and all other contributors for supporting the work of the Sava Commission and *hope* for their support and cooperation for the future activities of the Sava Commission.

## II. Sustainable Water Management in the Sava River Basin

5. *Reaffirm* our commitment to continue making our best efforts to implement the Programme of Measures that is an integral part of the first Sava RBM Plan, in order to achieve the commonly agreed environmental objectives and visions on a basin-wide scale,
6. *Acknowledge* the efforts of the Sava Commission and the Parties in the 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle of the river basin management planning in accordance with the Water Framework Directive and the progress made in that regard, in particular the development of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sava River Basin Analysis and the document on Significant Water Management Issues in the Sava River Basin,
7. *Reconfirm* our commitment to ensure adequate human and financial resources for preparation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sava RBM Plan and *request* the Sava Commission to continue related fund-raising efforts,
8. Stressing the importance of sustainable development in the basin, *encourage* the Sava Commission to continue the dialogue with relevant stakeholders from the navigation, hydropower, agriculture, nature conservation and flood management sectors, for integration of the economic, social and environmental aspects into the planning and implementation of infrastructure projects,
9. Respecting the existing obligations of Parties – EU Member States as well as Accession States, *recognize* efforts and work of the Sava Commission and the Parties invested into development of a joint Flood Risk Management Plan for the Sava River Basin (Sava FRM Plan), and *support* all actions leading to successful finalization and adoption of the Sava FRM Plan,
10. *Express satisfaction* with the results achieved in the establishment of the Flood Forecasting and Warning System for the Sava River Basin (Sava FFWS) and *commit ourselves* to ensure its functioning in the operational phase by securing adequate personnel, regular maintenance and performance control of the Sava FFWS, as well as regular trainings of the engaged experts,
11. *Recognize* the great potential of the Sava FFWS and *strongly support* plans for its future improvements, particularly those related to drought preparedness,

12. *Acknowledge* the significant results achieved by joint efforts of the Sava Commission and the Parties in hydrologic and hydraulic modeling, and *commit ourselves* to continue to enhance the models to increase their utility for the various purposes of the joint activities,
13. *Encourage final harmonization* of the Protocol on Emergency Situations to the FASRB, taking into account its significant importance for the implementation of the FASRB and *urge* the Parties, which have not yet done that, to take necessary actions to ensure the continuous operation (24/7) of the Principal International Alert Centers in the case of accidents that can cause water pollution,
14. *Noting with satisfaction* that all the Parties have ratified the Protocol on Prevention of the Water Pollution caused by Navigation to the FASRB and the Protocol on Sediment Management to the FASRB, and *commit ourselves* to undertake all required actions leading to fulfilment of the objectives of the protocols,

### **III. Navigation in the Sava River Basin**

15. *Reconfirm* our commitment to rehabilitation and development of navigation on the Sava River and its navigable tributaries having in mind its importance for further economic and social development of the region,
16. *Emphasize* the necessity of the complete demining of the Sava River banks, as well as *timely ensuring* the funding for the execution of works on the rehabilitation and development of the Sava River waterway, in order for the works in all Parties to be performed in a coordinated way,
17. *Welcome* the activities on development of necessary documentation for the rehabilitation of the fairway sector Novi Grad, works on development of the infrastructure in port Slavonski Brod and works on the rehabilitation of the critical fairway sectors in Serbia,
18. Although the planned measures on the rehabilitation and development of navigation on the Sava River are the responsibility of the Parties, we *request* the Sava Commission to continue with providing assistance to the Parties in communication with relevant international institutions, in order to find out more opportunities and mechanisms for supporting and funding of activities related to the rehabilitation and development of navigation on the Sava River and in monitoring and coordination of their implementation,
19. *Recall* a special importance of sustainable and environmentally friendly development of navigation on the Sava River and, in this regard, *encourage* continuation of the implementation of the principles of the “Joint Statement on Guiding Principles on the Development of Inland Navigation and Environmental Protection in the Danube River Basin”,
20. *Encourage* the Parties to actively follow and control the implementation of decisions of the Sava Commission in the field of navigation on their respective territories,
21. *Appreciate* great efforts and work of the Sava Commission and the Parties on the finalization and publishing of the second edition of the “Album of Bridges on the Sava River and its Navigable Tributaries”,

22. *Welcome* the start of the official functioning of the web application for support of the waterway safety inspections, as of the February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 and encourage the Parties to use the full potential of the application in order to improve the navigation safety in the Sava River Basin.

#### **IV. Cross-cutting Issues in the Implementation of the FASRB**

23. Recognizing the likely consequences of climate change on the water regime in the Sava River Basin and the need for effective adaptation measures, as well as the importance of the „Paris Agreement“, we *appreciate* great efforts and work of the Sava Commission and the Parties related to the assessment of climate change impacts and elaboration of potential adaptation measures in the basin, and *encourage* the Sava Commission and the Parties to undertake further activities leading toward preparation of the Strategy for the climate change adaptation in the basin and accompanying action plan,
24. *Express satisfaction* with the extraordinary progress made in regard to information exchange in the basin through further enhancement and upgrade of the geographic information system for the Sava River Basin (Sava GIS), as well as the hydrological information system (Sava HIS) especially related to the river basin management and flood management, and *commit ourselves* to undertaking all activities necessary to secure the proper functioning and maintenance of the systems as well as their further upgrade in line with all other objectives and areas of cooperation of the FASRB,
25. *Recall* the great potential for synergies between the processes of implementation of the FASRB and the EU strategies for the Danube and Adriatic-Ionian regions, and *recognize* potential benefits of using the best practices of the FASRB implementation for the implementation of the EU strategies,
26. *Encourage* further implementation of the FASRB in an integrated way, as a prerequisite for sustainable resource use and further development of the region based on “green” and “blue” development solutions in the Sava River Basin,
27. Recognizing the importance of sustainable tourism as a significant tool in the promotion of economic benefits, which among others, provides job opportunities, improves the quality of life and promotes networking and widens perspectives among the Parties, we *commit ourselves* to taking necessary measures on the national level to support the efforts of the Sava Commission in further development of sustainable tourism in the Sava River Basin,
28. *Welcome* the use of effective tools for public participation and stakeholder involvement at the basin wide level, including the Sava Water Council as an advisory platform of the Sava Commission, as well as the Youth Parliament of the Sava River Basin.

#### **Closing remarks**

29. *Appreciate* a significant contribution of international organizations and institutions provided so far in realization of the projects of importance for the FASRB implementation and *call upon* these organizations and institutions to support, by allocating appropriate financial resources, the implementation of the future priority projects and activities of the Sava Commission as well,

30. Recognizing the importance of the participation of Montenegro in activities of the Sava Commission, we *encourage* Montenegro to consider further steps toward the full membership in the Sava Commission,
31. *Express* our gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for having hosted the Seventh Meeting of the Parties and *announce* the next meeting of the Parties to be held in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2020.