

Stakeholder Involvement into Implementation of the Water Framework Directive in Bulgaria



Workshop "Sustainable Development in Lake Areas:
Empowering Local Initiatives and Civil Society"

Keramoti, Greece
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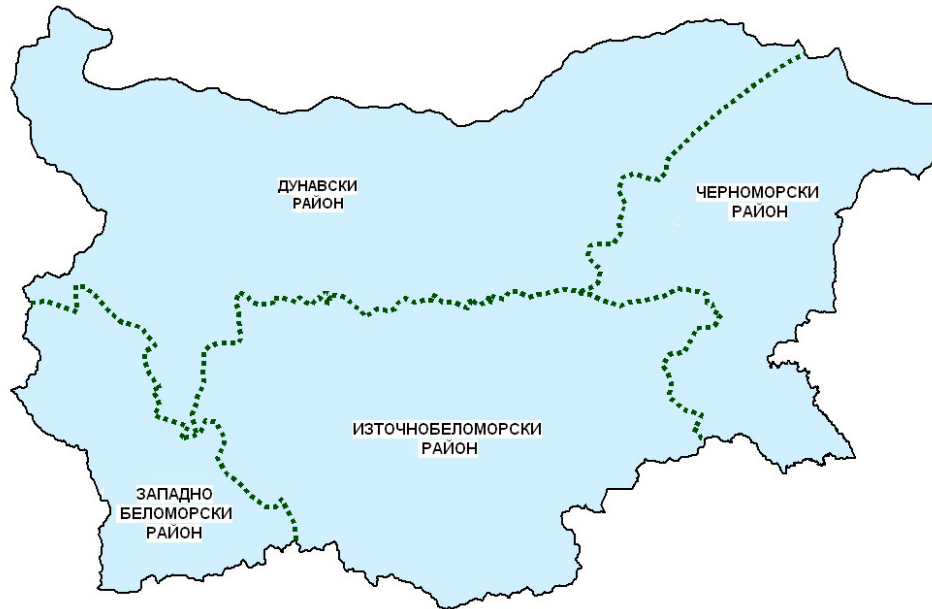
WFD in Bulgaria

- The WFD has been transposed in Bulgarian legislation early. The legal document is the Water Law (1999).
- Four river basin districts have been established, in the country in 2002 and became the competent water authorities :
- River basin districts characterized in terms of pressures, impacts and economics of water uses, register of protected areas. (2005)
- Pressures and Impact analysis (2005)
- Monitoring programmes (2008)
- Draft Programmes of measures and River Basin Management Plans (2009). Formal adoption in 2010

Forthcoming:

- Make the measures of the programme operational by 2012
- Implement the programmes of measures and achieve the environmental objectives by 2015

River Basin Districts



River Basin Councils

Establishment of River Basin Councils – 2003

Role: Stakeholder's consultative councils, supporting the decision making

Structure: 20-40 stakeholder representatives:

- State institutions – 20%
- NGOs – 20%
- Local administrations – 30 %
- Water users – 30%

Meetings:

- Regular – at least 2 per year
- Special – upon request

Possibility for establishment of

Sub-basin Commissions



Public participation requirements of WFD

Obligations of the State authorities:

Article 14 of the Directive specifies that Member States shall encourage the active involvement of all interested parties in the implementation of the Directive and development of river basin management plans. Also, Member States have to inform and consult the public, including users, in particular for:

- The timetable and work programme for the production of river basin management plans and the role of consultation;
- The overview of the significant water management issues in the river basin; and,
- The draft river basin management plan.

Benefits from the Public participation

- Better chance that the key water management issues at the river basin level are correctly identified and prioritized
- The knowledge, experience, aspirations and concerns of local communities are built into the RBMP and Programme of Measures from the beginning
- The Programme of Measures is more likely to be politically and culturally realistic and acceptable
- Any potential conflicts can be minimised or avoided altogether
- Implementation costs are likely to be lower when existing stakeholder knowledge and know-how is applied to avoid potentially costly errors and/or duplication of information
- There is a better chance that both regulatory and voluntary approaches will be enforceable if they have been developed in partnership with stakeholders (this point is closely linked with lower costs and improved conflict resolution/avoidance).

Key Ingredients

- **‘Pro-active information’** about legislation, the planning process and specific projects affecting water ecosystems, including results of ecological, economic or other analyses, proposed actions, measures, strategies and plans, debates over key issues etc. Examples: Water quality bulletins, letters informing specific stakeholders about key issues, web-based publications on monitoring results, public registers of permits and procedures
- **‘Public consultation’** - requesting comments and feedback from any interested party on a published document or proposal (e.g. a time table, a draft policy, work programme).
- **‘Active involvement’** implies that those involved have a genuine and early opportunity to influence the decision-making process. It is a dynamic, interactive process that relies on building trust and confidence that public/stakeholder views will be accommodated and have a real influence on the development of legislation, policies, plans and projects.

Good examples

Living Rivers – joint project of BBF and BD – East Aegean Basin
Pilot river – Middle stream of Maritza (Evros)

- Analysis of the conservation value of the demonstration sites (2006)
- Pressures and impact analysis (2007)
- Proposal for PA designation (2007)
- Series of meetings with local authorities (2007)
- Elaboration of proposals to be integrated into the Program of measures of RBMP (2009)

Conservation of river ecosystems and sustainable flood risk management (2007)

- National Conference
- Case studies
- Website (<http://rivers.biodiversity.bg>)



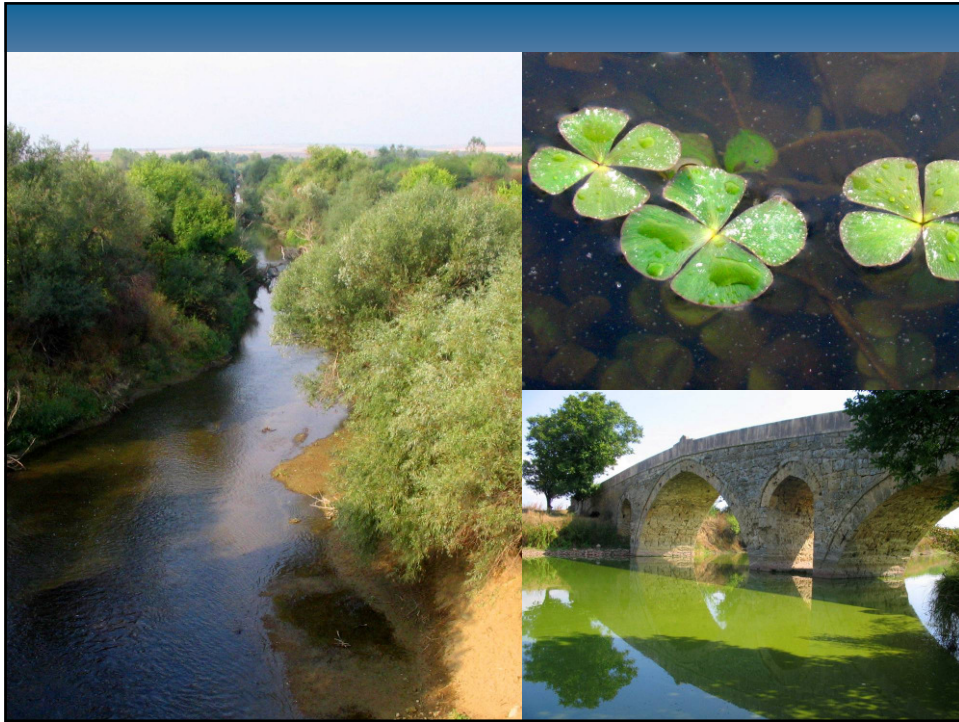
Good examples

Osam River – joint project of BBF and Municipality of Levski

Pilot river – Middle stream of Osam river

Project funded by Embassy of The Netherlands (KNIP – Matra)

- Study the management problems of Osam river basin
- Habitats study and hydro-engineering restoration feasibility study
- Propose integrated actions for biodiversity conservation and flood prevention
- Stakeholders are be involved in the elaboration of Action plan for sustainable flood risk management (tools: 2 workshops forming expert group, support in project development).
- Establishment of Sub-basin commission for Osam river to the Basin council is proposed.
- Development of proposal for follow-up projects



Gaps

- Lack of “bottom-up” initiatives in River Basin Councils
- No Sub-basin commissions established (with some exceptions)
- Public information is provided in technical and structured way but lack of interactive information.
- Insufficient “Active involvement” into the decision-making process.
- No public discussion/ awareness on sustainable flood risk management
- Public discussion is focused rather on the water supply, water quality, flood damages than on the ecosystems
- Insufficient public funds to strengthen the participation of NGO, Citizen groups or other forms of public participation in decision making
- Insufficient funds for “additional” measures in RBMP

Every gap = potential new NGO function (or a project)

**Thank you
for the attention!**



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