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Session VI: Water governance at different levels

The role of the Republic of Serbia in international water platforms - a tool for building trust in the West Balkans

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Serbia on the Danube: most of the territory (more than 90%) falls within the Danube River Basin.

All major rivers (except the Morava) define or cross the state border.

- **The Danube** River Basin is shared by 19 states (14 with significant catchment areas). The middle course of the Danube runs through Serbia or along its state border: 588 km or 20.6% of total length. Two major tributaries join the Danube in Serbia: the Tisa (largest in terms of catchment area) and the Sava (most significant in terms of volume).
- The catchment area of the largest left tributary of the Danube – **the Tisa** – is shared by 5 states (Ukraine, Slovakia, Romania, Hungary and Serbia). The lower course of the Tisa, 160 km of 966 km (16.6% of total length), runs through Serbia.
- The catchment area of the largest right tributary of the Danube – **the Sava** – is shared by 6 countries (Slovenia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Albania, Montenegro and Serbia). The lower course of the Sava, 210 km (or 25.6% of total length), runs through Serbia.
- The catchment area of the largest right tributary of the Sava – **the Drina** – is shared by 4 states (Albania, Montenegro, Bosnia & Herzegovina and Serbia).
- **The Tamiš, the Timok, the Nera, the Karaš, the Nišava** and a number of smaller rivers cross or define the state border.

UNECE Water Convention: Implementation



- ✓ The Water Convention as a framework, detailed obligations – bilateral and multilateral agreements.
- ✓ The Republic of Serbia is a party to the Convention since November 2010.
- ✓ The Convention provides strong legal back-up in case of transboundary water issues.
- ✓ Implementation of the Water Convention includes various measures:
 - ✓ Entry into bilateral agreements with neighboring countries on matters addressed by the Convention;
 - ✓ Enactment of new regulations, primarily in the water sector;
 - ✓ Building and strengthening of relevant institutional and economic capacities in connection with the prevention, control and reduction of pollution and transboundary impacts, water and environmental monitoring, research and development, etc.



<http://www.unece.org/env/water/>

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Synopsis of International Cooperation

BILATERAL

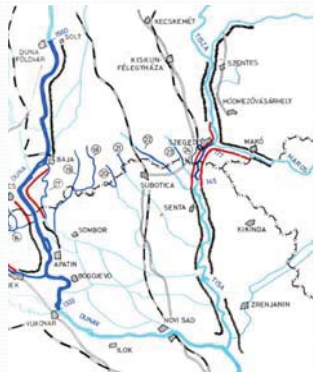
- ✓ Active bilateral cooperation with **Hungary** and **Romania** (agreements date back to 1955) – new agreements needed.
- ✓ Inactive bilateral cooperation with **Bulgaria** (agreement dates back to 1958 but no cooperation since 1982) – new agreement.
- ✓ No agreements at present with neighboring internationally-recognized states (**Croatia**, **Bosnia & Herzegovina**, **Montenegro** and **Macedonia**) – following the breakup of the former Yugoslavia, internally shared rivers and groundwater resources acquired transboundary status, which requires the establishment of inter-governmental and international cooperation in the field of water – bilateral agreements.

MULTILATERAL

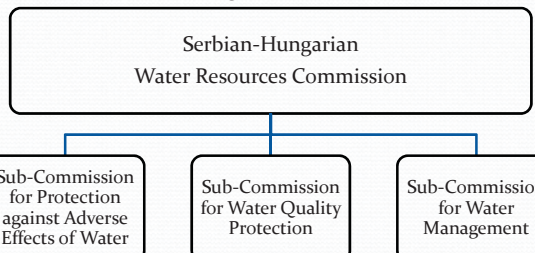
- ✓ Convention on Protection and Sustainable Use of the Danube River (Sofia Convention, 1994) – since 2003.
- ✓ Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin (2002).
- ✓ UN Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Helsinki Water Convention, 1992) – since 2010.

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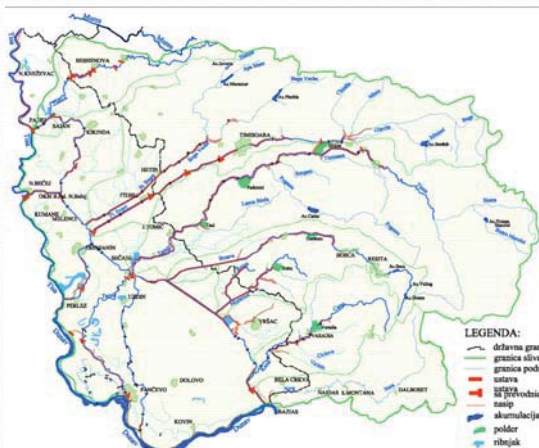
Hungary



- ✓ Bilateral cooperation between Serbia and Hungary based on the Agreement on Water Management Affairs (1955).
- ✓ The Agreement has become obsolete: many provisions of the Agreement and accompanying regulations and methodologies no longer apply due to significant changes on the ground in the interim.
- ✓ The outcomes of implementation of the Agreement only partly satisfactory.
- ✓ Cooperation to date has addressed relatively short stretches of shared watercourses, which is contrary to EU water directives.
- ✓ An agreement consistent with EU Directives has been drafted – currently being harmonized.



Romania



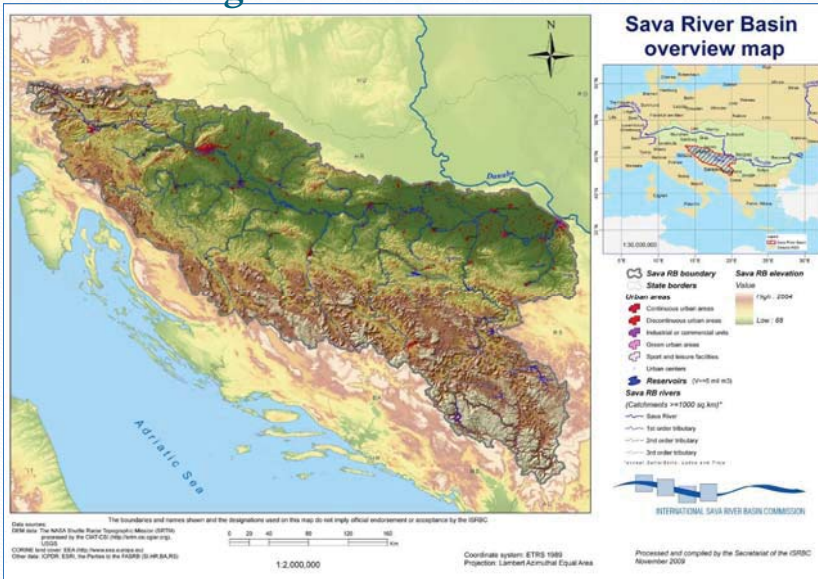
- ✓ Bilateral cooperation between Serbia and Romania based on the Agreement on Hydraulic Engineering Affairs (1955).
- ✓ The Agreement has become obsolete: many provisions of the Agreement and accompanying regulations and methodologies no longer apply due to significant changes on the ground in the interim.
- ✓ The outcomes of implementation of the Agreement only partly satisfactory.
- ✓ Cooperation to date has addressed relatively short stretches of shared watercourses, which is contrary to EU water directives.
- ✓ An agreement consistent with EU directives has been drafted.
- ✓ Negotiations initiated in 2010.

ICPDR - International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River

- The Convention established the ICPDR, which acts as a forum for cooperation and dialogue on water related issues and environmental issues dealing with water.
- The ICPDR has the mandate to ensure conservation, improvement and efficient use of surface water and groundwater; reduce inputs of nutrients and hazardous substances; control floods and ice hazards; and reduce pollution loads to the Black Sea.
- Since 2000, the ICPDR is the coordinating body for implementing the EU WFD.
- The Danube River Basin Management Plan provides a roadmap for achieving at least good status of all water bodies in the Danube River Basin. The Plan covers the period from 2009 to 2015.
- The draft Danube River Basin Management Plan Update 2015 and the draft 1st Flood Risk Management Plan for the DRB were approved at the 17th ICPDR Ordinary meeting - 10th December 2014. The plans are available for public consultation until 22 July 2015.

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Regional Level - The SAVA



http://www.savacommission.org/dms/docs/dokumenti/documents_publications/publications/other_publications/sava_rba_a3_map15odpi.pdf 8

FASRB Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin

- **The first development-oriented multilateral agreement** in the region signed after geopolitical changes in the 1990s.
- Following the support of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe (SP), which provided a solid basis for active cooperation of all stakeholders in the region and paved a way to the creation of a new approach to water resources management in the basin, the four riparian countries of the Sava River Basin (parties: **Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia** (formerly FR Yugoslavia, Serbia & Montenegro) and **Slovenia**) entered into a process of cooperation known as “the Sava River Basin Initiative”. The result of that process is **the FASRB – a unique international agreement, which integrated all aspects of water resources management and established the (joint) International Sava River Basin Commission (ISRBC) for the implementation of the FASRB, with the legal status of an international organization.**
- The Sava River Basin Management Plan was adopted at the 5th Meeting of the parties to the FASRB – 2nd December 2014

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Regional projects:

- Western Balkans Investment Framework (WBIF) - **Improvement of Joint Flood Management Actions in the Sava River Basin** – to ensure a consistent and coordinated approach to flood risk management in the Sava River Basin.
- Environmental and Climate Regional Accession Network (ECRAN) **Project** - the main objectives are to strengthen regional cooperation between candidate countries and potential candidates in the fields of environment and climate change, and assist in making progress in the areas of transposition and implementation of relevant EU legislation.
- **Pilot Project for the Drina River Basin** - The primary focus is on an initial exchange of information between experts engaged in the ECRAN Project and water management coordinators in Drina River Basin, associated with the development of Transboundary River Basin Management Plans, cross-border cooperation and better implementation of the WFD.

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Thank you for your attention!

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