

## Switzerland proposal: Options how to integrate PEBLDS contributions into the Astana Conference

### I. Management of water and water-related ecosystems

How do PEBLDS actions can reinforce the coherence of already existing implemented actions:

- **Integrated ecosystem approach:** As supported by various institutions (EU) an integrated approach to water management with the concept of **River Basin Management (RBM)** including measures to mainstream adaptation into sectoral policies is highly desirable in a Pan-European context. This approach is expected to have major impacts on preserving biodiversity in Europe and its neighboring countries. Moreover inland waters, such as wetland, marsh and dunes areas provide protection against extreme weathers (storms, floods, droughts). There is an urgent need to strengthen **ecosystem resilience to climate change**, with the development of Green Infrastructures, blue belt and networks of protected areas, all topics where PEBLDS is a key contributor and actor.
- **Valuation of Watershed Services:** The growing interest in ecosystem services generated by watershed and their economic valuation should also be embraced by the PEBLDS. This valuation should be integrated in the policy making process, as an additional **incentive to protect inland waters habitats and ecosystems** for local livelihood. Further research on the topic is needed to clearly stress the link between the level of biodiversity and the flow of ecosystem services or the costs and benefits from watershed services.
- **Regional cooperation:** Building and sharing expertise among countries and regions is a fundamental concern for inland water issues. RBM and transboundary management are vital to develop regional networks and information system on freshwater biodiversity. The PEBLDS covers a lot of river basins (Danube, Rhine, Dnieper, Elbe, Volga) and inland seas (Aral sea, Caspian sea), and is relevant to address and implement a better management on this field. Its Central Asian scope is a gate to the Middle East region, where water issues are crucial, in particular in the **peace keeping process**.

### II. Greening the economy and mainstreaming the environment

- **Ecological economy:** An economy subject to ecological principles (eg biodiversity & carry capacity) as well as utilizing ecological functions to contribute to both the economy and ecosystems (eg organic farming) is one of the approaches in greening the economy. For example, organic agriculture provides more than 30% jobs/hectare (TEEB). PEBLDS by **supporting ecological functions** which benefit both the economy and ecosystems is therefore key to greening the economy.

- **Green Jobs:** Jobs in green sectors related to biodiversity conservation (eco-tourism, high nature value farmland, “natural branding” linking products to protected areas,...) are of prime importance in Europe, where recreational activities linked to nature are key economic sectors. By uptaking lessons learned and existing knowledge, by transferring green technology from more advanced countries to EECCA, PEBLDS has a long-standing experience to draw upon.
- **The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity TEEB:** Without a clear understanding of the net economic benefit of nature areas, and how many jobs are directly/indirectly linked to ecosystems, it will remain difficult for governments to justify and incorporate investments in ecosystems and nature areas. The role of the PEBLDS is that approaches available through the TEEB which enable to establish new tools will be available and broadly shared in order to provide to policy makers easily digested information they can use and trust