Towards better communication strategy and stakeholder engagement: Experience from the ISRBC

Second Workshop on “River Basin Commissions and other Joint Bodies for Transboundary Water Cooperation: Technical Aspects”
Geneva, 9-10 April 2014

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Secretary, ISRBC
Challenges

- **High environmental and socio-economic values** → A balanced approach needed for water resources management

- **Geopolitical changes** in the region (1990-ies) → A new, international framework needed for water resources management on the basin level
Legal framework

- **Framework Agreement on the Sava River Basin** – FASRB (the first development-oriented multilateral agreement in the region)

- **Key objective:**
  
  Transboundary water cooperation for sustainable development of the region

- **All aspects of water resources management** integrated (protection + development)

- Implementation coordinated by the **ISRBC** (4 member countries + Montenegro)
Activities

- Development of **joint / integrated plans** for the basin
  - **River Basin Management** Plan (according to EU WFD)
  - **Flood Risk Management** Plan (according to EU Flood Directive)
  - Other plans
    - **Sediment Management** Plan
    - **Water and Climate Adaptation** Plan
Activities

- Establishment of **integrated systems** for the basin
  - **Information** systems (GIS, RIS)
  - **Data exchange** system (hydrological and meteorological)
  - **Forecasting and early warning** systems (floods, accidents involving water pollution)
Activities

- Development of water-related **economic activities** in the basin (Navigation, River tourism, Hydropower use, Agriculture)
- Harmonization of **regulation** (national → EU)
- Creation of additional **protocols to the FASRB**
Activities

- **The broadest scope of work** among int’l basin organizations (river/lake commissions) in Europe

- **Inter-sectoral coordination** – an important task of the ISRBC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity / Field of work</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>A</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>River Basin Management Plan (EU WFD)</td>
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<td>Water and Climate Adaptation Plan</td>
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<td>Tourism</td>
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E – Environ. protection  
F – Flood management  
N – Navigation  
H – Hydropower  
A – Agriculture  
T – Tourism  
C – Climate change
Public participation

- **Wide range** of stakeholders
  - Levels: International, National, Local
  - Water sub-sectors: Environment, Water management, Navigation, Hydropower, Agriculture, Tourism
  - Sectors of society: Governmental, Non-gov., Academic, Business

- **Three levels** of participation
  - Provision of information
  - Consultation
  - Active involvement
Information provision
Information provision

- **Sava Day**
  - Rafting, kayaking, cycling tours
Information provision

• Sava Day
  - Meetings of Youth Parliament
Information provision

- **Sava Day**
  - Concerts & exhibitions
Information provision

• **Sava Day**
  - National projects of the Parties
Consultation

• **Consultation workshops and meetings** with stakeholders
  - Preparation of the River Basin Management Plan
  - Preparation of the Flood Risk Management Plan
  - Planning of the waterway rehabilitation
  - Development of the Transboundary Eco-tourism Guidelines
Active involvement

- MoPs, Sessions and Expert Group meetings of ISRBC
  - Responsible national institutions
  - Observers
Summary

- **ISRBC meetings (MoPs, Sessions, EG meetings)**
- **ISRBC reports**
- **Sava Water Council**
- **Sava Water Partnership**
- **Ad hoc task (sectoral) groups**
- **Conferences, public present, cons. workshops**
- **ISRBC web-site**
- **Publications**
- **Trainings, courses, CB workshops**
- **Press releases & media briefings**
- **Sava Day celebration**
- **ISRBC reports**
- **Resp. national bodies, observers**
- **Public concerned (specific stakeholder groups)**
- **Wide public**

Key messages:
- All areas of work
- Specific areas of work
- Capacity building
- Awareness raising
- Size of target group
- Active involvement
- Consultation
- Information

Responding national bodies, observers
Public concerned (specific stakeholder groups)
Wide public

2nd Workshop on River Basin Commissions, Geneva, 9-10 April 2014
Conclusions

- **Wide range** of stakeholders → **Strong need** for public participation
- Using the **three levels of public participation** is reasonable
- **Both costs and benefits increase** across the levels
- Public participation – **demanding, but helps** find solutions faster

Gain from PP

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<tr>
<th>Unilateral Decision</th>
<th>Public Participation</th>
<th>Implementation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Problem identified</td>
<td>Decision made</td>
<td>Gain from PP</td>
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Taken from ICPDR, 2013
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