Conclusions & recommendations

Second Workshop on Transboundary Flood Risk Management
Geneva, 19th & 20th March 2015
Overall

- Interesting and fruitful exchange of experiences
- This workshop had a wider focus than the 2009 event
- Problems are similar across the world, but the extent to which they are tackled are different due to financial, and political constraints
- Solutions are different
- Data sharing (as said already 2009) is a crucial point
- Disaster is a mix of hazard, exposure and vulnerability
Overall

• Exposure and vulnerability can be reduced through structural and non-structural measures (e.g. land-use planning, education and awareness). Hazard cannot be reduced, but can be forecasted.

• Utilize transboundary flood management at all levels, from national to local (community based)

• It seems that CEEC countries are moving towards EU rules
Flood forecasting

• Data sharing (as said already 2009) is a crucial point. WMO Resolutions 25 and 40 on exchange of hydrological and meteorological data between NHMSs should be fully implemented.

• Clear responsibilities needed – both for early warning but also for taking action during a flood event.

• Avoid delays: early warning given in parallel to gov. administrative structures and the media/public.

• Cooperate with NGOs, stakeholder organizations and “community leaders” for “spreading the word” early and provide decision support!

• Utilize “new technologies” for informing the public – but take into account potential limitations (literacy, www-access etc.).
Flood forecasting

- Educate the public on how to respond to the “warning”
- Climate Change influences:
  - The way dams/reservoirs should be operated/managed
  - The statistical methods for forecasting. Thus, consider also other models/methods
- Management of water problems in the future
- “Stable” and continued/”real time” data sharing within a transboundary basin is a crucial, necessary information basis
Measures

- Important to mix structural and non-structural measures – but residual risks will remain.
- Community based flood management needs to be aligned with the transboundary approach.
- Creation of water retention areas can be beneficial also for environmental protection.
- Field trip illustrated very nicely the usefulness of transboundary cooperation for mutual benefit incl. cost sharing – also linking flood protection with ecological/recreational objectives.
- Promote incentives and/or risk sharing mechanisms (i.e. insurance) to reduce the residual risk of flooding.
- Intersectoral approach is need to implement measures.
Flood Risk Management Planning

• „Flood atlas“/publicly available information on flood events and their probabilities: useful basis

• [Unfortunately,] major transboundary flooding can provide a „push“ for more cooperation

• Balancing the use of reservoirs regarding floods/water level control and hydropower production – but political/technical/operational issues to be solved

• Climate change will influence the occurrence, timing and “kind” of flooding – thus, the (transboundary) planning approach needs to be adapting to this

• Link spatial development to flood risks
Institutional Arrangements

• Challenges: Find the common interest and find the right process among the parties

• Transparency of information triggers institutional change

• Political will being the pre-requisite for effective financing of flood management, opportunities should be sought for synergies with other sectors (e.g. education)

• Co-financing at the transboundary level should be considered (when applicable)

• Water should also be included in other international agreements (e.g. on energy and food)
Transboundary Aspects

• Cooperation on the technical level might be formalised later on the political level
• Flood management can be starting point for further water management cooperation
• Political agreements/legal frameworks need to be further detailed in technical definitions or guidance
• Weak national institution are a obstacle for transboundary cooperation.