

Item 2 Romania

Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

In my short intervention I want to speak about the European Union Water Initiative, particularly on its progress in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

This initiative, which is covering 12 countries from the region, is focused on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals related to water and sanitation, according to principles of integrated water resources management.

From 2002 onwards, when this initiative was launched, all countries actively participated in its activities and most of these countries have made important steps towards a change in their water management. The main instrument to promote this change has been the so-called National Policy Dialogues. Each National Policy Dialogue works as a platform where all stakeholders interested in water management at the national level meet and participate in the development of water policy reforms, national water strategies and related financial plans. Each Dialogue is supported by robust analytical work, or presentation of international best practices relevant in the context of respective countries. This substantive support facilitates the discussions. Based on the results of these dialogues countries started to improve their institutional and legal framework, to optimize investment in water supply and sanitation and the financial viability of the utilities and to improve public health.

After 2007, the National Policies Dialogues have made an important step forward and started to address water resource management more systematically, building on the principles of the EU Water Framework Directive and UNECE Water Conventions, particularly the Protocol on Water and Health. Issues related to international cooperation for the management of the transboundary waters become more actual having in view the effects of climate change.

Many of these activities have been supported by the European Union countries at the bilateral level which facilitated the direct exchange of experience by implementing specific projects.

We consider the activities developed in this region as an outstanding success of the European Union Water Initiative which has shown that, when there is an appropriate political involvement and openness for cooperation, there are

also positive and concrete outcomes. It is also a good example of interregional cooperation between continents.

The Second Assessment of Transboundary Rivers, Lakes and Groundwaters in the UNECE region provides us a picture of the existing situation in the region and recommendations related to improving the status of transboundary waters.

We highly appreciate and support this document and we would like to thank Finland, as leader of this activity and for the excellent product of its activity.

We welcome the involvement and dedication of the Parties to the UNECE Water Convention, UNECE members not Parties, and to the Secretariat of the Water Convention, in preparing the Assessment as an input to this Ministerial Conference.

We are convinced that the Second Assessment will provide to the Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Asia countries a solid basis for their future actions within the National Policy Dialogues towards a sustainable management of waters.

Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

In order to find more about this best practice example, Romania, as Chair of this component of the European Union Water Initiative, together with UNECE and OECD which are the implementing agencies, are inviting you Friday 23rd September, between 13.00 and 15.00, in Room B9 to the side event on Implementation of IWRM principles at national level through the EU Water Initiative National Policy Dialogues and other PROGRAMMES

I look forward to meeting many of you at this side event, where you will learn more about successes related to National Policy Dialogues on water policy reforms and how these can further benefit your country (if you are an EECCA government) or your cooperation policy (if you are a partner to EECCA countries).

Thank you very much for your attention.