Agreements and RBOs to strengthen the management of transboundary waters

Example of the Sava River Basin
Sava river basin
Sava river basin

- **Area:** 97,713 km² (the second largest Danube sub-basin; share: 12%)
- **Average flow** at the mouth: 1722 m³/s
  (the largest Danube tributary; contribution: 25%)
- **River length:** 990 km (~ 600 km of which is the waterway)
- **Population:** approx. 9 million

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Share of the basin (%)</th>
<th>Share of the territory (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosnia &amp; Herzegovina</td>
<td>39.2</td>
<td>75.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>45.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montenegro</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>49.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>17.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>52.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
History of cooperation

- **Challenges**
  - **Use of water resources**: development and protection
  - **Management of water resources**: national → transboundary

- **Legal and institutional framework**
  - **ISRBC** (2005), **Secretariat** (2006)
  - **Participation**:
    4 member countries +
    1 country (technical level)
Principles of cooperation

• Cooperation based on *sovereign equality, territorial integrity, mutual benefit* and *good faith*

• *Reasonable and equitable use* of water

• Securing *integrity* of water regime in the basin

• Regular *exchange of information* within the basin

• Reduction of *transboundary impacts* caused by economic and other activities of the Parties (*‘No harm’* rule)

→ Building on *Helsinki Water Convention*: Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia, Slovenia Parties to the Helsinki Convention – a reference framework, a common language, a neutral institutional platform
Scope of cooperation

- **Management plans**
  (river basin, flood risk, sediment, climate change adaptation)

- **Integrated systems**
  (information, forecasting, warning)

- **Economic activities**
  (navigation, river tourism)

- Harmonization of **regulation**
  (national → EU)

- **Protocols** to the FASRB
Mechanism of cooperation

• Legal capacity
  - **Navigation:** Decisions
  - **Other issues (i.e. WM):** Recommendations

• Financing
  - **Work of Secretariat:** MCs’ contributions (equal since the establishment)
  - **Activities / projects:**
    - MCs’ contributions (~ 10%)
    - External sources (~ 90%)

![Graph showing share of externally funded projects]

1 - Share in terms of the **number** of the projects
2 - Share in terms of the **budget** of the projects
Mechanism

• **Stakeholders**
  - Wide range horizontally
  - **All societal** sectors
    - Governmental
    - Non-governmental
    - Academic
    - Business

• **Monitoring of implementation**
## Inter-sectoral coordination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity / Field of work</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>River Basin Management Plan (EU WFD)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>Water and Climate Adaptation Plan</td>
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<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
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<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>Integrated Information System (INSPIRE Dir.)</td>
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<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navigation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Tourism</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

P – Water and aquatic ecosystem protection  
F – Flood management  
N – Navigation  
H – Hydropower  
A – Agriculture  
T – Tourism  
C – Climate change
Nexus assessment

• **Basin is critical** for the region in terms of:
  - Employment
  - Energy generation
  - Greenhouse gas mitigation
  - Irrigation
  - Transport and tourism

• **Governance**
  - Strong framework and incentives for good governance
  - Serious gaps (incomplete reforms, resource limitations, lack of political will)
Public participation

- ISRBC meetings (MoPs, Sessions, EG meetings)
- ISRBC reports
- Conference, public participation cons. workshops
- ISRBC web-site
- Sava Water Council
- Ad hoc task (sectoral) groups
- Sava Water Partnership & orgs
- Sava Day celebration
- Resp. national bodies, observers
- Public concerned (specific stakeholder groups)
- Wide public

Categories:
- Active involvement
- Consultation
- Information

Axes:
- Quantity of information (vertical)
- Size of target group (horizontal)
- All areas of work
- Specific areas of work
- Key messages

Topics:
- Capacity building
- Awareness raising
- Trainings, courses, CB workshops
Approach

- **Integrated** (whole basin, scope of work, all societal sectors, ‘top-down’ + ‘bottom up’)

- **Aligned** with the international conventions and EU regulation / strategies

- **Complementary** with the processes on the Danube level

- **Pragmatic** and **practical**

- **Educative** (capacity building, awareness raising)
Benefits

• Improved cooperation / Increased level of mutual trust among the countries

• Implementation of projects of common interest

• Harmonization of regulation, methodologies and procedures

• Enhancement of cross-sectoral cooperation on national level
Conclusions

• **FASRB & ISRBC:** a good framework for integrated TWRM
  - By scope
  - By approach to transboundary cooperation (principles, mechanism)

• **Broad scope of work:** an opportunity for all Parties to meet their interests

• **The process is:**
  - Demanding (resources and permanent joint efforts of the Parties), yet it provides considerable benefits
  - A good basis for the progress towards the achievement of the key objective – sustainable development of the Sava river basin