Cooperation of the Water and Wetland Conventions

protect nature to improve water sustainable solutions for water-related management problems valuing ecosystem services

Second Assessment of Transboundary Rivers, Lakes and Groundwaters

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water-related ecosystems = "wetlands"

the "Ramsar Convention" focuses on:

- rivers, lakes, marshes, swamps, fens, peatlands
- open and underground water
- natural, modified and artificial waterbodies
- permanent or temporary waters
- with static or flowing water
- fresh, brackish or salt water
- including coastal marine areas

Danube delta – Moldova-Romania-Ukraine
Ramsar is concerned about:

**ecosystem management** at the heart of the catchment-based approach:

use hydrological services **provided by wetland ecosystems** for the water cycle

maintain natural flows and aquifer recharges

maintain and restore biodiversity and cultural heritage
Ramsar’s critical path is an operational tool to link water catchment planning with site management

water and nature managers working together:

- establishing partnerships
- getting better information
- strengthening capacities
- using innovative economic tools and financing
- national legislation and international agreements
messages from the 2nd Assessment:

only *functioning* ecosystems are providing ecosystem services.

Water quality and quantities depend on *ecosystem services*.

Hydrological *ecosystem services* are *inter-related* with biodiversity, cultural heritage and socio-economic aspects.

Increased transboundary cooperation is needed, ideally to be based on specific agreements.
**Examples** of transboundary ecosystems in **South-Eastern Europe**

Summaries of cultural and biodiversity values, pressure factors, transboundary impacts and management measures

designated **Wetlands of International Importance** (Ramsar Sites)

**Danube basin:**
*Drava-Danube confluence*  
(Croatia, Hungary, Serbia)

**Drin basin:**
*Prespa lakes*  
(Albania, FYROM, Greece)

*Skadar lake & Buna river*  
(Albania, Montenegro)

3 Ramsar examples  
2 additional sites
Caucasus

**Kura basin:**
Javakheti plateau (Armenia, Georgia)

**Araks basin:**
Araks floodplain (Armenia, Azerbaijan, I.R.Iran, Turkey)
Northern and Eastern Europe

**Pasvik basin:**
Inari lake-Pasvik lowlands
(Finland, Norway, Russian F.)

**Narva basin:**
Peipsi lake and lowlands
(Estonia, Russian Federation)

**Salaca basin:**
North Livonian bogs
(Estonia, Latvia)

**Vistula basin:**
Western Bug floodplain
(Belarus, Poland, Ukraine)

**Dniepr basin:**
Pripyat-Stochid-Prostyr plain
(Belarus, Ukraine)

**Danube basin:**
Upper Tizsa floodplain
Aggtelek karst
Lower Danube and delta
(Bulgaria, Hungary, Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, Ukraine)

8 Ramsar examples
16 additional sites
Central Asia

Atrek basin:
Gomishan lagoon (I.R. of Iran, Turkmenistan)

Ob basin:
Tobol-Ishim forest steppe (Kazakhstan, Russian Federation)

Syr Darya basin:
Aydar-Arnasay lakes (Kazakhstan, Usbekistan)

Ili basin:
Balkhash lake-Ili delta (China, Kazakhstan)

Amur basin:
Daurian wetlands
Khanka lake (China, Mongolia, Russian Federation)
Western and Central Europe

**Foyle basin:**
Loch Foyle (Ireland, UK)

**Elbe-ems basins:** (coastal)
Wadden Sea (Denmark, Germany, Netherlands)

**Elbe-odra basins:** (watershed)
Karkonosze mires
(Czech Republic, Poland)

**Rhine basin:**
Upper Rhine
(France, Germany)

**Danube basin:**
Danube-Dyie-Morava confluence (Austria, Czech Republic, Slovakia)

**Bidasoa basin:**
Txingudi (France, Spain)

**Rhone basin:**
Geneva lake
(France, Switzerland)
lessons from the 2\textsuperscript{nd} Assessment:

- ecosystem services extend beyond wetland boundaries
- wetlands are traditional gathering points, trading centres and civilization crossroads
- wetland ecosystems as biodiversity hotspots, notably for threatened and migratory species

Skadar lake – Albania-Montenegro
pressures on water-related ecosystems:

unsustainable uses (peat mining, forestry, fishing, hunting)
alterations of the hydrological regime
(dams, canalization, water abstraction)
unsustainable irrigation, water waste, salt intrusion
water pollution (agricultural run-offs, sewage, discharges)

some differences Europe vs. Central Asia:
in CA sustainable wetland management is important for human well-being, health and political stability
in Europe already many transboundary cooperation and ecosystem restoration projects
towards a 3rd Assessment?

embarking on a common journey: for water and water-related ecosystems: focusing on hydrological cycles ... and the relations between ecological infrastructures and their water resources output ... in terms of quality and quantity

Karkonosze bogs – Czech Republic-Poland
3rd Assessment:

rather than focusing on pressures (now well identified),

focusing on solutions ...

sustainable ecosystem and resource management
restoration of ecosystem services
(water provision, purification, flood mitigation)
thank you for your interest
merci pour votre attention
спасибо за внимание

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on future priorities for water and wetland management
in Slovakia