



**RESEAU INTERNATIONAL DES ORGANISMES DE BASSIN
INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF BASIN ORGANISATIONS
RED INTERNACIONAL DE ORGANISMOS DE CUENCA
Международная сеть водохозяйственных организаций**

**« EUROPE-INBO 2008 »
6th EUROPEAN CONFERENCE
ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WATER FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE**

SIBIU (ROMANIA) – 1 to 3 October 2008

**CONCLUSIONS
WORKING DOCUMENT OF 29 SEPTEMBER**

The 6th conference of the “EUROPE-INBO” group took place in Sibiu, in Romania, from 1 to 3 October 2008, at the invitation of the Romanian Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development. The conference gathered participants from Basin Organizations and national Administrations, as well as representatives of NGOs and companies, representing countries (a list of the participants is appended).

On the one hand, a one-day workshop on the IWRM-Net project was held on the 1st October, and on the other, at the same time a workshop on the European preparation of the World Water Forum of Istanbul, the meetings of the Liaison Bureaus of the regional networks of basin organizations of Central and Eastern Europe (CEENBO) and of the Mediterranean (MENBO), the MENBO General Assembly and the meeting of INBO World Liaison Bureau.

The official conference of 2 and 3 October was opened by the Romanian authorities: Mrs. Lucia Ana VARGA, Secretary of State in charge of water, Mr. Ilie MITEA, Prefect of Sibiu Department;

Mr. , representing CEENBO Presidency, Mr. Walter MAZZITTI, MENBO President, Mr. Alfredo DI DOMENICANTONIO (Tiber Basin Authority in Italy) representing the EUROPE-INBO Group Presidency, Mr. Laszlo KOTHAY, World President of INBO (Hungarian Secretary of State in charge of water) and Mrs. Natacha AMORSI, IWRM-Net Project Manager, also participated in the official opening.

After a presentation of the Romanian water policy and institutions and a presentation of the IWRM-Net project and of the conclusions of the IWRM-Net workshop of the previous day, the workshops of the conference 2008 were opened and dealt with 3 main topics:

- Preparation of the programs of measures
- Implementation of the Flood Directive
- Analysis of WFD implementation in transboundary basins

X papers were presented.

As the meeting was taking place in Romania, special attention was paid to issues specific to Central and Eastern Europe and to the Danube River Basin. A technical visit was organized by the Olt Water Directorate and Sibiu Department on Saturday 4 October in the Olt river basin.

• **Conclusions of Workshop 1 – Preparation of the programs of measures**

- Developing the program of measures on relevant scales

→ Within the river basin district, the sub-basins are the most relevant territories for implementing the measures. It is also necessary to rely on the most important local administrations (regions, departments, etc.): their representatives must be able to take part in the work and “co-develop” the program of measures. The action plans of the State services must also be organized on scales which are appropriate to implement basic measures (of a regulatory nature).

→ There are various ways of reading the program of measures (administrative logics + basin logics) which are essential to make sure of their feasibility and of a shared understanding of the project by the parties concerned.

- Choosing the best suited financial and planning tools

→ As the deadline of 2015 will come very quickly, it is advised to concretely implement the program of measures, without waiting for its formal adoption. The donors and contracting authorities must now make sure that the action plans and programmed investments already comply with the program of measures.

→ In most cases, recovering good status will pass by the implementation of a “combination of very diverse measures”. At the same time, the involved stakeholders are varied. In such a context, local variations of management plans and programs of measures are essential (such as water management and development schemes and environmental contracts in France): these local tools allow gathering the stakeholders and giving visibility over a few years on all the measures planned in the river basin. But such procedures take a long time to be implemented and it is necessary to progress on certain specific pollution by way of “contracts of industrial branch” in particular.

→ It is necessary to have debates on the financing of actions, even if they can be difficult: with several billions euros to be mobilized over 6 years, i.e. an additional effort from + 30% for the public finances of the basin, who will pay and how much? The implication of the various administrative levels (regional and departmental authorities) allows the sizing of the possible financing coming from these authorities and raising the issue of the possible redeployment of financial resources from some actions towards other actions more directly related with the achievement of good status. The credibility of the program is partly based on the positioning of these important financial partners.

- Giving more room to the ecosystems and hydromorphology

→ Restoring the functions of the aquatic environments (biological continuity, space of mobility of the rivers, restoration of the related environments, etc.) is of prime importance for achieving good ecological status. INBO recommends to better take hydromorphology into account and to increase the means devoted to the management of wetlands.

→ The importance of the sediments was underlined: impact on the erosion and silting processes, a place with various habitats, reserve of chemical substances by the re-mobilization of the sediments contaminated by historical pollution.

→ Some participants also propose to better integrate fishing policy in the programs of measures, by conditioning the granting of fishing rights to the development of piscicultural and halieutic management plans for basins or sub-basins.

→ INBO recommends considering better the functioning of aquatic environments and more closely binding water policy with the policy for biodiversity conservation. It is necessary to communicate on the tool which the WFD is for biodiversity protection, through the objective of good ecological status and the program of measures.

- Making for lost time (agriculture, sanitation, groundwater, etc.)

→ It is necessary to finally act on pollution, agricultural discharges and erosion because the delays are huge. INBO calls for true mobilization: the programs of measures must include strong measures and an action coordinated at the European level is essential, being given

the lack of ambition noted in the preparatory documents to the “progress analysis” of the CAP.

→ It is urgent to concentrate management measures on groundwater and to take into account the interaction between surface water and associated groundwater.

→ It is also necessary to make for lost time on sanitation: creation of new wastewater treatment plants, increase in the capacities and treatment levels, repair and renewal of wastewater collection systems, storm water drainage and treatment, compliance with standards for connections, on-site sanitation, etc.

- Developing/harmonizing methods (economic analyses, efficiency of measures)

→ For economic analyses, practical application showed that it is really necessary to have threshold values and criteria of disproportionate cost, in order to homogenize the practices of granting exemptions and extensions of delays. The EUROPE-INBO Group proposes creating an inside group of exchanges (composition to be defined starting with volunteer basin organizations) to share experiences.

→ As regards the efficiency of measures, the presented work shows that it is sometimes difficult to determine the impact area of measures as compared to the distribution of water bodies and to assess their impact on water status. Although the efficiency of measures can be evaluated in some cases (abatement of the loads in nitrogen, phosphorus, priority substances), some measures have ecological effects which are not easily calculable or impossible to quantify. Experts' evaluations prove to be essential then. There are still some uncertainties on the real effectiveness of certain actions, more especially as the environments take sometimes a long time to react. INBO recommends sharing knowledge on the efficiency of measures and on the quantification of the pressure/impact relations. Modeling tools can also be useful (river modeling, tool for optimization of the combinations of measures, geographical information tool for support to decision-making, etc.).

- Involving the stakeholders/the public and improving the efficiency of the undertaken measures

→ The program of measures must directly help achieving the environmental objectives laid down for water bodies. Even if it is obvious, the managers and stakeholders must constantly pursue this goal. The program of measures must be designed and then implemented as a very operational tool, with a logic of permanent adjustment. The program of measures is not a ready-to-use catalogue. It is necessary to specify the operational methods of its implementation and to find synergies between stakeholders.

→ The robustness of the program of measures and its appropriation in time (and thus its effectiveness) are conditioned by the recognition of its added value by the stakeholders and managers of the territories bordering the water bodies. It is also necessary to make a success of this link between local project and WFD requirement. Consultation of the interested parties at the local level not only contributes in prioritizing measures, but also it is essential because these institutions or stakeholders will be responsible for their field implementation!

→ It is necessary to share the cultural change induced by the WFD, to increase governance (multi-partnerships, account taking of the territories, evaluation of the policies), to develop common cause (upstream/downstream, financial, rural/urban, etc.), to develop permanent dialogue between stakeholders to obtain consensus between the often contradictory interests.

• Conclusions of Workshop 2 – Implementation of the Flood Directive

Following the repeated floods which occurred in 2000, 2001 and 2002, in Eastern Europe, on the Rhine, Elbe and the Danube and in Great Britain, the European Water Directors decided to draw up a guide of good practices, approved in 2003, on flood prevention, protection against floods and reduction of vulnerability. Following this guide, a mandate was given in 2004 by the Council of Ministers to the European Commission to develop an action plan, from which the Flood Directive derived.

→ The EUROPE-INBO Group underlines the added value of Directive 2007/60/EC of 23 October 2007 because it creates a **common European framework** for the assessment and management of flood risks. Indeed, INBO has recommended European coordination for a long time: since most European river basins are shared between several countries, action taken at community level is more effective because it allows assessing better the risks and coordinating the measures taken.

→ The EUROPE-INBO Group also underlines the interest of the **integrated approach** of the Directive because all kinds of floods are concerned (floods of rivers and coastal areas, floods by saturation of drainage systems in urban areas).

→ The EUROPE-INBO Group appreciates **the Flood Directive approach, copied from that of the WFD**: river basin approach, several planning stages (risk assessment before 2011, development of maps of zones at risk before 2013, production of risk and flood management plans before 2015), coordination between Member States for transboundary areas, public participation, etc.

→ **Risk assessment and maps of zones at risk:**

- The maps of easily flooded zones must cover the geographical areas likely to be flooded according to: a/ a low probability of floods or scenarios of extreme events; b/ an average probability of floods (period of probable recurrence higher than or equal to 100 years); c/ a strong probability of floods, if necessary.

- The EUROPE-INBO Group thus notes that the Flood Directive is a revolution in practices: **the centennial flood is not a maximum, but an “average” event**; the Directive requires being interested in the events rarer than those which appear with an annual probability of 1%.

→ **The “flood” management plans:**

- As for the WFD, it is necessary to adopt an integrated approach: it is necessary to **pass gradually from flood control to flood risk management**. This does not mean only technical amendments (defence structures and instruments for crisis management) but true changes in policies, institutions, decision-making processes, education, public participation. The plan includes **all the management aspects**: prevention, protection, preparedness to floods including flood forecasting and early warning systems.

- The EUROPE-INBO Group notes that **the contents of the management plan** are wide: costs and benefits, floods range, axes of water drainage, zones having a potential capacity for flood retention, environmental objectives aimed at in art. 4 of the WFD, land and water management, regional planning, land use, conservation of nature, navigation and harbour infrastructures.

→ The EUROPE-INBO Group underlines that what is expected from this plan is **the planning of actions**, justified with costs, benefits and results! There will be a lot of work to formulate these plans before the deadline.

→ The EUROPE-INBO Group notes that the **information and participation obligations** of the Directive are close to those of the WFD, but, in most cases, higher than the current regulatory obligations which exist in the Member States. The Directive requires: 1/ availability to the public of the preliminary flood risk assessment, the maps of easily flooded zones, the maps of flood risks, the flood risk management plans; 2/ promoting active participation of the parties concerned with the development, re-examination and up-dating of the management plans.

- The EUROPE-INBO Group recommends formally integrating the flood risk management plans **into the management plans of the WFD**.

- The Flood Directive plans measures which can contribute to prevent the degradation of the water status as required by the WFD. **A coherent and closely coordinated implementation of these two directives** should maximize synergies for achieving their objectives. In spite of the preventive measures which will be taken, flood events will not of course be avoided and they will cause a temporary deterioration of the water status, then justifying an exemption within article 4 of the WFD.

- It will be necessary **to increase the exchanges** of knowledge and good practices between Member States, for example to organize exchanges between operational centers and to rely on the European circle of experience sharing on the prevention of flood risks.
- It will be advisable **to support the local authorities** starting innovating steps of flood risk prevention or reduction of vulnerability.
- The EUROPE-INBO Group underlines the importance of **preparing national strategies** taking into account: risk cartography, evaluation of direct and indirect damage, assessment of the socially acceptable risk, information and education of the exposed populations. This national strategy will allow orienting and coordinating the flood risk management plans established at the level of the districts. The management plans will have to take climate change into account.
- The EUROPE-INBO Group recommends **resorting to the European funds**: significant amounts have already been devoted to inter-regional cooperation for the 2007-2013 period for flood risk prevention and to the co-financing of research (7th FPRD).

→ **In transboundary basins**: of course, it will be necessary to progress in the pooling of data with ad-hoc information systems, in the coordination of flood warning networks and especially in the coordination of the actions for river development by taking into account the upstream/downstream interactions. It would also be necessary to anticipate the consequences of climate change and to start thinking on an international district scale, by assessing the hydrological consequences according to various scenarios

→ The EUROPE-INBO Group proposes requesting **to participate in the European working group**, whose work will initially focus on reporting and risk assessment.

• Conclusions of Workshop 3 - Analysis of implementation in transboundary basins

INBO wished to contribute in the transboundary basins within the WFD Common Implementation Strategy (CIS). At the next meeting of the European Water Directors on 24-25 November 2008, INBO will present a note on the topic: "WFD contributions to water management in transboundary basins".

The goal is to present, from the angle of the basin organizations, an analysis of the implementation stage at transboundary level, to evidence what goes well and, on the contrary, what makes difficulties, and to identify the needs and recommendations of the basin organizations for the continuation.

The draft document was presented and discussed at the beginning of the workshop. The discussions which followed and the contents of the presented papers will feed version 2 of the document. It was agreed to open a consultation until 30 October 2008: the observations or contributions are to be sent to Ms. Coralie NOEL, Assistant to Mr. Jean-François DONZIER, IOWater General Manager/INBO Permanent Technical Secretary, to the email address: c.noel@oieau.fr

Version 2, such as it will be presented to the European Water Directors will then be available on INBO website: www.inbo-news.org.

To summarize, the following aspects were evidenced:

- The WFD is a working framework which allows overcoming cultural differences and bringing people together in spite of the language barrier. For the **first time in history**, 29 countries (the 27 EU countries + Switzerland and Norway) were committed to jointly manage their water resources on a river basin scale, which is an unequalled effort for good governance on this scale.
- WFD implementation is facilitated where there is a long tradition of transboundary cooperation (bilateral agreements, international commissions, etc.). The WFD is an opportunity for increasing cooperation and synergies are possible between the WFD and the Helsinki Convention.

- The WFD allows a practical implementation of basin management at the transboundary level. It reinforces the role of the existing international commissions, which become coordination platforms for WFD implementation. The WFD led to consider the entire river basin, which meant widening the composition of the international commissions. The existing agreements were supplemented to integrate the WFD principles
- The great added value of the WFD is to set **a reference framework: the same objective of good status of water bodies, with common steps, methods and deadlines. The guidance documents** produced within the CIS provide a **common basis** for WFD implementation. With the WFD, the riparian States are committed into a common process, which enables coordination. Each planning stage results in formalizing this coordination in a common roof section in the documents to be produced (characterization, management plan).
- The WFD led to a **harmonization of practices** and to an improvement of the management tools between riparian countries, including with our new neighbors in the Balkans and in Eastern Europe. The WFD is a great advance for implementing integrated water resources management on the European scale. It is also **a tool for European integration**. As a complement to the bilateral agreements, the WFD allows **multilateral cooperation on a transboundary basin scale**.
- The characterization stage contributed to a **shared analysis** between riparian States. The ongoing stage allows clarifying the objectives to be achieved and agreeing on the actions to start. In practice, the **ambition of the common roof section** is however variable. For very large basins (the Danube, the Rhine), work was organized **on a sub-basin scale** allowing closer and more practical cooperation.
- The WFD **improves the upstream/downstream relations**, because it gathers the riparian States in a **community of interest**: they share a **joint responsibility** for the management of the basin.
- The intercalibration of the methods used for assessing the ecological status should allow **comparability of results**. Significant efforts were made to define monitoring networks on a transboundary basin scale. But it is necessary to pursue the consistency of the systems for follow-up and evaluation. The reporting obligations sometimes led to specify an **overall strategy** for the pooling of data and the development of shared information systems, with collaboration agreements between services and institutions that should share information.
- As regards economic analyses, data are still too often incomplete and **uncertainties remain on the methods** (cost and effectiveness of measures, disproportionate cost, way of extending exemptions for delays, etc.). The methods used are different from one country to another including in transboundary basins.
- A common strategy for **public participation** was sometimes defined in some international districts, but the approach still remains often very national.
- The WFD is **a driving force for the non-EU riparian countries**, which are gradually using this approach.
- But **there is still a lot of work to be done** to increase the consistency of the methods and actions. It is thus advisable to reinforce the means for WFD implementation, especially in a transboundary context

The basin organizations highlighted the constraints and needs specific to the transboundary context:

- Workload, language barrier, coordination constraints → providing more human and financial resources for WFD implementation
- Capacity building → launching joint training programs for the staffs of the basin organizations concerned
- Position of the international commissions → reinforcing their means and their role

- Economic analyses → carrying out work to identify differences in methods, to harmonize criteria and to develop common socioeconomic indicators
 - Information systems → coordinating the monitoring systems and designing overall information systems on a transboundary basin scale with agreements for sharing data
 - Coordination of measures → better coordinating actions, giving more ambition to the roof report which should become a guidance document for the management of the entire basin
 - Public participation → carrying out a true consultation on the shared stakes while relying on the international commissions, coordinating not only the consultation procedure but also its contents, in order to develop a feeling of membership in the international district, organizing joint consultations of the interested parties
 - Groundwater → implementing urgently a joint management of the transboundary aquifers to make for lost time, developing specific management agreements or extending the existing agreements to groundwater
 - Non-EU countries → increasing financial support to accompany them in the implementation of integrated water management, reinforcing cooperation programs with the EU neighbor countries within the European Neighborhood Policy, developing twinning agreements between countries or basins.
- The success of WFD implementation in transboundary basins will certainly be **the most relevant indicator** to evaluate the work done for WFD implementation in Europe.
 - This example of regional initiative can inspire other areas in the world and seems to be a **factor for disseminating the principles of good water governance**. The WFD may not be universal and cannot be exported as it is, but **its approach and its principles are transferable**.

The basin organizations requested adding the following points:

- Transboundary lakes and coastal waters: In some cases, like for Lake Lemman, the Italian lakes or the Wadden Sea, a transboundary cooperation had to be settled between EU Members States and sometimes Non-EU Member States: international commissions have been created respectively between France and Switzerland, between Italy and Switzerland or between the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark. The management plans of those transboundary lakes, coastal waters generally follow the principles of the WFD.
- **Importance to get transboundary maps:** The projection systems or cartography are generally quite different from one country to another, thus, in the Scheld district, there are 3 different systems on less than 150 km! As communication and management tools are needed to implement the WFD, maps on the scale of a district are also required. Coordinated cartography for a transboundary district is therefore very important
- Culture: it has often been built around water, water can gather people together and therefore the EUROPE-INBO group proposes to take well the cultural dimension into account in the transboundary implementation of the WFD
- The youth is our future; especially for water, the children must be taught a water citizenship and how everyone must participate to reach the good status of water. The EUROPE-INBO group proposes to develop educational tools and a transboundary Parliament of young for water
- Climate change: its consequences are already more and present, the EUROPE-INBO group proposes to take well the climate change into account in the transboundary implementation of the WFD
- ...
- Debates also took place on: operation of international commissions, articulation and added value of the WFD as compared to bilateral agreements, appropriation of the WFD principles by non-EU countries and WFD contribution in making these countries progress, contents and ambition of the roof reports, needs specific to transboundary basins within the CIS,

management of transboundary aquifers, improvement of public participation, coordination of measures.

→ These various points will be integrated into version 2 of the document which will be presented to the European Water Directors.

• **Aspects specific to Central and Eastern Europe and to the Danube Basin**

In the Neighborhood zone, many basin organizations (although not belonging to Member States) are interested in the developed methods and the experience feedbacks of WFD implementation from the point of view of integrated basin management. If some tools, such as institutional twinning agreements, are sometimes available to facilitate the transfer of experience, it is nevertheless recommended increasing the cooperation possibilities and access to the information and the transfer of knowledge.

Thanks to the work undertaken within the CIS and especially to intercalibration and the development of tools for assessing the ecological status, significant progresses were made. However, it is currently difficult for the Balkan States, for example, to compare their methods with those of the Member States, and even to use the methods developed in other countries, for lack of references used in the European intercalibration groups. The opening of some intercalibration groups to volunteer neighbor countries would thus allow promoting the use of methods for assessing biological quality and benefiting to the greatest number.

• **Continuations to Conference 2007 (Rome)**

INBO notes continuations to Rome Conference:

- twinning agreements: in 2007, the EUROPE-INBO group had recommended the continuation of twinning agreements, especially in the Mediterranean basin and in EECCA countries → Several institutional twinning agreements financed by European funds were launched in 2008 in the field of water (for example, in Egypt on water quality management, in Bulgaria on the economic tools for WFD implementation, etc.) others are being prepared. Many exchanges also took place between basin organizations of various countries with the objective of signing twinning agreements (for example, the Artois-Picardy basin and Armenia, etc.).

- public participation: in 2007, the EUROPE-INBO group had underlined the interest of having a base of practical references on the methods for public information and participation → in 2008, that could concretize itself with an INBO-WFD project (see section hereafter), one of the topics would be the participation methods.

- capacity building of water professionals → an International Network of Training Centers for Water Professions will be created to facilitate experience sharing (constitutive assembly from 19 to 22 November 2008).

- The Mediterranean area: INBO had recommended setting up an observatory of water resources and their uses in the Mediterranean area → within the Barcelona Process: a Union for the Mediterranean area, the next ministerial conference on water on 29 October 2008 in Jordan could decide launching a “Hub” of knowledge on water in the Mediterranean area (Mediterranean Water Knowledge Hub) networking the centers of excellence contributing to the emergence and dissemination of know-how and useful data to improve Integrated Water Resources Management in the area: EMWIS current National Focal Points, National Water Information Systems, research centers and universities, experimental and pilot projects developed by the Countries with possible support from European Cooperation, etc. This “Mediterranean water data network”, the idea of which was pushed by INBO, will give access

to reliable and relevant data to support the policies of integrated resources management and risk prevention. At the regional level, it will allow facilitating the follow-up of the indicators of the Millennium Goals on water and sanitation and of those related to pollution removal in the Mediterranean and the implementation of the “water” component of the Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development. The development of links between this future network and European actions (WISE/INSPIRE) is currently the under study.

- Preparation of the World Water Forum: for one year, INBO has been working a lot in the preparation (see section hereafter).

• **WFD Common implementation strategy (CIS)**

→ INBO would wish working more in the CIS and will approach the European Commission for this purpose.

→ In a first stage, INBO will present, during the next meeting of the European Water Directors on 24-25 November in Paris, a note on WFD implementation in transboundary basins. This note entitled “WFD contributions in transboundary basins: progress report” will give the point of view of basin organizations on the main contributions of the WFD, the encountered difficulties and recommendations for the continuation. The first draft of this note, which was discussed in workshops, was generally approved. Precise details and examples will be added after the conference. A consultation will be opened until 30 October for possible contributions

→ Further to this note, INBO would wish to be involved in the following CIS working groups, for example:

- floods;
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INBO could provide viewpoints and examples resulting from the field implementation in basins.

• **Research development: IWRM-Net, SPI Water, science/legislation interface**

It clearly seems that the WFD strongly renews the request for research and will imply an evolution of the ways of thinking, acting and planning in the field of water. It is thus important to organize exchanges for better sharing experience, identifying the needs and coordinating the future research programs.

➤ **The IWRM-Net project: and ERA-net project dedicated to IWRM**

IWRM-Net was born in August 2004 starting from this finding: the results of research deserve to be better enhanced and are not sufficiently visible for the community of potential users (decision makers, managers, elected officials, local authorities and the public even). Today IWRM-Net gathers 20 program managers from 14 countries of the European Union and neighboring countries. The objectives are to systematize exchanges, better sharing research results, assessing the needs for research, in relation with the FWD in particular, developing joint activities such as joint invitations to tender and transnational research programs even.

The first transnational research program was launched in November 2007. Two main topics were retained: hydro-morphological pressures/impacts on good ecological status; water governance. Out of the 17 submitted projects, 3 were chosen for a total amount of 2 million euros. The research projects will start during the last quarter of 2008.

The seminar of the IWRM-Net project was especially coordinated with the annual conference of the EUROPE-INBO group in order to establish a link between researchers and basin

organizations. The day of the seminar on 1st October and the session in the assembly on 2 October allowed establishing scientific priorities for the specifications of the 2nd joint research program, whose launching is planned at the end of 2009/ beginning of 2010, with special focus on the Eastern European countries. The delegates were invited to consider the type of research which they need for WFD implementation, either long-term research or industrial research.

The topics mentioned by the participants mainly dealt with: pollution by organic substances, diffuse agricultural pollution, dangerous substances, deteriorations of hydromorphology, as well as groundwater issues.

The needs identified in the four regional workshops (organized in Spain, Romania, Sweden and Belgium) will then be presented to the General Assembly of the IWRM-Net project partners in December 2008. The final decisions will be made by the donor organizations in June 2009.

The EUROPE-INBO group recommends:

→ insisting particularly on two topics: hydromorphology and groundwater in the second joint research program.

→ sharing these experiments with the other ERA-Net projects which deal with water topics and create a "Water ERA-Net" cluster (meetings between the CIRCLE, CRUE, SNOWMAN, SPLASH et IWRM-Net projects already took place to prepare the after 2010, date on which the European financing of these projects will end)

→ extending IWRM-Net to the Mediterranean (IWRM-Med).

➤ **SPI Water**

Within the European SPIWater project, activities especially involving tests in basins in Morocco and Lebanon allowed defining a series of recommendations to better transfer the IWRM and WFD experience to the organizations of States not members of the European Union.

It was thus proposed to develop mechanisms for promoting and organizing exchanges between managers, researchers or political decision makers, pertaining to EU members and other countries. For such a purpose, it is proposed to develop a platform for exchange which can gather these partners. This platform will be able to rely on existing or recent initiatives, such as the Mediterranean Union or the EU neighborhood policy. To facilitate the involvement of water managers in research, it is also recommended to develop processes for end-users to participate in the steering of research programs for example.

The other recommendations resulting from the project propose facilitating access to information on WFD implementation and related research work, for example via WISE-RTD site <http://www.wise-rtd.info/>. In addition, it is also recommended promoting exchanges of the twinning kind between institutions or between basin organizations to allow developing expertise and transferring capabilities based on practical cases.

➤ **Project for launching a "science-legislation interface" group**

The WFD is based on key stages (characterization, management plan, program of measures, etc.) and on a cyclic implementation process which calls upon scientific and technical knowledge which is not readily available (definition of good ecological status, economic analyses, effects of climate change). At present, exchanges between needs for and offers of research in the field of water are very insufficient. In addition, there is a lack of a consolidated transverse vision of the existing research programs and resulting tools useful for WFD implementation. This means few uses of the R&D project outcomes in the water field, and thus delays in WFD implementation. To allow that science satisfactorily meets the needs of the water legislators/managers in the future (next WFD cycles and its daughter directives), it is proposed to create a "science-legislation" interface group, whose actions would aim at making available to the users (managers, decision makers, etc.), tools and

methods developed by research on water, to make emerge future needs for research and to relay them to people in charge of planning research. It is proposed that these activities can be undertaken within the WFD common implementation process (CIS).

• **Facilitating the use of many sources of information on the WFD**

Following the conference 2007 which had highlighted the need for experience sharing, the EUROPE-INBO group proposes presenting a project in future calls for proposals of the European Commission. This project would aim to facilitate the use by experts of basin organizations and district authorities of the many and fragmented sources of information which exist (CIRCA, WISE-RTD, WSSTP, IWRM-Net, etc.).

This project entitled "INBO-WFD" would focus on the needs of the districts. A prototype could be developed in 8 districts (for example in France, Spain, Italy, Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Sweden), to test its usefulness, by starting with two topics identified as being important by the assembly of the EUROPE-INBO group in 2007: evaluation of public participation practices, the first lessons learned from the development of management plans and programs of measures.

• **Strengthening cooperation with other organizations**

→ With GWP: INBO is pleased with the project for the joint publication of a handbook on IWRM implementation in basins which will provide practical examples and recommendations.

→ With UNECE: INBO was invited to take part in the work and meetings of the Helsinki Convention and the Protocol on water and health; INBO requested to UNECE to contribute in the drafting of the two documents presented during the meeting (chapter "Basin Management and Transboundary Cooperation" of the European report for the World Water Forum of Istanbul and note for the European Water Directors on WFD implementation in transboundary basins). INBO is currently studying the details for the implementation of a draft catalogue of data for the UNECE monitoring group within the activities of the Helsinki Convention, for the areas of Caucasus/Eastern Europe/Central Asia. Work could be jointly carried out on the respective experience feedbacks of the UNECE Convention and the WFD and the prospects for development outside Europe (EECCA zone in particular), in particular within the European Neighborhood Policy and the European Water Initiative (EUWI).

• **Preparation of the 5th World Water Forum of Istanbul**

INBO was entrusted with the coordination with the International Hydrological Program (IHP) of the UNESCO of topic 3.1 of the Forum: "Basin Management and Transboundary Cooperation".

For one year, INBO has been working for this preparation and particularly in the European regional process coordinated by the European Water Partnership (EWP):

- INBO admission to the EWP Consultative Committee,
- participation in the meetings of the European regional process,
- preparation of the chapter "Basin Management and Transboundary Cooperation" of the European report,
- drafting of the preparatory documents and contents of the sessions.

In addition, INBO is preparing two tools which will be presented at the World Water Forum:

- joint drafting of a handbook with GWP on IWRM implementation in basins;
- handbook of recommendations on the management of transboundary aquifers (with the Water Academy, UNESCO/IHP, BRGM as partners and with the financial support of the French Development Agency/AFD).

• **Chapter “Basin Management and Transboundary Cooperation” of the European report.**

INBO was entrusted with the preparation of the chapter “Basin Management and Transboundary Cooperation” of the European report to the World Water Forum of Istanbul in March 2009.

Within the European Regional Process coordinated by the European Water Partnership /EWP, all the draft chapters must be available by 15 November 2008.

As the yearly EUROPE-INBO Group conference is a major stage in the preparation of the World Water Forum of Istanbul, the very first draft of this chapter was thus presented and discussed, in order to collect contributions from Basin Organizations.

It was agreed to open a consultation until 30 October 2008: the observations or contributions are to be sent to Ms. Coralie NOEL, Assistant to Mr. Jean-François DONZIER, IOWater General Manager/INBO Permanent Technical Secretary, to the email address: c.noel@oieau.fr

Version 2, such as it will be presented to the European Water Directors will then be available on INBO website: www.inbo-news.org.

• **Country hosting the next "EUROPE-INBO" conference in 2009**

INBO designated... to accommodate the "EUROPE-INBO" conference in 2009. The Romanian authorities were cordially thanked for the organization of the conference 2008.

• **Other mentioned points:**

- Preparation of the next LANBO General Assembly 2008 in Rio de Janeiro
- Preparation of the next INBO World Assembly 2010 at the invitation of OMVS
- Strengthening relations with NARBO in Asia
- Project for the creation of a new Network of Russian-Speaking Basin Organizations (EECCA network). INBO wishes that it can be particularly in line with a future initiative currently developed by the European Union to strengthen cooperation with the countries of Central Asia in the environment and water fields, within the European Water Initiative (EUWI).
- Project for the creation of a new North American Network of Basin Organizations (NANBO)
- ...

The delegates thanked the President for past year, Mr. Roberto GRAPPELLI, Secretary General of the Tiber Basin Authority (Italy). After this Italian Presidency, the Presidency passes to Romania: Mr. _____ was elected President for the coming year.

The delegates thanked Romania for the organization for this 6th Conference in Sibiu and designated _____ as host country for the next 7th Conference of EUROPE-INBO group to be held in autumn 2009.

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UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED IN SIBIU ON 3 OCTOBER 2008.

The final resolutions and the papers will be available on the website: www.inbo-news.org.