

R O M A N I A



MINISTRY of WATERS and ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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TOPIC :
**"progress in water management at the level of
river basins over the world"**

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*PROGRESS MADE IN RIVER BASIN MANAGEMENT IN ROMANIA.
SITUATION AND PROSPECTS*

**Ladies an Gentlemen,
Dear colleagues,**

It is a great pleasure for me to attend at this important meeting kindly hosted by International Network of Basin Organisation. In the frame of our session “Progress made in river basin management over the world – situation and prospects”, I would like to present you the Romanian experience, as following : the evolution of the “water management” concept in Romania and also, the role of *Central and Eastern European Network of Basin Organizations* (CEE NBO) in water management at basin level approach, Romania being in charge of the Presidency and Secretariat of this regional Organization.

1. The evolution of the “water management” concept in Romania

In Romania, the development of the water management followed three stages :

First stage : till 1974 - Quantity water management, based on quantity water control.

In 1924 was elaborated the first water law that allowed the establishing of the Water Sections Divisions on hydrographic basins, and after that the Hydraulics Trades Unions.

Second stage : 1974 – 2000 - Quantity and quality water management, based on quantity and quality water control.

In this period same laws were established (see table 1), but the most important was the new Water Law no.107/1996. This law settles two very important elements, adding to the current legislation in the field, as follows : first, the economic mechanism made up by prices, tariffs, penalties and bonus, having the aim to protect the water resources and to provide an efficient management for the water systems and second, the River Basin Committees, which provide the participation of the involved stakeholders in the decision – making process for water management;

During 2001, 11 River Basin Committees were established in Romania, at the level of each river basin, organised on the same river basins as National Administration “Apele Romane” Water Branches (fig.1). The Committees join the principal factors from water management and environmental protection, respectively representatives from the Ministry of Water and Environmental Protection, the Ministry of Health and Family, County Administration, Municipal and Local Mayors, River Basin Authority and Water Management Systems, Environmental Protection Inspectorate, water users from industry and agriculture, environmental non-governmental organisations or similar associations.

Third stage : 2000 → Sustainable water management, based on quantity and quality water control and healthy ecosystems

The concept of the sustainable development was adopted at the *World Conference for the Environment and Development of Rio de Janeiro*, in 1992. At first, the concept was defined as the solidarity between generations, in other words the moral obligation of the actual generation to preserve sufficient resources and a health environment for new generation.

The sustainable development has to be understood and applied in a modern society. Sustainable development can't be applied only in one region, in one economical sector or in one country, it has to be integrated at regional, national and international level.

The sustainable development is the only alternative on long term at the actual crises between “man “ and “environment”, it is an obligation assumed by the Romanian Parliament and Government by ratification of the agreements and international laws and also a fundamental condition for join to the European Union.

The international community joined in the framework of the Conference regarding Water and Environment (Dublin, January 1992) and the United Nations Conference regarding the Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, July 1992) recommended for the sustainable management of water resources to apply the following principles : River basin principle ; The quantity-quality water management principle; The solidarity principle; The “ pollutant pays” principle; The “ the user pays” principle. These principles have been implemented in the water resources management in Romania. They are the starting points for the integrated water resources management. The integrated concept joins the social problems and economical development with the protection of the natural ecosystems by the integration of the water users at river basin level.

In this respect, we welcome all initiatives launched with the occasion of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, in Johannesburg, 2002, including developing integrated water resources management.

The 2000/60/EC Water Framework Directive is the step to a new stage of development – *sustainable water management stage*.

Romania, being in full process of join to the European Union, pays attention to the implementation of the European Union Directives, especially to the 2000/60/EC Water Framework Directive.

The issues of the implementation of 2000/60/UE Water Framework Directive in Romania, are, first of all, legislative and organisational.

From legislative point of view, the Water Law is in change to harmonise with the provisions of the Water Framework Directive and the others European Directives in the water field.

From organisational point of view, we have already designate the competent authorities : an Inter-ministerial Water Council formed by the representatives of the ministries and central authorities and the National Administration “Apele Romane” were established within the Ministry of Water and Environmental Protection for the implementation of the WFD ; the Inter-ministerial Water Council has a president who is the Romania's representative in the International Commission for the Danube River Protection. By Governmental Decision, the National Administration “Apele Romane” is the authority in charge with the implementation of the 2000/60/UE Water Framework Directive.

The River Basin Water Management Plans drawing up by the Water Branches will be presented for consent to the River Basin Committee. Relying on the River Basin Plans, the National Administration “Apele Romane” will elaborate the Water Management Plan for Romania, which will be integrated in the Danube River Basin District Plan. Also, by their attributions, the River Basin Committees participate in the achieving the conditions for sustainable water management and they are involved in the implementation of the European policy in water field. The WFD has in view the public participation in the working out of the “River Basin Management Plan”.

The discussions, which will take place in the framework of the River Basin Committees, are at the same time, an exercise of democracy for a better image and a faster integration in the European construction process.

2. The role of *Central and Eastern European Network of Basin Organisations (CEE NBO)* in water management at basin level approach.

The first General Assembly of CEE NBO took place at the beginning of February 2002, in Romania, Sinaia, at the invitation of our State Secretary, M. Florin Stadiu. The CEE NBO members are : Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Hungary and Slovakia, the last two-ones being Permanent Observers. National Administration *Apele Romane* ensures the Presidency and the Secretariat of CEE NBO.

As you know, the objective of INBO and its Regional Networks is to *promote integrated water resources management at the level of river basins*, as an essential tool for sustainable development. In addition, the participants to the General Assembly expressed their interest to the following main activities of the CEENBO : to have common activities in the region ; to strengthen the relations between INBO members from neighbouring countries of the CEE region; to facilitate the implementation of the existing “Associated Program of the Global Water Partnership / INBO : strengthening and development of basin organisations”, in Central and Eastern Europe.

During the Sinaia meeting, the CEE NBO members have stressed the importance of the issues related to the EU Water Framework Directive and requested the organisation of technical seminars covering the different aspects of its application. The first workshop took place in Warsaw, in July 2002, and had as a topic “Pressure and impacts”.

The first Liaison Bureau of Central and Eastern European Network of Basin Organizations took place at 13 November 2002, in Romania / Calimanesti, at the invitation of the President of CEE NBO, Mr. Costica Sofronie, the General Director of National Administration “Apele Romane”. The event was organized by the Secretariat of CEE NBO with the support of the International Office of Water. The participants on this meeting were from all CEE NBO country members, with the exception of Serbia. Mr. Jean-Francois Donzier, the INBO Secretary, honored the meeting with his presence.

The Liaison Bureau was the occasion to evaluate the Progress report on the actions undertaken since the General Assembly – Sinaia in CEE NBO and also the progress of the “Associated Program GWP/INBO”, which goal is to support all initiatives for the organisation of Integrated Water Resource Management at the river basin level in Central and Eastern Europe.

We have proposed the extent of CEE NBO, including Moldavia and Ukraine. This will permit the development of the transboundary collaboration between Romania and Ukraine

Also, during the next two days (14 – 15 November), there was a very interesting technical seminar on “*The stage of WFD implementation concerning the delineation of surface water bodies and characterization of artificial and heavily modified water bodies*”.

The main objectives of this seminar were : to facilitate the dissemination of EU guidance documents within the applicant countries; to present the results of the French workgroups in the field; to allow the Basin Committees of the Candidate Countries to exchange their work experience.

The CEE NBO activity program for 2003 favours *the implementation of the WFD in the region* Regarding the actions planned for 2003, the next meetings of CEE NBO were established in June 2003 – workshop “Stage and problems on the implementation of the WFD” and in September, 2003 - the next Liaison Bureau joined with another workshop that will be held in Romania, at Tulcea, in Danube Delta.

A few words about the Romanian participation in Thonon ...?

Table 1

Laws and regulations established in 1974 – 2000

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 8 /1974 Water Law; - 414/1979 Decree regarding the admissible limits of the substances discharged in watercourses; - Rules regarding the sampling and analysing from the physic-chemical, biological and bacteriological point of view; - 5/1989 Law regarding the sustainable water management and protection and assurance of the water quality; - 1001/1990 Governmental Decision regarding the establishing of a unitary system of payments for the products and services of water management; - 107/1996 Water Law; - Rules of organising and functioning of the River Basin Committee - Government Decision on 29.11.2000

Table 2

The most important attributions of River Basin Committees

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To agree on the Plan for river basin water management; - To agree on the Plan for restriction and water use applied in critical conditions (floods and droughts) and the Plans for prevention and fighting against the accidental pollution; - To ensure the water quality according to the Romanian standards; - To propose the revision of the Norms and Standards regarding water; - To recommend the mainly objectives of river basin management Plan to be financed; - To ensure the public information; - To ensure the public information; - To implement the European Directives in the water field, at the river basin level.
