Tisza River Basin Integrated Sustainable Development Programme – Initiation Phase

Final Report

THE REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER
for Central and Eastern Europe

Tisza-Szamos
Public Benefit Company

Tisza River Basin Integrated Sustainable Development Programme - Planning and Initiation Phase (ENV20/01)

Preparatory Assistance to Hungary for an Integrated Disaster Preparedness and Sustainable Development Programme for the Tisza River Basin Background Data and Recommendations for Policy (HUN/01/003/A/07/99)

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Preface

This final report is the result of the Tisza River Basin Sustainable Development Programme initial Phase. The project was implemented during the period of August 2001- June 2002 by:

1. *The Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe*
2. *Tisza Szamos Public Benefit Company*

The project was supported by the British Embassy, UNDP, the Carpathian Foundation, the US Embassy Hungary, and the WWF International Danube Carpathian Programme Office in Vienna. The findings contained in this report were presented and discussed by experts representing the five nations and stakeholder groups of the Tisza catchment area at the international conference held in Szentendre on 25 April 2002. (See attached the list of participants on page 31).

I. Executive Summary

The **Initiation Phase of the TRB SDP** was aimed at providing a solid foundation for further steps in planning and implementing the TRB SDP.

The Tisa/Tisza together with its tributaries drains the largest catchment area in the Carpathian Mountains before flowing through the Eastern Pannonian Plain and joining the Danube. The Tisa/Tisza river basin is the largest among the 15 sub-river basins of the river Danube, which originates in the Black Forest in Germany and reaches the Black Sea on the border of Romania and Moldova.

Five countries share the river and its catchment areas: FR Yugoslavia, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, and Ukraine. There are 14,400,000 inhabitants who live in the 157,200 square kilometre territory of the TRB.

The countries and regions in the Tisa/Tisza river basin share a common recent history of communist controlled systems, as well as the transition to democracy and market economies that occurred in the last decade. This history has left the river basin with a mixed legacy of pollution hotspots, declining heavy industries, a lack of economic development, high levels of unemployment, emerging patterns of regular flooding and an increasingly fertile ground for social and ethnic tensions.

In recent years, the Tisa/Tisza river basin has come to the forefront of international attention due to a sequence of major flood events and environmental disasters with the Baia Mare cyanide spill leading the headlines.

Following the Baia Mare spill, the European Commission established the “Baia Mare Task Force” in order to assess the reasons for the disaster and to recommend possible future actions. Among others, the Task Force found that the response to the cyanide spill was a positive example of cooperation among the countries and that **a regional integrated programme for the sustainable development of the river basin** was called for to create jobs and future prosperity for those living in the river basin and to minimise the risk of future similar accidents.

In 2001 the REC and the UNDP/RBEC Regional Support Centre in Bratislava proposed to develop the **Tisa/Tisza River Basin Sustainable Development Programme (TRB SDP)** with the following main goals:

- securing the prosperity of the people living in the river basin;
- making sustainable use of the basin’s natural resources;
- minimising environmental risks;
- preserving natural and cultural values; and
- developing a participatory framework for cooperation between countries, sectors, communities and stakeholders in the river basin

The networking of the Initiation Phase is aimed to identify the most important organisations/contact persons relevant for the identification of potential investments

needs and priorities. The mapping is aimed to identify the sector relevant to the development of the TRB SDP.

The identified national key needs, priorities, potential stakeholders and information holders were planned to contribute to the final report of the countries and the final international conference.

I.1. Main results of the Initiation Phase of the TRB SDP

Networking:

The stakeholders living in the TRB in all five countries (FR Yugoslavia, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Ukraine) were identified, and networks were created that gathered the necessary information and identified the needs for sustainable development during national workshops and the closing International Conference. National focal points and organisations were targeted in all the countries.

The Preparatory Project activities were supported by a special website created and maintained by The Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe in Hungary.

Mapping:

Information sources on legislation, programmes and projects, institutes and NGOs, as well as publications were collected, mapped and structured into meta-databases at country level. It will be an important task during future phases of the TRB SDP to summarise and harmonise the existing meta-databases, thus serving programming activities, as well as the monitoring and evaluation of projects within the TRB SDP.

Country reports:

The identification of recognised needs for sustainable development in all the TRB countries was carried out and these needs were discussed and placed into the TRB SDP context during the Closing International Conference in the REC.

The results of the Preparatory Project form a solid foundation for future activities both in programming the projects, and in their monitoring and evaluation. Another key result is the introduction and use of the participatory approach during the Preparatory Project for TBR SDP activities. This established the pattern for effective partnerships, creating a win-win environment for cooperation between stakeholders in the TRB.

I.2. Conclusions from the Closing International Conference: Needs for sustainable development in the TRB and outlook for the TRB SDP

The REC and the UNDP/RBEC Regional Support Centre in Bratislava have proposed the development of a Tisa/Tisza River Basin Sustainable Development Programme with five main goals as mentioned earlier. The TRB SDP should encompass the entire geographical area of the Tisa/Tisza River Basin, including its natural resources and ecosystems, the entire economy and all social groups.

The relevant institutions and organisations in the five countries already have information about conditions in the river basin and ideas for its future development. In this instance, the most appropriate method to develop a comprehensive programme is to use the process approach, inviting all relevant stakeholders to provide their input, based on a common understanding of the situation, problems and options for the future.

The further programming of the TRB SDP is expected to follow the logical framework approach which is widely used in GEF, EU and other international development programmes. This approach was also used effectively for the Danube Pollution Reduction Programme (1997-1999) covering the Tisa/Tisza river basin as a sub-basin. This obviously covered a different level of details that corresponded to the Danube river basin scale and did not contain all the necessary elements for sustainable development.

The Preparatory Project for the TRB SDP aimed at providing solid ground for further steps in planning and implementing the TRB SDP. Therefore the outlook for the future is one of the key results of the Preparatory Project.

As the closing event of the Preparatory Project for the TRB SDP, an international conference was held on the premises of the REC in Szentendre, Hungary, on April 25, 2002.

Participants agreed on the following needs and bottleneck areas of the TRB SDP, indicating the overall priority needs in the TRB:

- Protection of human lives and properties were identified as of the utmost interest in relation to the floods in the TRB.
- Information management was identified as an important issue. Many aspects of effective and efficient information management were pointed out, like speeding up information flow; setting up a meta-database (a pointer database of further information, good practices and/or databases); use of information experts to analyse information, and the ability to derive knowledge from information; and finally to establish an information centre managing the information needs of the TRB. (Annexes)
- Public awareness was to be increased by publicising environmental values among the people in the TRB using the local press within the framework of a media campaign, as well as the reorganisation of educational systems in

accordance with sustainable development principles. The latter was emphasised through the creation of links at psychological level between the social-economic-environmental interrelationships of sustainable development.

- The participatory approach was to be considered based on the creation of space for public policy dialogues at local, national and regional levels to ensure effective public participation in decision-making, and in monitoring the implementation of activities and projects performed in the TRB.
- Institutional arrangements focused on the harmonisation of legislation within the TRB; the creation of an international institutional body with country based representation and involving powerful NGOs and/or a special implementation agency; and the development of administrative capacities at local level.
- The creation of development mechanisms that encourage bottom-up processes in project identification and reflect local development needs; the use of common structures, models and approaches to project management; the identification of criteria for the setting of priorities; and the definition of indicators for project appraisal were identified as the key elements in programming and related project management.
- The issue of cooperation was focused on at different levels and with regard to several aspects: the encouragement of international cooperation; the raising of interest in using mechanisms to solve problems at their roots and not at the end of the pipe (see floods and embankment lifting, or reforestation at the watershed issue); the development of cross-sectoral cooperation, especially between the business and NGO sectors; cooperation within the business sector to fill the gap in traditional economic practices; increased cooperation between regional offices in the TRB; and finally the strengthening of scientific cooperation regarding the TRB through an international scientific conference.

The final conference confirmed and approved the original scope of the TRB SD was given by the REC and UNDP.

The scope of the TRB SD was influenced by other ideas risen and formulated by other international initiatives (e.g.Budapest Declaration, and Council Europe's Draft Agreement).

The above areas served as the basis for core elements of the TRB SDP and resulted in **the scope definition of the TRB SDP** as follows:

Identification of the necessary and most cost-effective principal remedial actions to protect human lives and properties through the minimisation of environmental risks, including environmental hotspots, flood control and prevent flood damages. These may include long-term management of old tailings deposits, the reopening of certain wetlands to periodic flooding, and additional protection measures for threatened settlements.

Public information about the state of the river basin by using a combination of satellite imagery and traditional monitoring measure to provide a picture of the river basin that can be accessed by the public on the Internet or through local or sectoral authorities and NGOs. Specific emphasis would be on access to information through local media such as newspapers and TV stations, or through specific publications accessible to the broader public.

Consultation processes involving national and local authorities, as well as NGOs and the business sector to determine needs and the scope of the programme, and to consult on the actions proposed by the programme. NGOs and local communities will receive support to participate actively in this process.

Capacity-building for local and regional authorities with regard to the management of development programmes, environmental management and good local governance, including public access to information and public participation.

Socio-economic analysis and identification of development scenarios for key social-economic-geographic dusters. First priority for analysis will be given to the ore extraction/metal processing communities and rural communities. Development scenarios will be developed and compared on the basis of their benefits for the economy and quality of life, as well as their environmental impact. The most promising economic activities (such as low input farming, tourism, wood processing, renewable energy) that could be actively promoted, will be identified. Particular national and regional policies providing the adequate framework (e.g. integrated permitting, codes for investment, enforcement, economic instruments) for sustainable development will be identified and recommended.

Identification and cost-effective planning of key infrastructure (transport, communication, municipal services) required to meet the objectives of the programme will be mapped out in order to be submitted to EU Pre-Accession Funds, GEF, international donors and IFIs.

Assessment and coordination of regional development plans and spatial plans are necessary to facilitate environmentally sustainable economic development, the minimisation of environmental risks and the preservation of natural and cultural values such as mountains, forests, wetlands and traditional landscapes.

With a clear vision and subsequent plans for future development, as well as the necessary activities and related investments, stakeholders in the TRB will be able to invest their own resources wisely and attract additional international funding and investment from public sources (EU, GEF, IFIs) as well as from the private sector.

The TRB SDP is foreseen to be one of the main mechanisms creating synergy between the five countries, the different government, business, academic and non-governmental sectors, local communities and regional authorities, which will result in sustainable development in the TRB in the near future.

II. Introduction

II.1. History of the project

In recent years, the Tisa/Tisza river basin has been on the forefront of international attention due to a sequence of major flood events and environmental disasters with the Baia Mare cyanide spill leading the headlines. The river and its catchment are shared by five countries: Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Ukraine and FR Yugoslavia.

Following the Baia Mare spill, the European Commission established the "Baia Mare Task Force" in order to assess the reasons for the disaster and to recommend possible future actions. Among others, the Task Force found that the response to the cyanide spill was a positive example of cooperation among the countries. It also concluded that a regional integrated programme for the sustainable development of the river basin was necessary to create jobs and future prosperity for those living in the river basin and to minimise the risk of future similar accidents. At the same time, the water and environmental authorities of the five countries strengthened their cooperation by signing a Memorandum of Understanding.

Several other initiatives have been taken that contribute to the objectives stated above, including:

- International Convention for the Protection of the Danube River and related activities;
- Floor Control Concept of the Tisza Valley (7 working groups for 5 countries on the watershed)
- Floor protection Forum to the Tisza/Tisa valley
- Environmental Protection Programme for the Tisza/Tisa River Basin
- Carpathian Euro Region;
- Carpathian Programme of the WWF;
- Integrated Management of Carpathian River Basins study prepared by UNEP and REC for the Ministry of Environment Slovakia;
- Rapid Risk Assessment by WHO Euro and REC, sponsored by Italy;
- Integrated Rehabilitation and Management of Tisza River Oxbows, GEF project proposed by Hungary;
- An ongoing study conducted by REC Country Office Hungary, financed by the British Embassy providing an overview of the facts and consequences of the cyanide pollution and the resulting floods, from a technical, social and economic viewpoint – an effective emergency planning and action framework and system are to be developed for civil societies and municipalities along the Tisza river to enable them to respond to possible future incidents more quickly and efficiently;

- Study on international legal aspects of the Baia Mare accident conducted by the REC with support of the UK;
- Inventory, Regulations and Environmental Impact of Toxic Mining Wastes in Pre-Accession Countries conducted by the EU Joint Research Centre (Ispra);
- Emergency grants to NGOs and local governments following the spill, managed by REC country offices in Hungary, Romania and Yugoslavia, and follow-up grants for local nature conservation and wetland protection projects – these activities were conducted by REC Country Office Hungary with the financial support of the governments of the Netherlands, the UK, Japan and the USA.

A number of donors and international organisations have expressed their interest in helping to solve the environmental and social problems along the Tisa/Tisza river. Three of the five countries in the river basin are in the process of accession to the European Union, which is presenting a major opportunity and driving force for changing the development patterns in the region. The border regions of neighbouring countries will also benefit from EU cross border cooperation (CBC) programmes in future. The Global Environment Facility has recently initiated the Operational Programme for Integrated Ecosystem Management Projects, providing a comprehensive framework to manage natural systems across sectors, and political or administrative boundaries in the context of sustainable development.

The initiation and conceptual development of the Tisa/Tisza River Basin Sustainable Development Programme was initiated by REC and UNDP/RBEC Regional Support Centre in Bratislava. The Initiation Phase **of the TRB SDP** was implemented by the REC and the Tisza-Szamos Public Benefit Company, and supported by the UK FCO (British Embassy, Budapest) as well as UNDP.

This initiation phase was also feeded by the UNDP Emergency Response Unit, Geneva, which provided resource to Hungary to promote flood defence facilities after heaviest flood in the Tisza/Tisza River at 2001. Additional resources from the Hungarian government made possibility for the development of the TRB SD based on two projects: Tisza River Basin Integrated Sustainable Development Programme-Initiation Phase and the preparatory Assistance to Hungary for an Integrated Disaster Preparedness and Sustainable Development Programme. These would also be good bases for the future „Agreement on Sustainable Development of the Tisa/Tisza River Basin" inisiated by the Councile of Europe, Strassbourg.

II.2. Goals and objectives of the Initiation Phase of the TRB SDP

The overarching goal of the Preparatory Project for the TRB SDP was to bring the countries of the Tisa/Tisza basin region (FR Yugoslavia, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Ukraine) together to formulate the concept for the development and implementation of the TRB SDP serving the river basin's sustainable development.

The Initiation Phase of the TRB SDP built on the conclusions of related initiatives, such as the Baia Mare Task Force, projects such as those financed by the UK FCO around Baia Mare, as well as the position and experience of the REC and Tisza-Szamos Public Benefit Company in the organisation and facilitation of international multi-stakeholder processes.

The following objectives and timelines were set for the Preparatory Project for the TRB SDP:

Establish methodology and Select National Consultants (August 2001 – November 2001)

The first activity of the project was to establish common project management to carry out necessary methodology. National Consultants were selected (NCs) according to terms of references who were able to manage the project in country level. Several international coordination meetings were organised by Tisza-Szamos Benefit Company for the NCs to determine their detailed work, how to collect information, to organise national workshops, and create network for the future TRB SDP.

Establish and maintain a project website (December 2001 – April 2002)

A website for the Tisza River SDP was created on the REC Internet server with the purpose of providing information during the lifetime of the project about its activities and other projects containing the following information: basis, founders, goals, scope, planned progress, participants, progress made, results and conclusions.

The website was managed in English with local language summary introduction panels. Local language input was made by National Consultants. Local language communication was thus possible.

Create national networks of stakeholders and link them to the project (networking) (December 2001 – February 2002)

The networking objective included the identification of the most important organizations/contact persons (concerned ministries, local governments, businesses, major NGOs, research institutions, and others) relevant for the identification of potential national investment needs and priorities (on the Tisa/Tisza catchment) for the TRB-SDP, and the organization of national workshops with identified representatives of potential stakeholders. An additional objective was to identify national participants for the closing international conference.

Create a map of existing information about TRB (mapping) (December 2001 – February 2002)

The expression “mapping” covers the identification of the nature, whereabouts and accessibility of information currently relevant for regional planning of the sustainable development of the entire Tisa/Tisza river basin. The end-product of the mapping was a publication list that included a bibliography, current contents and a catalogue. The mapping targeted as much as possible sub-regions of the catchment area with similar characteristics as far as geography and economy are concerned. Focal interest areas were regional planning, regional policy, landscape ecology and regional development. Adjacent interest areas were risk management, disaster prevention and management, environmental protection, nature conservation and flood control.

Organize national workshops (January – March 2002)

The aim of the national workshops were to:

- identify regional development priorities and development bottlenecks;
- rank those from the point of view of sustainable development, and come to a compromise understanding with stakeholders or, as a minimum, to a mutual understanding of interests;
- contribute to a proposal for establishing a network of stakeholders (organisations, authorities and institutions) for the TRB SDP; and
- contribute to the establishment of a country-level management of the TRB SDP.

Organize Closing International Conference (April 2002)

The aim of the closing international conference was to:

- bring together the most important networking partners from all the countries involved in the project, including the founders and management;

- serve as a forum for the finalisation and approval of the draft conclusions of the project;
- open the event for international experts, including those nominated by founders, to comment on the results of and plans for the future of the programme; and
- provide a basis for further programme development and fundraising.

II.3. Description of the natural environment of the project area

The Tisa/Tisza river, together with its tributaries, drains the largest catchment area in the Carpathian Mountains before flowing through the Eastern Pannonian Plain and joining the Danube. The Tisa/Tisza river basin is the largest among the 15 sub-river basins of the river Danube, which originates in the Black Forest in Germany and reaches the Black Sea on the border of Romania and Moldova.

The river and its catchment area are shared by five countries: FR Yugoslavia, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, and Ukraine. Some general information about the TRB is provided in table 1 below.

Table 1: Some characteristics of natural conditions in TRB countries

Aspects	FRY	HU	RO	SK	UA
TRB area in the country (square km)	10,376	46,217	72,626	15,248	12,733
Percentage of TRB area of the whole country area (%)	10,1	49,7	30,5	31,1	2,1
Land form	Typical lowland river, same for its tributaries	Typical lowland river, same for its tributaries	Mountainous and lowland areas	Mountainous and lowland areas	Mainly mountainous areas and lowlands
Climate	Continental with low precipitation	Continental with low precipitation	Continental with high precipitation in the mountains	Continental with high precipitation in the mountains	Continental with high precipitation in the mountains
Other characteristics	Channel between Danube and Tisa 269 km embankments for flood protection	Unique wetlands and conservation areas Frequent floods	Great biological diversity and high rate of natural ecosystems Frequent floods	Frequent floods	50% forest cover frequent floods

Further details about the natural conditions (e.g. tributaries, human impact on forests and waters, and more) can be found in the different country reports.

Generally, the TRB is characterised by well-preserved traditional rural landscapes, vast complexes of natural forests and viable populations of species that are no longer found in Western Europe.

II.4. Socio-economic conditions of the watershed

The countries and regions in the Tisa/Tisza river basin share a common recent history of communist controlled systems, as well as a process of transition to democracy and market economies during the last decade. This history has left the river basin with a mixed legacy of pollution hotspots, declining heavy industries, a lack of economic development, high levels of unemployment, emerging patterns of regular flooding and a fertile ground for social and ethnic tensions.

Some characteristics of the socio-economic conditions of the TRB countries are provided in table 2 below.

Table 2: Some socio-economic conditions in the TRB countries

Conditions	FRY	HU	RO	SK	UA
Number of inhabitants in the TRB	810,000	4,525,000	6,095,000	1,670,000	1,300,000
Main economic sectors operating in TRB	Large pig and cattle farming Intensive agriculture Fish ponds	Intensive agriculture Manufacturing Tourism	Energy sector Industry Agriculture Science and technology research Tourism Transportation	Agriculture Forestry Industry	Timber processing Food production Some mining Water management incl. flood protection

Further details about individual socio-economic conditions can be found in the different country reports.

II.5. Methodology of the work

Management

Activities in Initiation Phase of the TRB SDP were managed by Éva Csobod, Project Manager, REC Country Office Hungary, in close cooperation with Péter Varga, Project Manager, Kálmán Morvay, Project Co-ordinator of Tisza-Szamos Public Benefit Company, Budapest. The REC Project Manager was supported by János Zlinszky, Senior Advisor to the Executive Director of the REC, and László Karas, external senior consultant compiling the Final Report.

Country input into the project was assured through the utilization of national consultants: Dr. Radoje Lausevic (FR Yugoslavia), Dr. Ferenc Ligetvári (Hungary), Anca Tofan and Ion Gherhes (Romania), Dr. Jaroslav Tesliar (Slovakia), Ivan Kruhlov (Ukraine), as well as the support of the REC country offices in FR Yugoslavia, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia.

Contributions by national consultants

National consultants were required to make contributions to the Preparatory Project for the TRB SDP in the following areas within the timeframe indicated in brackets:

Provisional identification of the potential national key interests in the TRB SDP (December 2001 – January 17, 2002)

- Analysis of the main public information sources available nationally on the TRB (Internet, recent newspaper coverage, etc.)
- Personal consultations with experts

Networking (December 2001-February 28, 2002)

Identification of the most important organisations/contact persons relevant for the identification of potential national investment needs and priorities (on the Tisza catchment) for the TRB SDP (ministries, local governments, businesses, major NGOs, research institutions, etc.) (reported by January 17).

Presentation of the concept of the TRB SDP, and the role of the current project via telecommunication media and in personal meetings with contact persons *(completed by February 28.*

Organisation of an initial national workshop with the representatives of potential stakeholders *(reported by January 31).*

Identification of National Focal Point representative(s) (reported by February 28).

Identification of possible partners (government, business, NGO, academics, representatives, experts) for the final identification of national investment needs and priorities in the TRB SDP *(completed by February 28).*

Identification of national participants for the closing international conference (*by February 28)* and assistance in the organisation of the conference.

Mapping (December 2001-March 2002)

Identification of the sectors relevant to the development of the TRB SDP in the five countries *(reported by January 17).*

Identification of potential holders of information (institutions, individuals) useful for the national part of the TRB SDP – creation of the network database (institutions, individuals, contact data) (weekly until February 14).

Development of the structure/contents for the national meta-database on the TRB SDP in co-operation with the other national consultants and project management (by January 24).

Collection of the opinions of experts about the most crucial data sources/events (e.g. legislation, current plans) expressed during personal meetings or in correspondence (until March 13).

Collection of the meta-data relevant to the development of the TRB SDB using the established network and the meta-database contents (draft report by March 20).

Final identification of the national key needs/priorities/conflicts of interests in the TRB SDP (during the final – 2nd – national workshop before the closing international workshop) (completed by March 11).

Contributions to the project's website (weekly between January 10 – April 11, 2002)

Goals, scope, planned progress of the national part of the SDP (January 17)

Submission of general information on geographic location, natural resources, economy, culture and environmental/social problems in the area (February 14)

Findings, documents and recommendations of the closing conference in different national languages (*April 8, 2002*)

Closing International Conference

On 25 April 2002, UNDP and REC convened an international conference in Szentendre, Hungary. The conference was financially supported by UNDP and organised by REC.

The reports from the five countries that participated in the Initiation Phase of the TRB SDP were presented at the International Conference.

Future needs were also identifies and agreed upon within the framework of the preparation of the TRB SDP during the conference.

II.6. Findings

Networking

The main goals of the networking component of the initiation phase of the TRB SDP were:

- the identification of the most important organisations/contact persons relevant in the identification of potential national investment needs and priorities in the TRB for the TRB SDP; and
- the identification of National Focal Points and potential organisations that could participate in the implementation of the TRB SDP.

The main results of the networking for sustainable development in the TRB countries, as a result of the Initiation Phase of the TRB SDP, are provided in table 3 below.

Three headings were chosen to summarize the information provided in the country reports:

- Stakeholders
- National focal points
- Proposed organisation to implement the TRB SDP.

Table 3: Main results of networking for sustainable development in the TRB countries

Institutions	FRY	HU	RO	SK	UA
Stakeholders: central government and government institutes	Mo Health and Env. Protection Mo Natural Resources and Environmental Protection (to be established soon) (10)	Mo Transport and Water Mgt. Mo Environment Mo Agriculture and Rural Development Mo Economics Env. Directorates (5) National Parks (5)	Mo Development and Prognosis National Council for Regional Development Mo Public Administration Mo Waters and Environment Protection Mo EU Integration Mo Public Works, Transport and Housing	Directorate Water Protection in the Mo Environment Mo Agriculture Mo Construction and Regional Development	State Administration Carpathian Biosphere Reserve

			Mo Health and Family Env. Protection Inspectorates State Inspectorate for Constructions Public Health Directorates		
Stakeholders: Regional and local governments	Local (20)	Regional (8) Municipalities (250)	Regional development agencies (3) County councils (14)	To be identified	Council of the region
Stakeholders: businesses	23	To be identified	To be identified	To be identified	To be identified
Stakeholders NGOs	35	Major NGOs (2) Several others	Major NGOs (11)	Major NGOs (2)	Major NGOs (2)
Stakeholders: others	Academic (3) Public enterprise (2)	Academic (3) Delegations of foreign donor countries Parliamentary Committees Regional and County Development Agencies 2. Further identification is needed in relation to: Educational Institutions Health service institutions Businesses Consultants and experts	Romanian National Waters Company	Slovak Water Management Enterprise Public Bodrog and Hornad River Enterprise Slovak Hydrometeorological Institute	Uzhgorod University
National Focal Points	Serbia Waters public enterprise	Mo Interior Affairs Catastrophe Prevention	3. Two identified: Mo Water and Environmental Protection Municipality od Baie-Mare	*Potential organizations:* Mo Environment Mo Construction	State administration of Environment and Natural Resources Central government: Mo

					Environment and Natural Resources
Proposal for organization implementing the TRB SDP	Consortium of: Serbia waters Hydrometeorological Institute Institute of Nature Protection Serbia Network of local municipalities	To be identified	Consortium of: Regional Development Agencies County Councils NGOs National Focal Point REC	Consortium of: Public Bodrog and Hornad River Enterprise Slovak Inst. Hydromet. Network of local municipalities NGOs	Consortium of: State Administration for Env. And Nat. Res. Industrial Administration for Melioration and Water Economy in the region Administration for Forestry in the region Council of the region Mo Env. And Nat. Res. NGOs universities

The networking process managed to reach key stakeholders in the TRB. The different actors and stakeholders that were identified, are due to the variety of administrative structures in use in these countries.

Two segments are still inadequately represented in the overall picture: businesses in the region and local municipalities. No direct contact was made with local populations living in the TRB during the stakeholder identification process and further workshops. This put an extra responsibility on the organisations representing specific interests of local people, and on participants in the future TRB SDP not to exclude the interests of local people from the scope of the TRB SDP. One possible way to address this gap in information about the needs of local people was utilised by the ECHO survey in Hungary. Information was gathered through a survey among 77 managers of micro-regions in the Hungarian part of the TRB. Managers who live in the communities and are close to local people affected by Tisa/Tisza and related developments shared their in-depth knowledge about possibilities for and constraints to sustainable development in their micro-regions.

It is important that NGO support for the TRB SDP was identified in all five countries. The details relating to the role and function of the different stakeholders, especially about ministries, can be found in the country reports.

National focal points were identified in some of the countries, but further negotiations and discussions will be needed in others.

Regarding the proposed organisations to implement the TRB SDP, it is important to note that consortia were mainly foreseen as effective implementation actors. This approach needs to be taken into consideration when establishing management structures and bodies for the implementation phase of the TRB SDP.

Mapping

The expression “mapping” covers the identification of the nature, whereabouts and accessibility of information that is relevant to regional planning for the sustainable development of the entire Tisa/Tisza river basin. The end-product of mapping is a meta-database that includes a bibliography, current content and catalogues of information.

The main results of the mapping for sustainable development in the TRB countries, as a result of the Initiation Phase of the TRB SDP, are summarised in Table 4 below.

Three areas were chosen to describe the information provided in the country reports:

- Potential information holders in different sectors
- Key components of databases
- Ongoing programmes and projects relevant to the TRB SDP.

Table 4: Main results of the mapping for sustainable development in the TRB countries

Areas	FRY	HU	RO	SK	UA
Potential information holders in different sectors	Sectors involved: Industry Agriculture Tourism Forestry Number of organizations: Government (10) Local govt.(20) Academic inst. (3) Businesses (23) NGOs (39)	Ministries Country Development Agencies Regional Development Agencies Academic Institutions National Parks NGOs	Main sources are Regional Development Agencies The regional development plans were developed in a participatory process with stakeholders in the regions of the TRB. Each plan focuses on: Development of productive sectors and related services Infrastructure development Human resources, labour force and social services Agriculture and development	Sectors involved: Water management Agriculture Forestry Industry Third sector (e.g. NGOs) 4. Number of organizations: Government (6) NGOs (7)	Sectors involved and number of organizations: Water management (8) Forestry (7) Nature conservation (7) Recreation (5)

			of rural areas Protection and improvement of environmental quality Promoting and supporting R&D, innovation and setting up information society		
Key components of databases	Legal framework (39) Public information (68) List of institutions (91)	Studies (26) Articles (23) Rules (10) Documents (193) NIMFEA database for 2000-2002 ECHO research survey and database about micro-regions concerned in SD of the TRB	Legal harmonisation with EU (13) Existing legal framework List of institutes, ministries, country councils, environmental protection agencies, NGOs (51)	Legal framework (68)	Ukrainian part of the TRB SDP meta-database consists of: Databases Legislation (19) Project descriptions (21) Reports Workshop minutes Publications (20) Websites
Ongoing programmes and projects relevant to the TRB SDP	74 projects	8 government programmes Many other local and NGO projects in NIMFEA CD-ROM database searchable also for settlements and small regions	7 large programmes large number of other projects	Needs to be identified	21 projects/ programmes planned, ongoing or completed

There are vast volumes of information available on the TRB and related activities that are relevant to sustainable development. Potential information holders in different sectors have been identified in all the countries. Many of them developed their own information portal and serve interested clients through the Internet.

Information is structured into components in various ways in the different countries. However, the legislative frameworks are available in all the countries in the TRB.

References to ongoing programmes and projects relevant to the TRB SDP are available in almost all the countries. Such information is crucial for the development of

the TRB SDP in future programming phases, since it shows the interrelatedness of different activities carried out by different programmes and projects, and can therefore assist in avoiding duplications in development work.

Sub regional information is available only for Hungary and Romania. This is a key task for the future development of the TRB SDP meta-database to assure that relevant information is made available for all sub regions in the TRB. This has an impact on the involvement of local stakeholders and on the ultimate success of any programme or project in the TRB.

At present Hungary (partly) and Ukraine have collected and structured information to user-friendly searchable meta-databases, where information can be accessed based on given criteria. This database will provide possible starting of the five counties data base in the future TRB SDP.

The proposed information œntre for the TRB may provide the technical assistance and consulting services needed for the finalisation of the meta-database of the TRB.

The meta-database (see in Annexes) will serve programming activities in the TRB SDP framework, assist in the raising of public awareness about the TRB SDP, and will provide the information base for participatory decision-making and the monitoring of ongoing activities The database will be accessible through Internet.

Priority needs

The different needs for sustainable development in the TRB countries, according to the findings of the Initiation Phase of the TRB SDP, are provided in table 5 below.

Three subjects were chosen to describe the information gained from country reports:

- Main characteristics of recognised needs
- Priority areas
- Concrete proposals for the future.

This structure allows the reader to interpret the information at a typology level, main areas level and, more concretely, on the level of proposals/potential project ideas.

Table 5: Recognised needs for sustainable development in TRB countries

aspects	FRY	HU	RO	SK	UA
Main characteristics of recognised needs	Environmental governance focused	Mix of targets focused	Geographic areas selected based on regional planning and nature conservation criteria	Environmental governance focused	Sectoral breakdown focused
Priority areas	enforcement of relevant	5. Devel opment	economically sustainable	Building human	Water management

	relevant legislation harmonisation of legislation with EU decision-making process public involvement quality of existing strategies	opment targets: Development of flood protection Transformation of polluting companies Infrastructure development Extension and modernisation of monitoring systems Nature conservation tasks Enlargement of economic ties in the TRB	sustainable development of the regional development poles sustainable development of growing poles sustainable needs in areas of economic development potential natural capital conservation and sustainable tourism management of natural areas tourism	human capacities and sharing knowledge Partnerships for better governance Legislation Implementation of strategies and plans Institutional development River basin management	management Forestry Nature conservation Recreational sector Infrastructure for SD
Concrete proposals for the future	6. Main groups of initiatives: Water quality and supply Waste water management Solid waste management Harmonisation of regulations Environmental education Capacity-building for local stakeholders Control of existing agriculture Organic food production Flood protection Hydro-technical	Protection of human lives and social goods Increasing the carrying capacity in the river basin for the human population: Renewal of the Great Plain programme Increased use of natural resources Development of infrastructure (transportation and water management) Nature and environmental protection activities Transformatio	A total of 53 projects identified: 40% water mgt. 23% waste mgt. 14% water supply 11% air pollution 8% biodiversity 4% soil quality related	*In the field of protecting water resources:* increasing of underground infiltration of surface runoff lowering flood discharges in rivers and creeks improving minimal discharges supporting bio-diversity and ecological stability increasing the soil's natural production potential strengthening the small hydrological cycle	Water management: Implementation of integrated structural measures Improvement of water-regulating function of the forest cover Implementation of special regime for agriculture in the flood plains and mountain meadows Forestry: Environment-tally safe logging Improvement of forest structure

	works for navigation Improvement of cross border cooperation	Transformation of polluting companies Renewal of monitoring system Protection of biodiversity Increasing the soft-tourism and medical-tourism Development of cooperative programmes with neighboring countries General spatial planning concepts Sectoral cooperation			Nature conservation: Increase natural conservation areas Re-naturalisation of disturbed ecosystems Re-naturalisation of extinct flora and fauna Recreational sector: Development of infrastructure for alternative tourism Infrastructure for SD: Environmental legislation (harmonisation with EU and enforcement) Information support environmental education for the whole population creation of an Information centre for TRB SD

There are four different types of approaches to the main characteristics of the recognised needs in the TRB. FR Yugoslavia and Slovakia took an approach focused on environmental governance, putting the emphasis on the institution and processes to be developed. Hungary's approach may be called a mixture of targets, with the main focus on human population needs (safety from floods and economic development linked to carrying capacity of the river basin), and on needs related to nature and environmental protection, as well as cooperation with neighbouring countries. Romania selected geographic areas based on regional planning criteria, for example, regional development poles with their own potential for development, growing poles with higher than average development potential, areas with development potential with modest growth rates, critical areas with severe economic and social problems, other focus

areas targeting by PHARE funds and nature conservation areas. Ukraine took a sectoral approach in identifying its needs for sustainable development.

The priority areas show some differences, but also some similarities. There is a strong influence of the approach taken at the previous upper level on the priority areas for sustainable development needs. However, some similarities between countries need to be mentioned:

- Legislation: FR Yugoslavia, Slovakia and Ukraine
- Public involvement: FR Yugoslavia, Slovakia and Ukraine
- Capacity-building: FR Yugoslavia, Slovakia and Ukraine
- Nature and environmental protection: Hungary, Romania, Ukraine
- Water management: all five countries.

At the level of concrete proposals, there are a huge variety of ideas and potential project initiatives. There are two possible factors in this: (a) the different approaches towards structuring sustainable development needs in the different countries have a major impact; and (b) the details of concrete proposals differed in the different countries due to the lack of available quality information and/or due to the gathering process itself.

Details about the concrete proposals are presented in the country reports chapter of this report.

Further steps in the TRB SDP should take all concrete proposals from the five countries listed here into consideration, and analyse, appraise and prioritise them within the same framework, most probably within the Programme Planning Matrices and the related Logical Frameworks for all the projects. This method has been used in GEF and EU funds management for years, so it is of great importance to use these methods not only in preparing proposals and gaining additional funding for projects within the TRB SDP, but also for setting up an effective management system for the implementation and monitoring of future projects in the TRB SDP.

The present list can be seen as reflecting priority proposals, but in the next phase of the TRB SDP the system and its criteria to prioritise them should be developed, first at country level, and then at the TRB level.

Under the mapping part above, an overview is provided of ongoing programmes and projects in countries relevant or related to the TRB SDP. When projects are appraised in the programme planning phase, it will be necessary first to create links, references and criteria for prioritisation related to ongoing programmes and projects so that a duplication of efforts can be avoided. Another important aspect of ongoing programmes and projects is that their portfolios change continuously. The TRB SDP management therefore needs to analyse its programme and project portfolio regularly to ensure that the TRB SDP is on target, and to avoid using resources for duplicate efforts.

The concrete proposals for the five TRB countries are extensive, and show a diverse set of elements that are all necessary for sustainable development: managing natural, social and economic resources for the development of quality of life for the current generation, while securing the chance for the next generation to do the same.

Conclusions of the international conference

On April 25, 2002, the International Conference on the TRB SDP was held on the premises of the REC in Szentendre, Hungary. Participants overviewed and discussed the country reports from FR Yugoslavia, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Ukraine. Based on the information provided by experts, participants summarised the development needs, bottlenecks and related physical conditions needed for the future TRB SDP as follows:

No.	Needs and bottlenecks	Physical conditions needed
1.	Harmonization of legislation in the TRB	Adopt legislation from EU
2.	Have information experts capable to analyze information at the info center	Trained people for data management, and data mining
3.	Exchange good practices trough the information systems	Using different tools for information dissemination (internet, media, posters, leaflets)
4.	Media campaign to get people understood the issues, to inform them	Same as 3
5.	Create space at local, national, regional levels for public policy dialogues	Organizing open public meetings (round tables)
6.	Setup criteria for setting priorities	Analyses (SWOT) and trained people
7.	Encourage businesses involvement, get NGOs to contact and lobby them	Preparing attractive brochure of projects for business people
8.	Create links at psychological level between social-economic-environmental issues of SD	Increasing environmental public awareness through sophisticated education and media campaign
9.	Create and develop cross-sectorial cooperation	Inter-sectorial coordination committees at all levels
10.	Need for special implementation agency, not a super agency, but far from government	Establish international planning and implementation agency
11.	Creation of development mechanisms: encouraging bottom-up mechanisms, local level development	Establish a necessary forum
12.	Create international institute with regional sections with the involvement powerful environmental oriented organizations	See 10.
13.	Lack of cooperation between regional offices	Regular meetings in certain time frame

14.	Establish information center managing info needs of the TRB	See 10.
15.	Go beyond information to knowledge, summarize information about SD	Launch proper training and education programs
16.	Filling gaps in traditions of traditional economic practices	See 15. , plus show working examples and experiences
17.	Information flow, setup a meta-database	PC equipment, staff , catalogue of PC library
18.	Reorganization of educational system in accordance with SD	New programs and books
19.	Building up administrative capacities at local level	Building, PCs, office machines, staff, communication lines
20.	Public awareness, inhabitants in the TRB must know about environmental values, etc.	Publication, mass media
21.	Encourage international cooperation, raise interest for international cooperation, instead of embankment building pay for reforestation or give Mother Nature the space and time to do so	-
22.	Show good paradigm for everyone	See 17, 18, 20
23.	Preparation of international scientific conference about ways of SD in the TRB	Done
24.	Common structure, models, approaches used for common projects, setting up indicators	See 17, 18, 20
25.	Make a contract at a county/province level with a newspaper for publication materials for SD	See 20.
26.	Secure human lives and properties in a sustainable way	Vasarhelyi Plan

Recommendations for grouping needs and related physical conditions:

I. Information management

II. Institutional arrangement

III. Public awareness

IV. Cooperation

V. Participatory approach

The items in the table above were grouped into the following categories reflecting the main elements and aspects of the TRB SDP:

- Information management
- Institutional arrangement
- Public awareness
- Cooperation
- Participatory approach
- Programming and projects
- Protection of human lives and properties

Next steps: main directions for the continuation of the TRB SDP as defined at the Conference

The expert networks established by conducting the workshops and the mapping work should be kept alive and active. The databases should be kept updated and extended. And, most importantly, the needs identified should be answered one after the other.

The results of this phase just concluded allowed the participants to identify problems that are typical for the whole catchment and relevant to sustainable development. They all support the key demand of "better management for our interdependencies" (UNDP).

Key activities already started with the present project are

- informing the public about the river basin,
- opening a multi-stakeholder, multi-level consultation process based on the information.

Key activities next should be

- capacity building for local and regional authorities,
- assessment and co-ordination of existing regional development plans,
- completion of planning of investments for sustainable development.

The international co-operation between the organisations facilitating the process of TRB SD can be widened, to ensure the complementarities and cohesion of existing expertise and work. The offer from WWF International Danube Carpathian Programme to this end was therefore warmly welcomed by the Conference.

Finally, a key feature of any follow-up has to be the display of direct links and feed-back to needs at the local level. This is essential to maintain the local-level credibility of the international facilitators of the TRB SD process. Therefore it is recommended that future projects include an element of local-level financial assistance to small-scale

development projects, so that the progress does not entirely remain in the governance domain but also includes quality of life aspects.

Participant List of the international conference

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