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TL and DTL RBMP Extension Missions to the Project Countries

Mission Report

Baku, Azerbaijan

Dates: 16-17 September 2015

- 1) Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Azerbaijan
- 2) Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources (MENR) of Azerbaijan
- 3) Department of Environmental Monitoring, MENR
- 4) RBMP Contractor – Period Ltd
- 5) Pilot project contractor – International Hydrological Programme / Baku State University

Participants:

EPIRB Project Team

Mr Tim Turner, KE1 - Team Leader

Mr Zurab Jincharadze, KE2 - Deputy Team Leader/River Basin Management Expert

Mr Rafig Veryev, Country Water Management Expert for Azerbaijan

EU Delegation to Azerbaijan

Ms Ulviyaa Abdullayeva, Programme Manager

Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan

Mr Mutalim Abdulhasanov, Head of Environmental Policy Division, Department of Ecology and Environmental Protection Policy

Department of Environmental Monitoring, MEMR

Ms. Matanat Avazova, Deputy Head of Env. Monitoring Department

Mr. Asyf Verdyev, Deputy Head of Hydrometeorology Department

Sadig Ltd

Mr Vafadar Ismailov, GIS and RBMP expert, Sadig Consulting LLC

Period Ltd

Mr Amin Mammadov, Hydrologist , Period Consulting LLC,

Mr Ramil Ibrahimov, Head of Period Consulting

Hydromet Consulting LLC

Mr Farda Imanov, Chairman



**Environmental Protection of
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Contract No. 2011/279-666



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Meetings/field visits:	Findings/results:
EU Delegation to Azerbaijan	<p>The objective of the meeting with a new Programme Manager at EUD Azerbaijan was, first of all, to introduce the project and update on progress made in the region and Azerbaijan. Particular attention was paid to the adoption and implementation of the draft RBMP, as well as water strategy in the country in general and urgent needs for more efficient coordination among the major institutions: Ministry of Ecology, State Water Agency (under the Ministry of Emergency), State Amelioration Company, etc. to synchronize specific parts of the policy document developed in parallel by the EUWI National Policy Dialogue and the Asian development Bank (ADB). It was agreed that EPIRB will use the opportunity to coordinate works that are necessary to update the Strategy document and will conduct next round of discussions among key stakeholders through the Project National Coordination Committee (NCC) mechanism, once the extension phase is granted.</p>
Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources	<p>The main objective of the meeting was considering different options of the RBMP adoption and implementation in Azerbaijan, as similar to some other countries, there is no clear procedure under the Azeri legislation for the adoption of basin management plan. The water code of Azerbaijan does not exclude the basin approach for management water resources in general; however there are no technical procedures and other implementation mechanisms elaborated so far. The Ministry's involvement in this process, therefore, will be limited to finalizing the draft document and presenting it to a higher level. However, there is no guarantee that in existing circumstances the Plan will be adopted by the government. Further, better coordination with other on-going and planned water-related projects, as well as participation at upcoming trainings (ESCS, Delineation & GIS, Lab QA/QC) and the Regional Steering Committee meeting in Chisinau, were discussed during the meeting.</p>
Department of Environmental Monitoring, MENR	<p>The team had a technical meeting with the representatives of Environmental Monitoring and Hydrometeorology Departments of MENR that play an important role in observation and management of water resources in Azerbaijan. Attention was paid to the technical performance of these agencies and their capacity to comply with the EU WFD standards. It was mentioned that the EPIRB senior chemical monitoring expert will visit Azerbaijan in terms to conduct a QA/QC check-up and short training for the laboratory staff.</p> <p>In addition, the participation of relevant technical units (information-analytical and water cadaster units of the Environmental Monitoring and Hydrometeorology Departments) in a 'post-project' data collection, processing and maintenance of a national level water quality/quantity database was discussed during the meeting. It was mentioned that EPIRB is planning to develop EU WISE/SEIS compatible web-based GIS-Database for the project pilot basins, that the countries should be able to maintain themselves after the project will end. For this reason, the project will conduct short technical training and invite relevant national institutions, including ones mentioned from Azerbaijan.</p>



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Meetings/field visits:	Findings/results:
RBMP Contractor – Period Ltd	<p>During this meeting status of preparation and adoption of proposals on harmonization of Azeri water legislation to EU WFD and adoption of EU UWWTD has been discussed.</p> <p>Also during this meeting the slow implementation status of a pilot project on IWRM in Zayamchay and Goshgarchay watersheds, was discussed. It was agreed that more focus should be on the water balance and setting of ecological flows.</p>
RBMP Contractor – Sadig Ltd	<p>During this meeting the status of addressing comments to the draft RBMP and adjusting the document in accordance of the last SW and GW surveys and implemented pilot projects were discussed. It was agreed that these changes should take place by mid-October to allow conducting another Public Consultation meeting, tentatively in November 2015. The Final Draft RBMP shall be ready and send to MoE for their comments by the end of December. After internal review in the Ministry of Ecology and further adjustment, the document will be distributed to the NCC members and other stakeholders by the end of January. It is expected that the finalized RBMP will be officially submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers in February 2015.</p>
Pilot Project Contractor – Hydromet Consulting LLC	<p>During this meeting, implementation status of a pilot project on water resources use at Zeymchay watershed, as well as possibility of a new pilot project on flood protection were discussed. The new pilot project should start around November 2015 and last for eight months, assessing most flood-prone areas of the EPIRB pilot basin in Azerbaijan of the central Kura, applying flood risk management methodology and focusing on integration of the EU Floods Directive elements and into the Programme of Measures (PoMs) identified under the Central Kura draft RBMP</p>

Tbilisi, Georgia

Dates: 21-22 September 2015

- 1) National Environmental Agency;
- 2) RBMP Contractor – REC Caucasus
- 3) Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection – MENRP
- 4) Environmental Information and Education Centre of MENRP
- 5) UNDP Georgia

Participants:

EPIRB Project Team

Mr Tim Turner, KE1 - Team Leader

Mr Zurab Jincharadze, KE2 - Deputy Team Leader/River Basin Management Expert

National Environmental Agency - NEA

Ms Tamar Bagratia, Head of the Agency

Ms Marina Arabidze, Head of Environmental Pollution Monitoring Department

Mr Ramaz Chitanava, Head of Department of Hydrometeorology

Mr Irakli Megreldze, Deputy Head of Hydrometeorology Department



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REC Caucasus

Ms Sophiko Akhobadze, Executive Director

Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection

Mr Teimuraz Murghulia, First Deputy Minister

Ms Marina Makarova, Acting Head of Water Resources Management Service

Environmental Information and Education Centre

Ms Ia Papiashvili, Director

UNDP Georgia

Ms Nino Antadze, Energy and Environment Team Leader

Meetings/field visits:	Findings/results:
National Environmental Agency	<p>The progress made by the EPIRB team in Georgia, particularly in the field of monitoring of chemical and ecological status of water objects, as well as establishing six automated hydrological monitoring stations in the pilot basin were discussed at the meeting. The project assistance was highly appreciated by the NEA management in every field of monitoring activities, including groundwater, physico-chemical, biological and hydromorphological sampling methodologies, on-site trainings, capacity building, etc. Further laboratory Quality Assurance/Quality Control training maybe needed, as this is one of the weak points the NEA is facing. The NEA’s role in implementation of EU-Georgia’s Association Agreement, particularly for establishing WFD compliant monitoring programmes and applying reliable monitoring data for development of RBMPs was particularly highlighted. It was mentioned that the Agency will need more in depth training and increasing number of qualified personnel, for this reason.</p> <p>In addition, the NEA management was briefed about the project extension and additional pilot activities relevant to Georgia and the NEA including MSFD/WFD methodology training and proposed coastal/transitional monitoring practices.</p>
RBMP Contractor – REC Caucasus	<p>During this meeting the project team and the RBMP contractor discussed necessary steps to be taken for formal adoption of the draft RBMP, as well as possible alternative ways for the adoption/implementation of the plan through the government of Ajara AR. Further, the possibility of REC’s involvement for the extension activities was discussed as well. It is understood that the national water code will be adopted early next year but some secondary legislation is still to be developed.</p>



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Meetings/field visits:	Findings/results:
Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection	<p>Meeting with the First Deputy Minister and Acting Head of Water Resources Management Service had a clear objective to report on the progress and brainstorm on possible ways for the draft RBMP adoption. Although Georgia does not have specific rules, or sub-normative acts dealing with the RBMP adoption, by signing EU-Georgia Association Agreement the country is obliged to develop and implement RBMPs for all major river basins. Therefore the new Water Law, that passed all necessary public hearings and will be adopted by the Parliament by the end of this year, have to establish rules for RBMP adoption and implementation. It was advised that meanwhile the project team and MoE should seek for an alternative solution, including submitting the finalized RBMP to the Government of Autonomous Republic of Adjara through the Directorate of Environment and Natural Resources, who is considered as one of the main end-user and interested party (possibly foundation for establishing the Designated Basin Authority) for implementation of the Plan.</p> <p>Further, Mr Murghulia requested from the project to send formal Action Plan for the rest of the year and the extension period in terms to better coordinate the activities of other on-going and upcoming projects in Georgia. He also mentioned about the importance of more thorough training courses on WFD principles and RBMP implementation, especially for Environmental Directorate of Ajara AR, who most probably will be responsible for implementation of the Plan.</p>
Environmental Information and Education Centre, MENRP	<p>Environmental Information and Education Center is a Legal Entity of Public Law (LEPL) under the Ministry of Environment, who is thought to be responsible for hosting, processing, maintenance and dissemination of environmental data and information. For the moment the Center is undergoing a structural and technical reorganization, including moving to a new office (should be fully operational by Nov-Dec 2015). It is difficult to judge on technical capacity of the center, as their primary activities for the moment are limited to environmental education and public awareness campaigns. The Ministry considers the Center as a key project partner for hosting and updating water information data. Therefore further investigation on their capacity is necessary.</p>
UNDP Georgia	<p>UNDP is very active in the region for on-going and planned environmental and water-related projects, with which EPIRB may seek some synergy and cooperation. Particularly interesting among them are projects related to the Flood Early Warning Management in the Rioni Basin; Climate Change Strategy for Ajara Region (as part of the 3rd UNFCCC Communication); EMBLAS and up-coming UNDP-GEF Kura Project that will focus on implementation of Strategic Action Programme (SAP) in water sector, formalize bilateral water agreement between Azerbaijan and Georgia, etc. Meeting with Ms Antadze was useful also in terms of coordinating further activities and avoiding overlapping among the EU and UN funded projects in the region.</p>

Yerevan, Armenia

Dates: 24-25 September 2015



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- 1) Armenian State Hydrometeorological and Monitoring Service (ASH), Ministry of Territorial Administration and Emergency Situations
- 2) Hydrogeological Monitoring Center (HMC), Ministry of Nature Protection
- 3) Water Resources Management Agency (WRMA), Ministry of Nature Protection
- 4) NHRS LLC, RBMP sub-contractor
- 5) Delegation of the European Union to Armenia
- 6) State Committee of Water Systems (SCWS), Ministry of Agriculture

Participants:

EPIRB Project Team

Mr Tim Turner, KE1 - Team Leader

Mr Zurab Jincharadze, KE2 - Deputy Team Leader/River Basin Management Expert

Mr Vahagn Tonoyan, Country Water Management Expert (CWME) for Armenia

ArmState Hydromet

Mr Levon Vardanyan, Director

Hydrogeological Monitoring Center

Mr Karlen Hakobyan, Director

Water Resources Management Agency

Mr Davit Grigoryan, Head of Water Use Permitting Division, Chairman of the EPIRB Project National Coordination Committee for Armenia

NHRS LLC

Mr Aram Gevorgyan, Team Leader

Mr Hamlet Melkonyan, Water and Climate Change Expert

Mr Vilik Sargsyan, Water Supply and Demand Assessment Expert

Mr Edgar Misakyan, Ecological Flow Expert

EUD Armenia

Mr John Barker, International Aid/Cooperation Officer

State Committee of Water Systems

Mr Volodya Narimanyan, Deputy Chairman

Meetings/field visits:	Findings/results:
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Meetings/field visits:	Findings/results:
ArmState Hydromet - ASH	<p>The progress up to the date, including the status of development of draft river basin management plan (RBMP) for Akhuryan River Basin District (RBD), implementation of pilot projects, as well as the planned activities during the extension period until October 2016 were presented at the meeting. For the ASH Director, of particular interest were the planned joint field surveys in Akhuryan RBD in 2016, as well as the possibility of additional pilot projects in Armenia. Mr Vardanyan reiterated the interest of the ASH to rehabilitate and equip the hydrological post Akhuryan-Akhurik, which is a transboundary post just upstream of Akhuryan Reservoir (jointly managed by Armenia and Turkey), with modern automated equipment. It was agreed that EPIRB Project CWME for Armenia will work with Hydromet specialists on development of detailed draft Terms of Reference for rehabilitation of Akhuryan-Akhurik transboundary hydrological monitoring post, including description of the period of operation of the post, existing data, current situation, and the specific rehabilitation needs and approximate cost estimate of the works.</p>
Hydrogeological Monitoring Cente - HMC	<p>In the beginning of the meeting TL presented the progress of the EPIRB project up to date, particularly highlighting the aspects related to the strengthening of groundwater monitoring in Armenia and the pilot project on rehabilitation of Aknashen groundwater monitoring well in Ararat Valley of Armenia, which was recently completed. The project is very well received by a beneficiary. Head of the HMC mentioned that the groundwater field surveys implemented in the last 2-3 years were very useful for the experts of the HMC and set the pathway for introduction of groundwater monitoring in the Akhuryan RBD, compliant to the requirement of the EU Water Framework Directive and Groundwater Directive. Based on the recommendations of EPIRB, the number of groundwater monitoring wells and springs in Akhuryan RBD has officially increased from 8 to 37. In addition, successful cooperation within the pilot project on the refurbishment of groundwater monitoring well and installing modern telemetry system in Aknashen region was also mentioned. As a possible continued cooperation, the project assistance was also requested by Head of the Hydrogeological Monitoring Center for support in the small-scale rehabilitation of 8 priority groundwater monitoring springs in the northern part of the Akhuryan RBD.</p>



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Meetings/field visits:	Findings/results:
Water Resources Management Agency - WRMA	<p>The status of implementation of pilot projects, current stage of development of RBMP for Akhuryan RBD, as well as the planned project activities in the extension period were discussed during the meeting. Head of the WRMA expressed the appreciation of the Ministry on the successful implementation of the project in close cooperation with the WRMA. The importance of successful completion of the pilot project on improvement of water resources management and ensuring efficient water use through the development of a system for an automated, centralized, on-line control of actual water use in Metsamor River Basin was particularly highlighted.</p> <p>Regarding the official adoption of the RBMP for Akhuryan RBD, it was mentioned that the representatives of the sub-contractor company (NHRS LLC) had already conducted series of meetings with WRMA and reached an agreement on the revised outline of the plan to make it compliant with the requirements of the Armenian legislation, in addition of complying with the WFD. After finalization of the draft plan in December 2015, it may take roughly up to six months to formally adopt it.</p> <p>In addition, the works on the development of GIS database by EPIRB consultants and need to populate it by national beneficiary institutions to ensure proper maintenance after the completion of the project was presented by the project. As it turns out, the WRMA through its State Water Cadastre and Monitoring Division shall be the unit in charge of maintenance and updating of the database after completion of the EPIRB project, and thus they will send a corresponding official request to EPIRB project.</p>
NHRS LLC	<p>During this meeting, the experts of the NHRS, LLC presented their approach in revising the draft RBMP for Akhuryan RBD. First, Mr Aram Gevorgyan, the Team Leader from NHRS LLC presented the overall work plan of the 4-month assignment, main steps to be implemented and the approach. He then presented the revised outline of the RBMP, which also takes into consideration the requirements of the Armenian legislation and has been already agreed with the WRMA.</p>
EU Delegation to Armenia	<p>The project progress made in Armenia, including pilot projects, development of RBMP for Akhuryan, joint field surveys of surface water bodies, groundwater field surveys, as well as planned activities for the extension period were the main focus points of this meeting. The EUD attended opening and hand-over ceremony of rehabilitated groundwater monitoring well in Aknashen community of Ararat Valley, which according to Mr Barker, was a success story, although with some drawback related to the absence of EU visibility materials during the opening. It was agreed that EPIRB CWME in Armenia would immediately correct the lack of the EU visibility procedure, document it properly and send corresponding photos to the EU Delegation shortly.</p>



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Meetings/field visits:	Findings/results:
State Committee of Water Systems - SCWS	<p>During the meeting status of development of draft RBMP for Akhuryan RBD and implementation of pilot projects were discussed. Given that the agriculture sector is the main water user in the basin, accounting for over 80% of all consumptive water in the basin, SCWS's position on the draft RBMP is particularly important, which in general is positive, but some comments were provided to the project. Mr Narimanyan outlined increased demand for irrigation water in the pilot basin and the steps the government will follow to resolve this problem by constructing Kaps Reservoir (Akhuryan River Basin) and Selav-Mastara Reservoir (Metsamor River Basin). He advised that these recent developments should be properly taken into account for calculation of water balance in the final RBMP.</p> <p>It was confirmed from the project that these interventions would indeed significantly impact the perspective water supply and demand scheme in the basin, and are already indicated in the current version of the draft plan. However, more details will be elaborated in the revised version.</p>

Kiev, Ukraine

Dates: 05-07 October 2015

- 1) Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources (MENR) of Ukraine
- 2) State Service of Ukraine for Geology and Mineral Resources
- 3) State Water Agency of Ukraine
- 4) Organization for Security and Economic Cooperation
- 5) EU-funded Project "Complementary Support to the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine for the Sector Budget Support Implementation."
- 6) Delegation of the European Union to the Ukraine

Participants:

EPIRB Project Team

Mr Tim Turner, KE1 - Team Leader
 Mr Zurab Jincharadze, KE2 - Deputy Team Leader/River Basin Management Expert
 Ms Nataliia Zakorchevna, River Basin Management Expert for Ukraine

Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine

Mr Mykhailo Tomakhin, Head of the Natural Recourses Protection Department
 Mr Oleksandr Bon, Head of the Aquatic Ecosystems and Water Resources Protection Division of the Natural Resources Protection Department

State Water Agency of Ukraine

Ms Olga Lysyuk, Chief of Water Directorate

State Service of Ukraine for Geology and Mineral Resources

Ms Nataliia Pyshna, Head of the Groundwater Monitoring Department of "Geoinform" SE



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Organization for Security and Economic Cooperation in Ukraine

Ms Anna Plotnikova, Coordinator of national projects

The Sector Budget Support Implementation project

Mr Oleksii Yaroshevych, the Team Leader

Delegation of the European Union to Ukraine

Mr Olexander Klitko, Environmental Sector Manager

Mama '86

Anna Tsvietkor, Project Manager

Meetings/field visits:	Findings/results:
<p>Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources</p>	<p>A joint meeting with the representatives of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources (MENR), State Water Agency (SWA) and State Service of Ukraine for Geology and Mineral Resources (SGMR) was held in the office of MENR Natural Resources Protection Department. The main discussion point during the meeting was the planned amendment to Water Code of Ukraine and other necessary steps to be taken for formal adoption of the draft RBMPs. Since the legal Amendments may take longer time, possible alternatives for implementation have also been discussed. Such alternatives may include implementing some Measures (PoMs) in the pilot basins through the local and regional infrastructure development plans.</p> <p>Further, practical steps of implementation the EU WFD in Ukraine was discussed in details. The beneficiaries requested from the Project Team to take into account specific tasks from the WFD implementation plan for the project extension activities, besides those that are already covered by the EPIRB. For instance, SWA is interested in the Capacity Building Needs Assessment to propose complete reorganization and rehabilitation of the state water monitoring system in Ukraine that will be compliant with the EU WFD standards.</p> <p>The ways of supporting the national/pilot GIS-Database systems that EPIRB will deliver to the project countries were also discussed during the meeting. Although the capacity of state beneficiary institutions in Ukraine seems limited in this regard, the team believes that it is possible to use the IT/GIS personnel, who recently received training for the Danube-GIS, and infrastructure of the Prut and Dniester Basin District Authority to develop and maintain the EPIRB web GIS/DB. The Basin District Authority will need licensed GIS software for this purpose, however, and beneficiaries hope to get EPIRB support on this.</p> <p>Finally, participation at upcoming trainings (ESCS, Delineation & GIS, Lab QA/QC) and the Regional Steering Committee meeting in Chisinau were discussed during the meeting.</p>



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Meetings/field visits:	Findings/results:
OSCE Ukraine	<p>The meeting proved to be useful for better coordination of different donor-funded water projects. OSCE is active in the region in the field of climate change adaptation, flood assessment and risk management and other issues related to a water sector. OSCE/ENVSEC recently finalized study on the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy for the Dniester River Basin that seems very useful and applicable to the Prut basin as well. Results of this Strategy will be discussed at a regional workshop to be held in Chisinau on 22 October. Further, it was mentioned at the meeting that EPIRB will discuss with the EC possibility to include a proposal to develop/update the Dniester RBMP in the frame of the follow-up EU water project.</p>
The Sector Budget Support Implementation project	<p>Main discussion points during this meeting were the changes that the Ukrainian legislation is undergoing in terms of adaptation rules for RBMPs and other pending issues of EU-Ukraine Association Agreement, including Water Framework Directive. For the moment, Ukraine does not have specific rules, or sub-normative acts dealing with the RBMP adoption, by signing EU-Ukraine Association agreement the country is obliged to develop and implement RBMPs for all 9 river basins. Therefore the new Water Code, that passed all necessary public hearings and will be adopted by the Parliament by the end of this year have to establish rules for RBMP adoption and implementation.</p>
EU Delegation to Ukraine	<p>The EPIRB progress made during the reporting period, as well as main results of the project implementation in Ukraine, as well as planned activities for the extension period were discussed at this meeting. It was agreed that close cooperation between the EPIRB and EU funded upcoming national project on the Approximation of Ukraine's legislation to the EU WFD should be reached to avoid overlapping. Furthermore, EPIRB was requested to support the beneficiary country by drafting some relevant secondary water legislations in accordance with the MENR WFD implementation plan. The mentioned and some other issues will be further discussed at the MENR working group meetings that will be organized specifically for the WFD implementation purpose.</p>
Mama '86 Meeting on 16 October	<p>A separate meeting was arranged with Mama 86, the rBMP contractor, due to their project manager, Anna Tsvietkev, being outside the country on the mission dates. The final drafts of the RBMPs (Prut and Upper Dnieper) are on schedule and will be delivered in December 2015. The comments have been collated and survey results will be included in the plans once reviewed by the EPIRB experts. It is clear that the adoption of the plans at the national level will not be possible until finalization of the Water Code and development of the necessary legislation. This will be the objective of the new national EU funded Approximation project which has just begun implementation. The timetable for this work is currently unknown. It is proposed therefore instead that the RBMPs be adopted at the regional level with their incorporation into the regional development plans. The CWME and Mama 86 will investigate the possible mechanisms. There was a general discussion about the consolidation of the River Prut plans from Ukraine, Moldova and Romania and Mama 86 were informed about the coming Eiver Prut working group meeting in Moldova.</p>



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Chisinau, Moldova

Dates: 08-09 October 2015

- 1) Ministry of Environment
- 2) Agency "Apele Moldovei"
- 3) Basin Water Management Authority (BWMA) of Agency "Apele Moldovei"
- 4) Hydrogeology Expedition of Moldova
- 5) Delegation of the European Union to Moldova
- 6) State Hydrometeorological Service
- 7) Beta Studio LLC (Italy)
- 8) Institute of Ecology and Geography, Academy of Science of Moldova

Participants:

EPIRB Project Team

Mr Tim Turner, KE1 - Team Leader

Mr Zurab Jincharadze, KE2 - Deputy Team Leader/River Basin Management Expert

Mr Victor Buzhak, Country Water Management Expert for Moldova

Ministry of Environment

Mr Andrian Delinschi, Deputy Minister

Ms Serafima Tronza, Head of Water Management Department

Agency "Apele Moldovei"

Mr Arcadie Calaras, Director

Mr V. Turcan, Head of Water Management Department

Mr. Dimitru Proca, Senior Specialist

Basin Water Management Authority of Agency "Apele Moldovei"

Mr Vasile Grama, BWMA Administrator

Mr A. Iakovlev, Head of Water Cadaster Section

Mr M. Turculet, Water Cadaster Section Engineer

Hydrogeology Expedition of Moldova

Mr Ion Panciuc, Director

Mr V. Jeleapov, Geology Engineer

EU Delegation to Moldova

Mr Henno Putnik, Project Manager

State Hydrometeorological Service

Mr Mihail Roibu, Deputy Director

Ms Natalia Zgircu, Head of Chemical Laboratory

Beta Studio – Water and Natural Resources Consultants

Mr Augustino Avanzi, Project Manager

Institute of Ecology and Geography

Mr Iurie Bejan, Deputy Director



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Mr Nicolae Boboc, Head of Water Department

Meetings/field visits:	Findings/results:
Ministry of Environment	<p>EPIRB on-going activities in Moldova, progress towards the bilateral (MD/UA) cooperation and proposal for combined transboundary River Basin Management Plan for the Prut River Basin were discussed at this meeting with the newly appointed Deputy Environmental Minister. According to the Ministry’s position, it is important to keep positive momentum of the EPIRB success in Moldova and increase technical capacity of beneficiary institutions by coordinating and cost-sharing with other donor-funded water projects, including flood risk reduction and protection activities, trans-boundary cooperation with Ukraine and Romania, effective water accounting (water cadaster), water use liensing and controlling, etc.</p> <p>In addition the team reported on the progress made while implementing the current pilot projects and proposals for the extension period. Regarding the Prut RBMP official adoption, it was advised by the Deputy Minister that according to Moldovan legislation the Danube Delta is part of the Prut Basin District and thus should be included in the final document. Formal adoptions procedures, therefore, can start only after these two parts are combined in one. The Danube Delta RBMP will be another pilot project that the EPIRB contractor should develop during the extension period, before May 2016. Other extension phase pilot projects may include follow-up to a lake survey, water resources GIS, establishing groundwater monitoring well, etc. The detailed plan to be discussed at the Regional Steering Committee Meeting on 25 November, in Chisinau.</p>
Agency “Apele Moldovei”	<p>The Agency Apele Moldovei is a public entity sub-ordinated to the Ministry of Environment, responsible for management of water resources and resource allocation, including abstraction permits but also certain quality aspects. The Agency is also responsible for implementation of the state policy in the field of water resources, flood protection and irrigation</p> <p>Besides the project progress report and presentation of the extension period plans, the role of the Agency Apele Moldovei for RBMP implementation was discussed during the meeting. The new management of the Agency is interested in linking the Prut basin management plan to other water-related instruments that currently are being developed for Moldova, including a flood risk management plan, hazards mapping, climate change adaptation strategy for water resources, etc. The role of the agency is also important in the management of water resources data and information, where they shall be considered as the ‘data-owners’. However, actual day-to-day management and maintenance could be done by other institutions, including Basin Water Management Authority and/or State Hydromet.</p>



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Meetings/field visits:	Findings/results:
Basin Water Management Authority - BWMA	<p>BWMA is currently implementing one of the EPIRB successful pilot projects in Moldova on Development of Water Resources Management Information System (WRMIS), which will be based on the web-GIS mapping of water abstraction and wastewater discharge locations in the Prut basin. BWMA has already delivered the preliminary and data collection and mapping methodology reports and shall finalize the works by the end of the year.</p> <p>Technical capacity of BWMA, as well as their mandate and the GIS-data processing skills, are probably the most suitable for the ownership of the EPIRB water database and to become a national water data management and information hub.</p>
Hydrogeology Expedition	<p>Hydrogeology Expedition is a State Enterprise, sub-ordinated to the Ministry of Environment. The Expedition implementing another pilot project in Moldova that aims strengthening of hydro-geological monitoring. New modern telemetry equipment was purchased and installed at important groundwater location. It was discussed at the meeting that the project will continue supporting the Expedition during the extension period. The Hydrogeology Expedition would like to use the remaining pilot project funds from the existing contract and some of the funds from the extension to drill a new monitoring borehole. The borehole is deep (>200m) and therefore expensive. It was agreed that if the work could be done for less than 20,000 euros then the work could be funded. The Hydrogeological Expedition will submit a proposal to the project for consideration.</p>
EUD Moldova	<p>The purpose of this meeting was to inform EUD Moldova about the project progress, particularly about the current activities and success stories in Moldova and brief about the extension plans. The Delegation was also informed on the upcoming EPIRB Regional Steering Committee meeting, as well as Ecological and Chemical Status (ESCS) training and the River Prut Trilateral Working Group meeting in Chisinau that are scheduled on 24-26 November 2015.</p>
State Hydromet	<p>The meeting has discussed results of the last field survey for ecological status assessment and priority substances gap filling in the Prut basin. All the lab results are delivered to EPIRB and are well received by the project biology and monitoring experts.</p> <p>The State Hydromet is also implementing a pilot project on Lake Beleu, a Protected Area, including baseline monitoring and design of WFD compliant surveillance monitoring programme. A preliminary report on the survey work was delivered in the early summer. The conditions over the summer with very low flows were critical and the final survey work has been delayed to see how the Lake has been impacted. It was suggested by the EPIRB team that the monitoring could be extended into Spring 2016 as an extension pilot project to see how the Lake recovers following the drought. This would mean that the final project report would be delayed until May/June 2016. This suggestion is to be considered by the beneficiary as well as expansion of the surveys to other Danube delta lakes.</p>



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Meetings/field visits:	Findings/results:
Beta Studio	<p>The Beta Studio (Italy) is a GIS Consultant involved in a Moldova Flood Protection Project in collaboration with the HR Walligford (UK) and financed by the European Investment Bank. The main beneficiary of the project is a Government of Moldova and the Ministry of Environment in particular. The objective of the project is to develop a Master Plan for flood risk management. The first phase of the project consisted of a Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment of flood risk for the whole country. The detailed hydraulic modelling and flood risk assessment was done afterwards for high risk areas that include EPIRB pilot basin as well.</p> <p>It was discussed at the meeting that, to ensure synergy, EPIRB will include some flood protection measures as reference links from this detailed study to the Prut RBMP Programme of Measures.</p>
Institute of Ecology and Geography - IEG	<p>The Put RBMP update and the extension delivery schedules were discussed at this meeting with the RBMP contractor – IEG. The contractor is working to address the last PC meeting discussion and extended consultation results in the document. Also, IEG will update maps of chemical status and to include 3rd JFS results, once the final results are processed and available. In addition, IEG will handle the combined Prut UA/MD RBMP that afterwards will be linked to the Romanian part of the Prut RBMP.</p> <p>The Prut RBMP adoption process (mentioned above) depends on the inclusion of the Danube Delta section to the plan. As expected, combined version of the Prut/Danube Delta RBMP will be ready by March-April 2016 that will leave enough time for another round of comments and consultations and formal adoption by the Government.</p>

Minsk, Belarus

Dates: 12-14 October 2015

- 9) Central Scientific Research Institute of Complex Use of Water Resources
- 10) Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection
- 11) Practical Centre on natural resources use
- 12) Delegation of the European Union to Belarus

Participants:

EPIRB Project Team

Mr Tim Turner, KE1 - Team Leader
Mr Alexandr Stankevich, Country Water Management Expert for Belarus

Central Scientific Research Institute of Complex Use of Water Resources

Mr Vladimir Korneev, Senior Researcher
Mr Konstantin Tsitou, Project Officer

Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection

Mr Igor Kachanovsky, Deputy Minister
Mr Segei Zavyalov, Head of Dept for Regulation, of Water Resources



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Practical Centre on Natural Resources Use

Ms Olga Vasniova, Senior Researcher

EU Delegation to Belarus

Mr Philippe Bernhard, Energy and Environmental Project Manager

Meetings/field visits:	Findings/results:
<p>Central Scientific Research Institute of Complex Use of Water Resources (functionbs as both public and private entity)</p>	<p>The experts from the institution provided detailed presentations on the preparation status of the Upper Dnieper RBMP and the Dobrush Flood Risk assessment which is now completed. The RBMP is to be revised to bring it in line with the new national water code and will include sections on climate change and water allocation. The revised plan will also incorporate the finding of the two main pilot studies, the flood risk assessment on the Dobursh and the Minsk GW assessment and aquifer protection strategy. The revised plan will be delivered in December on schedule and the plan is scheduled for adoption by the Government in Spring 2016. The contractors said they would welcome support from the project in identifying climate change adaptation measures and from the project and OECD undering taking a more thorough economic analysis. In the future the development of an umbrella plan for the whole of the Upper Dnieper working was Ukraine was discussed and the possibility of a joint plan for the River Pripyat again with the Ukraine was floated. A climate change strategy for the River Neumann in the north of the country is being developed in conjunction with the UNECE which could be extended to make it WFD compliant.</p> <p>The contractor also presented the findings of the Dobrush Flood Risk assessment which has been well received by the beneficiary, who now wishes to extend the study to prepare a more detailed</p> <p>The are three proposals for the additional pilot project funding under the extension including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An early assessment of the impact of the construction of hydro-power cascade on a Dnieper tributary upstream of Minsk. Calculation of minimum ecological flows. - Extension of Dobrush Flood Risk study to include a Flood vulnerability mapping and Floopd Management Strategy - Additional support in preparation of secondary legislation to the Water Code <p>The CWME will have discussions with the beneficiary regarding the best option.</p>
<p>Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection</p>	<p>The TL gave details of overall project progress and the proposed extension activities. The Deputy Minister said that they were happy with the project implementation and looked forward to continued support in their work. For some reasons the Deputy Ministry had not seen the Water Strategy document of the EU which includes the description of the EUWI+ project and was unaware of the potential follow-on report. The TL said he would ask Philippe Bernhard in the EU Delegation to send the document to the Deputy Minister.</p> <p>The Ministry are planning to establish a River Basin Council for the Upper Dnieper in the beginning of the year and hold a second PC meeting for the RBMP in Kagaluf January/February and asked the project for assistance. There will be five RBC established in the five national river basins.</p> <p>They will discuss the new pilot project options and make a roposal to the project shortly.</p>



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Meetings/field visits:	Findings/results:
Practical Centre on Natural Resources Use	The Project Manager, Olga Vashnova, gave a very detailed presentation of the GW aquifer study being undertaken around Minsk. The TL was very impressed by the technical and analytical work being done, in particular the 3D GIS modeling of the aquifer. The studies have high-lighted the need for an aquifer protection policy to be developed and implemented in order to protect Minsk's potable water supplies. The study has also shown there to be severe over-abstraction of the aquifer which is adding to the contamination problems. What the study has not yet done is develop strategy and action plan to tackle these problems. It was agreed that in the final phase the project will, working with the CWME, develop a strategy which could be incorporated into the Upper Dnieper RBMP and be promoted by the Ministry of NREP.
EU Delegation to Belarus	The project team reported to the EU Project Manager, Philippe Bernhard, on the progress of the project and the extension activities as they relate to Belarus. The TL reported how impressed the team had been with the technical performance of the Belarussian contractors and laboratories as well as the clear vision of the Ministry in strengthening the governance of the water sector. The project wish to harness the expertise of the Belarussians in the further development of the ESCS and partnering Ukraine in future development of an Upper Dnieper and Pyprat RBMP. Philippe Bernhard informed the team about a EU capacity building project which would support secondments and study tours for experts to institutions in member states and provided the Alexandr Stankevich with the project contact details.